

For Immediate Release
January 13, 2009

Conference on Urban Issues in Latin America Hosted by UF

Gainesville, FL – The 58th Annual Conference of the University of Florida Center for Latin American Studies will be on “The Urban Divide in Latin America: Challenges and Strategies for Social Inclusion.” The conference will take place January 28-30, 2009 at the J. Wayne Reitz Union on the UF campus. The conference is co-sponsored by the UF College of Design, Construction and Planning.

This multidisciplinary conference aims to gather scholars and professionals dedicated to improving the quality of life in urban Latin America. This forum will provide participants an opportunity to share their research and experiences, and to engage in dialogue to generate ideas and identify solutions to advance social inclusion in Latin American cities. Approximately 150 individuals from Latin America and the US are expected to attend.

Conference presentations will cover such topics as spatial and social equity, governance and political representation, gender, poverty, urban design, public space, housing and informal settlements, land use policy and legislation, urban crime and violence, sustainability and the environment, among others. More than 30 cities in ten Latin American countries will be discussed.

The conference will include three keynote lectures by Jaime Lerner, former Mayor of Curitiba, Brazil; Saskia Sassen, the Lynd Professor of Sociology at Columbia University; and Alan Gilbert, Professor of Geography at University College London.

Jaime Lerner, an architect and urban planner, served three terms as mayor of the city Curitiba, Brazil and two terms as Governor of the State of Paraná, Brazil. He is past president of the International Union of Architects and is known worldwide for his work to improve the livability of cities, with particular focus on sustainability and social advancement. Lerner’s extensive experience is relevant for the reassessment of urban settlement patterns in Gainesville and other cities. Lerner’s visit to UF is sponsored by the Ivan H. Smith Eminent Chair Endowment. While in Florida, he will interact with UF architecture students and meet with city officials from Gainesville and Orlando. Lerner will deliver the conference’s opening lecture on Wednesday, January 28 at 7:00 pm at UF’s Emerson Alumni Hall. Conference registration (\$15 for UF participants or \$120 for non-UF participants) or registration only for Lerner’s keynote (\$50) is required to attend.

Saskia Sassen is the Lynd Professor of Sociology at Columbia University. Her research and writing focuses on globalization, immigration, and global cities. She has published extensively and her recent books are *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton University Press, 2006) and *A Sociology of Globalization* (W.W. Norton, 2007). She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the National Academy of Sciences’ Panel on Cities. Sassen will deliver her keynote lecture on Thursday, January 29, 2009 at 12:30 pm at the Rion Ballroom in the Reitz Union. Conference registration is required to attend.

Alan Gilbert, Professor of Geography at University College London, is known for his research on housing, poverty, employment and urban problems in developing countries, particularly those in Latin America. Gilbert has authored or co-authored nine books, edited four others and written more than 100 academic articles on these topics. He is an elected member of the Academy of Learned Societies for the Social Sciences and acts as adviser to various international agencies such as the Inter-American Development Bank, UN-Habitat and

the World Bank. Gilbert's keynote lecture will take place on Friday, January 30 at 12:00 pm at the Rion Ballroom in the Reitz Union. Conference registration is required to attend.

Online conference registration is available until January 26 at: <http://conferences.dce.ufl.edu/LAS/>. On-site registration (for cash or check payments only) will also be available.

Founded in 1930, the University of Florida Center for Latin American Studies advances knowledge about Latin America and the Caribbean and its peoples throughout the hemisphere. With over 170 faculty from colleges across UF, the Center is one of the largest institutions for interdisciplinary research, teaching and outreach on Latin America, Caribbean, and Latino Studies. Programs include Tropical Conservation and Development, Crime, Law and Governance in the Americas, and Latin American Business Environment, among others.

Sources:

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