2017 Latin America Think Tank Summit Report: Global Challenges From a Regional Perspective: The Role of Think Tanks in Latin America

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Abstract
The 5th Latin American Think Tank Summit took place in the Dominican Republic at a time of regional change and uncertainty of a political, social and economic nature. Numerous crises of corruption, violence and organized crime will hinder public policy development in the region, and high levels of poverty and inequality will endanger economic growth. Upcoming presidential elections in key countries will determine the direction of political leadership in the following years. Scarce resources will make it difficult to achieve all of the sustainable development goals and to keep up with developing countries in Asia.

Some of these challenges will be hard on the region, but they present an unprecedented opportunity for think tanks in Latin America to strengthen and grow if they utilize the wide array of resources available to them. Think tanks can take advantage of the T20 to gain recognition before the G20 in Argentina. They can also promote best practices to increase transparency to gain legitimacy amidst corruption concerns. Think tanks can make policy proposals during electoral transitions to gain a foothold in the formation of new governments. All of these things are possible if think tanks embrace the latest technological developments, cooperate with other organizations at the regional and global level, and improve their communication with policymakers and the wider public.

The Latin America Think Tank Summit sought to point out these challenges and opportunities, with the aim of identifying points of parity to facilitate regional cooperation in the future. By recognizing that there are ample commonalities in the needs of each Latin American country, think tanks can look to each other to overcome some of the region's challenges together and prosper in spite of uncertainty.

Disciplines
Latin American Studies

Comments
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How to advance policy during a time of national, regional, and global uncertainty?

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A special thank to FUNGLODE and FGV, the sponsors of this summit
Think Tanks in Latin America at a time of uncertainty

The 5th Latin American Think Tank Summit took place in the Dominican Republic at a time of regional change and uncertainty of a political, social and economic nature. Numerous crises of corruption, violence and organized crime will hinder public policy development in the region, and high levels of poverty and inequality will endanger economic growth. Upcoming presidential elections in key countries will determine the direction of political leadership in the following years. Scarce resources will make it difficult to achieve all of the sustainable development goals and to keep up with developing countries in Asia.

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All eyes on Latin America: Presidential Elections, International Cooperation and the G20

The future of many Latin American countries will be decided by presidential elections in 2018. Brazil, Colombia, Paraguay, Venezuela all have elections in 2018, where corruption, economic insecurity, poverty and organized crime will be key issues. Lack of party trust and volatility amongst the electorate has led to an increase in populist movements in Latin America. Despite this lack of credibility and trust in governments, think tanks in Latin America are still a credible source. Therefore, think tanks have the responsibility to play a key role in fighting against corruption and proposing solutions to many of the realities faced in Latin American countries.

Prospects for the 2018 Presidential Elections in the Face of Economic Uncertainty, Stalled Reforms and Rising Public Discontent

Upcoming elections in several Latin American countries will show whether the current political climate in the region can be sustained. The status quo is not ideal, as concerns of corruption and disengagement of the electorate abound. While the conditions and concerns of electoral processes change by country, the democratic order in Latin America as a whole is being threatened. There is a diminishing support for the political system and lack of connection between democracy and younger generations, who have less exposure to non-democratic forms of governance. Citizens have high expectations that are met neither by established political parties, who promise things they do not deliver, nor by new and anti-system parties whose governance would result in uncertain political and economic outcomes. Political parties and candidates often focus on specific issues to gain popularity, rather than discussing the more complex picture of the socioeconomic climate.

One of the biggest issues is measuring the success of the democratic system: there is
not a clear metric to establish whether a democracy is successfully fulfilling its functions. Think tanks can help define success and play an important role in changing the perception of the political system, as they have more credibility as non-state actors over political parties.

One area of potential change is engaging the youth. Millennials process information differently and are constantly bombarded by sources of information that may or may not be credible. Think tanks must establish themselves as reliable sources by utilizing new forms of communication to inspire younger generations to engage in the political process in order to restore their faith in democracy. Furthermore, think tanks can help restore the history of authoritarian regimes to provide a frame of reference for youth who do not feel part of the process and do not vote, as they struggle to grasp the benefits of democracy without having lived through harsher political systems.

Think tanks must improve the electorate’s understanding of the problems in the political sphere and incentivize discussion on electoral reform. Now is the time to act due to growing uncertainty and upcoming elections. Many people do not consider the political elite to be an agent of change, so think tanks must be the ones to initiate reform and help rebuild the political system to avoid more decomposition of political reality. Further discussion should be held on the role of think tanks during elections, such as specific measures on how to provide the public with reliable information about politicians’ stances.

The Role of Think Tanks in the Economic Regional Integration: T20

Regional political issues can spill over to different parts of the globe. The United States presidential elections, the Brazilian Lava Jato investigations and the Colombian peace referendum are just a
few of the recent events that have affected Latin American economies. The Latin American economy is highly volatile to the G20 countries, so many think tanks focus their research on economic policy.

There are three Latin American countries - Argentina, Brazil and Mexico - in the G20, an international forum of the 20 most powerful economies in the world that aims to promote global economic stability. This shows that Latin America has a presence among the major global economic powers but not a particularly large one.

Nevertheless, the next G20 forum will be held in Argentina, bringing the spotlight to Latin America. This is a great opportunity for the region to influence global economic policy and for think tanks to get involved in the policy process through the T20. The T20 is a network of research institutes and think tanks from the G20 countries that work alongside G20 policymakers in conferences and workshops to develop policy recommendations.

In 2017, the T20 network hosted two conferences in Berlin with over 200 think tanks from G20 countries in attendance. These conferences focused on inequality, migration, Africa, commerce, investment and international development. The upcoming T20 conference in Argentina should continue working on these issues and expand to other pressing regional matters such as education and the future of the workforce. The T20 should also answer to the G20’s concern over an increase in protectionist policies throughout the world by continuing to recommend free trade to stimulate the global economy. Think tanks in Latin America should take advantage of the opportunity of the T20, as it will allow them to gain legitimacy as public policy actors on the global stage and show whether think tanks with different views and opinions can collaborate to present consensual recommendations to the G20.
International Cooperation and Institutional Capacity Building of Think Tanks in Latin America

International cooperation is essential to improve global security and international relations. However, there is not a lot of global reach stemming from Latin America, a region where expertise in international relations is scarce among political parties and where internal security is discussed at a greater length than international security. Latin America should be better prepared to address global challenges, and think tanks can help. They can provide the case for making globalization more inclusive and collaborate cross-nationally to tackle global problems jointly. Latin American think tanks could, for example, collaborate more closely with Asian think tanks to expand the flourishing relationship between the two regions in terms of trade.

Tied to the issue of international cooperation is that of institutional capacity building: in order to bring about significant change in the field of international relations, think tanks must first restructure at the organizational level. For example, think tanks must embrace technology and increase their work with artificial intelligence and big data. They should also look at younger generations for future employees. While hiring new staff may be risky, it is essential to have new scholars who bring in new perspectives and a more global reach to think tanks in order to adapt to changing times. Lastly, think tanks should focus more on innovation and on improving communication with policymakers. Think tanks across the world share these concerns of innovation and communication, which makes it a good starting point to increase collaboration between institutions globally.
How are Latin American think tanks dealing with regional political, economic, and security challenges?

Latin America faces many challenges. Citizens are becoming less engaged and more distrustful of the democratic process. Many countries are struggling economically, poverty is high, and violence is on the rise. Amidst all these political, economic, and security challenges, think tanks are of the utmost importance as credible agents of change. Depending on the circumstance, think tanks must employ various tactics to instigate change, working discretely while other times directly challenging particular policy positions or views.

Transparency and Corruption: Forefront of the Regional Socio-Political Agenda

Corruption is one of the most pressing issues on the sociopolitical agenda in Latin America. It is causing widespread discontent, a lack of faith in the political system and loss of legitimacy on the global stage. Think tanks are important tools to fight corruption because they are seen favorably as civil society actors and can access both the public and policymakers to uncover and address corruption.

Corruption in Latin America has traditionally been fought by going after corrupt individuals, rather than by analyzing how the system can be changed to prevent corrupt decisions. This approach does not address institutional weaknesses and encourages prohibitive regulation and fear over reform and flourishing. Think tanks can help change the focus on corruption by providing relevant policy proposals and exposing corruption to the public. By promoting stronger control mechanisms and new laws, think tanks can guide the corruption conversation towards increasing accountability and transparency. These initiatives must stem from a common regional vision that think tanks can help achieve through cross-collaboration.

It is crucial for think tanks to work with other influential actors to fight corruption. First of all, think tanks must support journalists because they have played an
important role in investigating and unveiling cases of corruption and they are seen favorably by the public. Working with journalists could legitimize think tanks’ efforts. Additionally, think tanks can collaborate with private businesses, as they are very influential and possess a wide array of resources not available to civil society actors. Think tanks must work with political parties because it is mutually beneficial to do so. Think tanks need political parties to survive, as they provide access to policymakers, information and influence. Political parties can benefit from good relationships with think tanks because cooperation could be seen favorably by the public as a way to root out corruption within the parties themselves.

Think tanks must also take measures to prevent internal corruption and to reinforce the idea that civil society actors are actually fighting corruption in the political realm. Think tanks need to promote transparency by making all of their information available online, showing that they have nothing to hide and encouraging others to do the same. They must also focus more on society to provide information rather than approach policymakers to address corruption concerns. Lastly, it is important for think tanks to construct an agenda for evaluating public policies.
Meeting the Political, Economic and Security Challenges Facing Latin America: The Role of Think Tanks

Some of the major challenges facing Latin America are violence, organized crime, poverty and tax reform. Think tanks’ main role in addressing these issues must be providing expertise, which is scarce in the region.

Violence is a major issue among Latin American countries that can only be addressed by improving regional security, which is also related to prevention, the judicial system, and human rights. The prevalence of different types of violence differ by country, although intrafamily and gender violence, violence from organized crime and human rights violations are widespread.

Think tanks should make available best practices to combat these types of violence. In addition, think tanks must address the discrepancy between violence awareness and prevention by linking it with direct pressure on the political system. Think tanks should provide more data on violence, as there is general awareness but little factual evidence on the magnitude of the issue.

Poverty and a decrease in the price of commodities are also affecting the region. Think tanks can address these issues by promoting fiscal reform through tax policy proposals. Think tanks’ research can promote legislation that can lead to action in promoting a more robust economy.

Public Policy in Latin America: Challenges Facing the Achievement of SDG’s and the Role of Think Tanks

The sustainable development goals (SDG’s) are a set of goals announced by the United Nations covering topics from economic to environmental issues. Their main goal is to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all.

Achieving all of the SDG’s would be ideal, but many Latin American countries must prioritize which goals are most important to them since they have limited resources and must use them efficiently. For example, many countries in Latin America
understand that global warming is a problem and that its consequences cannot be ignored. However, only some countries prioritize the issue, particularly those affected by hurricanes and other natural disasters. Others may prioritize the region’s necessity for development to improve indexes of well-being of its citizens. The difference in priorities will make it hard to achieve SDG’s through interregional cooperation.

Think tanks need to promote dialogue between civil society actors and governments to determine these priorities. They should provide evidence of which goals are most realistic, impactful, and consistent with sustainable political processes. Think tanks should monitor the development of the SDG’s in the region and communicate these achievements to policymakers and the public.
How can think tanks and policy makers prepare for and prevent common organizational issues?

Think tanks can collaborate and share best practices to address common organizational issues, notably funding, communication and economic growth. In terms of funding, think tanks must diversify their strategies and donors to compensate for a considerable decrease in funding by international organizations and private companies. To improve communication, think tanks can take advantage of the internet and social media to reach a wider public. Lastly, think tanks should promote education and economic policy to see regional growth.

New Strategies and Sources for Funding Think Tanks

Securing funding is an ever difficult challenge for think tanks in Latin America. There has been a significant decrease in international funding and many governments offer little to no funds. This, in addition to pressure from a slowing economy, unstable governments, and a disengaged audience, makes it hard for think tanks to obtain long-term sources of income. Most individual and corporate donations are granted to short-term projects that often reflect the interests of the donors, which can imperil the independence of think tanks’ research agenda. It is important to diversify methods of funding and to increase institutional support to prevent donors from becoming too involved in the agenda setting and to ensure that think tanks maintain their independent strategic vision.

Some fundraising methods mimic professional services. These include privatizing information, offering consulting or lobbying services, publishing paid subscriptions and hosting a wide array of sponsored events. While some think tanks adopt these practices willingly, others are reluctant to adopt strategies that may seem to detract from their research.

Think tanks that prefer to focus exclusively on research can try to collaborate with other institutions on their studies to reduce costs. This can be of upmost importance
to small or new think tanks with less funding, as they can increase their visibility and take advantage of the resources available to more established think tanks. They can also disseminate their research online to gain visibility on the web and attract individual donors who may be interested in their research.

Additionally, think tanks can hold workshops for research and administrative staff to ameliorate the relationship between the two job areas. Some think tank executives come from a research-heavy background while others come from business or consulting, so constant dialogue and institutional capacity building can ensure that organizations’ business needs are met effectively while staying true to their vision.

Taking corporate, government or political funds and adopting professional or research-oriented funding strategies are choices for think tanks to make individually. Not all think tanks have to adopt the same strategies: the diversity of the think tank landscape is what gives it legitimacy in the civil society space.
Fostering Economic Growth, Social Development and Resilience in Latin America

With the Commodity Boom over, Latin America is experiencing a lot of problems it already faced before the period of economic prosperity and expansion.

Education quality poses an important challenge. Educational reforms have failed in relatively prosperous countries such as Mexico, where failed reform garnered feelings of insecurity in the government and a sense of increased corruption. This is particularly important in Latin America, a region that struggles to retain its most talented individuals who opt to emigrate to different nations in Europe and North America. Governments should aim to educate the population to prevent this and to create a smarter labor force, and think tanks can aid in the development of education policy.

These economic issues are a double edged sword for think tanks. On one end, think tanks are responsible for researching economic conditions and social structures and for proposing plans to implement changes that improve these situations. On the other hand, they are affected by these very issues very directly.

Using Strategic Communication to Reach Policymakers and the Public

**SCENARIO 1**

Think Tank -> Traditional Communication Methods -> Public/Decision Makers

**SCENARIO 2**

Think Tank -> Internet/Social Networks -> Public/Decision Makers

Think tanks must adapt their methods of communication in order to remain relevant. There is a general consensus that the Internet and social media are replacing traditional methods of communication as the gateway between think tanks, the public and decision makers. Nowadays, the virtual world is a determining political factor and must be treated by think tanks as such. This presents both opportunities and challenges for think tanks.
On one hand, changing methods of communication offer an unprecedented opportunity for think tanks to transmit information instantly and to engage a wider audience, including youth. Think tanks can still work with traditional methods of communication and with journalists to interpret political, economic and social network phenomena in an innovative way.

On the other hand, adapting to social network standards is costly. It requires accommodating the public’s limited time to intake information, innovating in the use of technology and content, and working with big data and artificial intelligence. Currently, most think tanks use hybrid communication strategies, resorting to both traditional and new methods of communication. Think tanks that do not have a social media presence tend to think that their target audience prefers traditional methods of communication: this should not be the case. Regardless of the challenges presented by social media and the internet, think tanks must constantly rework their image to remain relevant actors. Think tanks must take this opportunity to establish themselves as reliable sources of information and should establish validity by reaching a wider public and working with the media.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Name</th>
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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18 – VENUE HOTEL

18:00 - 21:00 > Inauguration dinner and conference

18:30 – 18:45 > Welcome remarks by authorities and organizers:
Marcos Villamán, Rector-fundador del Instituto Global de Altos Estudios en Ciencias Sociales (IGLOBAL)- Dominican Republic. James McGann, Senior Lecturer International Studies and Director, Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP), University of Pennsylvania-United States.

18:45-19:15> Opening conference: “Global, Regional and National Trends and their Impact on Think Tanks and Policy Advice in Latin America”
Speaker: James McGann, Senior Lecturer International Studies and Director, Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP), University of Pennsylvania his presentation will provide an overview of the global, regional and selected national trends in think tanks and policy advice -United States

19:15-20:45 > Dinner

20:00– 21:00 > Keynote Address: “Checks and Balances: Political, Economic and Social Challenges of Latin America Today”
Keynote Speaker: Leonel Fernandez Reyna, former President of the Dominican Republic and President of Fundación Global Democracia y Desarrollo (Funglode)
9:00 – 10:00 > Opening Plenary Panel “Meeting the Political, Economic and Security Challenges Facing Latin America: The Role of Think Tanks”

This session will provide an overview of the security, political and economic issues and challenges facing the region from the perspective of a group of senior executives from some of the leading think tanks in Latin America. This panel is intended to provide an overview and a preview of the Summit Panels and Roundtable discussions that will follow.

Chair: Antonella Mori, Director Latin American Program, Italian Institute of International Political Studies (ISPI) - Italy
Panelist: Gustavo Martínez, Managing Director, Consejo Argentino para las Relaciones Internacionales (CARI) - Argentina
Panelist: Gabriela Capó Ramírez, Executive Director, Instituto para la Seguridad y Democracia (INSYDE) - Mexico
Panelist: Leonardo Villar, Executive Director, FEDESARROLLO - Colombia

10:00 - 11:30 Panel I: “Public Policy in Latin America: Challenges Facing the Achievement of SDG’s - The Role of Think Tanks”

This session will focus on sharing best practices and policies for key public policy issues and best practices for meeting the critical organizational challenges facing think tanks. In addition to the specific themes addressed during the previous panel, additional issues will be introduced and explored such as climate change, education, the future of work, infrastructure for development and youth and gender issues prioritized in the SDGs. What are think tanks of the region doing on these matters? How are they approaching these subjects in their local contexts? The session participants and panelists will be expected to present concrete policies and best practices for meeting the policy and organizational challenges facing think tanks in Latin America.

Chair: Marlos Lima, Executive Director, Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV CLPP)-Brazil
Panelist: Miguel Jaramillo, Director, Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo (GRADE)-Peru
Panelist: Andrés Lalanne, Dean, Centro Latinoamericano de Economía Humana (CLAEH)-Uruguay
Panelist: Miguel Ángel Simán, Presidente, Fundación Salvadoreña para el Desarrollo Económico y Social (FUSADES)-El Salvador
Panelist: Nelly Cuello, Advisor in Climate Change and Environment, Centro de Estudios Ambientales y Cambio Climático (FUNGLODE)-Dominican Republic

11:30 - 11:45 > Coffee break


The 2017 electoral calendar also includes the parliamentary elections in Argentina and the jurisdictional ones in Bolivia. In 2018 the entire Latin America political situation will be clear after the presidential elections in Costa Rica, Paraguay, Colombia, Mexico, Brazil and Venezuela. Results will likely shape the political and economic future of the region for years to come. The panel will explore the potential transformative dimensions of these elections and their implications for the region.

Chair: Harry Brown Araúz, Centro de Iniciativas Democráticas (CIDEM) Associated Researcher - Panama
Panelist: Pablo Hurtado, Director, Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales (ASIES) - Guatemala
Panelist: Fernando Masi, Director, Centro de Análisis y Difusión de la Economía Paraguaya (CADEP) - Paraguay
Panelist: María Victoria Llorente, Executive Director, Fundación Ideas para la Paz - Colombia

13:00 - 14:30 > Lunch


Best Practices for Promoting Transparency and Good Governance in Latin America. This session will explore the efforts to promote government accountability, transparency, and the protection of basic human rights. The panel will present and examine specific programs and best practices for increasing the accountability in decision making and transparency. The panel will dissect the utility and impact of tools developed by Transparency International (TI) and commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to measure corruption and good governance in Latin American countries.
Chair: Eric Olson, Deputy Director, Latin America Program, Wilson Center - United States
Panelist: Harry Brown Arauz, Associated Researcher, Centro de Iniciativas Democráticas (CIDEM) - Panama
Panelist: Guillermo González Caballero, Executive Director, Espacio Público - Chile
Panelist: Servio Tulio Castaños, Executive Vice President, Fundación Institucionalidad y Justicia (FINJUS) - Dominican Republic
Panelist: Paul Villarroel, Executive Director, Fundación ARU - Bolivia

15:30 - 15:45 > Coffee break

16:00 – 17:15 > Breakout Sessions: “How are Think Tanks Responding to the Policy and Organizational Challenges Facing Policy Makers and Think Tanks Today?”

The Breakout Session is comprised of 4 concurrent working groups that will include an assessment of critical policy issues as well as the organizational challenges facing think tank scholars and executives. These sessions are intended to be inactive and focused on sharing best practices and the transfer of strategies, best practices and innovate approaches. Participants can select one of the four concurrent sessions listed below. A speaker will help frame the issues, pose a few constructively provocative questions and moderate the discussion. The speaker/moderator will also help guide the group as they formulate some concrete recommendations to share at the concluding session of the Summit. A note taker will be assigned to each group to capture the major themes discussed and the conclusions of the group.

**Session A:** New Strategies and Sources for Funding Think Tanks  
- Chair: Carlos Carnero, Managing Director, Fundación Alternativas - Spain

**Session B:** Fostering Economic Growth, Social Development and Resilience in Latin America  
- Chair: Diego Macera, Director, Instituto Peruano de Economía (IPE) - Peru

**Session C:** Is Anyone Listening? Using Strategic Communication to Reach Policymakers and the Public  
- Chair: Klaus Stier, Project Manager, Centro Latinoamericano de Políticas Públicas, Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV) - Brazil
17:15 – 17:30 > Group photo

20:00 - 22:00 > Dinner
Venue : Colonial city restaurant Buche e’ Perico
An Ambassador’s Reflections on Politics and International Relations in Latin America
Speaker: Clemente Baena Soares, Brazilian Ambassador for Dominican Republic-Brazil

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20th – VENUE FUNGLODE
9:00 - 10:00 > Conference: The State of International Affairs in Latin America, Europe and US in the Face of Alternative Facts, Fake News and State Support Disinformation Campaigns
The Keynote address will focus on the impact of alternative facts, fake news and disinformation campaigns on international relations and specifically between Latin America, Europe and the US.
Andrea Canepari, Italian Ambassador in Santo Domingo

10:00 - 11:00 > Panel IV: “The Role of Think Tanks in Economic Regional Integration: T20”
Think tanks are now playing a key role in helping shape the agenda for the G20 summits. This panel will look ahead to the Argentinian G-20 presidency starting December 2017 and the upcoming G20 Summit there in September 2018. In addition, the panel will explore the pushback on globalization, the role of developing countries, emerging powers and think tanks in shaping the agenda for the G20. Panelists will include international think tank representatives, high-level officials, and key stakeholders.

Chair: Gustavo Martínez, Managing Director, Consejo Argentino de Relaciones Internacionales (CARI) - Argentina
Panelist: Liliana Alvarado, Director of Economic and Social Development, Ethos Laboratorio de Políticas Públicas - México
Panelist: Leonel Fernández, President of Funglode y la Fundación EULAC - Dominican Republic
Panelist: Gabriel Salvia, President, Centro para la Apertura y el Desarrollo de América Latina (CADAL) - Argentina
Panelist: Winfried Weck, Coordinator for Development Policy and Human Rights, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) - Germany
11:15 – 12:00 > Panel V: “International Cooperation and Institutional Capacity Building of Think Tanks in Latin America”

This session will focus on sharing strategies, programs and best practices currently employed to enhance the capacity, independence, impact and viability of think tanks in Latin America and around the world. Panelists from organizations that support and maintain think tank networks, training programs and knowledge and policy partnerships will discuss how these efforts help think tanks better serve policymakers and the public in the regions and countries where they are located.

Chair: Marco Herrera, Executive Director, Fundación Global Democracia y Desarrollo (Funglode)-Dominican Republic
Panelist: Hecry Colmenares, Director, Centro de Estudios Internacionales Gilberto Bosques (CEIGB) - Mexico
Panelist: Stefan Jost, Country Representative, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) - Germany
Panelist: James McGann, Senior Lecturer International Studies and Director, Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP), University of Pennsylvania - United States
Panelist: Shinichi Nakabayashi, Director of Administration, Asian Development Bank Institute-Japan

14:30 - 15:30 > Plenary Session: Conclusions and Recommendations

15:30 – 16:00 > Closing remarks:
Marco Herrera, Executive Director, Fundación Global Democracia y Desarrollo (Funglode) - Dominican Republic.
James McGann, Director of Think Tanks and Civil Society Program (TTCSP) at the University of Pennsylvania - United States.
Leonardo Villar Gómez, Executive Director, FEDESARROLLO - Colombia
ABOUT TTCSP

THINK TANKS AND CIVIL SOCIETIES PROGRAM

The Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) of the Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania conducts research on the role policy institutes play in governments and civil societies around the world. Often referred to as the “think tanks’ think tank,” TTCSP examines the evolving role and character of public policy research organizations. Over the last 25 years, the TTCSP has developed and led a series of global initiatives that have helped bridge the gap between knowledge and policy in critical policy areas such as international peace and security, globalization and governance, international economics, environmental issues, information and society, poverty alleviation, and healthcare and global health.

These international collaborative efforts are designed to establish regional and international networks of policy institutes and communities that improve policy making while strengthening democratic institutions and civil societies around the world. The TTCSP works with leading scholars and practitioners from think tanks and universities in a variety of collaborative efforts and programs, and produces the annual Global Go To Think Tank Index that ranks the world’s leading think tanks in a variety of categories.

This is achieved with the help of a panel of over 1,900 peer institutions and experts from the print and electronic media, academia, public and private donor institutions, and governments around the world. We have strong relationships with leading think tanks around the world, and our annual Think Tank Index is used by academics, journalists, donors and the public to locate and connect with the leading centers of public policy research around the world.

Our goal is to increase the profile and performance of think tanks and raise the public awareness of the important role think tanks play in governments and civil societies around the globe. Since its inception in 1989, the TTCSP has focused on collecting data and conducting research on think tank trends and the role think tanks play as civil society actors in the policymaking process. In 2007, the TTCSP developed and launched the global index of think tanks, which is designed to identify and recognize centers of excellence in all the major areas of public policy research and in every region of the world.
To date TTCSP has provided technical assistance and capacity building programs in 81 countries. We are now working to create regional and global networks of think tanks in an effort to facilitate collaboration and the production of a modest yet achievable set of global public goods. Our goal is to create lasting institutional and state-level partnerships by engaging and mobilizing think tanks that have demonstrated their ability to produce high quality policy research and shape popular and elite opinion and actions for public good.

THE LAUDER INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

The Lauder Institute of Management and International Studies offers an MA in international studies, and conducts fundamental and policy-oriented research on current economic, political, and business issues. It organizes an annual conference that brings academics, practitioners and policy makers together to examine global challenges such as financial risks, sustainability, inequality, and the future of the state.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

The University of Pennsylvania (Penn) is an Ivy League school with highly selective admissions and a history of innovation in interdisciplinary education and scholarship. A world-class research institution, Penn boasts a picturesque campus in the middle of a dynamic city. Founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1740 and recognized as America’s first university, Penn remains today a world-renowned center for the creation and dissemination of knowledge. It serves as a model for research colleges and universities throughout the world.

LATIN AMERICA TEAM — TTCSP

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