

Brazil and LatAm Don't Lack Democracy but Government Quality, Says Global Forum

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The continuation of economic growth in Latin America, the challenges that must be met, and the insertion of the continent in the global economy constitute the backbone of the World Economic Forum's round of discussions in Latin America, entitled "Building a Stronger Region in the Global Economy."

The event began on Wednesday, April 5, and ended Thursday, April 6, in São Paulo. 280 entrepreneurs and political and economic authorities from 27 countries participated.

In their introduction to the forum, the organizers pointed out that "Latin American economic growth attained an average of 5.6% in 2004, the best performance since 1980."

They also noted "an improved economic environment characteristic of the majority of the countries in the region," and they expressed their hope that this tendency will persist in 2006.

Addressing the plenary session of the round, the secretary-general of the Organization of American States, José Miguel Insulza, said that "thirteen presidential elections in one year could naturally produce a climate marked, to some extent, by political uncertainty," but, in his view, the issue on the continent is no longer democratic stability but, rather, governmental quality.

According to the organizers of the forum, on the website created for the event, the great majority (71%) of the participants in this round were executives and entrepreneurs, but there were also 16 government authorities and government economic officials.

The Brazilian delegation included the minister of Development, Industry, and Foreign Trade, Luiz Fernando Furlan, and the president of the Central Bank, Henrique Meirelles. 29 representatives of civil society entities also attended.

The event was organized around four main pillars: global and regional risks, competitiveness, the agenda of integration, and the structure of investments.

There were also 21 discussion panels, which, besides mostly economic themes, touched on related matters, such as combating inequalities, social inclusion policies, gender policies, democratic stability, and the environment.

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