

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 943

Calling for the annulment of the Monroe Doctrine and the development of a “New Good Neighbor” policy in order to foster improved relations and deeper, more effective cooperation between the United States and our Latin American and Caribbean neighbors.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 19, 2023

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself, Mr. CASAR, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, and Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Calling for the annulment of the Monroe Doctrine and the development of a “New Good Neighbor” policy in order to foster improved relations and deeper, more effective cooperation between the United States and our Latin American and Caribbean neighbors.

Whereas, 200 years ago, President James Monroe announced that the United States Government would actively oppose any interference by European powers in the affairs of independent Latin American and Caribbean countries “for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny”;

Whereas, over time, this policy, referred to as the “Monroe Doctrine”, came to be interpreted by many United States policymakers as a mandate for United States interference in the affairs of Latin American and Caribbean countries in order to protect and promote United States economic and political interests, irrespective of tangible threats posed by foreign powers;

Whereas following a period of western expansion of the United States, resulting in the massive forced displacement and genocide of Native peoples who originally inhabited much of North America, United States political and business leaders took an increasingly active interest in the acquisition of raw materials and in investment opportunities in other parts of the Western Hemisphere;

Whereas, after annexing the territory of Texas, the United States invaded Mexico militarily in 1846 and, after defeating the Mexican army and occupying Mexico City, acquired 55 percent of Mexico’s territory through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed in 1848;

Whereas, in 1898, the United States invaded Puerto Rico and Cuba during the Spanish-American War and continues to maintain control of Puerto Rico as well as a piece of territory in Guantánamo, Cuba, to this day;

Whereas, from 1898 to 1934, the United States conducted military interventions in Cuba, Panama, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, known as the “Banana Wars”, in order to advance American financial interests that often came at the expense of United States support for dictatorships and flagrant human rights violations;

Whereas, in 1904, President Teddy Roosevelt established the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, whereby the United States could intervene to ensure the protection of United States interests and those of foreign creditors in the region, and declared that the United States could exercise “international police power” in “flagrant cases of such wrongdoing and impotence”;

Whereas, in 1933, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt announced the establishment of a “Good Neighbor” policy toward the region that sought to emphasize nonintervention, noninterference, and trade in contrast with the previous policy of using military force to advance United States interests;

Whereas, in 1947, President Harry S. Truman signed the National Security Act which created the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and authorized the agency to begin covert action in the region;

Whereas, in 1953, following Guatemalan President Jacobo Arbenz’s actions targeting United States corporation United Fruit Company, President Dwight D. Eisenhower authorized the CIA to begin Operation PBSuccess, a multimillion-dollar project investing in “psychological warfare and political action” that led to the coup against President Arbenz in 1954;

Whereas, in 1961, the United States covertly financed opposition leaders and began seeking military leaders to support the eventual 1964 coup against Brazilian President Joao Goulart which resulted in a 21-year military dictatorship in Brazil;

Whereas the Organization of American States (OAS), headquartered in Washington, DC, and funded in large

part by the United States Government, remained largely silent and inactive with regard to the many egregious abuses perpetrated by United States-backed rightwing dictatorships during the decades of the Cold War;

Whereas, in 1962, the United States imposed a full embargo on Cuba, still in place today, which led to tens of billions of dollars in capital losses for the island country;

Whereas following the election of Chilean President Salvador Allende in 1970, United States President Richard Nixon directed the CIA to spread propaganda aimed at preventing Allende from taking power, and later, actively worked with and supported Chilean military leaders that carried out the 1973 coup of President Allende resulting in a 15-year-long military dictatorship in which at least 40,000 people were tortured and more than 3,000 killed;

Whereas, from 1975 to 1980, the United States actively supported Operation Condor, a coordinated campaign of political repression and state terrorism that saw the United States work closely with military governments in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay to help kidnap, torture, and kill people who had left their home countries in exile;

Whereas following a regional debt crisis sparked in part by historic Federal Reserve interest rate hikes, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) vastly expanded its lending portfolio in Latin America;

Whereas the IMF, whose largest shareholder is the United States, promoted austerity, deregulation, and other structural reforms that resulted in stagnant economic growth in much of Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s, following two decades of strong economic growth;

Whereas, in 1983, under the false pretense that the safety of 600 United States medical students in Grenada was under threat, President Ronald Reagan authorized the military invasion of the island country, a move condemned as a “flagrant violation of international law” by the United Nations General Assembly;

Whereas, in the 1980s, the Reagan administration supported security forces in Guatemala that perpetrated a genocide against Mayan indigenous peoples, according to the Commission of Historical Clarification; death squads in El Salvador; rightwing paramilitary militias (Contras) in Nicaragua; and participated in efforts to coverup egregious crimes perpetrated by Central American security forces, such as the massacre of 6 Jesuit priests and 2 other unarmed civilians by an elite United States-backed battalion in El Salvador;

Whereas the United States-backed “dirty wars” of Central America triggered a major wave of migration from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua to the United States in the 1980s and early 1990s;

Whereas the CIA covertly financed units of the Haitian military, whose officers led a violent coup d’état in 1991 that overthrew the country’s first democratically elected President, and then continued to support individuals involved in death squads that targeted supporters of the ousted President;

Whereas, beginning in 2000, the Bush administration blocked development and humanitarian assistance to the Haitian Government and provided financial support to opposition groups culminating in another coup against the elected President in 2004;

Whereas, starting in 2000, the United States provided billions of dollars of funding to Plan Colombia, a joint counter narcotics and counter insurgency initiative which resulted in thousands of civilian casualties, massive human rights abuses perpetrated by military and paramilitary forces, and the forced displacement of millions of mostly Afro-Colombian and indigenous civilians, while failing to reduce the production and trafficking of cocaine;

Whereas the United States-backed drug war, along with economic displacement attributable in part to United States-sponsored free trade agreements, resulted in another major wave of migration from Central America and Mexico during the first two decades of the 2000s;

Whereas, from 1941 to 2003, United States Navy operations in Vieques, Puerto Rico, caused the death of civilians and high rates of lethal illnesses to the population;

Whereas, in 2002, the United States Government provided funding and other support to political actors that carried out a short-lived coup against the democratically elected Government of Venezuela, and subsequently expressed support for the coup;

Whereas, following the 2009 coup in Honduras, the United States continued to support the country's illegitimate government by providing, between 2009 and 2016, an estimated \$200,000,000 in military and police aid to Honduran security forces engaged in violent extrajudicial killings and other human rights crimes targeting protesters, activists, land rights advocates, and other civilians opposed to the regime;

Whereas in a 2013 address to the OAS, Secretary of State John Kerry declared that the “Monroe Doctrine era is over . . . The relationship that we seek and that we have worked hard to foster is not about a United States declaration about how and when it will intervene in the affairs of other American states. It’s about all of our countries viewing one another as equals, sharing responsibilities, cooperating on security issues, and adhering not to doctrine, but to the decisions that we make as partners to advance the values and the interests that we share.”;

Whereas, in 2014, Presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro announce the thawing of and eventual normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba;

Whereas, in 2017, President Donald Trump threatened to invade Venezuela militarily and imposed broad unilateral sanctions against the country;

Whereas, in 2019, United States National Security Advisor John Bolton announced, “Today we proudly proclaim for all to hear: the Monroe Doctrine is alive and well.”;

Whereas the migration of Cubans and Venezuelans to the United States has increased dramatically since the imposition (and reimposition) of broad economic sanctions against these countries;

Whereas, in late 2019, a military coup was staged against the elected Government of Bolivia following unfounded claims of electoral fraud made by an OAS Electoral Observation Mission, while the subsequent coup government received support from the Trump administration and OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro;

Whereas President Trump reversed the Obama administration’s policy of normalization with Cuba, imposed new

sanctions, and, as one of his last acts in office, put Cuba back on State Sponsors of Terrorism list without justification;

Whereas the United States Government has failed to apologize for its past support for military coups in the region;

Whereas Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) provisions found in United States-backed free trade agreements allow multinational corporations to sue governments before panels of corporate lawyers based on claims that regulatory frameworks, including those designed to protect workers and the environment, will lead to future losses, and whereas thus far Latin American and Caribbean countries have been sued a total of 346 times under ISDS provisions, more than any other region of the world;

Whereas a United States-based company has filed an ISDS claim against the State of Honduras for nearly \$11,000,000,000 in alleged future losses, more than a third of the country's yearly economic output, as a result of the Honduran Government's announcement that the company can no longer continue to operate as a ZEDE, a territorial area largely governed and controlled by private investors developed under former President Juan Orlando Hernández, who is now awaiting trial in the United States on charges for drug trafficking; and

Whereas President Biden has expressed his strong opposition to ISDS provisions and to their inclusion in future trade agreements: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that—

1 (1) in order to send a strong signal to the re-
2 gion that the United States Government wishes to
3 turn the page on a long era of political and military
4 interference in the region, the Department of State
5 should formally confirm that the Monroe Doctrine is
6 no longer a part of United States policy toward
7 Latin American and the Caribbean;

8 (2) in place of the Monroe Doctrine, the Fed-
9 eral Government should develop a “New Good
10 Neighbor” policy, designed to foster improved rela-
11 tions and deepen more effective cooperation with all
12 the countries of the hemisphere, with measures that
13 include—

14 (A) developing, jointly with the Depart-
15 ment of the Treasury, the United States Trade
16 Representative, the Department of State, and
17 the United States Agency for International De-
18 velopment, a new approach to promoting devel-
19 opment based on a respect for the integrity of
20 sovereign economic development plans of the re-
21 gion’s governments, support for equitable and
22 sustainable economic transitions through tech-
23 nology transfers and new forms of climate fi-
24 nance that prioritize grantmaking and
25 concessional lending;

1 (B) terminating all unilateral economic
2 sanctions imposed through Executive orders,
3 and working with Congress to terminate all uni-
4 lateral sanctions, such as the Cuba embargo,
5 mandated by law;

6 (C) working with Congress to develop leg-
7 islation that triggers an automatic review of bi-
8 lateral assistance to a government whenever
9 there is an extraconstitutional transfer of
10 power, until the United States and a majority
11 of regional governments determine that the new
12 leadership is legitimate under that country's
13 constitution;

14 (D) proceeding with the prompt declas-
15 sification of all United States Government ar-
16 chives that relate to past coups d'état, dictator-
17 ships, and periods in the history of Latin Amer-
18 ican and Caribbean countries that are charac-
19 terized by a high rate of human rights crimes
20 perpetrated by security forces;

21 (E) working with Latin American and Car-
22ibbean governments on a far-reaching reform of
23 the Organization of American States to—

24 (i) ensure accountability surrounding
25 any potentially unethical or criminal activi-

1 ties in which the Secretary General or
2 other senior officials have been involved;

3 (ii) ensure full transparency sur-
4 rounding the financial and personnel deci-
5 sions taken by the Secretary General;

6 (iii) establish an ombudsman's office
7 that is fully independent from the Sec-
8 retary General;

9 (iv) ensure that the Office of Amer-
10 ican States electoral observation division is
11 independent from the Secretary General
12 and appointed by a majority of Office of
13 American States members; and

14 (v) ensure that the Inter-American
15 Commission on Human Rights and its
16 rapporteurs are financially independent
17 from the Secretary General's Office;

18 (F) working with Congress to secure
19 major, recurrent contributions to the Amazon
20 Fund;

21 (G) supporting democratic reforms to the
22 International Monetary Fund, World Bank,
23 Inter-American Development Bank, and other
24 international financial institutions to ensure
25 that the developing countries of the region are

1 able to play an equitable role in shaping the
2 lending and grantmaking policies of those insti-
3 tutions;

4 (H) supporting regular issuances of Inter-
5 national Monetary Fund Special Drawing
6 Rights to help avert balance of payments dif-
7 ficulties and to promote greater fiscal space for
8 regional governments, thereby allowing them to
9 expand investments in health care, education,
10 economic development, and in climate adapta-
11 tion and mitigation programs; and

12 (I) supporting the creation of a Loss and
13 Damage Trust, under the auspices of the
14 United Nations, to support climate action in de-
15 veloping countries, and working with Congress
16 to secure major, recurrent contributions to this
17 fund; and

18 (3) the United States should work with regional
19 bodies such as the Community of Latin American
20 and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Caribbean
21 Community (CARICOM), the Union of South Amer-
22 ican Nations (UNASUR), the Southern Common
23 Market (Mercosur), and other groups to increase co-
24 operation around the major challenges of our time,
25 including the response to climate change, inequality,

1 arms trafficking, tax evasion, illicit financial flows
2 (particularly those derived from drug trafficking),
3 the protection of workers' rights, and promoting the
4 rights of indigenous peoples and Afro-descendent
5 communities.

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