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WESTERN HEMISPHERE BRIEF 058-75.4

//LATIN AMERICA: THE PROPOSAL FOR AN EXCLUSIVELY LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM (SELA) HAS BEEN GREETED SO FAR WITH CONSIDERABLE SKEPTICISM. APART FROM ITS CO-SPONSORS, MEXICO AND VENEZUELA, ONLY A FEW GOVERNMENTS SEEM EAGER TO COMMIT THEMSELVES. EVEN IF IT DOES NOT ATTRACT NEW ADHERENTS, HOWEVER, SOME SORT OF REGIONAL COOPERATIVE IS ALMOST CERTAIN TO BE CREATED BEFORE THE YEAR IS OUT. A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENTS PROBABLY WILL JOIN, PERHAPS FOR NO BETTER REASON THAN TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY.//4

//TO BECOME MORE THAN JUST ANOTHER IN THE LONG LIST OF IMPOTENT REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, SELA WILL HAVE TO OVERCOME FORMIDABLE HURDLES. OLD AND NEW RIVALRIES, COMPETING NATIONAL INTERESTS, AND A CONCERN THAT THE ORGANIZATION COULD CAUSE TROUBLE WITH THE US WILL TEMPER COMMITMENT.//4

//SELA'S AMBITIOUS GOALS AND PLANNED STAFFING WILL REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE FINANCING. ALL MEMBERS PRESUMABLY WILL BE REQUIRED TO PAY DUES. ALTHOUGH VENEZUELA AND MEXICO SEEM THE

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MOST EAGER AND THEREFORE WILL PROBABLY BE THE PRINCIPAL  
 UNDERWRITERS, THEY ARE UNLIKELY TO PROVIDE MORE THAN A FEW  
 MILLION DOLLARS. EVEN THEN, THEY WILL CONTRIBUTE ONLY IF  
 THEY ALSO HAVE THE KEY ROLES IN DETERMINING WHAT PROJECTS  
 ARE TO BE UNDERTAKEN AND ARE ASSURED OF RECEIVING A GOOD  
 RETURN FOR THEIR MONEY. A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENTS, ESPECIALLY  
 THOSE IN SOUTH AMERICA, ALREADY ARE SUSPICIOUS OF VENEZUELAN  
 AND MEXICAN PRETENSIONS TO REGIONAL LEADERSHIP. SOME ARE  
 WARY OF CUBA'S PARTICIPATION.

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