

### *Toward a Biregional Agenda for the Twenty-first Century*

In the wake of the 1999 Rio Summit and its focus on biregional cooperation, this article reviews the background and development of European-Latin American relations over the past two decades, the political and economic context, the current state of transatlantic links, and the short-term prospects for the relationship. Among its several premises is that the EU and Latin America constitute the bulk of the West, and the ways they work together will therefore condition the role of each of them on the international stage.

### *Trade, Politics, and Democratization: The 1997 Global Agreement Between the European Union and Mexico*

Mexico and the European Union signed a new Political and Economic Association Agreement in December 1997 and ultimately a free-trade agreement in March 2000, aiming to establish a new model of relations with a more dynamic trade and investment component. This article analyzes the 1997 agreement as background to the final accord. Economic and political changes in the 1990s modified both parties' participation in the international political economy, helping to overcome some of the structural obstacles to the relationship. The policy toward Latin America adopted by the EU in 1994 was influential. The negotiation process revealed divergences over the scope of the liberalization process and the so-called democracy clause.

### *The European Union as a Global "Civilian Power": Development Cooperation in EU-Latin American Relations*

The European Union's attempts to strengthen ties with Latin America relate to a broader international strategy of demonstrating that it is a "global player" and attaining the image of a "civilian power." Yet many observers suspect that European aid is simply instrumental to trade and investment promotion and other interests. They question whether the EU's strong position as a donor in Latin America means that Latin America is strongly important to the EU. This article reviews the history, context, and latest trends in EU aid to Latin America, then looks at the prospects for a biregional partnership.

*Romancing Civil Society: European NGOs in Latin America*

European NGOs have reoriented their Latin American aid policy to embrace the notion of building citizenship, developing civil society, and promoting democratization as the keys to long-term development. Stimulated partly by the new aid policy agenda, this shift also reflects a sea change in the thinking that shapes European NGO strategies. This article explores the significance of the new emphasis on civil society for EU policies toward Latin America and as a contribution to democratization.