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# Ecuador: Political And Economic Conditions And U.S. Relations



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## **Synopsis**

The United States has traditionally had close relations with Ecuador, yet tensions in the U.S.-Ecuador relationship have surfaced in recent years as the left leaning government of President Rafael Correa (2007-present) has objected to U.S. influence in the region which it has labeled "imperialist." • Nevertheless, the United States is Ecuador's largest trade partner and has extended trade preferences to Ecuador under the Andean Trade Preferences Act (ATPA) since the legislation's enactment in 1991. The ATPA provides unilateral preferential access to the U.S. market for certain products in order to reduce dependence on the illegal drug trade, although the Correa government in late June 2013 announced its participation in the program. For additional information on the consideration of trade preferences for Ecuador under the Andean Trade Preferences Act by the 113th Congress, see CRS Report RS22548, ATPA Renewal: Background and Issues, by M. Angeles Villarreal. This report provides a brief background on political and economic conditions in Ecuador under President Correa, and examines current U.S. relations with Ecuador. It provides context for recent developments such as the asylum request reportedly made to Ecuador by former U.S. intelligence contractor Edward J. Snowden who is wanted on espionage charges in the United States for release of top secret documents about U.S. surveillance programs. For more information about Ecuador's extradition policies and legal analysis, see CRS Legal Sidebar WSLG561, U.S. May Face Significant Obstacles in Attempt to Apprehend Edward Snowden, by Michael John Garcia.

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of US and Ecuadorian political and economic relations. Beittel does a good job of outlining US policy in regards to our southern relative a country that provides a significant number of visiting workers to the US. Ecuador has a lot to offer as attested to by its growing American ex-pat community. Biittel gives a good overview of the financial and political ties behind this relationship.

It was interesting to read, however, the content strives to put down and diminish the achievements of Correa's positive policies, and present the current government from the opposition point of view. Unfortunately liberal bias is all that is presented here.

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