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MUST READS

1. [Brazil president to make US state visit in October](#)

-Associated Press, 5/30

BLUF: Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff will make a state visit to Washington in October, US Vice President Joe Biden announced Wednesday during a visit to Rio.

- "President (Barack) Obama has asked me to extend an invitation to your president to come to Washington in October for the only state visit that will occur in Washington this year," Biden said.
- The White House later issued a statement saying the visit -- the first US state visit by a Brazilian president since that of Fernando Henrique Cardoso in 1995, and the first of Obama's second term -- would take place October 23.
- The meeting will allow Rousseff and Obama to "continue developing and strengthening the strategic partnership between the United States and Brazil," the White House said.

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BRAZIL

2. [Brazil's Neymar to complete Barca move on June 3](#)

-Chicago Tribune, 5/30

BLUF: Brazil have given striker Neymar permission to travel to Barcelona to complete his move from Santos and be presented on June 3, the Spanish champions said in a statement on Wednesday.

- Barca beat arch-rivals Real Madrid to the highly-rated 21-year-old's signature last weekend after almost three-years of interest from Europe's top clubs.
- Neymar is with the Brazil squad preparing for the Confederations Cup, but the federation's technical co-ordinator Carlos Alberto Parreira said they had allowed the forward to travel to Spain after Sunday's friendly against England in Rio de Janeiro.
- "Not only do we agree, but we authorise him to be presented, to do all the interviews he has to do," Parreira was quoted as saying in the Spanish media.

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3. [Brazil's middle-class boom -- but are they tempting a bust?](#)

-CNN, 5/30

BLUF: With the World Cup in 2014, the Olympics two years later and large discoveries of oil boosting the economy, Brazilians could be excused for looking at the world through rose-tinted glasses.

- The world's party country -- home to samba dance and Carnival -- is enjoying an economic cocktail of low unemployment and easy consumer credit, propelling many Brazilians into the country's burgeoning middle class.
- But while tens of millions of people have been hauled out of poverty, questions are being raised around the risks of a consumer-driven boom.

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COLOMBIA

4. [Colombians get light sentences in drug case amid accusations that US withheld evidence](#)

-Edmonton Journal, 5/30

BLUF: Two Colombians who were facing the prospect of spending the rest of their lives in a U.S. prison for drug trafficking will go home much sooner after prosecutors were accused of withholding evidence about payments by the Drug Enforcement Administration to police in the South American country.

- John Finkelstein Winer and Jose Salazar Buitrago both pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to transport cocaine and received sentences of 36 months, with credit for the nearly two years they have already been in custody.
- The hastily arranged plea deal and sentences before a federal judge in Florida on May 23 was a rare defeat of sorts in a drug case for the U.S. government, which has been working

with Colombia to extradite hundreds of people suspected of trafficking in recent years and routinely sentences them to lengthy prison terms.

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5. [Terrorist attacks in Colombia went up in 2012: US](#)

-Colombia Reports, 5/30

BLUF: Colombia experienced its second consecutive year of increased terrorism in 2012 despite a significant drop in attacks in the second half of the year, according to the United States annual Country Reports on Terrorism.

- “As was the case in 2011, the number of total terrorist incidents, casualties caused by acts of terrorism, and economic losses due to terrorism increased in 2012” said the report, released on Thursday by the US Department of State.
- The report specifies that attacks made by Colombia’s largest rebel group, the FARC, increased by over 50% in comparison with 2011, and attacks in the first half of the year were “almost a daily occurrence” including “the launching of mortars at police stations or the military, explosive devices placed near roads or paths, sniper attacks, and ambushes” as well as an increase in attacks on infrastructure, such as oil and gas pipelines carried out by the FARC and Colombia’s second rebel group, the ELN.

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VENEZUELA

6. [Venezuela angrily scolds Colombia for having president meet with opposition leader Capriles](#)

-Washington Post, 5/30

BLUF: Venezuelan officials reacted angrily to Colombia’s president meeting with Venezuela’s opposition leader Wednesday and warned it could severely damage relations between the neighboring countries.

- Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos received Venezuelan opposition leader Henrique Capriles, who is trying to build international support for his efforts to overturn an April 14 presidential election he claims was fraudulent. Capriles narrowly lost to governing party candidate Nicolas Maduro.
- Venezuelan Foreign Minister Elias Jaua told state TV that the meeting “will bring a derailment of the good relations that we have.” Parliament Speaker Diosdado Cabello compared the meeting to “placing a bomb on the train.”

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7. [Venezuela Warns Colombia Over Meeting With Opposition Leader](#)

-Bloomberg News, 5/30

BLUF: Venezuela opposition leader Henrique Capriles Radonski met with Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos in a move that Venezuela's government said could damage relations between the neighboring countries.

- Capriles discussed trade and safety along the border with Santos yesterday in Bogota as Colombia offered to swap powdered milk for oil to ease shortages of consumer goods and basic foods in South America's largest oil producer. Venezuelan National Assembly President Diosdado Cabello called the meeting with Capriles, who claimed fraud after losing this year's presidential election to Nicolas Maduro, an "aggression."
- "We're surprised by the meeting, but it helps clarify the position of governments that claim to be friends and then do the contrary," Cabello said on state television. "It's worrying and suspicious that a government that claims to be a friend placed a bomb under the train of good relations."

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ARGENTINA

8. Argentine Prosecutor: Iran Infiltrating Continent

-ABC News, 5/30

BLUF: The Argentine prosecutor who charged a handful of former Iranian officials with masterminding the 1994 bombing of a Buenos Aires Jewish center accused Iran on Wednesday of "infiltrating" South America and setting up intelligence networks to carry out more terrorist attacks in the region.

- Alberto Nisman accused Mohsen Rabbani, Iran's former cultural attache in Buenos Aires and a suspect in the attack that killed 85 people, of working continually over the last two decades to develop an intelligence network in Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Chile, Colombia, Guyana, Surinam and Trinidad and Tobago.
- "These are sleeper cells. They have activities you wouldn't imagine. Sometimes they die having never received the order to attack," Nisman said as he presented a 500-page indictment.

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PERU

9. Peru Sol Drops to Lowest Since 2011 as Bonds Fall on Fed Outlook

-Bloomberg News, 5/30

BLUF: Peru's sol slumped to its weakest level in more than a year as slowing economic growth and speculation that the Federal Reserve will reduce monetary stimulus sparked a selloff in the Andean nation's bonds.

- The sol depreciated 0.8 percent to 2.7220 per U.S. dollar at 11:53 a.m. in Lima, the lowest level on a closing basis since October 2011, according to prices from Datatec. The drop extended this month's decline to 2.8 percent.
- Sol-denominated bonds tumbled on speculation that U.S. economic growth will lead the Fed to slow the pace of bond purchases that have buoyed emerging-market assets.

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