

# Webinar Latin America's Challenges in a World in Disruption

March 12, 2026, 5.00-6.00 pm (Swiss time)

## Speaker biographies



**Felipe Larraín Bascuñán** is currently Professor of Economics at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in Santiago, and Director of the Latin American Center of Economic and Social Policies (CLAPES UC), which he founded in 2014 and also directed between 2014 and 2018. He is President of the Think Tank Network of the Americas (CEPAS), which has 8 member centers from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Spain and the U.S. Professor Larraín is member of the UN Leadership Council for Sustainable Development since 2014. He also served as Chile's Finance Minister from 2010 to 2014, and then from 2018 to 2019. In 2019 he founded and led the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action, which now has over 100 members. He also led the issuance of the first sovereign green bond of the Americas.

Between 1997 and 1999, he was the Robert F. Kennedy Visiting Professor of Latin American Studies at Harvard University. Since 1985, he has been economic advisor to the governments of Bolivia, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela. He has also been a Fellow of the World Economic Forum. A consultant to the Banco de Desarrollo de América Latina y el Caribe (CAF), the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank, he has also served as a consultant and member of the board of directors of several companies and non-profit institutions (foundations, sports clubs) in Chile, Latin America, the United States and Europe.

Professor Larraín has published 23 books and some 140 scholarly articles in specialized journals and books in Latin America, the United States, Europe and Asia. His co-authored book "Macroeconomics in the Global Economy" has been translated into 10 languages, including German, Chinese, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese and Russian. He has received several recognitions and awards, including: Best Sovereign Green Bond Issue (2019); Minister of Finance of the Year of the Americas (The Banker, 2018); chosen as one of the 100 most influential world leaders by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business - AACSB (2015); Best Sovereign Bond Issue 2012-2013 (Latin Finance); Vice President of the OECD Ministerial Meeting (Paris, 2012); Minister of Finance of the Year of the Americas (The Banker, 2010); Minister of Finance of the Year of Latin America (Emerging Markets, América Economía, Latin Finance, 2010-11); Economist of the Year 2010 (El Mercurio, Chile).

In his academic work he has directed some 100 undergraduate and graduate dissertations. He holds a PhD and a Master of Arts in Economics from Harvard University, and a BA in Economics from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. He has been married to Francisca Cisternas for 37 years, and they are parents of 5 children: Felipe, Maria Francisca, Jose Tomas, Josefina and Agustin.



**Philippe G. Nell** is a University Lecturer on trade, investment, and integration policy as well as negotiating techniques, and Honorary Ambassador of LATCAM.

Until October 2019, he was Deputy Assistant Secretary for Bilateral Economic Affairs and Head of the Americas Unit at the Swiss Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research. He held the diplomatic title of Minister. Previously, he dealt with WTO matters (1999-2004) in charge, i.a., of investment and China's accession to the WTO; Rules of origin, Customs matters, and Government Procurement (1992-1999), and the European Area Agreement Negotiations (1988-1992).

Mr. Nell holds a PhD from the Graduate School of International Studies of the University of Denver and a Master's from the Universities of Fribourg, Carleton (Ottawa), and Denver. He is Privat Doцент at the University of Fribourg, where he dispenses courses.

He has published numerous articles on trade and integration policy. In September 2020, he released a book "Strategy with China: Swiss Cooperation or U.S. Confrontation. The Swiss Successful Path with a Free Trade Agreement" available at the Foundation Jean Monnet for Europe in Lausanne. His new book "Négociations Suisse-Union Européenne. Regard critique sur deux grands échecs et nouveaux espoirs" was published in May 2025 by Slatkine Editions in Geneva.



**Linda Walker** graduated with a MBA at George Washington University, USA; with a MA at the Sorbonne, Paris; and with a BA in French Literature at the University of Delaware, USA. Furthermore, she studied at the universities of Munich and Saarbrücken, Germany.

Her career at Citibank, spanning 21 years, included positions in the USA, Peru, Venezuela, Greece and Switzerland in the areas of corporate, investment and private banking. In March 1998 she established Walker von Graffenried Asset Management Ltd. in Zurich. She is the President of the board of the Latin American Swiss Chamber of Commerce as of January 1, 2025, and has been a member of the board of Mercantil Bank Schweiz AG since 2019.

In January 2016 she was appointed Honorary Consul of Mexico in Zürich and in the same year she founded the international Advisory Board of Takimundo, a school for children with hearing disabilities in Uruapan, Mexico. In addition to her mother tongue of English, she is also fluent in French, German, Spanish, Greek and has a working knowledge of Italian.