

SLIDE 1

Chapter 11
Today's Issues: Latin America

Its colonial past has left Latin America with long-term problems, including environmental crises, political instability, and poverty.

SLIDE 2

Section 1: Rain Forest Resources
Section 2: Giving Citizens a Voice
Case Study: The Income Gap

SLIDE 3

Section 1: Rain Forest Resources

- Special-interest groups make competing demands on the resources of the rain forest.
- As the rain forests are destroyed, the quality of life on earth is threatened.

SLIDE 4

Section 1: Rain Forest Resources

Rain Forest Land Uses

Vanishing Biodiversity

- Rain forest has **biodiversity**—wide range of plant, animal species
- 50 million acres of rain forest worldwide destroyed annually

Clearing the Rain Forests

- Mahogany, cedar harvested, exported from Amazon
- Poor native farmers clear rain forest for crops
- Poor soil fertility, increased erosion lead to more timber clearing

SLIDE 5

Continued **Rain Forest Land Uses**

Population Pressures

- Over half of Amazon rain forest is in Brazil
- growing population: 173 million in 2000, 200 million projected in 2020

SLIDE 6

The Price of Destruction

Losing More than Just Trees

- **Deforestation**—cutting down and clearing away trees

Environmental Concerns

- Rain forests regulate climate: absorb carbon dioxide, produce oxygen
- Fewer forests means less carbon dioxide absorbed
 - it builds up in atmosphere, prevents heat from escaping into space
 - **global warming**—atmospheric temperature rises, weather patterns change

SLIDE 7

Continued **The Price of Destruction**

Plants and Animals in Danger

- Covers 6% of earth's surface but has 50% of plant, animal species
- Researchers are trying to develop medicines from rainforest plants

SLIDE 8

Moving Toward Solutions

A Juggling Act

- Balancing economic development with rainforest preservation
 - some countries restrict economic development
- Grassroots organizations try to educate people about rain forests
 - protest environmentally damaging plans

Fighting Economics with Economics

- One environmental plan is the **debt-for-nature swap**
 - group pays part of government's large debt
 - government protects part of rain forest
 - approach works in Bolivia

SLIDE 9

Section 2: Giving Citizens a Voice

- Despite obstacles, democracy is beginning to succeed in Latin America.
- The success of Latin American democracies depends on political, economic, and social reforms.

SLIDE 10

Section 2: Giving Citizens a Voice

A Struggle to Be Heard

The Legacy of Colonialism

- Since Spanish conquest in 1500s, Native Americans ruled by others
 - under Spain: governors ruled the region, acting on behalf of monarchs
- Minority of Spanish colonists still ruled after 1800s independence
- **Oligarchy**—non-democratic government of the few
 - press censored, free speech limited, dissent punished
 - discrimination against those not in Spanish ruling class
 - elections were rigged

SLIDE 11

Continued A Struggle to Be Heard

The Legacy of Colonialism

- If government couldn't control people, military would seize power
 - form a **junta**—harsh government run by generals

SLIDE 12

Continued A Struggle to Be Heard

The Rule of the *Caudillo*

- Many 20th-century Latin-American countries ruled by a **caudillo**
 - military dictator or political boss, such as Argentina's Juan Peron
 - supported by military and wealthy; sometimes even elected

SLIDE 13

Continued A Struggle to Be Heard

The Rule of the *Caudillo*

- *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) ruled Mexico for 71 years
 - in English, the Institutional Revolutionary Party
 - opposition parties legalized, and elections held
 - fraud and corruption keep PRI in power
- Opposition parties make gains in 1997 congressional elections
 - Vicente Fox becomes first non-PRI president in 2000

SLIDE 14

Establishing Stable Democracies

The Goals of Reform

- Establish constitutional government, democracy
 - freely elected government that respects the law
 - citizens participate in political affairs
 - citizens are well-educated and economically secure
- Economic stability needed for political stability

SLIDE 15

Continued **Establishing Stable Democracies**

The Goals of Reform

- In 1983 Raul Alfonsín becomes president of Argentina
 - first free election in decades, but economy was ruined by military rule
 - to fight inflation (rise in prices) Alfonsín freezes wages, prices
 - issues new currency to replace peso (which later returned)
- Measures work at first, but by 1989 inflation is back
 - Carlos Menem elected as new president; introduced capitalist reforms
 - reduces government spending; sells off state industries, utilities

SLIDE 16

Continued **Establishing Stable Democracies**

The Goals of Reform

- Increase women's role in politics, involvement in government
 - Marta Suplicy elected mayor of São Paulo, Brazil, in 2000

SLIDE 17

Continued **Establishing Stable Democracies**

Land Reform

- **Land reform**—break up ruling minority's large landholdings
 - take land, economic power from wealthy elite, give to peasant farmers
- Mexican land reform begins when Benito Juárez becomes president in 1858
 - wanted to redistribute land to break cycle of poverty
 - further land reform follows Revolution in early 20th century

SLIDE 18

Case Study: The Income Gap

How can the economic gulf between rich and poor be bridged?

Background

- Income gap—the difference between quality of life for rich and poor
- Rio de Janeiro's mix of wealth, poverty illustrates an income gap
- Some people live in swamps, garbage dumps; others live in luxury
- The gap is widening in Latin America; solutions have been proposed

SLIDE 19

The Nature of the Problem

Bridging the Gap Between Rich and Poor

- Income gap—difference between quality of life of the rich and poor
 - gap is widening in most Latin American countries
- Gap has many causes, including the impact of colonialism
- Three ways to understand the issue: moral, economic, political

SLIDE 20

Continued **The Nature of the Problem**

A Moral Issue

- How can a caring society justify wealthy few, poor majority?
- Catholic Church, other religious faiths see problem as moral
 - feel narrowing gap is matter of social justice

SLIDE 21

Continued **The Nature of the Problem**

An Economic Dilemma

- Most countries have free-market economies, minimal government rules
 - people have freedom, rewards they need to create wealth
- Poor lack skills to fully, equally participate in such an economy
 - most have little education; can't read, can't find jobs
 - end up doing menial labor
 - conditions in slums bring disease, crime, short life spans

SLIDE 22

Continued **The Nature of the Problem**

A Political Problem

- Poverty creates desperation
 - people with nothing to lose are willing to take risks

- they protest, fight, attempt to overthrow unjust governments, societies

SLIDE 23

Continued **The Nature of the Problem**

A Political Problem

- Region has had many bloody rebellions put down by militaries
 - Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Columbia, El Salvador, Guatemala
 - during civil wars, human rights and dignity are violated
 - rebels seek economic justice, militaries protect wealthy

SLIDE 24

Possible Solutions

Education, Politics, and Economics

- Gap varies by country
 - 45% of Brazilians live in poverty
 - income gap is much narrower in Ecuador, Paraguay, Uruguay
- Governments hope free-market economies will narrow gap
 - create economic opportunity, stability for all citizens

SLIDE 25

Continued **Possible Solutions**

Education, Politics, and Economics

- Democracy seen as essential for widespread prosperity
 - provides outlet for protest, opposition
 - policies can reflect will of people
- Important to spend money on education
 - need literate, well-educated people for complex economy's new jobs