



VII Conference of
Forte de Copacabana
International Security
A European–South American Dialogue

**Current Challenges
for Disarmament and
Peace Operations on the
Political Agenda**

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ISSN 2176-297X

International Security: a European – South American Dialogue (2010)

Rio de Janeiro: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2011.

Series of texts presented at the VI International Conference of Forte de Copacabana, held in Rio de Janeiro, from 3rd to 4th, November, 2010

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The Konrad Adenauer Foundation is a political foundation from the Federal Republic of Germany which works on a national level and around the world, furthering human rights, representative democracy, the rule of law, a social market economy, social justice and sustainable development. The main areas in which the Konrad Adenauer Foundation works include: political education, applied research development, the promotion of political and social participation and collaboration with civil society organizations and the strengthening of independent media. In Brazil, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation pursues its activities through its office in Rio de Janeiro, always connected with local partners. By means of its publications, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation aims to encourage public debate on issues of national and international relevance.

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Introduction

Thomas Knirsch

Representative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Brazil

Security challenges are in a constant flux. The Financial Crisis, the Arab Spring as well as the massive leak of US Diplomatic Cables have, among other unforeseen events with a major impact, all contributed to accelerate the already ongoing process of redistribution of power in the international system. As a result, much uncertainty has been injected in the complex framework of international security architecture. The framework itself is defined through the acceptance of a common language by the society of states. Spoken through the institutions of power it however progressively fails to reach many areas of the world.

A global arc of instability now spans from the Horn of Africa to the Hindu Kush, with further flash points dotting all of Eurasia as well as Africa. Concerted efforts by the International Community to hem in agents of conflict and to bring back stability have so far showed mixed results; in some areas they have arguably even further fractured already fragile power relations and thus opened space for more conflict. The world faces the prospect of a series of protracted conflicts, some of which have the potential to threaten the very working of the modern world; should this trend not be reversed.

In this sea of peril South America and Europe remain islands of stability, with no hot conflicts in sight. As such, South America and Europe must work together to guarantee that conflict doesn't re-emerge in their vicinities as well as to promote peace and prosperity around the world. To achieve this goal each partner must comprehend the interests and priorities,



as well as the domestic considerations of his counterpart to avoid misunderstanding and to accelerate further cooperation on the global stage.

In this light and with the premise of promoting cooperation and dialogue, the International Security Conference of Forte de Copacabana was organized in November 2010, in Rio de Janeiro, by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Brazil and the Brazilian Centre for International Relations (CEBRI). The forum was supported by the Delegation of the European Union in Brazil. This seventh edition of the Conference aimed to further facilitate discussions concerning the main points of interest related to defense in South America and Europe.

Current debates play a decisive role in the process of developing and implementing practical strategies for the South American/European defense agenda. This year's edition features a variety of topics: an account of the current process of transformation of the national defense *forces of Venezuela*; arguments concerning nuclear non-proliferation; the impact of the financial crisis on defense budgets; as well as general European perspectives on security. Other topics touch upon questions concerning the South American Defense Council, provide views from Colombia and Venezuela in examining domestic as well as regional considerations and the potential of further Latin America defense-cooperation.

New needs always create new forms, a wise diplomat once said. The need, to which the International Security Conference of Forte de Copacabana corresponds, is confirmed through the large public interest it draws each year and the illustrious range of speakers it attracts. The maturing of the discussions on South American defense and security in a bi-regional context is gaining importance in an increasingly globalized world. Europe and South America, sharing common culture, language and history, have a common interest in being able to formulate together the terms in which the future of this globalized world will be built.

The intent of this publication is to provide the readers with detailed analyses of the contributions made during the event and an in-depth view on the topics debated. Furthermore its objective is to present fundamental studies for the comprehension of South American/European dialogue concerning defense and security.



Security Perspectives for Europe

Klaus Naumann

General and Former Chairman of the North Atlantic
Treaty Organization Military Committee (NATO)

It might be worthwhile to address from a European perspective in such a publication an issue which is presumably not too prominent in debates in Latin America : Security Perspectives for Europe.

Seen they are definitely gloomier than those of the countries of Latin America since Europe although no longer being at the centre of world politics is geographically closer to the present centre of turmoil and instability, the Maghreb and the wider Middle East,. But as the world is increasingly interconnected and intertwined the situation in Europe might be of interest for Latin America as well.

To address the issue of European security one has to begin with a sober assessment of the world as it is, of the likely developments in the foreseeable future and of the risks and challenges the European nations will have to cope with. Thus one could identify the proper security arrangements for Europe. At present Europe relies on NATO as the only functioning security organisation. It is indeed at present the indispensable instrument for Europe which leaves to discuss whether this will remain so.

As so often in its more than sixty years the alliance was said in 2010 to be at a critical juncture since it is struggling with a truly difficult situation in Afghanistan and its members were to some extent divided over quite a few open issues which had to answered by the new Strategic Concept which the Heads of States and Governments agreed at their Lisbon Summit on November 20, 2010. At the centre of these debates was the question

whether an alliance such as NATO can be the proper answer to the challenges of the 21st century, to which extent it will need profound reform and whether it will remain the guarantor of European security although the emphasis of its leading nation, the U.S., is probably shifting to Asia.

The Lisbon documents reaffirmed NATO's pivotal role as the bedrock of transatlantic security and strengthened the transatlantic ties between Europe and the North American democracies although quite a few issues were left vague and will need clarification in follow on documents.

The Situation

Turning to the situation one should begin by stating that the world is in a tumultuous transition period in which for the time being but one truly global power exists, the U.S.

In Europe nations are confronted with instability in the Maghreb, with the potential crises and conflicts in the Balkans – Caucasus – Middle East triangle which today pose the nearest geographical challenges to security and stability in Europe. Spearheading the dangers is global Islamic terrorism, *Jihad terror*, spearheading instability are unrest and turmoil in some countries on the Southern shores of the Mediterranean and in Yemen.

The wider Middle East including Afghanistan and Pakistan is at the moment the main of focus of attention for Europe's indispensable ally the U.S. whereas the Maghreb instability hit both Europe and the U.S. unprepared. Both have little freedom of action since Europe is still struggling with the economic and financial crisis and the U.S. is a global power which is stretched to its limits. It is fighting the global war against terrorism, it is heavily engaged in two regional armed conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and it begins to understand that consumption at the expenses of future generations and being financed by foreign powers which might become at least regional rivals could eventually pose a risk to American national security. Moreover, the American society has not yet fully digested how much more change will be necessary, particularly in the American economy and industry but also, politically much more difficult to achieve, in the American way of life if the U.S. wants to maintain its leading position as the world's undisputed number one. Being under such pressures the U.S. recognises that it needs partners and allies in order to preserve the global role of the U.S. This is the key message of the recently published National Security Strategy of the U.S. The partner of choice in such a situation is for the Americans Europe. The U.S. hope that Europe which after all is the only partner which in its entirety fully shares with the US the same values and convictions will be at their side in the common task of shaping a multi-polar world order in which China, India, Japan, Brazil, Russia and Europe might be the most important players although none of these will probably be capable of playing a truly global role as a fully fledged actor during the next two or three decades. One has to underline this point since it is the key issue which will determine the future of NATO but it is at the same time a point which is not too well understood by quite a few European leaders: In a time of global challenges Europe must have an ally capable of global action as Europe although being a global economic actor does not and will not possess global projection capabilities for the foreseeable future.



Whether one likes it or not, the only power in the world which can act across the full spectrum of politics and can do it globally is now and will remain for the foreseeable future the U.S. But to get such American support will no longer be for free, therefore an alliance such as NATO which commits Europe, Canada and the U.S. to collective defence must offer advantages to the US which no one else can offer otherwise NATO will fade away. Hitherto Europe provided its geographic position to the American security equation but this alone will no longer suffice. This means that the Europeans have to matter for the U.S., they have to be on the side of the Americans there where either common interests are at stake or when the U.S. came under attack as the Europeans expect the Americans to be on their side should there be dangers for Europe. The days in which NATO stood for the import of security provided by the US are gone. Europe must become the indispensable partner of the US prepared to export security contributions to North America if necessary.

Returning to the assessment of the situation I leave for the moment aside the burning issues of our days, the Middle East, Afghanistan, the risk of an implosion of North Korea and in particular the crisis over Iran which could escalate at any moment and which holds the potential of becoming a truly global issue should the international community not succeed in peacefully preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Should this happen, and I add that I do not have the slightest doubt that Iran is pursuing a nuclear weapons program which might enable the Iranian regime of disposing of a crude nuclear device in a few years time, a delay probably caused by the STUXNET cyber attack. Should this happen then the world will be on the slippery slope at the end of which one will probably see a world in which quite a few additional nuclear weapon states will exist and in which one could no longer rule out that one day such a weapon will be used. But Europe's security perspectives cannot be assessed against the crises at hand; one has to take into account the long-term developments although one element of today's threat assessment will most probably remain with us: Islamic jihadist terrorism.

It seems to pursue a long-term global strategy designed to achieve three aims: it seeks to establish an ideological network in the arenas of terrorism in North Africa, the Gulf region and the Indian sub-continent. It strives to islamise ethnic conflicts. It joins forces with organised crime for drug trafficking, money laundering and people smuggling.

The Long Term Perspective

As stated earlier on the world is at the brink of seeing a shift of the centre of gravity from the transatlantic/European area to the Pacific although the key area of world politics will remain for the near to mid term the enlarged Middle East. In the Pacific the U.S. and China (PRC) will be the two key players and the key question for the next two to three decades will be whether this relationship will be cooperative or confrontational. It is fair to assume that this relationship will for quite some time be more cooperative than confrontational since these two powers depend on each other in an almost symbiotic way: The Americans need the Chinese money for financing the credit-based American way of life and the Chinese need the Americans as customers who buy a large portion of Chinese products. This does not rule out, however, that there will be conflicts over access to scarce resources, over regional issues ranging from Taiwan to other disputed islands to the larger question of dominant influence in India, Pakistan and Central Asia and over financial and trade issues. Most of these issues will probably be settled through regional arrangements as China is for the time being not interested in any conflict with the U.S.. On the contrary, apparently China wishes the U.S. to remain the guarantor of Asian/Pacific security since the PRC is for the time being simply not capable of playing this role. China will for quite some time be absorbed by its huge domestic problems ranging from substantial unemployment, tremendous environmental problems to the destabilising effect of modern economies and the information age on an outdated ideology. In the meantime China is positioning itself on the world markets for energy, scarce metals and minerals and it is improving its geostrategic position. There are substantial Chinese activities in Latin America and there is a considerable Chinese presence in Africa, there are huge Chinese investments in the Afghan copper mines and there are the strategically positioned harbour construction efforts in Myanmar, in Sri Lanka and Pakistan which apparently serve a twofold strategic objective: denial of Indian control of the Indian Ocean and circumvention of the Straits of Malacca through which a large portion of Chinese imports, notably oil, is shipped. In addition, one can note the rapidly progressing modernisation of the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army with main emphasis on some regional maritime power projection and on cyber operations. One could imagine that the final decision in the new forbidden city of Beijing is not yet taken on whether one should confront the U.S. or cooperate with them and that such a decision will most probably not be taken within the next twenty years or so. This is the chance for the entire world to push the two competitors into the direction of cooperation. Latin America will have to play an important role and Europe plus Russia as well. There should be no doubt on one strategic reality: Europe will remain on the side of the Americans for security reasons as well as for ethical reasons. We Europeans share after all common values and convictions with our American allies and friends such as democracy, the rule of law and the respect for Human Rights as do most Latin American countries. Should the U.S. succeed in keeping Europe firmly on their side, should they succeed in forging a true partnership with Russia and should they also succeed in fostering friendly relationships with the majority of the Latin American countries then the chances will grow that the US will remain the world's leading power and that the Chinese /American relationship will be cooperative. This means for Europe, however, that the Europeans have to do more than today to become a player who can use all instruments of international politics. Based on this macro-weather forecast I turn to the reasons of crises and conflicts in the decades to come.

Obviously, nobody can predict with certainty, which risks and dangers will surface during the next twenty to thirty years. But there is one certainty, the world will remain a very unruly place and the likelihood of crises and conflicts is increasing and not decreasing. Nevertheless, people in all nations will most probably increasingly look inward, they will not appreciate if governments will see the necessity of taking preventive action in order to keep dangers at a distance and they will not too often support the need of staying engaged in conflicts far from home. Convincing electorates of such strategic necessities will remain a permanent uphill battle.

I see three long-term developments, which could become the reasons for crises and conflicts: demographic changes, resource scarcity and climate change. Traditional reasons such as unresolved territorial disputes, ethnic rivalries or religious strife will probably not be the reasons for armed conflicts but they will be used to trigger or inflame conflicts. Such future conflicts will probably be characterised by three features: Non-State actors, proliferation of WMD and cyber operations. The traditional inter-state conflict might presumably become more and more the exception whereas some of the future conflicts could begin as inner-state conflicts. And there are two other noteworthy features: Non-state actors will have access to all weaponry and thus the states' monopoly of using force will fade away.

From a European perspective demography could pose the biggest risks since Europe's population will shrink and will get older and older but the populations in Europe's neighbourhood will grow and will get younger and younger. By the year 2050 the average age of the Europeans will be approximately 50 years whereas the US population will grow and stay at an average age of 37 years. In Russia the demographic data are even more alarming: The population may decrease to less than 100 millions but today's share of Muslims will increase to more than one third of the Russian population. The six million ethnic Russians living today in the thinly populated Siberia, which is so rich in natural resources of all kind, will helplessly watch today's four million illegal Chinese immigrants growing in numbers.

In China, which will soon be outnumbered by India, the average age will increase as well and the society will have to struggle with the long-term impacts of the one child policy in an increasingly urbanised society. Today's tensions in the Chinese society are enormous: there are some 150 millions of unemployed plus some 200 millions of migrant workers and there are incredible environmental problems which alone would require an annual real growth of the Chinese economy of some eight percent to be kept manageable. In addition, there is the questionable attempt of the Communist Party to control the country by an authoritarian form of capitalism masked as Communism. I tend to believe that today's tensions will probably increase. This is one of the reasons why I doubt that China will be capable of global power projection for quite some time to come.

A real growth of population will take place in Latin America, in Africa and in the Muslim world. If one looks at the many young people in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia where often close to 50 percent of the population are younger than 25 years and if one remembers that in Germany soon one third of the population will be older than 60 years than one can



foresee what might happen: Social unrest first later to be followed by migration which will primarily hit an aging and unprepared Europe.

The second reason for conflict is scarcity of resources. I do not have oil and gas in mind when I mention resources although nobody should harbour the illusion that assured supplies will be guaranteed: The fact that the so called West possesses three percent of the world's known reserves but stands for 40 % of the world's consumption does not suggest that this will happen. But possibly more alarming will be the likely competition for water and scarce minerals, metals etc, in particular if one takes the fancy ideas serious which are floated here and there, e.g. one million electro-cars in one country which would eat up a large portion of the world's known and exploitable Lithium reserves.

Europe, China and to some extent India as well need imports of energy and raw materials. Regardless whether nations will stick to nuclear energy, wise nations should for a few more decades, or not there is no hope that the growing demand for energy could be covered by renewable energy sources and the formula of the long term, fusion power plants will not be available for other than experimental use before the second half of this century. Energy supply and with it energy security will become one of the issues of the future. The same is true for potable water, the most demanded natural resource in the future. Today some 40 percent of the world's population need foreign water sources to get the drinking water they need; one billion people have at this moment no access to potable water at all. Should the World Bank's estimate be correct then the demand for food will increase by 30 percent in the year 2030 which means that the struggle for water could become the reason number one for conflicts.

Climate change is expected to exacerbate resource scarcities, prompting large-scale migration of people, instability and conflict. The impact of climate change will vary and it is not as precisely predictable as one would need it for a proper assessment but many regions will suffer harmful effects, particularly water scarcity, storm intensity and loss of agricultural production. Estimates suggest that by 2020 up to 250 million Africans could face starvation and malnutrition due to the lack of fresh water supplies, lower crop yields and drought.

Another development could be the Arctic Ocean being ice-free in summertime. Such a development could have profound strategic consequences. It might open up vast energy and mineral resources and it could pose considerable environmental, legal and geo-strategic challenges. Some estimates suggest that up to 25 percent of the world's remaining oil and gas resources lie north of the Arctic Circle. Moreover, one might see disputes over SLOCs as world shipping might be transformed: The Northern Sea Route between the North Atlantic and the North Pacific is about 5000 nautical miles shorter, that is a week's sailing time, than the trip via the Suez Canal.

Should the results of these developments be crises and conflicts the resulting future conflicts will as mentioned earlier on probably be characterised by three features: Non-State actors, proliferation of WMD and cyber operations.

Europe will probably see less obvious forms of attacks ranging from terrorist attack to cyber attacks launched by truly invisible attackers and there might be truly asymmetric reactions to all steps alliances such as NATO may take in crisis management. There will be armed conflicts outside Europe triggered by other than the traditional reasons for war and Europe's nations will be forced to react to proliferation and to cope with failing states. Terrorism, organised crime and radical ideologies will continue to exacerbate regional tensions and trans-national threats and they will fuel competition and instability. Moreover, the technology and the knowledge to make and to deliver agents of mass destruction are proliferating among some of the most ruthless actors. The ability of non-state –actors to employ destructive power will grow as governments struggle to meet the challenges of stateless networks that roam freely across borders.

I mentioned the risk of spreading nuclear proliferation when I discussed Iran but the world's most devastating agent of mass destruction – infectious disease – is moving from the hands of nature to the hands of man. The age of engineered biological weapons is here, today. The world is on the cusp of exponential change in the power of bio-agents and their accessibility to state and non-state-actors. The absence of available medical countermeasures and the inadequacies of health systems will limit most nations' capacities to deal with large-scale man made epidemics.

In addition to nuclear and missile proliferation the proliferation of bio-agents thus poses truly existential dangers for the highly vulnerable industrialised societies as well as those of less developed countries.

Moreover, a new dimension seems to loom over the horizon, a dimension I would call the dimension of mass disruption caused by cyber attacks. Cyber operations could produce a shift of strategic paradigms for state actors as cyber operations may permit to paralyse an opponent before he began using its instruments of power and coercion. Thus the strategic paradigm of enforcing surrender through destruction might be replaced by enforcing preventive surrender through paralysation.

None-state-actors will have access to cyber operations as well and they will use it since it will be increasingly difficult to locate the source from which the attack was launched. Remember the incredible growth of capabilities: In 2000 the capability was determined by 4 Gbps, today it is 16 Gbps or more. Determined and skilled actors are or will soon be able to disrupt modern societies unless the industrialised nations take resolute action to protect them better and to coordinate their efforts. It is thus no longer Bond-movie science fiction that non-state-actors might take on states. We are about to enter a world in which cyber hackers, criminal cartels and terrorists have one thing in common: They are networks that prey on our networks, our interconnected arteries and nodes of vulnerability which are so typical for free societies.

This means in a nutshell that the potential for conflicts is growing faster than the international community's ability to arrange for proper conflict resolution mechanisms since the states being locked in the "Westphalian order" thinking are too often looking for the traditional tools which were not made for a world without any rules and full of asymmetric conflicts. It is a world in which no conflict can be settled by using military means alone and in which no nation state including the U.S. and none of the existing international organisations will be able to arrive at a settlement by acting alone since the global has become local and the local has become global.



The Consequences for Europe

Thus the security perspectives for Europe are not as bright as our citizens wish them to be but two consequences can be drawn at this stage already:

- There will be no security for Europe without the U.S. and Europe has to do more and has to become a full-fledged actor in all domains of politics.
- As there is no time to develop something new and from scratch. Europe needs functioning security arrangements and the EU has to be capable of acting in global dimensions but unfortunately Europe is not capable of doing so and it will not be it for some time to come.

Therefore NATO is and remains Europe's security guarantor but NATO appears at a first glance to be yesterday's organization. First, it disposes of military tools only and secondly, it can no longer afford to sit and wait until the dangers arrive at the NATO Treaty Area. The reactive defence of the past is no answer to the challenges of the future but at the same time NATO must never become the interventionist global policeman. The NATO nations can neither afford it nor would they be prepared for supporting long lasting military engagements if they do not see that they serve their nations' security. Moreover, an interventionist NATO would never be able of producing political stability. This should not mean, however, that NATO should focus exclusively on the territorial defence of Europe against a more assertive Russia. Russia will for quite some time remain an authoritarian state but Russia is for the foreseeable future not capable of threatening NATO as such. Therefore NATO should seek an arrangement with Russia which allays the Russian fears of NATO's superiority and which leads without making any concessions on NATO core issues to a more cooperative NATO-Russia relationship.

Thus the first answer for Europe in responding to tomorrow's challenges is that NATO must be strengthened and reformed as well. The Lisbon documents point exactly into this direction.

But this alone will not suffice. Needless to say that this means as well that nuclear deterrence remains indispensable although it could increasingly become a sole purpose instrument of exclusively deterring the use of nuclear weapons. The Lisbon documents are a little vague on the nuclear deterrence issue but follow on work is mandated.

The open question is how to make deterrence and defence credible in times in which the nature of conflicts and the threats are truly different. Obviously, today's defences must no longer be the one directional, largely territory oriented defences of the past. Today's defences have to be multi-directional and multi-dimensional since the threats are multi-faceted and they can come from anywhere. Today defence could begin at an early stage of a conflict and could include preventive military action although the use of force, provided it is both legal and legitimate, must remain the ultimate resort of politics, which does not necessarily mean the last. But first and foremost defence must include the protection of the homelands. The main military contributions to a truly integrated NATO homeland defence are, first, a much improved intelligence cooperation, second, an integrated multi-layered missile defence which covers the entire NTA, i.e. North America and Europe, as well as deployed NATO forces, and, third, CBRN defences. In addition NATO forces will

have to contribute to our nations' provisions of protecting their energy supplies as well as their cyber defence efforts. Cyber defence requires NATO as well to dispose of a limited cyber attack capability enabling the Alliance of regaining the initiative should a cyber war being waged against NATO. Therefore the second answer is that Europe has to strengthen its capabilities. For this reason the Lisbon NATO Summit decided to review until spring 2012 the deterrence and defence posture of NATO.

Such a review will have to stress one strategic imperative: Europe must become capable of strategic action. This is not a call for a programme to drive America out of Europe; quite the opposite in fact: the higher Europe's capacity to act is, the earlier and the more America's burden in Europe can be relieved or it can expect Europe to be able to act on its own. Only a bundling of European components can provide Europe with a limited capacity to respond to the global challenges even if US resources are tied up or the USA does not wish to act. They would also enable Europe to act in tandem with the USA where the USA is unable to engage for political or military reasons even though common interests are at risk. This approach would turn Europe into an indispensable partner for the USA, would tighten the transatlantic bracket and, with reasonably manageable time and effort, would maximise its political influence over the USA. However, the sole aim is not just to relieve the USA of its burden but also to act side by side where either common interests are endangered or there is a need to demonstrate alliance solidarity towards the USA.

In terms of practical implementation, a European division of tasks embedded in a transatlantic alliance would involve establishing European components which are fully interoperable with those of the USA and which, by being flanged to identical or at least fully interoperable American components, could become NATO Component Forces.

Europe's Way Ahead

To this end Europe's way towards a common a EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CSFP) should be guided by the following six principles:

- **Firstly:** Europe's security will, in future, continue to require a fully functional structure of nuclear armed forces whose task is to prevent other holders of nuclear weapons from using these.
- **Secondly:** Not least of all, a corresponding land and/or sea-based missile defence system that, at all costs, should be built up by NATO together with Russia, would help to counter the growing threat posed by ballistic missiles which may be armed with CRBN warheads.
- **Thirdly:** In the old days the Mediterranean Sea was the element separating and uniting Europe and North Africa. Today, the Indian Ocean has a similar key impact on the geographical situation between Africa, Europe and Asia as some 25–28,000 large ships navigate through the Indian Ocean every year on their way to Europe or the Pacific.
- **Fourthly:** In view of the geographical concentration of the potential for crisis and conflict and terrorist forces in the southern arc of crisis, above all in the Balkans, Caucasus, Near/Middle East triangle, but also in Northern Africa, Europe must shift its strategic focus to the South and South-East. It is *the paramount interest of Europe* that *Turkey* be tied in to Europe.

- Fifthly: The shift in the strategic constellation is leading to the Mediterranean members of the EU practically becoming “front-line states”.
- Sixthly: The new threat necessitates that Europe equip itself with strategic and operative means of intelligence and be able to dispatch and lead light combat units across long distances and keep them in theatres over extended periods. The significance of naval forces capable of operating on the outskirts of Europe is on the increase.

Concluding Remarks

Despite many remaining deficiencies Europe made substantial progress in the field of foreign and security policy during the past ten years. But there is no reason to lean back since too much still needs to be done.

Now as the constitutional treaty entered into force, the EU is better equipped to bring together the many policies and instruments that it has to focus on security .

Within a few years the foreign minister will be able to call on the member-states to deploy not only 5,000 policemen, but also a further force of 5,000 gendarmes, armed police who can operate in a rougher environment. These men and women will normally serve in national police or gendarme units, but be available for EU missions at short notice. The EU will also develop a ‘civilian rapid reaction force’, consisting of skilled professionals such as judges, prosecutors, doctors, nurses, customs experts, aid workers, water engineers and electrical engineers, all ‘ear-marked’ as ready to fly to a trouble zone at a few weeks’ notice.

There will be more pooling of military equipment and support functions.

Governments are most likely to apply pooling to the less-sensitive sorts of military task. National defence bureaucracies will resist such pooling, for it would force them to change the way they work and to accept job losses. But finance ministries, understanding that pooling permits a higher level of output for a given financial input, will drive it forward.

Although there will be no formal directorate of large countries to lead EU military operations the foreign policy interests of the EU states are more likely to converge than diverge. The EU will therefore continue to develop a more coherent CFSP – and as a consequence it will seem natural to step up co-operation on military operations. One distant day there will thus be a European Army provided the EU will eventually adopt a meaningful and coherent CSFP, will agree on common Rules of Engagement , lift national constraints and will, first and foremost, develop the common will to act collectively if and where necessary based on the understanding that the nucleus of national sovereignty in the 21st century is the „responsibility to protect“.

Such a Europe would be more than happy to cooperate as closely as possible with all democracies in Latin America which share such or similar views.



Latin America: A Panorama of Security and Integration

Clóvis Brigagão

Director of the Center of Americas Studies at Universidade
Candido Mendes and Coordinator of GAPCon

This paper provides an insight and overview of Latin America, with emphasis on South America. Dynamic relations are defined here between the historical and political standards and circumstances of the regional security issue in all of its dimensions and development issues, considered from the viewpoint of the integration process which the region is currently undergoing.

These are a number of topics viewed by means of an approach required for diagnoses of what to do and how to do this, with a constant concern on looking closely at the changes that the region has undergone since its return to democracy in the 1980s, which nonetheless has been known as the lost decade. The subjects of democracy, regionalization and economic, commercial, and physical integration, globalization, and its adverse and positive effects, are treated as if to result in a balance sheet and to provide a panorama on both issues: security and integration.

Fernanda Fernandes, a graduate in International Relations (IH/UCAM) and assistant to the Coordination of GAPCon and EPAZ, provided her cooperation in the text's research and preparation.

The Panorama

We are intent on preparing a panorama of the current trends on security and integration of the region that includes Latin America, the Caribbean region, and in particular South America. These are interdependent topics which will find an improved solution inasmuch as there is greater cooperation between these two areas that are strategic for the region.

The Western Hemisphere of the American continent (Latin America, the Caribbean region, and South America) is not merely a homogeneous conglomerate or a group of physical and territorial entities. Five centuries of life have given rise to multiple heterogeneous groups that include more than a score of independent and sovereign States and as many more territories, still under the guardianship of European states and of the United States.

Even the Latin portion of the Americas is composed of countries of different sizes and wealth, with deep-rooted characteristics of the European colonial past and the new features of American civilization, universal in comprehension, Latin in its actions.

During decades of military dictatorships under the aegis of the ill-fated National Security Doctrine – with thousands of dead, murders, and missing persons – the security environment in the region was a result of adopting the international policy of a world power stalemate by means of the balance of nuclear terror between the USA and the former USSR. The result was more and more Coups d'États throughout the region. History has named this period Latin America's Leaden Years.

As of the 1980s democratic conditions began to recover, at a slow pace yet with security acting in defense of democracy and not in its violation. At the same time a brisk pace of economic growth was put in place, particularly in the Southern Cone – yet with no practical and real results for greater economic or physical integration (communications, energy, and transport), an increased level of regional cooperation (with mechanisms in action albeit not fully integrated).

A complex interdependence

The region is faced with what we might term as a paradox: it is the region with the least number of conflicts between states. Perhaps it is the most peaceful region on the planet, and at the same time a highly vulnerable. Firstly, the key threats to the region's security do not arise entirely from conflicts between states, or from domestic issues. They derived from three dimensions:

- a) Social and economic development and the absence of institutionalization within the States, yet with incremental improvements;
- b) A number of old and dormant inter-state conflicts, which to this day have political significance;
- c) The appearance of transnational problems such as drug and arms trades, money laundering, etc., which acquire a strong impact in public order issues (public security).

Regional vulnerabilities do not always respond to classic security actions (the use of military instruments to face a conflict originating abroad). Attention should be given to military vulnerabilities. An example of this bond is found in the dilemma by states in seeking internal political unity by giving evidence to a latent inter-state conflict.

This seems to be what occurred between Peru and Ecuador between 1994 and 1995, with an intensified latent border conflict based on an attempt by national players to seek internal legitimacy. This also manifests in the permanent discussion on the armed forces' involvement in control of the drug trade. In conclusion, employing the armed forces to control public security is starting to be discussed in Latin America in a democratic context.

Lastly, the expression of the three dimensions involved in regional security appears in different forms in accordance with the sub-region in question. While in Central America and in the Andean regions these factors may be noted almost simultaneously, in South America the issue is somewhat different.

Structural factors

Hence, the key temptation is to blame the lack of regional development: officially, it may seem that once poverty and infrastructure development problems are overcome, the solution to other vulnerabilities would come naturally. There is also a trend showing a cause and effect relation between social and economic development problems, state institutional weaknesses, and threats to inter-state security. It may be concluded that the solution for development problems should lie directly in solving the state's weaknesses and in creating an environment of regional stability.



This seemingly logical argument is true to an extent. Though there are cases that may evidence this assertion, such as in Haiti, cases such as Argentina and Venezuela do not apply. Both countries enjoy expressive levels of social and economic development, yet they currently face serious problems of institutional consolidation.

At the same time topics such as new threats (the drug trade, money laundering, the arms trade) do away with the domestic / international paradigm, as they are interdependent. In the case of drug trade, there are domestic agendas, such as in the Andean region and in the continent's sub-regions. These overlapping domestic and international agendas require mobilizing the police (public order) with the armed forces (external defense), which provokes, for example, tensions on Colombia's five borders. Inasmuch as the military will start to participate in this new kind of threats, the drug trade had a direct involvement in the arms trade, which ends up affecting security measures¹.

Within this outlook, Latin America displays a number of inter-relations of factors (domestic / inter-state and inter-domestic) which should be included in an analysis on security and regional integration.

A. Domestic Levels

Inequality in the distribution of wealth, use of the armed forces to ensure public order, and the state's low level of institutionality are inter-related levels or indicators of economic and social development. Certainly, there are differences between the several States in each sub-region. South America, in the Mercosur area, is where we may see the lowest levels of conflicts derived from this dimension.

B. Inter-state Levels

In a greater part of this region the use of the national defense forces may be perceived under the assumption of conflicts between neighbors: between 1990 and 2001 sixteen military clashes took place caused by border conflicts, with a further ten border conflicts are relatively active in the region. In some cases, such as between Argentina and Brazil, they were converted from distrust and the likelihood of conflicts to the building of mutual reliance mechanisms, as we will examine below².

C. Inter-domestic Levels

Conflicts here have a multi-dimensional security, i.e.: a domestic dimension and a transnational dimension. The drug and arms trades and money laundering are of this kind.³

What attracts more the attention of analysts and specialists are normative issues on regional security. During the Special Conference on the Hemispheric Security (OAS in October 2003), a definition was sought for a restricted security concept, in order not to run the risk of "securitizing" the regional security agenda. Considerations such as the question of poverty as a "threat to security" may cause normative consequences and practices by qualifying any social problem as a security problem.

On the other hand, a broad concept of security such as human security would not necessarily imply the need to think of military responses for conflicts arising from development.

In order to define the concept of regional security more precisely, an extremely clear distinction should be made between the component of an objective view of reality for analysis and the standard considered optimal. An analysis of regional vulnerabilities should cover the three levels (domestic, interstate, and inter-domestic) which are likely to directly or indirectly influence the level of security.

Hence, poverty and a low level of institutionalization by the State could cause some effect on security, but that would not mean that the solution is of a military nature. Issues regarding the drug trade and guerrilla are unquestionably a threat to security in the case of Colombia. Yet the response likely to be placed against the threat from the viewpoint of the Colombian and the Chilean governments is completely different, as the objective conditions of a threat are radically the opposite: while Colombia is dealing with a very complex social, political, and military reality, in Chile's case this condition is very different, if they exist at all.

A last point to be made is to establish standards of sub-regional threats. A systemic vision of regional reality may be considered, though we know very well that Latin America, as analyzed above, is a region much more complex than we imagined and which has sub-regions or subsystems with singularities that should be taken into consideration: South America's sub-region; the Andean sub-region; Central America; Mexico; and the Caribbean sub-region. Though there are inter-relations among these sub-regions, from the analytical viewpoint it is very important to consider the difficulties faced by each one of these sub-regions.

Three Dimensions of Regional Insertion

A general overview reveals three challenges for the region in the multi-dimensional security issue and the outlook for greater physical, economic, services, cultural relations, and diplomatic integration. The events in the Mercosur region's plan may be noted (albeit with serious institutionalization), those in the Andean region (albeit with conflicts between Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela), between both regions with the creation of UNASUR, and now in 2010 with the construction of a South American pillar of security and defense, such as the South American Defense Council, which is likely to be innovative and ingenious from a security viewpoint.

However, the road to the region's democratic progress is not at all easy. Economic crises were sure to appear, international losses, imbalances in economic and military power: the symbol engraved in literature as the Lost Decade. Yet the point that should be preserved is that there was no rupture of democratic order, and the process of new security issues related to the integration process was able to proceed.

This is how we consider the process started by Brazil and Argentina, at first rescheduled and subsequently also placed in the hemispheric agenda as of the 1990s, and now undergoing dynamic growth in the first decade of the 21st century. Security issues, at least in principle, follow the guidance of democratic policy, such as ensuring continental democratic order. This is a gain, although not a majority one.



There are three new dimensions in regional security, and of course in expanding the regional integration process, more concentrated in South America, although in the Andean region and in Central America integration actions are also thriving in their own forms and with greater cooperation by the United States, Europe, and Asia (China and Japan).

The first of these dimensions is that it has been understood that the basis for the region to acquire greater security and improved integration would be under the form of democracy, consubstantiated in the OAS and the Mercosur Democratic Letter, excluding the likelihood of anti-democratic actions. With crises here and there, the region began to cultivate this feeling with the growing participation by civil society and the institutions of a number of States, acquiring – in some countries still limited when not violated – basic democratic indices with efforts for human rights of the citizenry not to be violated, or its development and integration project.

Hence, the discussions on the Bolivarian doctrine by Chavez (Venezuela), Correa (Ecuador), under several aspects the policies of Evo Morales (Bolivia), the same with the Kirchners (Argentina), acquired this pace and content that does not conform with democratic standards, with the multi-faceted functioning of society and politics, as it seems to be in effect in Brazil, in Chile, in Peru, and even in Colombia (under a very profound conflict with restrictions of civil rights), and in Uruguay.

Realistically and regardless of these important political and ideological differences, the fact is that currently, more than ever, the region has created its own development mechanisms to deal with issues regarding security as well as the complex relations of a progressive integration. Recent data shows that the majority of Latin Americans support democratic changes, albeit gradually.

On the other hand, we have a serious problem of regional security regarding the Colombian situation, whereby the central government has been combating guerrillas for decades, and

little by little these have been converted into armed extensions of the drug trade and encouraged by the 'kidnapping industry.' In addition to the marked presence of illegal paramilitary forces, and furthermore, the United States' intervention in a conflict by a sovereign state gives rise to an internationalization issue of a conflict that is currently intirely regional.

Said conflict affects the borders of Panama, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, and Brazil. Borders which are intermittently violated by the FARC as well as by the Colombian military apparatus (as in the case of the invasion of Ecuadorian territory and even certain helicopter penetrations by Colombia into the Brazilian Amazon region).

The second issue is integration itself, which starts with the cooperation process between Brazil and Argentina, in particular the sui generis architecture created by both countries under mutual reliance of nuclear non-proliferation, the creation of ABACC (Agência Brasileiro - Argentina de Confiabilidade e Controle), in the wake of the Quadri-Partite Accord of an international nature, formed by Argentina, Brazil, ABACC, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Of equal importance is the construction of a broad understanding undersigned by all of the systems of non-proliferation of mass destruction weapons.

With this mutual confidence base, Brazil and Argentina were able to create neighborhood cooperation. This process was possible through the settlement of differences in connection with shared hydroelectric resources (the Itaipu hydro plant in Brazil and Corpus in Argentina). This gradually developed into cooperation in security in the nuclear diplomacy area as mentioned above.

It is worth noting that the Falklands/Malvinas war (1992) encouraged the strengthening of diplomatic, commercial, and security bonds between Brazil and Argentina, and currently discussions are under way to create a bi-national company to enrich uranium and compete in the international market. Lastly, bilateral economic agreements resulted in the creation of Mercosur (1991), with the association of Paraguay, Uruguay, and more recently Venezuela.

As to Mercosur, there are a number of things waiting to be done and right now it appears more like a boat docked waiting for repairs. Macro-economic difficulties with partners, neighbours' economic difficulties, particularly the Argentinean one, are strategic issues that need to be resolved.

The infrastructure's integration – energy, transportation, and communications – have been boosted by means of actions for Integration of the Regional South American Infrastructure (IIRSA) forum that began in the South American Presidents' Meeting held in Brasilia in 2000. Brazil's Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social (BNDES) played a leading role in the financing of projects for physical infrastructure investments, as have other Brazilian banks, in addition to Corporación Andina de Fomento and the decisive support by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

On the one hand, the level of intra-regional production and trade is already well developed, and the IIRSA actions are at a reasonable pace. On the other hand, the institutional framework in connection with security and peace issues is still in a lagging stage of development, though it began to move forward in 2009.

Global threats such as the drug trade, international organized crime, and even urban violence which afflicts the region's capital cities, are among the key concerns in the new regional security agenda.

Under these circumstances, the actions by Brazilian diplomacy are justified during the government of President Lula in the South American Presidential Meeting (2008), when the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) was created, under much political and diplomatic motivation. UNASUR is an expressive turning point in Brazilian foreign policy, which until then had kept distant from projects in common with the South American community, having preferred bilateral relations. Currently, there are even criticisms inside and outside of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with regard to Brazil's diplomatic activities during the government of President Lula.

During the launching of UNASUR, the South American Defense Council (CDS) was also created, with the participation of most ministers of defense, such as those from Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Surinam, Uruguay and Venezuela

In Santiago, CDS made a historical commitment by coordinating the defense policies as a body for regional dialogue and political cooperation. During this same meeting, Chile's Minister of Defense was put in charge of preparing a four-year plan.

In principle CDS is not a traditional military alliance (such as NATO) and neither will there be a South American Armed Force. On the other hand, CDS will have as its core objectives:

- a) Supporting steps to build mutual confidence;
- b) Intensification of regional integration; and
- c) Dialogue and cooperation in the region's defense issues.

In addition to these core objectives, CDS will be in charge of submitting clear and transparent information on defense expenditures, will put in place a joint defense budget project, defense economic indices (pursuant to a model prepared by Comissão Econômica para a América Latina (CEPAL), and a proposal for a unified stance in multilateral security forums.

Please note also that South America is one of the last regions in the world that has created a permanent forum such as the CDS, which provides an appropriate venue to resolve regional and border conflicts, to fight terrorism (and other forms of extremism, separatism, and armed insurgencies).

In summary, the South American Defense Council provides an innovative legal, political, and diplomatic milestone, such as:

- Joint defense policies for South America
- Armed Forces personnel interchange, with projects for joint military exercises
- Joint operations in UNO Peace Missions and special OAS missions
- Interchanges of outlooks and political analyses of the world's defense scenarios
- Integration of basic industries for regional defense.

CDS is also perceived in a number of quarters as part of a decision by Brazil of emphasizing the region as a Brazilian strategy for international security insertion, by acquiring a more active role in UNO Peace Missions and in special OAS missions, and which also includes the claim for a permanent seat in the UNO Security Council.

The third and last element is the globalization process: Latin America and in particular South America has become a stage for the entry of overseas capital, in addition to more liberal commercial and communications policies, which initially has caused certain regional imbalances. Nonetheless, globalization will subsequently serve for Latin American capital, in particular Brazilian capital, to become international in a two-way channel, albeit the regional insertion pattern will remain unequal with regard to overseas capital.

Regional Security Actions

The democratic process which goes back to the 1980s, seeks to integrate itself with regional security mechanisms, based on more traditional institutions and with the reinvention of new mechanisms.

According to the OAS Charter, security is considered a collective vision⁴. Both the TIAR (Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty) and the Pact of Bogotá (American Treaty on Pacific Settlement) were devised as pillars of the hemispheric security system. TIAR lost its legal and political efficiency with the Falklands/Malvinas war, and the Pact of Bogotá was never applied⁵.

In addition to these two regional security milestones, we should mention the Inter-American Defense Board (JID, 1952). JID was always defined through the vision of national security doctrine which led to the entire chain of military regimes in Latin America during the Cold War period. Formally very little active in the sense of conflict prevention and resolution, and lacking transparency with regard to its attributions, JID left aside the multilateral management of peace and regional security in favor of ad hoc groups created based on the Summit of the Americas and the Conference of Defense Ministers. Mention should also be made of the Rio Group's extra-institutional role, which by virtue of its nature more informal than that of the Presidential Summits, has provided important support to regional conflict prevention, resolution, and management actions over the last 15 years.

The OAS security structure was devised to carry out collective security missions and for diplomatic consultations regarding conflict prevention. The latter was especially designated for conflict prevention and solution among the critical region's States but not always successfully, though in recent years this mechanism changed and assumed more vigorously the intense political and social dramas that took place in the hemisphere.

In 1991, as part of new security measures, the Hemispheric Security Commission was created in order to proceed with a number of consultations among different regional security institutions and civil society organizations (OSC)⁶, within the new multi-dimensional outlook, with an imperative need for greater cooperation in solving problems involving not only one but all of the states.

in 1995 the Committee on Hemispheric Security was created as a permanent body of OAS, with the attribution of reviewing the hemispheric security system⁷.

Nonetheless, hemispheric security conditions are still a source of concern. A consultation in 2002 by the OAS Hemispheric Security Commission to the member States on new approaches and threats concluded that the drug trade, the several forms of organized crime, and the arms trade were considered priority.

A decade has gone by and the situation does not reflect satisfactory improvements in this field, with the sum of new forms of urban violence such as ‘las pandillas delictivas,’ according to the expression employed by Elsa Llenderozas⁸

In the field of regional cooperation, it should be mentioned that the relations between OAS and UNO are growing ever closer as of the 1990s. This effort is due to a broader review of regional security mechanisms. Hence, cooperation has taken place by means of meetings between OAS and UNO representatives and through the approval of joint resolutions and the undersigning of conventions. The key cooperation areas are: humanitarian matters, mine removals, human rights programs, etc.



The case of Colombia is a good example of how the regional security mechanism in the Americas is still not concluded. Closer cooperation with the UNO Security Council, by means of permanent communications and interchange channels would allow OAS to improve its ability of creating an environment of peace, through more efficient decision making processes. We might mention here article 53 in the UNO Charter. As of the 1990s, institutional renewal can be felt in OAS in connection with new security concepts⁹.

The perpetuation of non-resolved conflict situations – such as in Colombia – is a risk that cannot but concern the entire region: as it extends further and until 2014, when the term of office of President Juan Manuel Santos comes to an end, the Colombian armed conflict will be 50 years old, i.e.: half a century active.

A political exit and under an extended viewpoint of human security may be able to put an end to this persistent “guerra sin nombre” (an appropriate expression by Colombian historian Gonzalo Sánchez) which goes on right in the middle of South America and which encourages the destabilizing participation of hemispheric and extra-regional players, such as the USA.¹⁰

We may mention in this area new actions of a more permanent nature and of a number of practical ranges. One of these mechanisms was the Conference of Defense Ministers which began in 1995 – with 15 years of very policy oriented activities in which security and defense policies became more transparent, open, and converging, albeit it is still possible to detect contrasts and different approaches, for example, between the United States and some South American countries.

However, South America in particular, is resuming levels of non-recommended ‘arms race’ activities, initially triggered by the Hugo Chávez regime in Venezuela, and followed closely by Colombia, Chile, and Brazil.¹¹

On the subject of new threats, these deserve special attention. Latin America, the Caribbean region, and South America are currently more taken by intra-state conflicts than by the traditional inter-state conflicts. Regional security in this early stage of the 21st century has been looking very closely at the new threats to regional security, and has attempted to create new structures and mechanisms to face these new threats.

As stressed by political analyst Juan Gabriel Tokatlian, “*Es paradójico que la debilidad estatal se presente – con razón – como un peligro significativo, pero no así la desregulación del mercado. Este último nos afectó y afecta por su impacto devastador para el bienestar básico de las sociedades en el área. La proliferación armamentista es una cuestión crítica – a no dudarlo – pero la reaparición de estrategias de contrainsurgencia entre las principales potencias de Occidente con planes estratégicos también lo es para nosotros*”.¹²

This new kind of low intensity militarism is very little discussed in the region and features a player that has proven to be little interested in the subject – in terms of offsetting policies for its limitation in the region – the United States. Moreover, the defense of and reliance

on democracy and human rights are vital for the region, which does not pose a threat to the security of the United States.

According to disclosures from the ‘Wikileaks’ website, Brazil does not trust the intentions of the United States, in particular with regard to the Amazon region, to Brazil’s efforts on behalf of regional integration, and more recently, to the oil discoveries along its coast. From July 2006 to October 2009, Wikileaks referred to the opposing reactions by Brazil to the then recently signed the United States-Colombia Defense Cooperation Agreement.¹³

“Brazil is jealous because it does not like matters to be treated or discussed without its participation in a leading role: ambassador Marcelo Biato, counselor in foreign policy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, explained to the Americans that though acknowledging Colombia’s sovereign right of entering into a military agreement with the United States, Brazil cannot ignore the serious implications of this agreement to the region’s stability.

”While the United States – as well as other powers – maintain their presence in the region, this issue will be difficult and crucial and will crop up regularly, requiring constant supervision. At the same time, Brazil understands the reasons for the presence of the United States in Colombia, but also its government aims for making efforts to eliminate the conditions that make this presence necessary.¹⁴

What may be concluded is that putting these facts together with Brazil’s concerns over the US Navy’s 4th Fleet, sailing in the region under the justification of fighting drug trade and terrorism, the age-old concerns with the Amazon region, all of this shows the low level of confidence many Brazilians have in the United States, which is something to be considered essentially especially as the bilateral partnership is being expanded.”¹⁵

The United States do not represent an antagonist to Latin America, as Hugo Chavez and his associates wish to believe and several actions by Brazilian diplomacy seem to suggest. But Washington may become a problem for the region if it presses the armed forces to perform tasks outside of their competent functions. In addition, if the United States should expand the role of the Southern Command over the State Department in matters of inter-American relations, and if it intends that its security agenda should also be the entire region’s agenda.¹⁶

In this regard, the Obama administration, which aroused so much interest on intensifying inter-American relations in order to strengthen democracy and human rights, has not been completely effective. In this regard there is a debt by the Obama government related to the region regarding security and also integration aspects. The contradictions and ambiguities with which the United States view the Latin American region have become more or less evident.

With the Republican victory, the recent legislative elections may strengthen and increase even more internal political obstacles regarding the Southern hemisphere. Merely as an indicator, the new Republican majority and the likely appointment of Illeana Ros-Lehtinen to preside the cold war, as in Cuba’s case.

With regard to Venezuela and Brazil, and several other countries in the region, the trend is to maintain an atmosphere of little innovation and priority to other areas and strategic topics in US policy for the region. Relations with Brazil during President Lula's government were full of misunderstandings and 'false expectations' from both sides. Now with the new government in place and with the country's first female president Dilma Rousseff, it may be possible, and that is what is expected, to resume the good relationship, in a mature and realist way.

In any case, Brazil's increasing international projection and its regional 'soft power' leadership, as with the boost provided by UNASUR, may possibly be subject to change, albeit modest and also realist. At any rate, it is worth referring to the Military Agreement between Brazil and the United States, entered into in 2010 after Brazil's criticism to the renewed Plano Colombia agreement for the use of seven Colombian military bases. The new Brazil-United States agreement ensures greater cooperation between both armed forces in a number of areas that are likely to improve the unproductive and politically unreliable environment existing between the two largest countries in the Americas.¹⁷

New Prospects of Mutual Reliance

I would like to assert that there is also a mutual reliance environment in the Latin and South American continent, with methods for ratifying defense expenditures with emphasis on the role of the White Defense Book as a measure of mutual reliance, and the exercise of peace operations by Latin American Armed forces.

Hence, security and society are entering a new stage of possibilities for regional cooperation, such as training civilians in the defense area, experience in disarmament procedures, and the armed forces' contribution to social development through their participation in logistics, and intelligence in dealing with the drug traffic, banditry, and organized crime, etc.

In order to ratify this renewal process regarding regional security, the Special Hemispheric Conference was held in Mexico in October 2003, which produced the Declaration on Security in the Americas, with the intention of strengthening the inter-American system's mechanisms related to the several aspects of security in the hemisphere, in order to produce greater coordination and cooperation among them.

Two issues were broached that are very important in our times in terms of public policies: Improvement of the ability of both OAS and American States to face (1) traditional threats and (2) new threats and other challenges related to regional security.

This proposed agenda was given to the member states for practical implementation, with results that were subject to assessment in the subsequent Special Hemispheric Conferences¹⁸.

With regard to other forms of cooperation on security issues, we should pay attention to the growing cooperation provided by non-governmental organizations and academic institutions that practice citizen diplomacy. In this regard, it is worthwhile to pay attention to the actions developed by Coordinación Regional de Investigación Económica y Social

(CRIES) in their articulation of movements, social organizations, and states in a multi-dimensional security outlook.¹⁹

The challenges faced by social movements and civil society organizations in the Americas has been building networks and social organizations with an increasing desire of influencing regional processes and contributing to launch the integration project.

It is necessary that this effort by civil society should not be dissociated from the dynamics of local and regional development, or from global dynamics. This effort is closely linked with local claims and aspirations to allow joining forces around specific projects and topics, with the purpose of encouraging greater interaction with clearly identified participants from local, national, and regional governments, with movements and social organizations of a global nature.

At this point we should heed the focus and priorities of the several social and political aspects in the promotion and defense of the so-called global public assets, such as eradication of poverty and inequality, preservation of the environment, equality of genders and development, defense and promotion of human rights and economic, social, and cultural rights.²⁰.

In the scope of regional organizations, the increased dynamics by these bodies (OAS, UNASUR, CDS) may be seen regarding participation by civil society in their resolutions. Despite their limitations, the work performed by the organizations and by civil society in matters of conflict prevention and resolution has been more fruitful in countries in which OAS develops pioneering actions, in particular where there are specific missions for greater commitment with civil society organizations.²¹

Advancing simultaneously in these aspects creates forthwith an expectation of collective action. Within our protracted historical tradition, that of the region indicating that when threats occur to regional security, the societies' human resources are readily mobilized in order to check and resolve such conflicts.

This is the great challenge of at the same time consolidating collective regional security jointly with an effort for physical, productive, and social integration.

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Annex 1: Map of Latin America



Taken from <http://portugues.avis-int.com/>

Biography

Clóvis Brigagão is a Political Scientist and specialist in Peace and International Security Studies and Research.

He is a Renowned Doctor in International Relations at Universidade Candido Mendes (2005), and a Doctor in Strategic Affairs at the Strategic Affairs Post-Graduate Program, Faculty of Economic Sciences, at Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (2011).

Also Director of Centro de Estudos das Américas (CEAs), Coordinator of Grupo de Estudos de Prevenção de Conflitos Internacionais (GAPCon) and of Escola Sérgio Vieira de Mello – EPAZ, Institute of Humanities, at Universidade Candido Mendes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Brigagão prepares research projects, and publications and partnerships in academic events as of 2002 with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in Rio de Janeiro.

Endnotes

¹ (Sources, Julio and Saavedra, 2004, p. 7-10).

² (Brigagão and Paz Neves, 2011)

³ (Sources, Julio and Saavedra, 2004, p. 8).

⁴ (Aravena, Francisco Rrojas, 2003).

⁵ (Herz, 2003, p. 133).

⁶ We might mention entities related to combatting terrorism, the drug trade, and prevention regarding public health, such as Comité Interamericano Contra Terrorismo (CICTE), or Comité Interamericano Contra Drogas (CICAD) and Organização Panamericana de Saúde (OPS), etc.

⁷ (Brigagão and Dalla Costa, 3/05/2005).

⁸ (Llenderrozas, 2010, p. 47).

⁹ The Special Conference on Security was originally formalized during the 2nd Presidential Summit of the Americas in Santiago, Chile in 1998. The Presidents requested OAS through the Committee of Hemispheric Security to detail topics in connection with measures encouraging mutual reliance and security.

¹⁰ (Tokatlian, 2010, p. 32-33).

¹¹ (Brigagão and Paz Neves, 2008, p. 21-36).

¹² (Tokatlian, 2010, p. 32).

¹³ (O Globo newspaper, 1/4/2011, p. 34)

¹⁴ (O Globo newspaper, 1/4/2011, p. 34).

¹⁵ (O Globo newspaper, 1/4/2011, p. 35).

¹⁶ (O Globo newspaper, 1/4/2011 p. 35).

¹⁷ (Serbin, 2010, p. 43-44).

¹⁸ (Declaration of Security in the Americas, 2003, p. 277-295).

¹⁹ In Brazil under the author's initiative, Escola Sérgio Vieira de Mello – EPAZ was created, aimed at providing training programs and digital services that within the vision of citizenship diplomacy will be able to assist in the avoidance, mitigation, or overcoming of international conflicts.

²⁰ Serbin, 2003, p. 165-222)

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Regional Defense Strategies and Mechanisms

Sergio Abreu

Member of the Senate – Uruguay

The author examines the political conditions in South America, potential conflicts faced by the region and the state of its defense industry; analyzing what the political and military purpose of a regional organization dedicated to defense issues would be. He analyzes the main courses of action assumed by the South-American Defense Council, and as a conclusion, he determines that this is a “soft” cooperation body, more consultative than operative in its nature and does not include any commitments of its members to amend domestic standards, strategies or policies. This current soft version is, judging by his understanding, functional to a certain leadership exercise that has the same nature. As future objectives, he also analyzes the support given to the solution of regional conflicts in a peaceful and balanced manner, and the assistance to democratic governments; the protection of natural resources and the territorial integrity against foreign powers, as well as the development of a regional defense industry.

Regional Scenario (South America)

South America as an Entity

States don't have permanent friendly relations, but national interests; therefore, durable political alliances –a necessary prerequisite to subscribe substantial agreements concerning defense issues– must be based on shared interests and needs. These can be identified on the basis of a hard core that enables a shared path.

South America is not the most appropriate environment to find those coincidences, since it is very difficult to gather intense bonding factors that justify a strong political proximity; mainly, when homogeneity is not a regional trait, since –even historically– there are differences that raise serious difficulties to a community-based approach.

On the other hand, in view of this diversified mosaic, there is no ideological or political unity that can be expressed by a dominating power; particularly in the current scenario, which must be analyzed beyond its historical issues which are linked to a past where the big powers had direct influence on the domestic policies of the American states.

The economic integration promoted by the Latin American Free Trade Association, LAFTA (ALALC) and the Latin American Integration, LAIA (ALADI) can serve as a reference in the aforementioned sense, since these sub-regional processes, which, in turn, were successively mutating and lagging, are the reflection of different political and economic realities that performed as constraints to an unambiguous expression of the region. Even now, within a global context, integration demands concessions that many countries have not been willing to grant in diverse projects that they have been involved with.

On the other hand, there is not a cultural or ethnical identity either, since diversity is perceived even within the countries themselves, and particularly now, when we are dealing with a continent artificially fragmented in two axes: the “Bolivarian” and the “Monroe”. This hinders an ideological harmony that can uphold a strong strategic political alliance, as the agreements on defense issues would demand. And since diversity is the rule, in some cases, it is impossible to reach a shared perception regarding the threats and risks that may impact the region.

This is valid to such extent that some Caribbean and Andean countries identify the United States as the enemy to be fought, a totally different approach adopted by other countries which, regardless of the discrepancies concerning the foreign policy adopted by different North American governments, develop strategic links both in economic-commercial and in political issues.

Actually, there is no “shared threat” in terms of a true and imminent risk capable to impact at the same intensity level on all or the majority of the countries on the continent.

On the other hand, the existence of a dominating country in South America capable of imposing on others certain behaviors involving the cession of their sovereignty, is not a topic of discussion either; and even though Brazil is the state with a greater influence on the region, it cannot emerge as a power capable of disregarding debate and negotiations with the remaining countries. This scenario has put its leadership on the continent to the test, since other states have proven to be strong competitors based on a different view of the region and, particularly, as to their external insertion and policy on defense issues. This, in response to different approaches that focus on the interpretation given to the non-intervention principle, the type of armament that shapes their defense goals, or their relations with the United States.

The Conflict's Hypotheses

The region shows a series of historical conflicts derived from armed combats and diplomatic tensions experienced in the 19th and 20th centuries, such as the Pacific War (Chile, Bolivia, and Peru), the War of 1942 (Ecuador and Peru), the Beagle conflict between Argentina and Chile, and the Esequibo conflict between Venezuela and Guyana. While most of them are territorial disputes, not all of them can be defined as historical conflicts that still keep nationalistic postures latent. For example, the Triple Alliance War between Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay, as a block, against Paraguay; or the Chaco War, between Bolivia and Paraguay (the only military confrontation in the 20th century) are a result of other circumstances derived from political and economic interests typical for those years.

Currently, the historical differences are cause for relatively few heated disputes, even if some of them are forwarded to the International Court of The Hague, thus withdrawing from armed conflict scenarios. However, the nationalistic argument continues to be the best excuse to justify a defense budget, Armed Forces equipment and the need to communicate signals among the states regarding their military capability balance (the most evident case is Chile and Peru).

The only real hypotheses of a conventional armed conflict in the Region have been the recent confrontations between Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela, which –as a distinctive trait– are triggered by the Colombian guerrilla operations and the military and technological US cooperation to fight drug trafficking in the Colombian territory.

On the other side, the anti-US stance adopted by Venezuela –and to a lesser extent by Bolivia and Ecuador– has not surpassed the verbal level, because –among other reasons– the North American administrations, especially Obama's, haven't shown serious concern about the increasing military cooperation between Venezuela and the Russian Federation, or about the purchase of armament from France by Brazil, which could mark the beginning of South America's "nuclearization"¹.

In another milieu, the conflict between Argentina and the United Kingdom for the South Atlantic islands remains active –with the entire sub-region's support in favor of Argentina– but without any signs that this historical conflict could trespass the diplomatic level, as in 1982.

Nonetheless, in the present circumstances, no country in the region is able to engage in a military conflict, except for a short skirmish, mainly with its neighbors and in border areas; nor could any country reasonably have resources available to build that capacity in short term either, because –among other reasons– although the economy has had a positive repercussion on the growth of the region, the states are not able to divert massive resources to build a modern and significant arsenal. In the middle term, Brazil could create

¹ Actually, the Russian Federation has no possibilities to conduct long-range conventional military operations, and even providing maintenance to modern equipment, such as the Su-30, poses difficulties. The Russian Federation's strategic priorities rely on its boundaries and its control to the separatist republics. The possibilities of purchasing equipment and procuring technical cooperation between France and Brazil, based on the data available, are not creating a very remarkable imbalance within the region either.

an effective middle-range intervention force (Caribbean, Central America) and a short-range one (Chile and Colombia), but this does not seem to be a priority within its defense policies.

Regional Defense Organization Options

In view of the above, the options of establishing a regional defense organization should be analyzed. To begin with, there is the need to acknowledge that the so called ‘regional arms race’ is non-existent when one compares the procurement of military equipment carried out by non-regional countries with the procurement conducted by countries of other regions which have no active or potential military conflicts at present. However, some of that arms procurement may influence local balances and raise the need to increase defense expenditures of other countries in the region².

On the other hand, it is important to point out that equipping is not the main factor to consider, since the organization of the Armed Forces and furthermore quality and discipline in a state are equally or more relevant factors.

In other words, the Armed Forces, as an institution, acquire great significance in many countries regarding their historical continuum and institutional presence, since they create a national identity for each state and, in many cases, the strategic project of a country that can express itself, but not necessarily through its warfare potential.

In this regard, Brazil is a mandatory benchmark and should be considered a gradually developing state. Even though it cannot be militarily compared –in quantity or quality of its resources– to the level of the other BRIC members (China, India and the Russian Federation), which are among the most powerful nations in the world, it is evident that it needs a minimum of approximation to avoid being simply relegated as the new club’s “economic” member status, particularly because the other members already have nuclear weapons.

Therefore, building up such power will take time and resources, and will force its different governments to overcome significant internal hindrances. It is worth mentioning that in the Brazilian democracy, public opinion weighs much more than it does in India, Russia and China; and that the slogan “Brazil, a power” may be popular until its cost is justified with transparency. Therefore, it is not surprising that the new President of Brazil, Ms. Dilma Roussef, has called off the procurement of armament already negotiated by her predecessor, Lula da Silva, using “fiscal reasons” as her argument. The task of the current Itamaraty is summarized in matching its incomplete regional leadership with an active global positioning policy. In other words, in exercising a peaceful but efficient leadership in the region as to defense policies, capable of promoting cooperation that differs from an approach of permanent confrontation with the United States.

² The Venezuelan acquisition of 24 Su-30 airplanes manufactured in Russia placed this country on top of the regional ranking in this issue. The Su-30 outmatches the Brazilian Mirage 2000, the Chilean F-16 and the Peruvian Mig-29. The Brazilian equipping projects, except for the submarine line (not nuclear but conventional) do not aim to up-to-date material, but to image creation. Brazil’s priority would be targeted to a borderline security network, especially in the Amazon area.



Purpose of a Regional Agency for Defense Issues

It is easier to build conflict hypotheses among the countries on the continent than with non-continental powers, since from the Second World War, the armed conflicts did and will take place in other geographic settings, based on new confrontation patterns inherent to globalization.³

In Latin America, one can say that there isn't a true, imminent threat of an outside aggression that would trigger political decisions and the development of a regional strategic and operational response.

In the case of Venezuela, which is the only country that poses a real threat, its stance trespasses the Hemisphere, since it raises a solid confrontation with the US and alliances with countries outside the continent, with globally acknowledged conflicts, such as the cases of Iran and North Korea in terms of nuclear weaponry. Moreover, its attitude may be typified by many as 'ambiguous' regarding issues like international terrorism and the advocacy of human rights, such as the political refuge offering to the President of Sudan, who was charged with genocide by the International Criminal Court.

³ As a matter of fact, all military conflicts occurred within the continent, with the single exception of the Falklands War; and in this case, the conflict was initiated by an Argentinean military action.

The situation in Cuba, although it takes place outside the South-American sphere, is present through political signals transmitted by the governments of the nations that are members of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA), and even from Brazil. Particularly the latter, through former President Lula da Silva, granted Fidel Castro's regime an unusual support before the entire international community's mistrust. Cuba demonstrated its capacity to survive as a neighbor of the USA for fifty years, even after the dissolution of the USSR; therefore, the submittal of a continental defense project regarding its political situation would simply be an ideological political movement, which the Region is no longer willing to be a part of. Moreover, it is starting to show weariness concerning the Human Rights violations committed on the Island.

In this context, we could design two conflict hypotheses to be explored:

The first one would be an escalation to access South America's vast natural resources which implies an active involvement of extra-continental powers accompanied by an eventual armed assault. Although this does not pose an imminent and placeable threat in the far future, the preparation it takes to face such a hazard also requires an extended time, as well as continuity and adjustment of the region's effort, since it is a potential conflict to be considered, and the analysis thereof should be addressed by means of a well thought out strategy and prepared upon realistic foundations.

The second one is related to terrorism and its connections to international drug traffic and organized crime. Their scope has reached devastating levels and problems cannot be solved without the implementation of middle-term policies based on a regional approach.

This requires a clear, unambiguous stance that condemns any expression of violence and discards a double-standard discourse, prone to classify the types of terrorism based on each state's political interests.

Defining the Type of Threat and Conflict

In this context, it is possible, on one hand, to discard the economic and commercial threats, since presently they do not translate into actual military actions, but its solution resides in a political concentration field or in specific dispute-solving mechanisms, both regional and multilateral.

On the other hand, defining the type of threat and conflict is vital to move forward in terms of defense agreements; and while the threat tends to be potential and remote, but still credible, conflicts may not have a "face", but are identifiable.

In view of the above, an organization such as the South-American Defense Council should not be perceived as just another competition manifestation among international organizations, both regional and hemispheric. Based on institutional foundations, it's evident that a forward motion is driven by countries such as Brazil, which is tailoring its proposals to the direction of its foreign policy. Even if it's arguable, Brazil's foreign policy is logical since it's headed towards assuming a preponderant role in terms of security under the United Nations perspective; this is how it encourages the development of an

armament-oriented industrial infrastructure platform; by getting involved in various venues related to diplomatic solutions for regional conflicts.

This is how –in some cases- a regional Defense agency may perform as an instrument to anticipate the emergence of conflicts; and in others, as a supporting platform to the regional countries that are in conflict with non-regional powers (Argentina – United Kingdom); and, finally, there are other cases, which comply with most of the regional countries, as an answer that explains their belonging and usefulness in the management of regional tensions in the light of a modern security concept.

Nevertheless, as long as the region preserves both its internal and external peace, the member states of the South-American Defense Council shall not face extreme situations in which even the concept of sovereignty itself may result jeopardized. The legal framework that regulates the Council's operation does not anticipate a decision-making system that may be imposed to each State's will; and although the evolution of the South-American Defense Council can progress as an institution in the long run, the Defense topics shouldn't be submitted to a supranational administration, since the political balance is only kept when the states get involved in an intergovernmental organization.

Actually, what really matters in terms of regional defense is that all actions be directed towards a modern policy that enables the countries to cooperate in fighting those problems that pose a threat that trespasses each state, such as drug traffic, terrorism and the environment. In other words, resources destined to arms procurement must respond to a social commitment in terms of quality of life and the preservation of those values that –alongside with peace- result in freedom, a representative democracy, social justice and security, both domestic and international.

The main topic is international drug traffic and terrorism, which intend to weaken the social structure in each country, and particularly, the defense institutions that perform a vital role in their suppression, since those institutions are the only ones that have weaponry available and end up being the main support for an institutional strengthening of the entire state. There are plenty of examples in the region, such as the complex Mexican experience, the one in Colombia, and even recently, in Brazil, where their Armed Forces were used to fight drug traffic in various “favelas”.

Therefore, a topic that can be discussed is the Armed Forces' modern role as part of an ethical and social commitment that detaches them from old patterns of power struggles derived from ideologically biased political projects.

In the light of the above, this modern institutional, ethical and social role embedded into a dynamic sovereignty concept, turns the dismantling of the Armed Forces' path, unfeasible. To a great extent, because there is no average pattern that may be applied to all the states. Each state has not only its own history and a particular relation between its national identity and the Armed Forces' role but also different, non-transferable national variables that do not accept a methodological uniformity when addressing defense issues. Furthermore, because the Armed Forces and the defense policy cannot be an executive



branch's executing arm that wants to make its way through the checks and balances inherent to the separation of powers principle. The concepts of national security, identity and sovereignty cannot be subjectively handled by giving the Armed Forces a role tailored to a head of state's will or to the perspective of a political force exercising the power. And if this cannot be done within each state's boundaries, it is even less convenient to do so at a regional level.

In other words, problems are above the governments' will and must be faced through state policies aside from circumstantial conveniences, since defense, as mentioned, is linked to a modern expression of foreign policy. And if there should be a lack of continuity and sustainability for its projection, it would only emphasize existing asymmetries.

The South-American Defense Council's Course of Action

The course of action outlined by the organizations, usually provide a much more accurate view of the institution's nature and purposes than the objectives stated in the documents that created them. In the case of the South-American Defense Council, the Brazilian secretary of defense envisioned it –since its initial proposal– as a counseling body without operative functions, foreign to the political will of constituting collective Armed Forces.

Defense Policies

In this area, said actions include the creation of an information network on defense policies (Council's website); the conduction of seminars regarding the Departments of Defense's

modernization and mutual confidence measures proposals; information exchange concerning expenses and defense affairs economic indicators (the creation of a shared methodology to measure the military expenditure is in progress); the definition of conceptual approaches of defense, and the region's risks and threats; the identification of risk factors and threats that may affect regional and global peace; the creation of a mechanism to formulate the region's joint positions in multilateral forums on defense (concerning peace consolidation, confidence and cooperation; democracy, Armed Forces, security and solidarity; increased hemispheric cooperation related to natural disasters); and the establishment of a consultation mechanism, information and immediate assessment in situations that pose a risk to peace.

There is a difference between each country's defense policies being collectively analyzed and discussed, and preparing a system that is imposed upon national policies. It is clear that the scheduled activities consider the Council as a system to do the former.

Military Cooperation, Humanitarian Actions and Peace Operations

Within this sphere, those intended actions are: planning of a combined assistance rehearsal in case of catastrophes or natural disasters; arranging a conference on the lessons learned in peace operations, both in domestic and multilateral fields; preparing an inventory on defense capabilities offered by the countries to support humanitarian actions, and exchanging experiences in that area, in order to establish immediate-response mechanisms to enable humanitarian actions upon natural disasters.

Education and Training

The actions foresee an elaboration of a registry containing defense academies and instructional centers and their curricula, as well as creating a South American network for defense training and education, that enables an exchange of experiences and a joint curricula development; proposing scholar and student exchange programs, standardization, assessment, and studies validation, degrees recognition and scholarships among the existing institutions concerning the defense subject; as well as creating and implementing the South American Center for Defense Strategic Studies (CSEED).

Industry and Technology

Finally in this regard, the foreseen actions are focused on the defense industry of the member states' diagnosis, identifying capabilities and strategic partnership areas to promote complementarity, research and technological transfer; those actions also focus on the promotion of both bilateral and multilateral cooperation initiatives for the protection of industry as well as for production purposes in the member states within the Council's framework.

In conclusion, as one can see in the courses of action aforementioned, the profile of the South-American Defense Council responds to a "soft" cooperation agency profile, which does not include commitments that may compel its members to modify national standards, strategies, or policies. In turn, it is basically intended for a better understanding and relationship among the defense ministries, and to improve the coordination possibilities in terms of humanitarian or peacekeeping actions.

Consequently, it is of a counseling nature more than an operational one, since a cooperation-based agency does not require a previous definition of the external threat or risk, but should serve to boost a political dialog capable of analyzing them. Eventually, it can act in order to influence intraregional conflicts solutions, without directly intervening in them.

A Perspective from Uruguay

Defense strategies are shaped to solve existing problems or hypotheses about conflicts within a wide and modern framework. International cooperation in this issue is based on eventual conflict hypotheses that may vary over time, but they are usually well defined. Historically, political-military alliances emerged from the identification of a shared enemy or threat. For example, the NATO was the opportune answer to the Warsaw Pact, and currently keeps an eye on the Russian Federation, and the other on international terrorism and its derivatives; the US alliances with Korea and Japan have their sight set on North Korea, and in the long run, also in China; the support received by the US to intervene in Afghanistan and Iraq represented the proof of fidelity for its allies, and even the recent crisis in Egypt showed varied responses to prioritize global stability and eventual repercussions in economic and social issues, such as oil price and migration tides towards the European continent.

Also in this regard, regional agreements must be compatible with the national strategies of the countries involved. On one hand, it means including the handling of situations that are considered a priority in terms of defense; on the other hand, cooperating with the neutralization or reduction of conflict potential among the involved countries.

Within this context, an effective South-American agreement must consider /should consider objectives such as:

- 1) The joint action to face terrorism and drug traffic threats, either regionally or internationally.

This is probably the only realistic objective that answers to an active conflict. However, the South American countries' stances are not consistent. Regarding drug traffic, Bolivia defends its cocaine production, while Peru and Colombia are engaged in a frontal fight against its production and commercialization. Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay are concerned about local traffic and transit, while the other countries do not seem to put much effort into the subject.

In terms of terrorism, criteria unification has to be carried out, as to identify terrorist actions without distinction between international organizations and some regional movements, such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Terrorism is a scourge and even though it is expressed domestically, its devastating actions are projected outside the states where it develops.

Therefore, a defense organization should seek clearer, more effective commitments in terms of fighting against drug traffic, international terrorism, and domestic or local expressions⁴.

⁴ This does not seem to be a priority to the South-American Defense Council.

2) The Support to a Peaceful, Balanced Conflict Solution among the Countries in the Region.

This should be the regional defense agency and the UNASUR's goal, because solutions cannot be imposed, and they must always be submitted to the opinion or resolution of remarkably unbiased jurisdictional bodies.

This is the field in which the asymmetry principle plays a rougher role, since the outcomes of non-fulfillments are different based on each state's strength. For example, if it relates to a small state, a wrong decision could place it at the very edge of an identity crisis; but a bigger state always has the non-compliance or even the strength resort available, even if it lacks legal firmness to further its postures.

3) The Support to Democratic Governments against Internal or External Threats, Within Certain Parameters.

This is a topic that remained latent after the unfortunate events in Honduras. The support to democratic governments must be compatible with the states' non-intervention and self-determination principles. It is not a topic that can be defined simply in regard to many of the region's governments, particularly if one considers the democratic system's distortions that are being witnessed in some countries, where the heads of state seek to compel the institutional mechanisms to perpetuate themselves in office or promote reforms that are related to respecting Human Rights as to its widest meaning, and particularly, by applying the double standard, based on the degree of affinity with the country involved.

4) Defense of Natural Resources' and Territorial Integrity against Foreign Powers.

Natural resources - as a military objective- are part of a problematic vision of the future, concerning the conflict for the availability of those resources: water, fuels, food, and other first-need commodities. Even if we are facing a long-term potential conflict, it is also true that an effective defense community should be functioning and built to reinforce a deterring or resistant capability much superior to the current one.

5) Developing a Regional Defense Industry.

The idea of an industrial development in the sphere of defense poses difficulties in terms of technological availability, as well as remarkably accentuated differences among the countries' industrial infrastructures.

Nevertheless, the South-American Defense Council must operate within the sphere of cooperation, since an effective organization in the defense field needs consensuses concerning diverse items. In the first place, those regarding an agenda that defines the core topics that the member states must address; and secondly, those related to the need of achieving a balanced decision-making system, that excludes the practice of imposing resolutions against each state's will.

Moreover, a cooperation organization in the field of defense must acknowledge the need of a balanced military power, in order to prevent becoming an instrument manageable by

the state's interests. That the balance conditions vary over time must be taken into consideration, and particularly, due to the influence of global topics linked to international security and to the action adopted by certain governments that drive specific leading roles in this region.

In these respects, some balances are built around current historic conflicts. (Chile/Peru, Colombia/Venezuela + Ecuador), and other nations are beginning to build themselves on the basis of Brazil's more active presence as well as the countries at the Pacific Ocean, that neutralize any intent of supremacy shown by any of the member states.

The competition over a continental leadership, whether explicit (e.g. Venezuela) or implicit (Brazil) can allow a checks and balances game in view to channel in an appropriate manner the region's Defense Cooperation System.

Finally, in order to achieve the aforementioned objective, it is imperative to emphasize that a cooperation agency in the defense field will need a strong institutional foundation, both politically and technically, especially to design an eventual mechanism that helps settle controversies.

Consequently, cooperation resides in the essence of these bodies and cannot be confused with or drift into an integration scheme that will restrict the defense policy in some countries or that could be handy to the asymmetrical interests in the region. This isn't about designing defense policies with a warfare purpose, but about adapting international treaties and domestic regulations to an arms policy that does not have a defensive criterion in military terms as its core objective.

Therefore, foreign policy and defense policy walk hand in hand, and the cooperation required by both needs the establishment of a controversy settling mechanism to rescue the legal certainty principle; this is the most undisputed guarantee available to the member states of an organization that helps them address their asymmetries through an intergovernmental relation.

About the Defense Industry

The defense industry is a tool that provides countries the ability to sustain a conflict and autonomy regarding the other nation's decisions about the armament and equipment supply.

In some countries, it performs a predominant role in the industrial sector and, in those nations in which it became autonomous, it turned into the engine that develops technologies that entail some effects or may be applied on multiple productive sectors oriented both to the domestic market and exports. However, this phenomenon occurred only in the big powers involved in warfare conflicts (US, USSR/Russia, UK, France, Germany); in countries that underwent risks or conflicts under relative isolation conditions with industrial infrastructure and knowledge or the capability of creating it (Sweden, Israel, and –to some extent– South Africa and Spain), and in countries that took advantage of the opportunities to participate in multilateral defense organizations (Holland, Italy, Czechoslovakia).

China itself, which has historically been dependent on the Soviet industry, acquired Western technology and has its own development, although it is still subordinated to imported technologies in the defense systems' critical elements. In the same way, India dedicated itself –with a certain degree of success– to combine Western and Soviet technologies, with a limited development of its own technologies.

There is another level of defense industry, in which the South American countries have no technological autonomy at all in critical issues, although their conditions would allow them to manufacture some elements such as light weapons, artillery, tactical missiles, vehicles, ships, or aircrafts.

The NATO exercised an industrial allocation policy that enabled the automotive, naval, aeronautical, communications, and electronics sectors' consolidation or development in its member countries. An important tool for this policy was comprised by the industrial rewards for acquiring North American or British equipment. A similar behavior was adopted through the Warsaw Pact with the naval industry of Poland, the GDR, and with Czechoslovakia's aeronautical industry.

However, in the Latin American area, there is no country that has reached a modern technological autonomy in the so called critical elements, since even if it had the political will, it would not have enough resources to achieve it.

As recorded by history, around 1950 in South America, Argentina had the foundations to develop defense industries, even at naval and aeronautical levels. (In 1950, Fabricaciones Militares [a state-owned complex] had built an archetype of a fighter jet equally or more equipped than the USA's F-86, that was starting to be mass-manufactured. Political swifts in that decade and the lack of resources were the decisive factors to abandon this and other projects). There was no evolution in that capacity, and the ground, air, and naval equipment remains stalled since the '80s. Brazil developed a commercially successful aeronautical industry based on its own designs, but technologically dependent on avionics, as well as on arms and engine systems. This also happens with military models: such as the Tucano training airplane (also manufactured by Shorts for the Royal Air Force⁶) and the AMX light attack fighter jet, manufactured jointly with Italy. This situation is no different in the naval and military vehicles industries⁷. Chile showed a certain capacity to manufacture armored vehicles and a training airplane, but Peru and Colombia focused on light weaponry and on the capacity to give maintenance to imported equipment, while Venezuela recently set the pace for that trend, by acquiring Russian equipment.

Summarizing, it can be asserted that South American military equipment, especially regarding aviation and heavy equipment, is highly obsolete. In general, the materials are from the '80s or previous decades, and the acquisitions include a high proportion of used

⁵ It was the so called Pulqui II, designed by a team in which Eng. Kurt Tank took part, one of the most prestigious aeronautical designers of the 3rd Reich.

⁶ The Short Tucano has significant improvements over the model that was originally produced in Brazil.

⁷ Recently, Brazil acquired Leopard 1 tanks, a German model from the '60s, considered 'obsolete' by the NATO.

materials. This combined with the existing constraints regarding the development of critical technologies, we can speculate about a realistic profile for the regional defense industry:

- Equipment maintenance, manufacturing of parts and spare-parts, as well as of ammunition for light weaponry, artillery, and similar.
- Upgrade/update of existing equipment (using mainly imported elements)⁸.
- Manufacturing of light weaponry.
- Manufacturing of vehicles and other equipment with no substantial differences as to requirements between civil and military uses.
- Manufacturing, with justifiable quantities, of licensed vehicles and aircraft, and mostly of the imported weapons' assembling, navigation, and communication systems. Businesses between Brazil and France follow this model: partially imported, and partially manufactured under license (an industrial rewards system approach).

The possibilities of developing this profile and stepping –in the middle and long term– into the technologies assimilation and self-owned systems' development, are limited by the countries' demand and the capability of allocating research and development resources in the defense field.

Defense budgets are the main constraint of an updated, efficient defense industry's development, just like the industrial infrastructure is a constraint to equipment that can be manufactured individually or on a short series basis (e.g. ships). However, a demand consolidation could generate industrial opportunities for some kind of equipment, especially if combined with export possibilities, but would demand a balanced cost and benefit⁹ allocation, which is something historically difficult to achieve in the region.

In addition, a defense industries' integration is an economic and political issue. From an economic standpoint, an eventual balance between benefits and costs for the participants could be beneficial, and the technological development is therein included, or at least, a shortcut for accessing foreign technologies. From a political point of view, the evident market for a regional defense industry is the own region (the global market is overflowed with supply) and developing such market supposes that the countries will invest in their own defense systems, with the injection of substantial resources that will restrict their re-orientation possibilities to non-deferrable social policies aimed to amend disparities that brand the region as the most unequal of the planet.

Nevertheless, Brazil would be the natural beneficiary from consolidating this regional demand. The Brazilian rationale could be: “if there will be rearmament in various countries in the region, why not be the supplier?” It could be useful for all, if decisions related to equipment are reasonable (up to the extent of the available resources and foreseeable use)

⁸ For example: engine replacement; weapon systems refurbishment in vehicles, aircraft, or ships; navigation or communications systems and similar.

⁹ There are successful partnership experiences in order to manufacture military equipment. An additional demand from some European countries enabled the creation of consortiums for several fighter jets' manufacture (Jaguar, AlphaJet, Tornado, Typhoon) and airlift crafts (Noratlas, Transall). Other than the European, there are also successful experiences. The CN-235 airlift plane manufactured by a consortium between the Spanish CASA and the Indonesian Nurtanio, based on the demand from both countries, had a remarkable export success.

and negotiations are properly carried out. A different approach would be to promote the countries' rearmament in the region to uphold a regional defense industry, based on weak and remote hypothetical conflicts.

The South-American Defense Council must justify its existence in a practical sense, since it is insufficient to outline the potential conflicts that could emerge in this region. A defense policy must strengthen the Armed Forces' role as an institution, and does not exclusively cease with the resources targeted for their equipping.

In conclusion, this new institutional expression should be put aside from the timelines and interests that are individually pursued by each state, and reject every leadership intent exclusively based on an arms race or on political postures that could engage its efficiency due to the pursuance of objectives outside this new institutional vision and the new roles to be performed by the Armed Forces, both at domestic and regional levels.



Colombian Relations with Venezuela and Ecuador in the Regional Security Scenario: Recent Dilemmas and New Tendencies

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By the end of the first decade in the 21st century, the balance of the trilateral relations between Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela is contradictory and extremely complex. The Colombian Democratic Security Policy (PSD) legacies and regional repercussions as well as its collision with the Ecuadorian and Venezuelan “revolutions” security doctrines, pose a high degree of uncertainty and numerous challenges to the normalization and stabilization of political and diplomatic relations, and the revival of the cooperation and integration dynamics. The relevance and importance of the political task, currently developed by President Santos in Colombia, which entails an approximation towards Ecuador and Venezuela, will undoubtedly depend on the stances and consequences that remained from the age of Uribe Vélez in terms of recognizing security, defense and foreign policies.

The stance adopted so far by President Santos’ administration towards its neighbors –pragmatic, without presumptions, and without ideological radicalism– has been complemented with an intense diversification agenda concerning its foreign affairs and the recovery of the government’s interest in the Latin American integration processes. This has highly benefited the neighboring relations, but cannot simply become a “start from scratch” practice. In the present article, an account of the main hindrances in the trilateral relations, an examination of the Andean “arms race” issue and an analysis of its erroneous foreign policy strategies, are proposed. This task is complemented with two additional sections: an analytical approach to the possibility of war between Colombia and Venezuela and an update of the diplomatic approximation in the beginning of the Santos’ Age.

Retrospective of the Most Visible Conflicts and Tensions

Between Colombia and Venezuela

Generally speaking, the problems that emerged between Colombia and Venezuela's detailed summary can be made based on Benítez, Celi, and Jácome (2010, pp.7-11) and others can be added, such as:

- a) Venezuela has attempted to become the regional opponent of Colombia's and the US' security cooperation efforts.
- b) Its military equipment acquisition policy has led to a decrease of trust throughout the Colombian public and government (The level and type of acquisitions are considered disproportionate compared to the "real" internal and external threats faced by Venezuela, and a double jeopardy is reported regarding the possibility that it could nourish both an escalation of the Colombian internal conflict due to the deviation of Venezuelan weapons to illegal groups, and the unleashing of a regional arms race reply due to the competition between neighboring States, thus disrupting the balance of power.)
- c) Venezuela, in turn, claims that Colombia is responsible for causing regional imbalance due to its strengthened military capability and for favoring the dominating espionage practices and influence exercised by the US in South America, while Colombia informs that it only aims to increase its internal reaction capability against domestic threats, such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and drug traffickers.
- d) Instead of using diplomatic or non-official channels to clear out any tensions concerning sensitive issues, Colombia has accused Venezuela before the OAS and the entire world by declaring that the country tolerates the existence of FARC camps and the visits of its representatives, all the while Venezuela has reported that paramilitary troops, Administrative Department of Security (DAS) officials and US agents have been behind espionage and sabotage practices, as well as coup d'état plans against the Caracas government.
- e) Chavez' intervention attempts pleading international recognition of the FARC as a belligerent and non-terrorist force, as well as the pressure exerted by the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) jointly with Ecuador in order to advocate a negotiation between the Colombian government and the FARC, have raised the level of distrust in Colombia toward any type of Venezuelan mediation or interest in this regard.
- f) Venezuela's rejection to the Colombia Plan and the cooperation with the DEA in the fight against drug traffic has resulted in a struggle between the Colombian-American and Venezuelan figures vis-à-vis its own anti-drug strategy.
- g) Hugo Chávez' assumption of extraordinary powers remarkably influences the arbitrary and egocentric handling of his Foreign Policy. Although his goal is to surmount the internal governance crisis facing multiple adverse, not clearly defined economic and social factors and to accelerate the transformation of a "bourgeois" State into a "socialist" State, the deinstitutionalizing consequences for the foreign affairs system have been unavoidable. Currently, President Chávez resorts to a fourth Enabling Act, arguing that its relevance can be found in the winter emergency that left around 132,786 affected inhabitants in 2010.
- h) The legal battle between former President Uribe and President Chávez due to the lawsuits filed by the former Colombian President's lawyers against the Venezuelan Head of

State constitutes more than a personal dispute. There have been attempts to indict the Venezuelan President before the International Criminal Court for his complicity related to the war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the FARC. He is also accused before the International Human Rights Court due to violations to the American Human Rights Convention for protecting or sheltering terrorists and criminals.

Between Colombia and Ecuador

A summary of disputes between Colombia and Ecuador can be also made in this regard based on Benítez, Celi, and Jácome (2010, pp. 11-13), others can be added, such as:

- a) The existence of a highly permeable borderline which can be easily trespassed by illegal armed groups, drug traffickers and criminals, which both lacks a shared and mutually binding surveillance system and is very vulnerable in social-economic terms.
- b) Colombia's engagement in a head-on approach against drug traffic and the guerrilla have a lasting impact on the Ecuadorian side, and there are no clear self-containment mechanisms, especially due to the fact that the "opportunity principle" prevails.
- c) Ecuador's arrogance in filing lawsuits before its national courts or the international criminal justice against Colombian senior officials, such as the former Secretary of Defense and current President, Juan Manuel Santos, and the former Commanding General of the *Colombian Armed Forces* and current Ambassador of Colombia in Austria, Freddy Padilla De León, because of their alleged intellectual liability in the illegal bombing at Ecuadorian territory in the so called "Operation Phoenix".
- d) Ecuador's permanent distrust in getting involved in the Colombia Plan and in the US-Colombian security strategy, in addition to its reluctance to establish specific coordination mechanisms by resorting to the principle stating "each one takes care of their own backyard".
- e) The Bi-National Commission of Frontiers' (Combifron) intermittent and weak nature as a solving mechanism for bilateral security dilemmas.
- f) The ongoing process of the two international lawsuits brought by Ecuador against Colombia, one before the International Court of Justice concerning the harmful effects of aerial fumigations with glyphosate over the other border side, and the other one before the Inter-American Court of Justice for the death of an Ecuadorian as a result of an illegal bombing.

The Three Andean Countries' "arms race" as an obstacle to the integration in terms of security and defense.

The military acquisitions have experienced a particularly remarkable increase in Latin America in the last decade, inevitably bringing along rumors concerning "arms races" that evoke old borderline disputes, old remnants inherited from the Cold War's extinct ideological bipolarity that initiate new political conflicts between "conservative" and "alternative" governments, and new domestic, bilateral and regional security dilemmas. According to recent figures, Latin America's volume of transferred arms increased by 47% in the period between 2003 and 2007 vs. 1998-2002 (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p. 166). According to the report issued in 2009 by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the military expenditure in South America increased remarkably during the last years reaching up to 48.1 trillion USD in 2008, recording an overall

increase of 50% in this field during the decade of 1999-2008, compared to the previous decade (SIPRI, 2009, p. 2). In 2009, South America experienced an overall military expenditure of near 51.8 trillion USD, even despite the world economic crisis context (SIPRI, 2010, p. 10). Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela have not escaped this overall dynamic, even though, as analyzed below, their political motivations, their orientation, and procurement capacity in this field have been different, although invariably related to their geographic proximity, a transnational overflow of the Colombian domestic armed conflict and the reality of an ideological conflict that has affected and, to some extent, transformed their trilateral relations.

At a first glance, the Venezuelan “arms race” –linked to the ALBA project– would attempt to be a dissuasive response to the orthodox influence of the USA in the political, military and commercial spheres in Latin America, and a persuasive source to gather smaller nations in the region and capabilities within its proto-socialist influence sphere. The Colombian “arms race” would obey internal counter-insurgency needs and a re-alignment with the US towards the recovery of the hegemonic legitimization of US Americans in the region. The previous, after a period of unpleasant South American “independence” and concentration of US national and global security interests in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. On the other hand, an increase of Ecuador’s armed power would be driven by the revival of old boundary disputes with Peru, an increase of the Peruvian military capacity in the last decade and the close threat of the Colombian “arms race” and its paramilitary groups.

In order to make a deeper analysis of the Andean re-armament policies’ complex background, examining the acquisition details is not enough, since the chain of factors involved in a governmental decision-making process includes motivations, intentions, perceptions, interpretations, historical memory and political environment. International relations compel to a higher extent a certain State or government to the response of both domestic –such as equipment– and external decisions from others, seeing as they always involve mutual expectations regarding the other party’s identity and political decisions (Klotz and Lynch, 2007, p. 17).

Previous to addressing political and interpretative arguments, it seems convenient to make a brief introduction of Venezuelan, Colombian and Ecuadorian military procurement activities:

Venezuela increased its military expenditure by 78% in 2007 compared to 2003, with Russia as its primary supplier (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p. 169). Between 2005 and 2007, Venezuela and Russia signed 12 weapon supply contracts for an amount presumably higher than 4.4 trillion USD. In 2005, Venezuela acquired ten Mi-35 combat helicopters, three Mi-26 cargo airlift helicopters, forty Mi-17 multipurpose helicopters, a hundred thousand AK-103 rifles and twenty-four Su-30MK fighters from Russia (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p. 169). Equally, contracts for the construction of two manufacturing plants in Venezuela to produce such types of rifles and its corresponding ammunition were subscribed, in addition to the contracts for the procurement of military technology from Spain, China and Belarus (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p. 169). The predominant nature



behind this supply has to do with the dual defensive-offensive role that this equipment provides in terms of destructive power and scope, the potential of technological transfer self-supply, and its vendors' multi-pole and competitive origin compared to the US, a traditional and somewhat cautious supplier for Latin-Americans.

On the Colombian side, the material factor alone accounts for a different orientation regarding the purchases' functionality. As of 2003, it has been positioned as one of the States with the highest military expenditure in Latin America, especially if compared with the GDP growth percentage (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p. 169). It is estimated that in 2008, Colombia disbursed slightly more than 9.076 million USD (SIPRI, 2009, p. 2). When defining this expenditure, two factors are highlighted: one relates to the role of the US as the primary financial and arms supplier (71% of the domestic weaponry), especially through the Colombia Plan, and the other to the incorporation of the Extraordinary Estate Capital Gains Tax established by the Uribe administration, intended to collect some 4 trillion pesos to sustain the Democratic Security Policy (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p. 169). Since 1990, the North American cooperation has enabled Colombia to acquire five C-130B Hercules airlift planes; thirty-three Bronco OV-10 light combat planes, and more than a hundred Bell-205, Bell-212 and Blackhawk helicopters (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p. 170). On the other suppliers' side, Colombia has obtained fourteen Tucano (EMB-312) airplanes, and twenty-five Super Tucano "light-combat" airplanes (EMB-314, just like the ones used during the bombing against AKA "Raúl Reyes") from Brazil since the mid '90s, Israeli components and missiles; and four C-295 airlift planes, one CN-235MP airlift plane, and fifteen SBT 150-mm Howitzers from Spain, in addition to sixteen Russian Mi-17 airlift helicopters between 1997 and 2002, as well as an agreement to assemble the BTR-80 troop-carriers (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p. 170).

This equipment is predominantly intended for domestic use (security needs), but some purchases stand out that are more appropriate for defense purposes, such as the Spanish Howitzers, the Boeing 767 refurbished by Israel for cargo and aerial refueling missions, as well as the twenty-four Israeli Kfir C10 fighter bombers (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p. 170).

In the case of Ecuador, its recent ranking in military terms had to do with the bilateral conflict with Peru in the borderline zone of Alto Cenepa, as a result of the illegal incursions of Peruvian troops in Ecuadorian territory, and of its open strike and defeat between January and February, 1995. As of the early '90s, the country acquired equipment such as two frigates previously discharged by the British Royal Navy, as well as two C-130 Hercules heavy airlift military planes. Furthermore they purchased Cessna A-37B Dragonfly fighters transferred by the US Air Forces (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p. 170). In addition to those, there are other aircrafts that the country already owned, such as the Mirage F1, Kfir C.2, Jaguar and multi-purpose helicopters that had an essential role in the conflict. Among its next two stages of improvement, we can mention both the refurbishment of eight of its Kfir according to European standards and the purchase of 222 Russian SA-16 Gimlet air defense missiles (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p. 170), the definite ending of its competition with Peru, and the new equipment concern caused by the Colombian-Ecuadorian borderline's instability magnified within the Colombia Plan and the PSD framework. Within the context of the illegal bombing conducted by Colombia on Ecuadorian territory in 2008, the 2006 modernizing plan sped up considerably. The purchase of 24 Brazilian EMB-314 Super Tucano planes; 7 Indian HAL ALH Dhruv tactical helicopters; Chinese radars, aircraft and components within a cooperation agreement; an upgrade of its Super Puma helicopters and electronic surveillance systems; the replacement of its tank fleet with Chilean units of Leopard 1V MBT; the purchase of Chilean frigates; and the request of unmanned surveillance aircraft capable of launching strikes, such as IAI Heron and Searcher (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p. 171) has been announced. Up to this date, an additional purchase of 12 South African Cheetah airplanes, idle since 2008 and scalable, in an amount between 74 and 80 million USD² was disclosed.

Now, after slightly outlining some of the strategic reasons on security and defense issues for the purchases made by the three Andean countries, it is convenient to list some of the hypotheses and causal arguments being considered to help question the apparent "arms race" and find other illustrative variables in the trilateral conflict context, in the defensive individualism and in the players' stances, that will enable to escape the argumentative trap related to the "domino effect". This means, that a presumably competitive background can be turned even more complex and can obtain a political meaning, beyond the simple security dilemma, in which the collective distrust towards the armed equipping of a State single handedly promotes the subsequent individual or collective arms race of all its neighbors (Wendt, 1995, pp. 78-79). By reconstructing those approaches, one can find that the "selfish" orientations in terms of security and defense stand out by definition and that the bilateral and regional integration processes are politically obstructed or stalled in the following aspects:

- a) The existing perceptions about military asymmetries that would cause an irreversible change on the balance of power in the Andean region do not operate in all the

bilateral tension scenarios, whose conflict dimension has tended to be essentially political-diplomatic, as well as its management approaches.

- b) Most of the Latin American acquisitions have been encouraged by the need of either upgrading or replacing the “military inventories”, resorting to non-offensive and varied purposes, such as updating capabilities, responding to persistent domestic threats, strengthening political bonds with supplying governments, improving the domestic military industry, among others (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, pp. 166-167). Even though the Venezuelan case seems to lack the rationality and moderation shown by the collective upgrading movement, it is still framed within a large increase and influence strategy, and not within a preparation for an armed confrontation.
- c) Latin American States are implementing equipping programs which have been postponed for several years and were planned previously to the current tensions, driven both by the overall improvement of the regional economic scenario, favored by a worldwide increase in the price of the “commodities” that they offer, and by the aging of their regular “stocks” (Bromley y Guevara, 2009, p. 167). These programs do not originally have a competitive nature, but they are not subdued to regional coordination effort, either.
- d) Many of the acquisitions that Colombia and Ecuador have made are “second-hand”, which fulfill multipurpose functions and depend on the US for the maintenance and operation of their components. This diminishes their discretionary use due to the US pressures. However, in the Venezuelan case, it has encouraged the accentuated diversification of suppliers and a approximation towards Russia and China.
- e) The main “threats” faced in military terms are diverse, being situated in the domestic or foreign spheres, depending on the case. While the main threats for Colombia against the consolidation of the State are domestic (insurgency, paramilitary forces and drug traffickers), in the case of Ecuador they represent the aftermath of the cross-border conflict (illegal incursions by all the armed parties in the conflict, displaced persons trespassing the borders and affected villages in the borderline surroundings), and the internal political instability that usually ends in a coup d’état. In Venezuela, these threats acquire greater ideological connotations and operate in both spheres fueling militarization. From an outside perspective, the US is considered an imperialist power that tends to “invade” opposing governments or support their internal unrest to induce a regime change compatible with its own national interests. Internally, the political opposition is described as a highly dangerous enemy prone to coup d’état practices, to violent outbreaks and even to the infiltration into the State’s key sectors, such as the Army, in strong remembrance of the failed anti-Chávez coup of 2002.
- f) There are multiple political motives that sustain the military upgrade decisions. In the Colombian case, there are two factors that stand out: on the one hand, the governmental decision to allow an “invited” US intervention make up for the national coercive system’s weaknesses toward the FARC, and on the other hand, the intent to approach the US in a development and security “strategic” alignment, but within a subordinated relation (Tickner, 2007, pp. 105-106). There was also an electoral motive behind the scenes in order to ensure a high popularity rate toward the re-election by proving the “resoluteness” of the PSD. In the Venezuelan case, a search for political connections with non-Western powers and States that manufacture arms is initiated, in order to help erode the global US hegemony (Bromley and Guevara, 2009, p.

169) and the creation of an image as a “new power”, capable of displaying protection over “alternate” governments in South America and the Caribbean that are threatened by the US, within a collective defense structure for the ALBA. Likewise, it attempts to become the main partner of the new South American security and defense schemes within the UNASUR frame.

In the case of Ecuador, both the illegal bombings and incursions conducted by Colombian troops, and the increasing borderline permeability in which it’s engaged –despite of its reluctance– are decisive in the development of the internal Colombian conflict. Moreover, it is suggested that the three Andean governments could not only be strengthening their military systems according to their notions of “threat” and “need”, but also satisfying the interests of the military elite groups to preserve their loyalty, particularly because they are democratic regimes that have evolved historically in the midst of frequent political and institutional crises (Benítez, Celi, and Jácome, 2010, p. 7). This has induced the Andean region to re-militarize key security sectors, such as intelligence and even militarist ideas that permeate and ingrain their societies, which –in the case of Venezuela and Ecuador– has been encouraged by the increasing reaction towards the US presence, and the radicalization of their domestic political processes (Maldonado, 2010, pp. 56-58). Within the Venezuelan regime, it has had a greater significance: the government militarization and the Army politicization, which makes it possible for the military sector to merge with other governmental programs and institutions and for the Army members to transition from being neutral safeguarding agents of the democratic constitutional order to advocating actors of the Bolivarian doctrine (Corrales, 2009, p. 71).

- a) The confusion and “merger” between the security and defense policies is a common factor due to the intermestic [international + domestic] nature of the agendas prepared to face cross-border challenges, such as drug traffic, arms trafficking, terrorism and immigration. In this regard, Tibiletti (2001) highlights that the US American school influenced considerably the Latin American military doctrine by defining National Security as the protection against every interest that is considered “vital” by a Nation vis-à-vis any potentially threatening factor, thus submitting National Defense to it and structuring it as the set of measures adopted to meet those individual demands, both domestically and abroad. This vision of a Defense that is subordinated to the individual security is one of the largest hindrances to the Latin American and Andean integration in this field. Matching the aforementioned statement, Ugarte (2010, p. 37) declares that the different domestic security approaches distort the classic notion of a “common defense”, formerly defined as the building of collective answers to inter-State and/or external threats. Thus, the construction of a collective defense agenda must assume every kind of risk factors, both domestic and transnational and even economic, political, and social issues, resulting in the collision among dissimilar interests of Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela within the South American Defense Council (CDS) (Ugarte, 2010, p. 37). In the praxis, this has meant that, although it has been established that the CDS would exclude the domestic security issues and would transfer them to other bodies, such as the “South American Council on the Global Problem of Drugs”, it is not quite appealing for Colombia to discuss a “collective defense”, if the transnational threats are not linked, and even less justify its domestic policies to the region, as Venezuela and Ecuador intend (Ugarte, 2010, p. 37).

- b) Just like all the other UNASUR members –although Colombia’s ratification of the constitutive treaty is pending so far–, the three Andean countries defend the diversity of their national scenarios’ collective recognition in terms of domestic security (internal challenges) and defense (external threats) that enables them to preserve their own mechanisms, methods, legal regulations and instruments to face their respective challenges (Ugarte, 2010, p. 38). Meaning that they do not discard the integration processes’ political relevance within the UNASUR and the CDS, but however, they do not seem to be willing to replace the –already sufficiently blocked– intergovernmental cooperation principle in the security and defense fields with the supranational decision principle.
- c) The trilateral conflict regarding the Colombian ostracism and its security policy, in addition to the collective concern toward the asymmetrical Colombian-American treaty that would cause an increased US surveillance over the Andean region, brought on a positive effect which was the CDS’ operative adjustment. This conflict contributed to creating the need of developing Measures and Warranties in order to Build Confidence and Security (MFCS), as a primary result of the CDS in defense (Ugarte, 2010, p. 31). However, an accentuated military response against threats and uncertainties is still to be addressed, which promotes militarization rooted practices and securitization of the domestic and foreign political agenda, and tightens in view of the frequent political changes and fragility that the current integration options evidence (Leal, 2010, pp. 74-75.).



The Foreign Action Serving a National Security Approach

To a great extent, the “preventive war” concept enforced by the US, which infringes international law and justifies the “opportunity principle” (strike first or strike immediately if the military circumstances are favorable), influenced negatively and heavily the Colombian military actions, such as the “Operation Phoenix” conducted in Angostura (Ecuador). This concept is a response that entitles highly ethical and legal prejudices concerning the international post-war tradition based on principles such as acting in good will and mutual respect to each nation’s sovereignty. Sustaining that there’s need of deploying a sudden State military action (with no previous consultation or controls) as a single or almost exclusive instrument against a non-conventional threat such as fundamentalist or insurgent terrorism, and that said strategy may disregard the national borders and bilateral information and coordination mechanisms in view of factors such as the lack or deficiency of bi-national cooperation or the peer State’s tolerance, it overthrows the entire legal-political symmetry doctrine that underpins the democratic inter-State system.

Recently and due to communication leaks between high-ranked US officials and agents of other nations revealed by “Wikileaks”, it was disclosed that the Colombian government was about to make a unilateral decision in terms of cross-border security, such as the one that originated the diplomatic conflict in December 2004 because of the unilateral capture –coordinated between the US and Colombia– of AKA “Rodrigo Granda”, a FARC representative, in Caracas. In a meeting held in mid-January 2008 between former President Uribe, former US Ambassador in Bogotá, William Brownfield, and the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Michael Mullen, and according to the cable unveiled by the media press, Uribe stated the possibility of authorizing the Colombian troops to cross the border to ensure the capture of FARC members, instead of coordinating their extradition³.

In a pure and realistic power policy, the threatened State –whether factually or hypothetically– chooses to fight that transnational instability or risk factor by disregarding the capability and/or legitimacy of the government that receives that threat, acts in a permissive manner, or does not have the suitable means to counterattack, thus justifying the unilateral actions and non-agreed interventions. Consequently, it is stated that it does not represent an illegal war or a belligerent behavior against the other State in particular, but a “legitimate defense action” carried out in a foreign territory. It does not intend to fight other societies nor destroy the peer State, but that unlawful conduct’s ultimate effects, mainly when it concerns scenarios of a remarkable military asymmetry, end up encouraging precisely such a behavior, especially due to the threat’s ambiguous nature: between the civil and military spheres, with branches in the State’s institutions and agents, but without having seized the systems as a whole (like the alleged “Narco-States” or “Terrorist States”), sometimes anchored or manipulated by legal codes, but very evidently opposed to the legal-moral system, with political aspirations, but without the absolute freedom to excerpt visible activism, among other unclear dimensions.

Another classic national security principle that tended to be exacerbated and distorted in the relations between Venezuela and Ecuador during the PSD in the Uribe Vélez era was the deterrence of State-related external threats. As such, it is more a defense maintenance

principle than one of domestic security and stability, but due to the domestic conflict in Colombia's transnational and political-ideological connotations, it has always operated within an intermestic sphere or field in which domestic risk variables are merged –and sometimes, confused– and endangered the country's foreign relations with its neighbors and the US. Within the strategic sphere, militarizing the State's response to domestic challenges warns the surrounding States on the inherent increase of the military capabilities, although they are presumed and justified as exclusively oriented to face domestic threats, since just one of its consequences, like the perceptible increase of troop members, automatically implies an overall increase of the State's potentially offensive capacity, which would be diametrically opposed to an exclusively police and judicial strengthening.

The mere increase of an offensive capacity does not involve a temptation of usage (explicit aggression) or of hegemony (latent aggression) per se, but it does if embedded in a framework of relations and significances that generate rivalry and distrust. The international relations 'inter-subjectivity' feature makes power more than simply possessing material capacities (power through attributes), but a multiple influence relation (Klotz and Lynch, 2007, p. 11). Here is where the political-ideological variable and the game of quick interpretations of intention come into full-strength action. Concerning the first item, the Colombian governments have shown close ideological affinity with the US over the last twelve years, especially in global economic and political issues, as well as regarding the regional security. This has increasingly collided with the so called "alternate governments" represented in the Andean region by Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Rafael Correa in Ecuador and Evo Morales in Bolivia. All of them drastically reject the US post-war role as a "global and regional sentinel", its extremely asymmetrical and monopolistic commercial policies, the frontal combat and assisted intervention approach of its anti-drug cooperation programs, and the way it encloses –within the ambiguous concept of "international terrorism"– a whole range of multiple threats in its own national security.

Upon an eventual non-matching and incompatibility of the national security agendas among the Andean countries, the transnational risks become bilateral dilemmas in terms of security and other spheres that trigger the individual defense policies, thus mixing up the rationality of confrontation regarding the non-State risk factor with the rationality of the international deterrence action, whose primary goal consists in provoking fear or concern on the opponent, compelling enough to avoid testing the ground warfare capability, as well as a certain State's temptation to intervene in another State's domestic instabilities. Whenever the cooperation options to face the shared risk are blocked and when the States resort to self-protecting or deterring –even they're only discoursing– strategies, foreign relations only get downgraded as long as a free scope and maneuverability is left for that threat, which can grow whenever the borders are more permeable and detached. If the individualist behavior and self-protection goals are accentuated, the harmonious relation that should be kept between national security and Foreign Policy needs gets out of balance, thus leading to a foreign agenda that's subordinated to the domestic security plan and to the securitization of the shared international influence spheres, which contributes in nourishing the biased stances, as well. In this regard, Der Ghougassian (2004, p. 66), based on the work of Buzan, Weaver and Wilde (1998), states that securitization accesses an intertwining of relations whenever threats take an existential character –a perceived

risk of destruction– thus generating emergency measures and reactive decisions that collide with the game’s rules and postures previously established by the actors to achieve a mutual understanding, even if they are opponents.

The game of quick intention interpretation seems -this time- as an ambiguous principle to guide bilateral decisions when the Foreign Policy is considered a “zero-sum game”, in which an advantage acquired in the opponent’s domestic security or defense capacity means an increase of the other party’s vulnerability; and is responded through a bilateral anticipation/reaction posture. Anticipation hinders the horizontal dialogue and burdens the foreign agenda with forecasts, fears and frequently exaggerated assumptions regarding the other party’s eventual –always negative– intention trend. The reaction often resorts to the emotional nature of the moment, mainly when there is a politically provoked public opinion where populist strategies prevail, and to the speed of an equivalent or increased response based on the other party’s words and actions that are considered an aggression, encouraging spirals of distrust and mutual provocation.

As to the Venezuelan and Ecuadorian cases, their heads of State’s prevailing perception seems to be totally apprehensive and oriented to espionage/coup d’état threats, whenever Colombia decides to reinforce its domestic security plan, particularly when compromising greater disbursements from the national budget for military reinforcement and involving an active US role in financing and consulting/operating functions. In Colombia’s case, and particularly during the Uribe Vélez era, a publicly disseminated apprehension tended to prevail as to the fact that an increase in the armed capacity of Ecuador, and mainly Venezuela, can mean, due to ideological affinity and/or lack of control warranties over inventories, the armed reinforcement of the FARC and/or an authoritarian instauration of a socialist State in the country and the Andean region.

A third geopolitical strategy principle that affected the setup of both a security agenda and a defensive orientation in the cases of Colombia and Venezuela, was the principle of



political-ideological containment; which was - indirectly and to a certain extent - also military. During various episodes, and noticeably more during the regional discussion of the new agreement sought by Colombia with the US to allow extended US use of base camps in its territory, the Colombian government's attitude behind this initiative was interpreted by some spheres as a stratagem that would stop both Hugo Chávez's interventionist intention in the Colombian domestic armed conflict and the domestic policy, as well as a "21st Century Socialism" or "Bolivarian Revolution" continental extension. The public opinion on both sides of the border - and in other South American locations - was almost unanimous in agreeing that the agreement's significance was considerably higher than the Colombian Armed Forces anti-drug and anti-insurgency needs, thus generating even more regional repercussions than domestic advantages. The "need" argument was even more contradictory considering the high figures in Álvaro Uribe's retiring government security balance shown in the end of 2010, which suggested an "early end of the FARC"⁴. Concluding, there currently remains no doubt, after the revelations made by Wikileaks regarding this issue, that the agreement's true goal was deterring Chávez from any attempt of an intervention.

The anti-Soviet containment policy's ghost, raised by the US American George Kennan within the global ideological division context, seemed to temporarily re-emerge in the Andean region. The political-military traditional surveillance US principle over specific geographic spots from a democratic State or from an ally to another -the recipient of its ideological interest- and the defensive nature of the military assistance reinforcement principle to resist an aggression as well as an eventual "ideological contamination" (Carbone, 2006, p. 4). These seemed to direct the agreement's foundations which was justified at that time as exclusively "complementary" to the Colombia Plan framework, exposing its partially defensive nature.

The agreement was presumably a reactive way to equally balance the Venezuelan plans to equip, innovate and manufacture highly destructive armament without entering the arms race's cost spiral, which was unfeasible from a political and financial standpoint. Concerning Venezuela, its accelerated military expenditure rate and its type of purchases surpass Colombia's conventional offensive capacities in this regard, fulfilling its deterring effect in the case of an assumed "Colombian arms race" or cooperation to propitiate an overthrow the current revolutionary government. However, the only plausible intention to justify the argument related to satisfying Venezuela's "legitimate defense needs" seems to be the US' indirect containment effect with which it overtops the Andean States' capabilities, but always -and indistinctively- lags behind the US capabilities. A containment that is not intended to directly offset the US, but to avoid an overflow of the US counterrevolutionary political and military influence from Colombia toward Venezuela.

Colombia-Venezuela: Is War a Possibility?

There have been several attempts to disseminate a blurred climate of opinion during a bilateral crisis: using a lot of passionate versions, lacking analytical depth and discernment to distinguish the abysmal gap between the high risk of an international armed conflict and a simple politicized "war rumor". The "show" and the theatrical nature of the discourses and alarmist press releases must disappear in order to analyze the real background

of the frequent bilateral tensions. To this end, it is useful to discuss some argumentative assertions that rebate such a possibility:

- a) Venezuela and Colombia are two historical confraternities. Their same origin; their democratic, social and cultural connections; their similar political legacies; their natural geopolitical interdependence; their mutual favorable opinion despite the turbulent junctures and controversies between their governments; all these factors represent sources of reciprocity, recognition and identity rooting appreciation that surpasses the differences between political doctrines while being independent, democratic, Andean, coastal, Christian, mixed and Latin American countries. The ideological bills between these communities do not match the cultural, ethnic, or religious frontiers, and the unsolved controversies on some yet to be defined geographical borderline issues have never been a relevant source of open confrontation nor an explicit breeding ground for partisan doctrines.
- b) The US is both countries' first commercial partner; Colombia used to be Venezuela's 2nd partner, but is currently ranged between the 3rd or 4th partner. It is true that after the bilateral commerce between Colombia and Venezuela tripled for the period between 2004 and 2008, even in the midst of a persistent diplomatic crisis, a drop of 33% in 2009⁵ represents an increasing concern to those who trust in the economic-political premise which states that the best bond and prevention strategy against an Inter-State conflict is a dynamic, fluent and interdependent commerce. Up to September 2010, Colombian exports to Venezuela dropped by 69.7% and imports by 48.6%⁶, which sought to replace the bi-national market, but without closing the door to a revitalizing exchange.
- c) It is true that the de-structuring of the Venezuelan domestic market capabilities and its hoarding by a gradually stagnant State, co-opted by the Executive Branch, have generated a perturbing dependence on the Colombian rich supply, an argument exploited by the Venezuelan President to nourish his demagogic anti-Imperialist incendiary speeches, and defend repressive measures on trading, such as restrictions and blockades. However, a context's further detailed analysis should point out the transcendental additional factors about this phenomenon, such as the impact that the global economic crisis has and the Venezuelan currency (Bolívar) behavior.
- d) As a complement to the above, it is necessary to indicate that President Chávez knows in advance that his aspirations of an economic re-boost depend to a great extent on Venezuela's entry in the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR, as per its acronym in Spanish) and on a deepened commercial integration into the ALBA, both integration schemes self-defined as democratic and observant of the territorial integrity and the national sovereignty. They also intend to preserve their legitimacy in the international system by involving other principles such as multilateralism, a solution for differences and cooperation based on dialog.
- e) Simply stated, as long as Venezuela depends on insertion into the international system mechanisms in order to economically and politically survive, it will not become a dangerous floating particle, such as North Korea or Iran. Discussing about its oil-related dependence on its largest discourse opponent (the US) is unnecessary. In this regard, the continuous verbal aggression has never matched the Venezuelan foreign policy's mild de-facto decisions, even while adopting a "provocative" attitude with a "wink of Cold War" on its approximation to Russia, China and Cuba.

- f) The US has disregarded both the bilateral conflict's depth and any eventual intervention that might be advantageous in it, and has even offered to serve as a mediator between both countries. The Obama administration has proven to be much more conciliating in its foreign policy (soft power) and less friendly towards taking repressive measures (hard power) to face annoying or less friendly governments, even if maintaining troops in Afghanistan is somewhat of a paradox – a scenario that differs entirely from the Andean neighbors. Venezuela does not represent any real threat to the US, not because of its political identity and/or international alliances structure, nor because of its real combat capabilities possessions, even though it has speculatively increased the degree of its interest and observance of (abundant) Venezuelan statements and (scarce) determinations in terms of foreign policy. Even while accepting the –high– probability of increasing US “espionage” activities conducted from Colombia over Venezuela, besides the extensive use of Colombian base camps near the border, both the Venezuelan people and its armed forces, as well as the remaining weakened, democracy-inhibiting institutional structure, know that this strategic US action is not new and doesn't become a “State's reason” compelling enough to legitimize a concrete force deployment to “safeguard the national sovereignty” or the “sovereign government plan”.
- g) No South-American country accepts the ‘de facto’ conflict possibility and some of them advocate for and/or are willing to mediate in order to maintaining peaceful relations. There could be a political retaliation from the MERCOSUR members to block the Venezuelan entry into that integration scheme in view of Chávez's radical positions in terms of free commerce, foreign investment, domestic anti-democratic measures, and the escalation of aggressive statements against Colombia, raising winds of war. Brazil, Peru and Chile –in addition to Spain– have always been willing to propose diplomatic solutions and avoid a real confrontation at any cost.
- h) Colombia will always resort to multilateral venues (UN, OAS, UNASUR) keeping up with its tradition in foreign policy, instead of responding proportionally to Venezuela's provocations. Colloquially speaking, “it takes two to make a war” and Colombia is not willing to play the “hen game”. This means: Two parties confront each other in order to show their bravery with the risk of firing the first bullet until one of them withdraws in the last minute and gets labeled as a “coward”. Even during the Uribe era, which is characterized by a verbal diplomatic offensive against the neighboring Venezuela, the Colombian government never attempted to second the borderline provoking game by encouraging the geographical proximity between rival armed forces.⁷
- i) The Venezuelan public opinion concerning Colombia is severely disillusioned by its Head of State's performance, and does not pay much attention to his armed conflict insinuations, to such extent that most of Venezuelans themselves –eight out of ten– rejected the possibility of a declared war against Colombia, according to the results of a survey held by the private organization Datanálisis⁸.
- j) Both governments and their respective security and defense orientations, have more concerns and variables regarding domestic than external instability that may as well be attributable to the assumed or proved support by a neighboring government. Their priorities are essentially domestic and nowadays do not have sufficient internal potential to be morally and ideologically bonding, materially sustainable and executable to represent the risk of a proper international confrontation.

- k) A declared and weakly justified war against Colombia undermines Venezuela's international credibility, places it in frontal conflict position with the international system based on International Public Law and on the UN Foundational Chart's principles, also facing a resolute Security Council intervention. A positive military action contradicts the spirit that drives both UNASUR and the South-American Defense Council, where Venezuela is an integral part and for which it has encouraged the extension of its binding and effective institutional scope.
- l) According to the foundational State and society principles, due to the arrangements in the electoral system, and to the advantages of remaining in the States' "club" which is officially and commonly acknowledged as "democratic" –even if they resort to the "ism" suffixes (Chavism, Uribism, or an eventual "Santism") appended to their 2nd last name– Venezuela cannot conduct an assault on Colombia. It could not do it even if it would obtain convincing evidence that would prove the assumed conspiracy concerted among the CIA, the DAS, and the paramilitary forces; in that case, it must resort to the legitimate international venues, such as the International Court of Justice. It would be politically less expensive to join the Ecuadorian strategy which consists in filing international complaints against the Colombian anomalous conducts, rather than to resort to commercial, diplomatic or warfare de facto retaliation.
- m) The CDS's implementation in 2010, ratified by nine of its members, and the future application of Measures to Foster Confidence and Security (MFCS), in addition to the introduction of a "South American Peace Protocol", will be decisive in order to avoid a new bilateral armed confrontation rumor. The MFCSs would allow a permanent information exchange on domestic equipping, defense policies and subscribed military cooperation agreements, and will open cooperation doors on usually sensitive defense issues, thus contributing to reduce risk perceptions and dissipate the distrust regarding eventual conflicts⁹.

The Beginning of the Santos' Administration Face to Face with the Two Andean Countries: Realism and Pragmatic Co-Existence.

Surprisingly, and in an independent manner, the Santos' Administration has initiated an intensive diversification task as to its foreign relations without leaving the US unattended, –aiming to the FTA ratification in that country, and supporting continued anti-drug cooperation–, not only reassuming the disrupted or unattended diplomatic relations, but approaching emerging powers such as Brazil and China with great interest. An attempt to recover the neighboring and multi-topic integration relations within the Andean region is also gradually becoming evident, even before his official assumption –since August 2009. Santos' current pragmatism contrasts with his prior obstinate position during his office as Secretary of Defense, as he continuously reported the links between the FARC and the administrations of Presidents Correa and Chávez. Even though the proceedings against Colombia filed by Ecuador at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (CIDH) are still pending, and despite of the fact that discordances between Venezuela and the US have increased due to the rejection of new US ambassador Larry Palmer in the unfortunate statements made regarding the scarcely democratic regime, Santos and the Chancellor's Office seem to be making their best effort

to provide a dialogical treatment to topics of high sensitiveness, politicization and controversy with their neighbors.

Since mid-2009, approximating actions and dialogs between the chancellors of Colombia and Ecuador began to be re-encouraged, resulting in positive determinations, such as the reactivation of the Combifron and the establishment of three special commissions: the first one concerns issues regarding cross-border crime and subversive groups; the second one was created for the development of border communities and humanitarian assistance, and the last one for sensitive issues, like the international lawsuits filed and the domestic litigation regarding the bombing issue (Benítez, Celi, and Jácome, 2010, p. 10). Recovering confidence is another core issue and, therefore, Colombia decided to share the information that it found in the FARC's hard disks during that operation, as well as the details about that military action with Ecuador. Currently, and following Ecuador's various requests, proposals to develop an overall scheme of action on co-responsibility basis in order to address the displaced persons issue and to support the returning Colombian refugees in Ecuador¹⁰ have emerged. In exchange, Ecuador has recently insisted on its good disposition to fight drug traffic and not allow the entry or stay of Colombian armed groups, revealing the destruction of 125 FARC camps in its territory during 2010¹¹. As to the Latin American integration, since September of last year, Ecuador exploited its temporary UNASUR chairmanship and encouraged the Congress of Colombia to ratify the Constituent Treaty, expecting it to pass the Constitutional Court; the Colombian government committed to support the proceeding.

Once Santos was elected President of Colombia, there has been no display of indifference between Colombia and Venezuela. Opened dialogs were already revived between both heads of state, resulting in a five-item bilateral work agenda for the improvement of commercial and political relations supported by bilateral commissions (Benítez, Celi, and Jácome, 2010, pp. 12-13). First: the discussion of outstanding debts and the improvement of commercial relations. Second: the suggestion for the creation of economical complementation mechanisms, to replace what got lost after Venezuela's exit of the CAN. Third: Jointly developing social and productive projects for the borderline communities. Fourth: developing a shared infrastructure, including the possibility that an exit to the Pacific Ocean may be granted by Colombia to Venezuela. Fifth: discussing security issues with a prudent, somewhat reserved, diplomatic posture, including sensitive issues, such as border protection, and the shared rejection and combat of illegal armed groups. However, there are some highly sensitive topics which remain unsolved, such as Colombia's demands regarding Venezuela's (and Ecuador's) explicit commitment to reject and fight the FARC with specific cooperation mechanisms and – in this regard, Colombia seeks to be an influencing party on the CDS direction – to refrain from intervening in its domestic conflict in favor of “negotiated” alternatives with the FARC and to accomplish the verification tool's introduction through the OAS or the UNASUR, with which Colombia could prove the existence of FARC camps in Venezuela and Ecuador. At present, and with the intention of initiating his government with the regained neighboring relations, Santos seems to be determined to freeze those issues, as well as to postpone the extension of military cooperation with the US, on which he persistently insisted considering the rumors about war with Venezuela.

Therefore, the foreign action of Santos' administration outlines new orientation contours pertaining to the Colombian foreign policy, whose strategic objective is aimed to a geographical and topical diversification. The world has changed in the last decade, and makes progress toward a polygon structure, as the result of the new formation of alliances, such as BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China), BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) and IBAS (India, Brazil and South Africa), in whose creation Brazil, as an emerging power, has played a key role. Consequently, Colombia is acquiring awareness of the emergence of a new power balance that, in the end, will be outlining a new world order, in which Latin America, and especially South America, will have to find its place.

It won't mean a total disruption of relations with the US. It rather means the search for a balance in Colombia's foreign relations that reduces the extreme vulnerability caused to the country by an excessive topic and geographic concentration on the US during the last eight years, as well as its controversial unconditional alignment to North American foreign policy. With a realistic view and a pragmatic attitude, as an expression of an identity of its own and of true national interests, the ideologization of Colombian relations with the world is beginning to be a part of the past.

Latin America is to Colombia the geographic, cultural and historical scenario for the development of its international relations. Therefore, it is positive that the Latin American neighborhood starts to play a core role within the new Colombian foreign policy context, where relations with the region are beginning to originate due to conviction more than obligation. In this regard, what could be called the new South American foreign policy strategy of President Santos' administration emerges, clearly expressed through its active and constructive participation in the UNASUR, and the recent announcement that indicates the start of the Colombian negotiations, supported by Brazil, to be accepted as a MERCOSUR member.

In conclusion, a geographical diversification begins to be noticed in Colombia's foreign policy re-orientation; it construes the geopolitical and geo-economic potentials offered by its binding neighbors, in whose intertwining a possible strategic association with Brazil begins to emerge.

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Summary

Most of the article develops a reflection on security conflicts, tensions and dilemmas that emerged during the Uribe era (2002-2010), between Colombia and its neighbors: Ecuador and Venezuela. Within this context, sensitive issues are highlighted, such as the repudiation of the latter to the military strategy of the Uribe administration and the Colombia Plan. Then, the different militarist approaches to domestic and bilateral security dilemmas are compared, outlined by different threat perceptions and the search for regional prestige and domestic loyalties. Subsequently an analysis on how the ambiguous nature of its foreign policy strategies systematically led to erode the peaceful neighborhood is presented. At last, the pragmatism that marks the beginning of the Santos' era in Colombia is highlighted, thus creating favorable conditions to provide a diplomatic treatment to sensitive topics and even revive stagnant integration processes.

Endnotes

- ¹ In the past, Chávez resorted to three Enabling Laws as presidential decrees with "lawful rank, strength and value" approved in 1999, 2000-2001 and 2007-2008, applicable to any national interest subject, including National Defense and Security issues. See: "Get to Know the Details of an Enabling Law" (Conozca los Detalles de una Ley Habilitante). December 14, 2010. Note of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV, as per its acronym in Spanish). In: <http://www.psu.org.ve>
- ² Official Notice available on the website of the Ecuadorian Air Force (FAE, as per its acronym in Spanish). December 15, 2010. In: <http://www.fuerzaaereaecuatoriala.mil.ec>
- ³ See: "Uribe considered sending troops to Venezuela to capture FARC leaders" (Uribe barajó enviar tropas a Venezuela para capturar a jefes de las FARC). December 13, 2010. In: <http://www.eluniverso.com>
- ⁴ By the end of 2009, according to estimations of the National Government submitted in 2010, the FARC and the ELN had been reduced to approximately 9,500 members allocated in both groupings, after having reached a maximum of 20,000 men in the FARC and 4,000 in the ELN by 2002, in addition to achieve a reduction of kidnappings by around 92%. See: "The FARC and the ELN have less than 10.000 members, according to the Secretary of Defense" (FARC y ELN tienen menos de 10.000 integrantes, según Mindefensa). July 25, 2010. www.eldiario.com.co
- ⁵ However, a drop experienced by the Colombian exports to Venezuela in 2009 (approx. 33.5%) and to Ecuador (approx. 16.1%) cannot be exclusively explained by the political variable, since the global crisis of the consumer markets also influenced a sale loss to the US (8.35% approx.). See: "Strong drop of regional exports to Venezuela" (Fuerte caída de exportaciones regionales a Venezuela). February 23, 2010. In: <http://www.dinero.com>
- ⁶ Variation figures from 2009 to 2010 show both a drop in the bilateral commerce between Colombia and Venezuela and China's positioning as a second preferred partner of the Bolivarian country. See the overall export & import statistics per destination of the Venezuelan National Statistics Institute: <http://www.ine.gov.ve>
- ⁷ Uribe Vélez's government always tried to avoid skirmishes and force struggles with Venezuela, despite the roughness of its discourses. See news like: "Colombia disregards troops' movement at the borderline with Venezuela" (Colombia descarta movimiento de tropas en la frontera con Venezuela). July 22, 2010. In: <http://www.semana.com>
- ⁸ The sample included only 1,299 Venezuelans, but was able to reflect the opinion of most of the communications mass media that expressed their rejection at that time to Hugo Chávez's decision to mobilize his troops and heavy weaponry toward the Colombian border. See notes like: "Venezuelans reject war against Colombia, a survey reveals" (Venezolanos rechazan guerra con Colombia, revela encuesta). November 10, 2009. In: <http://venezuelaaldia.com>
- ⁹ See official note of the agency: "The CDS developed an unprecedented procedure to apply Measures of Confidence" (CDS desarrolló procedimiento inédito para aplicar Medidas de Confianza). November 30, 2010. In: <http://www.cdsunasur.org/es/prensa/noticias/459>.
- ¹⁰ See: "Correa and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will study the status of Colombian refugees in Ecuador" (Correa y ACNUR estudiarán estado de refugiados colombianos en Ecuador). December 19, 2010. In: <http://www.eltiempo.com>
- ¹¹ "125 FARC camps were dismantled in 2010 in Ecuador". In: <http://m.eltiempo.com/politica>



Venezuela's Leading Role and its Relations with Brazil

The Commercial Issue as the Axis of a Pragmatic Relation

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Priorities in the relations presently held by the Venezuelan government with its neighbors depend on their overall strategy within the framework of the international system that has three critical axes: The perceived need of a multipolar world; the establishment of an anti-US axis and the defense of sovereignty, as well as promoting President Chávez as a world leader. Based on the above, Venezuela has privileged the entry to the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the South-South relations, by bringing up the need of constructing what it perceives as an anti-West axis through its relations mainly with Iran, China, Russia, and other countries like Syria, Libya, and Belarus.

Regarding its relations with Brazil, around five years ago it was expressed (Jácome, 2007) that these relations rested upon energy cooperation and a mutual aspiration of strengthening South American integration. Although some shared goals of those times may still prevail, the bilateral dynamics have undergone certain important modifications. First of all, more than the energy cooperation that was focused on the proposal of a Southern Gas Pipeline, never completed for being considered an unfeasible project, and the joint construction of a refining plant that is still in the planning process, today the relations rest upon bilateral trading. Secondly, the formal character adopted by the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and the South American Defense Council (CDS) has not necessarily developed as a joint initiative, although both countries are involved in it. In this regard, the most recent years have been characterized by an increasing disintegration and fragmentation in the region, and factors such as the conformation

and actions carried out by the Venezuelan initiative now known as the Bolivarian Alliance for The Peoples of Our America (ALBA) have contributed thereto.

Based on these two axes, one could tell that commercial relations on the bilateral links are sought to be privileged, under the pragmatic view of Brazil. From the political-ideological standpoint prevailing in the Venezuelan foreign policy, feeding an anti-US discourse with the purpose of gaining the Brazilian support is what has been rather pursued. However, just a few supportive actions from the neighboring country have been received as an alliance around this political-ideological objective; therefore, and in more practical terms, there is a greater commercial approximation with the purpose of helping to face domestic problems. With a higher rate of success on the Brazilian part, a pole to contain the interests and influence from the United States in the region is being strengthened. It is therefore important to highlight that Venezuela, in spite of its search for alternate markets, continues relying mainly on selling its oil and derivatives in the US-American market.

This working document is comprised of two main sections. In the first section, the main areas of commercial cooperation that have become the basis of the bilateral relations are identified. The second one is related to its bilateral links and its performance within South America, which may not seem clear yet and which raises the question about whether the processes currently promoted by the UNASUR and the ALBA are supplemental or controversial. In this regard, playing a significant role are issues such as the acquisition of weapons, the unsettled relation with the mutual neighbor, Colombia, as well as regional leaderships. Based on the above, it is imperative to clarify that the Amazon Region issue is vital for Brazil, both internally and in relation with its neighbors; Venezuela does not consider it this way, since it is not a priority in its agenda of building a regional leadership.

From Economic Complementarity to Commercial Dependence

Within the framework of strengthening South-South relations and building an alternate integration in which energy resources would perform an important role, the possibility of a close economic relation between Brazil and Venezuela has been raised; as already mentioned, such a relation would be focused on maximizing energy power. However, few advances have this made in this regard. As previously stated (Jácome, 2007), the commercial balance between both countries as of 2001 favors Brazil, due to the fact that it does not need oil derivatives to be imported any longer. Therefore, imports and investments from the Southern neighbor have experienced an increase in the last 9 years.

Based on the above, Brazil should be considered one of the most important investors in Latin America. Oil independence from Brazil, accentuated by the recent discovery of offshore oil fields, has substantially changed the relations between both countries, and has given Brasilia an advantage related not only to commercial balance, but also to political relations. This discovery will lead Brazil to become an important oil exporter in the near future. President Chávez's government strategy to replace commercial relations with Colombia with imports from Brazil and Argentina has created an increasingly dependent relation with its Southern neighbor. However, the rotten imported food containers scandal has also led to a reassessment of the scenario. There is no doubt that handling and allocation of imports hauled by

land freight from Colombia are carried out more easily than imports by sea freight, that must be processed at the port facilities, proven to be inefficient and corrupt.

Thus, commercial agreements become the core issue of their relations. Both countries' presidents have implemented a quarterly meeting methodology to keep track on such exchanges. Imports coming from the South, range from vehicles to agricultural food products, thus becoming one of the largest suppliers in the latter item. Likewise, there has been an increase in the investments from Brazilian businesses for the subway works as well as for construction of dams, bridges and railroads.

Most recent examples are those initiatives approved in April and August 2010, which favor Brazil. In the first case, 22 agreements were signed for 10 areas where electricity, petrochemistry, and finance and food industries stand out. The first one is of special interest, in view of the electricity crisis Venezuela has been facing since 2009. Brazil has become a partner in this issue, when, in the past, it was Venezuela who had been a steady electricity supplier to the northern Brazil. Later, 27 covenants were subscribed in areas including public finances, social projects, borderline relations and technology. Once more, an agreement regarding the establishment of a bi nationally shared refinery in Pernambuco was signed; this project has been present within the last 5 years, but apparently it is not being executed as a binational company due to lack of resources from the Venezuelan state-owned petroleum company (PDVSA).

According to the statements issued by Nelson Quijada, chairman of the Venezuelan-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce (Tovar, 2010), the commercial exchange in 2009 amounted 6,000 million USD and it is expected to reach 5,000 million USD in 2010. The most important Venezuelan import commodity is food, especially beef, poultry, farm machinery. Exports from Venezuela are focused on oil derivatives.

A full incorporation into the MERCOSUR has not been possible yet in the regional sphere, since the approval from the Paraguayan Legislative Branch is still pending. An important progress was achieved when the Brazilian Senate approved this incorporation after two years of discussion. However, from the standpoint of the increasingly weakened Venezuelan entrepreneurial sector, their peer's competitiveness surpasses the capabilities of the former. They believe that accessing such organization as a fully enabled member will further harm their precarious situation. Just like it has been happening in the last years, it is expected that business will be done with state-owned companies, which are neither characterized by their transparency nor by their degree of compliance with the agreements. Despite the risks, the increased bilateral business seems to indicate that the benefits for the Brazilian investors exceed the concerns for legal uncertainty.

In this regard, the Venezuelan government makes all possible efforts to comply with these commitments, for an integral part of its strategic view of the region is the alliance with the Brazilian government and private sector. Venezuela considers this alliance should be kept and considers that it is by no means as conflictive as is its bilateral relation with Colombia. In spite of historical border disputes, there is a distension position in the case of Guyana, which makes Caracas pay the least attention to this borderline.

The South American Sphere: Complementarity or Estrangement?

As highlighted earlier, the official discourse of both governments has been intended to encourage complementarity and establish alliances within the regional sphere. However, some actions adopted by President Chávez, particularly since 2007 with the beginning of the radicalization process of his Bolivarian Revolution and the establishment of the “Socialism of the 21st Century”, could lead to a certain estrangement, at least concerning the regional relations scheme in South America. Bilateral relations are not considered to have been impacted by the military acquisitions in this regard, although they might become a debating point in the middle term, if transparency practices and confidence measures are not adopted. Relations with this neighbor are diametrically opposed to those developed with Colombia, especially within the last two years, a period that witnessed a high degree of conflict and tension. Furthermore, Brazil has several times assumed an important role as a non-official mediator, trying to keep regional stability, especially in the Andean sub-region.

Certain differences between both governments and their regional leadership goals can be detected in the regional integration and cooperation sphere. Such discrepancies are clearly evidenced in the fact that, in view of the increasing fragmentation and weakening of the traditional instances, such as the Andean Community (CAN) and MERCOSUR, two proposals emerge within the last years. UNASUR, led by Brazil, and ALBA, powered by Venezuela. Just as explained below, in some spheres, particularly in those related to security and defense, different perspectives have emerged on how to address certain junctures that have to do with the fact that there are differences as to how the main vulnerabilities faced by the countries in the region are perceived, and based on it, about the answers that may be construed from multilateral cooperation instances.

Military Acquisitions

These new cooperation initiatives emerge among increasing bilateral tensions related to the usual border disputes between countries, such as the case of Chile and Peru, but that have more to do with political differences, just like the cases of Ecuador-Colombia and Colombia-Venezuela, as well as with new topics basically related to issues such as the access to resources and environment, like the cases of Brazil-Bolivia due to the gas issue; Paraguay-Brazil due to the Itaipu dam, and Argentina-Uruguay due to the paper mills. Therefore, while the integrationist discourse is strengthened on one hand, inter-state tensions increase on the other hand, the most recent one being the Venezuelan government breaching relations with its neighbor Colombia in July 2010, although resumed in early August.

However, it is unlikely that inter-state conflicts become traditional military confrontations, a scenario that hasn't occurred in the region for almost 20 years. Borderline tensions can be expected, though. That's the reason why the question on why re-armament is occurring in several countries, particularly in the South American region, has emerged. This situation has raised a debate around those military acquisitions.

On one hand, governments argue that they are going through a modernization, re-equipping process, since current devices are outdated. In this regard, it is critical to consider that up to 2009, high prices in commodities (oil, copper, gas) made it possible for several governments in the region to be able to target those additional resources for acquiring weapons and military equipment. There are two additional arguments. First, the need of strengthening the sovereignty defense capabilities facing threats of possible interventions from other countries, as basically argued by the Venezuelan government. Second, the priority of increasing the capability of securing the territory against threats such as drug traffic and international organized crime, as well as protecting it from vulnerabilities associated with the environment and natural resources, the latter related to the Amazon region from the Brazilian standpoint.

On the other hand, sectors who criticize those acquisitions argue that a new “arms race” is being developed, i.e. a competitive behavior in the purchase of weapons that leads to an imbalanced military power in the region. As to the military expenditure, Venezuela ranks in the 6th position after Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Mexico and Argentina, although it has been the country with more expenditure in this sense within the last five years. In this period of time, according to the data provided by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), following Chile, Venezuela has been the 2nd largest purchaser of weapons in Latin America, and in 2008 it surpassed this Southern Cone country. The US has expressed their concern as to whether a part of such armament may be subsequently diverted to the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC). In this regard, it is important to consider the impasse that emerged with the Swedish government in 2009, as some rocket launchers previously purchased by the Venezuelan government, were discovered in hands of the FARC. Furthermore, it has been highlighted (Diamint, 2009) that while the other countries are purchasing equipment to be operated only by military staff, the Venezuelan government, in a high percentage, makes purchases that may be destined to arm civilians.



The primary acquisitions of armament and equipment between 2005 and 2008 include the following, among others¹:

Type	Qty	Supplier
AK 103 Rifles	100,000	Russia
MI 8, 17, 24, and 26 I 26T Helicopters	51	Russia
Long-Range JYL Radars	10	China
Venesat 1 Telecom Satellite	1	China
KAB 500/1500 Missiles	200	Russia
Air-Ground Missiles	150	Russia
SU 30 Fighter Planes	24	Russia
Vympel R 27 Medium-Range Air-Air Missiles	100	Russia
Vympel R 73 Short-Range Air-Air Missiles	150	Russia
Night Vision Rifle Peep Sights	N/I	Belarus
Air-Ground Missiles	N/I	Belarus
Dragunov Rifles	5,000	Russia
RPG-7 Rocket Launchers	N/I	Russia
Riot Control Equipment	N/I	China
Igla-S & RBS-70 Portable Air-Defense Devices	N/I	Russia
K-8 Training Planes	18	China
Novantia Patrol Vessels	8	Spain
Kilo Submarines	3	Russia

Source: Jácome (2010).

As one can see, the most important supplier has been Russia, and an estimation of the amount invested up to 2009 is around 4.5 billion USD (González, 2009). In addition, Russia granted Venezuela a new credit line in the amount of 2.2 billion USD in September 2009, to be used for acquiring, among others, the following items (El Universal, February 2, 2010; González, 2009):

- 92 T-72 Tanks
- Over 300 armored BMP-3 vehicles
- S-300VM Antey-2500 and Buk M2 Air-Defense Systems, and S-125 Pechora Missile Systems
- Mobile Batteries of Multiple 9K58 Rocket Launchers and Smerch Missiles

¹ There is no official source that can provide information about these acquisitions. Therefore, this chart is prepared based on data provided by different sources, lacking information about some items, and possible inaccuracies are highlighted. Likewise, one should be warned that such chart contains acquisitions that have been announced, but not necessarily carried out and/or delivered.

According to Bromley (2009), Venezuelan acquisitions are intended for multiple goals: First, to modernize its equipment, as stated by the government some years ago. Secondly, to deepen relations with other countries based on the government search for the establishment of a multi-pole approach. In this regard, in addition to commercial relations, Venezuela has strengthened the acquisition of military material with Russia, China, Belarus and Iran. Third, there is the hypothetical USA military intervention, which as publicly highlighted, could be carried out through the neighbor, Colombia.

However, there are also contradictions between the hypothesis of a conflict and the equipment being purchased. The governmental standpoint is that those acquisitions are for defensive purposes, and not at all for offensive purposes. It has been pointed out (González, 2009) that such purchases are basically targeted to a conventional offensive approach against an enemy equally powered, which is contradictory to the “war of resistance” hypothesis, which in recent years has been the official discourse’s primary argument. Additionally, it’s been emphasized that there’s a contradiction (Romero in Jácome 2007) in some of these acquisitions as well as the argument that there is a scenario of an asymmetrical war, since this type of conflict does not include the use of conventional weapons. In this regard, airplanes, helicopters, and air-defense missiles are virtually useless as opposite to rifles, portable weapons and other light systems.

Regarding the arms build-up (Benítez/Celi/Jácome, 2010), three additional issues should be submitted to consideration. First, the development of military industries in the region, an increasing presence of the nuclear topic and the traffic of light weapons, directly related to the increasingly higher degrees of urban violence in cities like Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and Caracas.

Although in a smaller scale, several South American countries have been creating and expanding military industries, with Brazil as the largest supplier of weapons in South America. As an example are the Super Tucano manufactured by Embraer, which have been sold both to the Colombian and the Ecuadorian air forces. It’s worth mentioning that in the specific case of Venezuela, the different agreements especially subscribed with Russia and China include provisions that consider technological transfers.

Among the middle-term objectives proposed by the CDS (www.cdsunasur.org) in this regard, the construction of a South American identity in terms of defense is included, and one of its vital axes relates to the increasing, strategic autonomy that would be attained by strengthening the armament industry and by cooperating in this area. Based on this scenario, discussions on the progress made in this area were held during a workshop carried out in Quito by the end of June 2010.

In addition, the nuclear topic has become part of this arms build-up agenda. In the case of Brazil, it was achieved in 1975 through the Brazil-Germany covenant and the most recent initiatives about submarines driven by nuclear energy. Even in more recent dates, the Venezuelan president has publicly pointed out that developing nuclear energy projects for peaceful purposes jointly with Iran is possible. Among the CDS agreements (Temporary Secretariat, 2010), the agreement related to keeping South America as a nuclear weapon free

zone and the employment of nuclear technology only for peaceful purposes is prioritized.

In spite of the fact, that Brazil and Venezuela are among the countries with greater acquisitions of military equipment, this has not impacted their neighboring relations, particularly due to the fact that it is the only border on which Venezuela is not undergoing a border dispute. Therefore, both of these countries believe that such acquisitions pose a threat to their security. It is important to highlight that the security and defense topics do not perform any important or controversial roles in the relations between both countries. A good example in this regard is the military agreement between Brazil and the United States, which was presented to the UNASUR members in 2010, without having received any kind of remark or criticism from Caracas, drastically opposite to the case of its Colombian neighbor.

Crisis with Colombia

For the past ten years, Venezuela and Colombia have had a relationship characterized by a cyclic trend of unrest and approximation, not only associated with their bilateral relations, but also with the hemispheric context. Several topics have led to an increase of mutual fears (Ramírez et.al., 2005) in this regard. The following can, among others, be pointed out:

On the Venezuelan side	On the Colombian side
Equipping the Colombian armed forces to face the domestic situation that, as perceived, can lead to a military imbalance.	Close relations between the Venezuelan central government and some local governments that reject the so called "Plan Colombia". It can hinder a joint border control and enable –whether by acting or by ignoring– the employment of Venezuelan soil to host guerrillas. A perceived insight that the Venezuelan government does not want to cooperate in joint activities to help control the borderline.
Due to its close relation with the US Government, the fear of Colombia becoming a forefront to discredit, threaten or confront President Chávez's government.	The Venezuelan government may benefit from the advantage of its ideological closeness with the guerilla and get involved in the country's domestic political debate.
The support given by the Colombian elites to the Venezuelan opposition.	Using the border dispute issue to encourage nationalism right at a moment where it is facing domestic unrest.

Both countries have been experiencing an increasingly tense environment, particularly since March 2008, which influences the dynamics associated not only with the bilateral relations between both central governments, but also the borderline links and those bonds emerged in the South American and continental dynamics.

Relations between the governments of Colombia and Venezuela have been oscillating between approximation/distension and tension/unrest. In this regard, it has been stated that links have undergone three stages between 1999 and 2010 driven by the same objectives on each side (Ramírez, 2010). In the Venezuelan case, it seeks to influence the Colombian



conflict, since expansion and consolidation of the “Bolivarian revolution” is particularly significant for its project, and considering its perception of Colombia as a US area of influence in the region, its influence is strategic in nature. On the Colombian side, the government seeks to prevent that the ideological closeness with the FARC does not translate into an open support; therefore, an emphasis on the commercial relations has been attempted.

These three stages transitioned from an active neutrality (1999 – April 2002), through tensions and reconciliations (April 2002-2007), to a high degree of tension (2008-2010). Different options in the foreign policy between both governments were outlined since the beginning of President Chávez’s government; they included critical disagreement points regarding the Colombian domestic conflict, the “Colombia Plan”, and the role played by the United States. Within this framework, the Venezuelan Government, led by its President, issued in 2008 the order to decrease and subsequently discontinue the commercial relations. Thus, the bilateral trading descended from 6.514 million USD in 2008 to 2.600 million USD in 2009, and it is projected to become even lower in 2010 (Romero, 2010). This situation has favorably impacted the commercial relations with other countries, especially Brazil and Argentina, countries that have tried to fill the empty space left by a decreased bilateral trading with Colombia.

However, this suppliers’ replacement, particularly in the agro-food field, has also had negative repercussions for the Venezuelan government. As previously pointed out, transportation and distribution of food from this country is carried out by land freight, which is a quicker method. In return, imports from Brazil and Argentina are conducted through sea freight and the entry/distribution process from Venezuelan ports has proved to be much more complex. The multiple scandals between May and August 2010 regarding the containers found with rotten and/or expired food, are a clear indicator of this situation.

The most recent impasse with Bogotá emerged on July 2010, as the presence of guerilla leaders and camps at the Venezuelan borderline zones² was reported by the government of

² In the communities of El Nula, Machiques and Sierra de Perijá, province of Zulia, and in Elorza, Guasdualito and Achagua, province of Apure (*El Universal*, July 16, 2010).

former President Uribe before the OAS authorities, which led to a disruption of relations and their subsequent resumption just a few days after President Santos's assumption. In spite of the establishment of five bilateral commissions to negotiate various issues, especially the commercial topic, it will be significant to see if a mutual confidence environment can be achieved in the short and middle terms, in order to overcome the cycles of tensions and unrest. In view of the above, a strengthening of the commercial relations –a necessary scenario for the domestic political plans of Caracas– may be expected.

The challenges of regional leadership

Within the last ten years, Brazil has played a much more active role in the region, particularly since Fernando Enrique Cardozo's government, and even more with Lula Da Silva. The best example thereof is the leadership as of 2004 regarding the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), a “backstage” diplomatic approach in the conflicts between Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela, as well as its performance in the Honduran crisis in 2009. It played a vital role in the UNASUR and CDS creation process. Even more recently, it has played an important role in the initiative to create the Community of Latin America and the Caribbean States (CEALC).

According to the International Monetary Fund, Brazil is the 8th economic power in the world, and represents 40% of the Latin American and the Caribbean GDP, and 55% of the South American GDP (Arnson/Sotero, 2010). This has helped Brazil to outstand as a global player, being a part of what are considered the ‘emergent economies’, together with India and China. This was evidenced in the most recent diplomatic events through the joint effort conducted together with Turkey to promote an agreement between Iran and the permanent members of the UN Security Council. In this regard, the wish of becoming a permanent member in this Council once its extension is approved, has been present within the last years.

However, it has been remarked (Hurrel in Arnson/Sotero, 2010) that an ambiguous stance prevails concerning the assumption of regional leadership. However, it has focused in undertaking an important role to maintain the regional political stability, always encouraging dialog and negotiations between conflicting parties, whether within the domestic (Bolivia, Venezuela) or bilateral (Colombia, Venezuela and Ecuador) level. In the last year, there is a perception that it is rather withdrawing, that it is determined to pursue its role as a global player without the problems typical to leadership in a conflictive region, especially in the Andean sub-region. There is the perception that both Mexico and Brazil, the major players, do not wish to assume the costs of a regional leadership in this sense. It is perceived that there are increasing tensions between its roles as a global and a regional player.

Regarding this debate about the Brazilian leadership, we should ask ourselves whether its neighbors are willing to accept it. This is an especially relevant question both to Argentina and Venezuela. On the other hand, ideological discrepancies with Colombian and Peruvian governments pose setbacks. Particularly In the case of Venezuela, as previously stated, a controversial issue has been whether a competition for regional leadership is unfolding, in spite of the apparent good relations between both neighbors,. There have been speculations as to the fact that Venezuela, based on its energy power, pursues a

leadership that has even been announced as a part of its international strategy. A feeling of an increasing tension between the UNASUR and the ALBA can emerge as an alternate perspective, but with an asymmetrical relation between Venezuela and the other members.

As an example of the above, we can mention that in the VII Summit held on October 17, 2009 at Cochabamba, the decision to create the ALBA_TCP Permanent Sovereignty and Defense Committee was made, as an integral part of the Political Council, and it was determined that one of its main objectives would be the outline of a “Joint People Overall Defense Strategy” and the constitution of a “School of Dignity and Sovereignty of the Armed Forces of the ALBA-TCP”³. This action can be interpreted as the beginning of the construction of a parallel institutionalization, particularly after the UNASUR’s approval on May 2010 to establish the Center for Strategic Studies that will be based in Buenos Aires and will perform as the CDS consulting body. However, resolute steps within the ALBA have not been taken, and the Ecuadorian Secretary of Defense claimed during a conference about the South American Defense Council held September 20, 2010, in Washington D.C., that such instance will not be implemented⁴.

Another scenario where this eventual rivalry can be witnessed is in Central America and the Caribbean, where there seems to be a sort of competition regarding resources for cooperation. In the Venezuelan case it relates to the Petro Caribe initiative that has been operating for many years, although a range of the already announced projects has not been developing and a decrease of oil prices may influence sustainability in this initiative. In the meantime, both public and private Brazilian investments have been increasing in countries such as El Salvador and Nicaragua. Cuba’s case is similar, where it is believed that the approximation between Havana and Brasilia witnessed within the last 2 years is intended to decrease the dependence on Caracas and to promote the Southern country’s interests in the Caribbean. Brazil has become the 4th largest commercial partner of the island (Mendelson Forman, Johanna in Arnson/Sotero, 2010). Likewise, Brazil’s interest in the Caribbean is clearly inferred in its presence in Haiti, along with other Southern countries, like Chile and Uruguay. It has been pointed out (Mendelson Forman, Johanna in Arnson/Sotero, 2010) that Haiti’s experience is a clear indicator of the Brazilian strategy of exercising leadership in the region, but within the context of multilateral institutions.

However, within the framework of what is perceived as an apparent ambiguity to assume a stronger regional leadership beyond Haiti, although without a realistic rationale, especially after the economic crisis worldwide and its effects on oil prices, the fact that president Chávez would want to take advantage of the eventual void cannot be ruled out, in spite of the estrangement and increasing isolation of his government due to its internal radicalization with the proposals regarding the 21st century socialism.

Based on the above and speaking in more political-ideological terms, within Latin America and the Caribbean, there has been a differentiation between the reformist-socialist

³ Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and St. Vincent, and the Grenadines showed some reserve, since they belong to the Regional Security System (RSS) of the Eastern Caribbean Islands (www.alianzabolivariana.org)

⁴ Discussion panel entitled “The Emerging South American Defense Council”, organized by the Washington Office on Latin America and the Regional Security Cooperation Program of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

approach for social justice promoted by Lula's government and Chávez's radicalism. They have highlighted two leftist options, but while it seems that the former is gaining more space, the latter is decaying and witnesses a decrease in the alliances when governments, such as Ecuador, and even Bolivia, seem to be distancing themselves, especially as to their more belligerent stances both in the regional and international fields.

Conclusions

One may expect that commercial relations will continue to be the vital axis, favoring both state-owned and private Brazilian companies. Within the security and defense sphere, one can also expect a greater degree of cooperation, especially regarding drug trafficking, since both countries have become the preferred routes for drug traffic to Europe, Africa and the United States. Establishing important cooperation agreements in this regard would have significant value, although they could be restricted by the dialogue agreement established in March 2010, when the Secretary of State visited Brazil and created a consensus on the need of handling threats like drug trafficking jointly, as well as analyzing topics related to the environment, and the development of bio-fuels and commercial relations.

Another additional element that will require follow-up is the fact that they share an increasing relation with Iran, although the relation held by Brazil has much more to do with commercial exchanges than with the political-ideological rhetoric of Caracas.

An important factor that can also influence the links between those countries is the fact that a "hyper-presidentialism" in the foreign policy has occurred in Venezuela in the last 11 years, in which the President of the Republic sets forth the guidelines in the relations with other countries. This was, to a great extent, witnessed in Bogotá, since the personal tensions between presidents greatly weakened bilateral institutionalization. This has not occurred to the same extent with the current Brazilian government, but the fact of maintaining and strengthening the institutional instances is considered of great importance. In addition, President Chávez has been much more cautious as to getting involved in his neighbor's domestic policy, in spite of the close relations he maintains with some social organizations and movements, especially within the framework of the World Social Forum.

Generally speaking, it can be pointed out that Venezuela needs Brazil in a greater extent than the opposite, since for the former its alliances with other countries, especially Argentina, are much more important. Moreover, Venezuela can sometimes be an uncomfortable neighbor, especially within the South American framework, a fact that will probably continue requiring further diplomatic containment efforts by Brasilia.

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Venezuela: The Chosen Path to National Defense. A Critical Perspective of Its Domestic and Regional Impact

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In this article, the author performs a detailed analysis of the path chosen by the Bolivarian Revolution in terms of security and national defense since its promoter, Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Chávez Frías, assumed the Presidency of the Venezuelan Republic. It takes us through his twelve-year (12) walk in office, and through the consequences it had Regional Security towards the 21st century.

Judging by the nature of the legislation and the official documents that emerged from these last years of exercise of power in Venezuela, the primary players' key decisions, and the developments described in the course of action, the author warns about the serious problems which are faced by country in terms of security and national defense due to the de-institutionalization of the State, the operation of illegal armed groups, and the migratory, fiscal, sanitary, and customs vulnerabilities.

Introduction

Since 1999, Venezuela lacks a National Strategic Concept¹, which was approved by the National Defense Council "...on the bonding basis of the contents found in the core principles established in the Republic's Constitution and Laws, with a gradual progress that addresses the current scenario and in conformity with the national interests"²: and this allows and guarantees the utmost purposes of national security.

During the first decade of the 21st century, this situation has generated in

the South American country a lack of functionality as to the conception, planning, decision-making, and execution of public policies related to national security and defense. These are starting to become noticeable and will have an unavoidable impact on regional security.

By 1999, upon the approval through a referendum of the new Constitution, a hope of an assertive directionality for the Venezuelan State was emerging concerning national security. It was the first time in the country's constitutional history, that an entire section regarding National Security was incorporated in the Constitution³, which –among other issues– highlighted that it was imperative to legislate on unprecedented topics and –in some other issues– to amend current laws and to adjust them to the requirements the constituents of the late 20th century, as outlined for the country. Unfortunately, the balance after ten years of the Constitution being in place reports that the following laws, among others, are still pending approval: National Mobility Law, Law for an active Engagement of the National Armed Force in the National Development; Document Classification and Declassification Law, National Intelligence and Counterintelligence Service Law, Weapons and Explosives Law, National Armed Forces' Social Security Law, Military Discipline Law, Organic Boundaries Law.

On the contrary, laws such as the National Armed Forces Law, have been under permanent amendment over the last five (5) years. Three (3) reforms have occurred. The first was conducted in 2005⁴, and the others in 2008⁵ and 2009⁶. A new reform is expected for the ongoing year, 2011, which will include, among others, the incorporation of the new National Bolivarian Militia Commanding Officers who are being currently trained for that purpose. This is undoubtedly a controversial issue, since the Militia is not considered in the composition formula of the National Armed Forces which is specifically mentioned in the Constitution, and since the creation of the Militia in 2005 was ascribed to President Hugo Chávez Frias, interested in establishing a Praetorian Guard at the service of the so called Bolivarian Revolution. Regrettably, because of the lack of political will, another important law, the Disarmament Law of 2002⁷, has not been enforced in any of the sections.

Other key laws and political decisions that might have fostered national security and extend its benefits to the region, have not made any progress in their execution either, such as the Organic Law for the National Police Service and Enforcement⁸, the Organic Law against Organized Crime, and a strengthened national decentralization and integration with neighboring countries in terms of security cooperation. Just recently, with the new Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos' taking office on August 7, 2010, cooperation has been incipiently re-established in regard to mutual border security between Venezuela and Colombia, after 10 years of complex mutual relations. It must be recalled that President Chávez's first action regarding his government's foreign policy in 1999, was that he declared himself a neutral party in view of the Colombian domestic conflict, a situation that entailed its own consequences.

The leap transition from the 20th to the 21st century, instead of becoming a challenge to call upon the best to formulate the path towards the future, has been used by the political leaders for more than 10 years to keep a polarizing ideological discourse, in many cases,

with no adherence to the rule of law. This formula has been kept to maintain power, thus preventing Venezuela to outline the toolbox necessary to face a safe and prosperous future for the State's constitutive elements: its people, its territory, and its legal-political system.

Integral National Defense

By 2004, the Bolivarian Revolution's military doctrine known as: "Integral National Defense", (Dieterich, 2004) was born in Venezuela. It was frequently mentioned in official speeches, but remained inaccessible as no official publication is made available.

This plan emerged as the government's answer to the destabilization plans attributed to the opposition, judging by the events of 2002 that held Chávez's government at bay, ousting him from power for more than 48 hours on April 11 that year and also as a response to the results of the presidential referendum held on August 15, 2004. "The new doctrine emerges as a response to the US military threat, and as such, reflects the structural traits of every defense doctrine, intended to deter or defeat a numerically and technologically far superior aggressor" (Dieterich, 2004).

The new doctrine seems to be based on the co-responsibility between the State and the civil society and remains oriented toward three strategic directions or lines (Dieterich, 2004):

- Strengthening of military power
- Deepening the civic military union
- Strengthening of national defense and the people's involvement thereto

In this doctrine, nothing refers to the fight against drug trafficking, organized transnational crime, human trafficking, or arms/minerals trafficking, all of which are easily feasible, given the extraordinary geographical location that makes Venezuela an essentially borderline country, adjoining 14 States, at the Caribbean, Andean, Amazon, and Atlantic regions.⁹

Military Power Strengthening

The first strategic line intended to strengthen military power includes maintaining and developing the physical infrastructure of the military, increased contingency forces, the creation of new military units, and the execution of a re-equipping plan encompassing both the procurement of new weaponry systems, as well as the recovery of existing ones. In terms of equipment, it a priority to seek alternative arms supply sources and to develop a domestic defence industry in conformity with a domestic development model.

However, so far the strengthening of military power has not meant an increase of the military manpower. As a matter of fact, the military staff in the National Armed Forces has transitioned from 163,364 members, as set forth by the National Budget Act of 2008, to 117,400 members anticipated by the National Budget of 2010, which includes the so called Bolivarian National Militia that was officially enabled as of 2005 through an amendment performed to the National Armed Forces' Organic Law. In turn, training provided to military staff has faced two hindrances to be properly addressed: on one hand, a screening of



trainers in the military schools which has been performed since 2004 to date, and which was resulted in excluding those faculty members considered to belong to the “opposition” or those who, because of their request of the presidential revoking referendum held in 2004, had been included in the so called Tascón List¹⁰; This meant a decrease of quality in the military staff training, where critical thinking was suppressed. The other hindrance has been a deterioration of the weapon systems functionality, due to two circumstances: Failure in making key decisions during the 5-year period (2000-2005) regarding new investments and plans in view of a foreseeable uselessness of the weapon systems; and the aftermath of the US resolution that banned the sale and transfer of weapons and military technology to Venezuela, which was enacted on October 1, 2006, although its actual implementation began one year before that date. Both circumstances had a deep impact, which we undoubtedly consider as the “lost decade in sustaining the National Armed Forces’ functionality”.

Investment in maintenance and development of the physical infrastructure of the military has been intermittent, although noticeable in some instances because of its amounts, but also notorious in other respects due to the contrary effect, because of the shockingly abandoned state of some of the infrastructure. Lacking an official infrastructure plan for the middle and long term, the National Armed Forces do not have any real outcomes concerned with the improving their staff members’ quality of life, improving of the conditions of those facilities which are used for military training, upgrading of those facilities requiring new weaponry, or improving of the environmental conditions and in seeking to reduced the impact on the environment.

a. Military Equipment

In terms of military equipment, there are various items to highlight: “During Hugo Chávez’s first presidential period of 5 years, among other equipment, military materiel was acquired from multiple Western countries: tactical vehicles from Austria, Brazil, and Switzerland; administrative airlift units from France; an elevation trailer, radars, and fire steering systems for air defense missiles from Holland; hovercrafts from the United Kingdom; missiles and mobile air defense launchers from Sweden. In addition, the United States continued supplying spare parts for the US systems currently used by the Venezuelan Armed Forces, such as the F-16 fighter aircraft, the C-130H Hercules airlift plane, and the OV-10 Bronco tactical support aircraft”ⁿ (Civil Association “Citizens’ Control”, 2011, p. 4).

Within the last 5 years, (2005-2010), 14 State sources supplied weaponry to Venezuela, some of them mentioned below: Austria, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, China, Spain, the USA, Holland, Iran, Italy, United Kingdom, Russia, Sweden, and Switzerland. (Ibid., p. 4-16).

Among the features of those supplies the following ones are highlighted: 1) The State’s lack of transparency in reporting of the received quantities. 2) Frequent lack of information regarding the branch (Army, Navy, Air Force, or National Guard) within the National Armed Forces as recipient of the supplies. 3) An information gap in terms of the official announcements of new acquisitions and the final condition after their reception. Following the same pattern, according to a survey conducted by the research and analysis team of the “Citizens’ Control” Civil Association (Ibid.), there is no data available concerning the quantity of: 6-ton, 4x4 Steyr4 L-8 anti-riot trucks (Whales) acquired from Austria for the National Guard; Imbel MD1 9x19mm handguns acquired from Brazil; campaign equipment (tents and kitchens), communication equipment, and anti-riot/anti-disturbances equipment and material acquired from China; anti-riot equipment and materiel acquired from Spain; radar, electronic systems, fire steering systems acquired from Holland; or of 2S23 Nona –SVK self-propelled gun-mortar systems, 2S12 Sani 120-mm mortars, ZU-23-2 23-mm air-defense twin-barreled guns, BAL-E Coastal Defense missile systems, 9A52 Smerch 300-mm 1x12 mobile multiple rocket launcher systems, 2S19M1 Msta-S 152-mm self-propelled howitzers, 9K51 Grad 40x122-mm mobile multiple rocket launcher system, S-300 mobile air-defense missile systems, S-125 Pechora 2-M mobile air-defense missile systems, 9K37 Buk self-propelled air-defense missile systems, all of which have been acquired from Russia and are expected to be delivered to Venezuela within this year (2011) or in 2012. Also, there is no available data concerning the status of the Belarus project for the establishment of an Air Defense Command and Control Center and an Electronic Warfare Command and Control Center announced by the Venezuelan government. Venezuelan military personnel have been sent to Belarus by their government and are training at this time. There is no accessible data regarding the status of the announced project for the construction of a night combat system for an air base powered by solar and AC energy acquired from a US-Canadian entrepreneurial consortium, nor about the status of the communications equipment acquisition project to be obtained from China.

Based on the investigative task conducted by the aforementioned research and analysis team of the “Citizens’ Control” Civil Association, it is notable how Russia, the largest supplier of weapon systems to Venezuela —due to the quantity and amount of sales carried out— has

also been its most mentioned supplier when announcing new acquisitions within the last 5-year period, and the purpose of many of these acquisitions have not been disclosed yet. In this regard, the following equipment should be highlighted: S-125 Pechora 2-M Air-Defense Missile Systems; 9K37 Buk self-propelled air-defense missile systems; Ilyushin Il-476 strategic airlift planes; Ilyushin Il-78 aerial refueling tankers; Mi-28N Night Hunter attack helicopters; Tor-M1 9M330 mobile air-defense missile batteries; Project 636/class Varshavyanka submarines (NATO code: Improved Kilo); Project 677E/Amur class 1650 submarines; Beriev Be-200 amphibious planes; Antonov An-74 airlift planes, and Antonov An-74P maritime patrolling aircrafts. A list of presidential announcements, most of them for projects that have not been submitted to the public eye, and which show to a great extent the tactical and strategic needs of the National Armed Forces that have not been satisfied yet, especially if we add to this situation the pending construction or manufacturing deliveries from multiple countries, the following standing out: a gunpowder manufacturing plant contracted to Iran, and currently under construction in Moron, province of Carabobo; the Russian helicopter crew training center currently being set up in San Felipe, province of Yaracuy; the Su-30Mk2 planes Service Center, whose purpose and status is unknown; and the construction status of the project for the last of 4 Avante 1400/class Guacamacuto heavy coastal surveillance patrol ships acquired from Spain, which was expected to be built at the Venezuelan State-owned Embankment and Shipyard Company Diques y Astilleros Nacionales CA de Venezuela (Dianca) facilities. This has not been materialized yet.

b. A Dysfunctional Conceptualization of the National Military Defense.

Venezuela is not involved in an arms race, as has been frequently highlighted by the international media. Venezuela is facing probably the largest historical dysfunctionality regarding the conceptualization of the needs required to the Nation's military defence. Thus, acquisitions are being projected and executed as compartmentalized components development plans, in an attempt to overcome obsolete equipment, insufficient logistics, the consequences from the US embargo and the pressures exerted by the US over its allies and third-party nations who manufacture arms systems and technology with US components, in order to prevent weapons to be sold to Venezuela. The National Armed Forces face a challenge on whether to project its operational readiness for a hypothetical conventional conflict or for a hypothetical "protracted people's war", as part of the new Bolivarian military thought that identifies the US American imperialism as the primary permanent threat of military aggression, based on its estimation of a war threat in two axes: one relates to the very existence of the Bolivarian Revolution that is perceived by this thought as to undermine the US interests in the region, given its socialist, solidarity-based approach toward the Latin American and Caribbean region; and the other axis has to do with the traditional military aggressiveness of the Yankee Imperialism and its hunger for Venezuela's abundant oil reservoirs.

This hypothesis does not exclude –as the Venezuelan government has frequently pointed out— the threat of a conflict with Colombia² and the US interest thereto³ as an excuse to invade Venezuela, an issue that, by the way, is present in the new Venezuelan military thought since the unrest reigning in the Venezuelan-Colombian borderlands and the tensions which emerged within the last decade as a constant factor between the Nariño Palace and the Miraflores Palace.

Since 2004, the possible scenarios of conflict threat for the Venezuelan National Armed Forces were defined on a doctrinaire basis. In fact, during an exposition made by the former Commanding General of the Army, Gen. Raúl Baduel, in occasion of the 51st Anniversary of the Infantry School, those scenarios were outlined as follows: “1. A 4th-Generation war, intended to create unrest in the country as a first step towards the execution of operations targeted to disrupt and finally destroy the Nation State; 2. Coup d’états, subversion, and actions conducted by separatist groups, promoted by transnational political organizations known as “corporate predators”; 3. A regional conflict, and 4. A military intervention like the one presently conducted by the coalition in Iraq, developing combined operations whether or not under the OAS-UN mandate. The transnational goals of a conflict would be as follows: 1. to punish nationalist ideology; 2. to ensure the unlimited, safe, and cheap access to important energy sources; 3. to consolidate the globalist ideology, and 4. to extend the Anglo-Saxon dominance throughout the world, at least for the next century.” (Dieterich, 2004).

To this date, the periodicity theory, regarding the appearance and development of wars that the national government has pronounced in 2004 remains unchanged, and will come true if a Colombian-US American alliance launches a military assault on Venezuela, as inferred from the official statements and actions arisen during the peak moments of tensions with Colombia, bearing continental repercussions; in 2008, with the deployment of ten (10) battalions on the borders, as ordered by President Chávez¹⁴, without an apparent motive of threat against the Venezuelan sovereignty, and supposedly grounded on political-ideological reasons when the Colombian military attacked a Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) camp located in Ecuadorian territory, with which President Chávez holds a “strategic alliance”. The events occurred in August 2009 in rejection to the agreement subscribed between Colombia and the United States regarding the US use of Colombian military bases¹⁵ and the agreement of 2010 regarding Colombia’s complaint about the existence of more than 1500 guerrilla members of both the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) in Venezuelan territory, equally sheltered by the national government. Chávez interpreted this accusation as formulated by the Colombian government as a threat of war.¹⁶

c. Consolidated and Intensified Civic-Military Union and the Strengthening and Involvement of the People in National Defense.

The second and third strategic lines known as “a consolidated and intensified civic-military union” and “the strengthening and involvement of the People in National Defense” are worthy to be jointly analyzed, due to their deep future impact on national and regional security. Based on a mistaken concept of co-responsibility between civil society and the National Armed Forces as to the nation’s military defense¹⁷, they encourage citizens to turn into fighters. Hence the emphatic contents of the current Bolivarian National Armed Forces Organic Law related to the Bolivarian National Militia, which is directly subordinated to the President of the Republic (Article 43) and is comprised by the “Combatant Corps” (Article 50) composed by citizens working for public or private institutions who are voluntarily enlisted, organized, and trained by the General Command



of the Bolivarian Militia with the purpose of assisting the National Armed Forces with the total defense of the nation; and the “Territorial Militia” (Article 51) composed by citizens that get voluntarily organized to fulfill integral duties to defend the nation; both structures are allocated with functions to collect, process, and disseminate information regarding community councils, public and private institutions (Item 8, Article 46); as well as contribute and advise on the integration and consolidation of the integral defense committees of the community councils, in order to strengthen a civic-military unity (Item 7, Article 46), all of which has translated –in some cases– into the conduction of social intelligence and coercion missions targeted to capture votes in favor of the official party throughout the countless voting processes carried out in Venezuela, with this aggravating factor: the training of new combatants in a country that lacks transparent public policies that ensure a control over lawful weaponry and in which the figures of illegal weapons in the hands of civilians are extremely high.

d. Ideologization and Politicization Process of the National Armed Forces.

Two events in 2002 serve as benchmarks in the politicization process of the National Armed Forces. Chávez’s ousting from power for more than 48 hours on April 11 that year through a “coup d’état”, as the national government has sustained since then, or due to his “abandonment of office”, as the opposition has recounted this episode. The other event: the pronouncement made at the Altamira square, by a group of active National Armed Forces service members on October 21, 2002. Both undoubtedly triggered the accelerated ideologization and politicization process in the National Armed Forces, driven

by President Chávez, with the purpose of establishing a socialist regime supported by the military sphere and as a method to spot the so called “institutionalist” officials, opposed to the politicization process.

In his discourses and lectures directed towards military service members throughout the entire hierarchy, Chávez encourages them to defend his political process and urges those who dissent with socialist ideology to leave ranks¹⁸. High-ranked National Armed Forces (FAN)¹⁹ members and government officials, such as the Executive Vice-President of the Republic, should do likewise²⁰.

One of the more controversial issues within the sphere of FAN’s political ideologization process has been the presidential order to include the motto “Socialism, Fatherland or Death. We will triumph!” in the military protocol, which besides being part of the military salute, can be observed in facilities, ships, aircraft, and military documents²¹. There are documented cases of officials who opposed to the use of such motto and have been sanctioned²².

Following the National Armed Forces’ open politicization approach, it is usual that –conforming with of office ceremony– any official belonging to a military unit expresses the commitment of deepening the socialist, anti-Imperialist Bolivarian revolution.

Another National Armed Forces’ emblematic event of this politicization process is the accusation made by the Citizen’s Control organization on May 2010 about the existence of high-ranking active officials associations with the united socialist party of Venezuela, thus Articles 328 and 330 of the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela were infringed by: Major General (MG) Francisco José Ortega Castillo, National Guard’s Chief of the 7th Regional Command,; Major General (MG) Luís Alfonso Bohorquez Soto, National Guard’s Chief of the 4th Regional Command ; and Rear Admiral Gilberto Pinto Blanco, of the extended high command of the National Bolivarian Guard.²³

But the most significant part of the National Armed Forces’ politicization process has undoubtedly been the statements issued by Gen. Henry Rangel Silva on November 2010, regarding the fact that the National Armed Forces are married to President Chávez’s socialist project and that they will not accept an eventual electoral victory of the opposition. These statements triggered an immediate reaction from all national²⁴ and international voices, but resulted in no sanction against this important officer who was immediately promoted to Commanding General by the President of the Republic, as a reward to his unconstitutional statements.²⁵

e. Proliferation of Weapons in the Hands of Civilians.

Between 9 and 15 million illegal weapons were circulating freely in Venezuela by 2009, according to statements issued by the official party’s congressman Juan José Mendoza, Chairman of the Defense Commission of the National Assembly²⁶, with more than three thousand gun shops indiscriminately existing by 1998 with no control at all²⁷. By now, there is no official data available regarding the status of the “lawful weaponry in the country”, the number of municipal police officials –which could reach 335 based on the

political-territorial division–, or the number of state police officials –which could reach 24– with arsenals and their supply status. Also, there is no official data regarding the number of private security providers whose members are authorized to carry weapons, or about the number of gun shops authorized to sell them.

The accepted standards to acknowledge an existing epidemic account for 10 homicides per 100 thousand inhabitants. According to the World Report on Violence issued by the World Health Organization, homicides in Latin America and the Caribbean were the death cause for an average of 22.9 individuals per 100 thousand inhabitants in 2002. In Venezuela, according to non-official data, homicide reports reached 60 per 100 thousand inhabitants by the end of 2009²⁸.

Unfortunately, the Venezuelan drama does not circumscribe to that simple but horrendous figure. More than 19,000 homicides were committed in Venezuela in 2009²⁹ and more than 340 long-term kidnappings in that year, according to figures handled by the National Cattle Breeders Association of Venezuela (FEDENAGA)³⁰. It should be highlighted that over the past 5 years, the national government has not disclosed any homicide-related figures. According to data provided by the Venezuelan Violence Observatory, there are 9 detentions per 100 homicides. This reflects an impunity rate of at least 91% for this crime³¹.

f. Parallel, Illegal Armed Groups.

A proliferation of illegal armed groups would seem, in turn, to be a constant factor which in some remarkable cases is encouraged by the State. In Caracas, within a 12-km radius around the Miraflores Presidential Palace and around the National Bolivarian Militia headquarters, armed social groups operate illegally and embrace the process led by President Chávez. These armed groups have shown their heavy weaponry in public and through the mass media, and have threatened to commit crimes –some have been actually committed– without the Venezuelan State taking any legal action so far. Among other, we can mention the following groups: Coordinadora Simón Bolívar, La Piedrita³², Carapaica, Colectivo Montaraz, Tupamaros, Alexis Vive, Venezuelan Popular Unity party (UPV), and the “Bolivarian Forces for Liberation” guerrilla group, which have shown heavy weaponry manifestly in public and through the mass media, as well as committed crimes against other citizens.

A list of these groups may easily include ten illegal armed groups, which hold an ideological/ economic relation with the Bolivarian Revolution as social groups; some of them, like the Bolivarian Forces of Liberation, have been accused by the United States to be terrorist groups³³.

The leader of La Piedrita, Valentín Santana, has even stated: “*We are a group that performs social activities, but –as expressed by our Commander Hugo Chávez– we are also armed and willing to defend this revolution by the use of weapons*” (...)³⁴.

It is clear that in Venezuela, armed ‘social’ groups and organized crime coexist with the militias who are loyal to the fatherland and to the country’s revolutionary process.

Using the National Armed Forces to launch the “Bolivarian Revolution” and to intervene in third countries.

President Chávez has continuously used the FAN for missions other than those set forth in the National Constitution since he took office in February 1999.

Chávez has been accused of using the FAN to launch his “Bolivarian socialist revolutionary” process in other American nations; to threaten and try to disrupt regional governments that dissent with his political project; and to support political movements and irregular armed groups which attempt to replace or oust lawful governments of Latin American countries to impose a socialist regime. The facts and documents supporting those accusations are many. We will however refer to four scenarios: El Salvador, Bolivia, Colombia and Honduras.

On April 2001, the government of El Salvador requested Venezuela to withdraw a Venezuelan civic-military brigade that provided humanitarian assistance in the village of Comosagua. Venezuelan military officials were accused of serving in disguise as civilians in order to conduct political proselytism activities in favor of the ultra-left opposition movement “Farabundo Martí for National Liberation Front” (FMLN, for its acronym in Spanish)³⁵.

In Bolivia, as of Evo Morales’ assumption of office, relations with Venezuela have been strengthening considerably. The Venezuelan government has contributed with multi-million financial and material resources to strengthen the Bolivarian Armed Forces and law enforcement institutions. In addition, as of 2007 and according to official sources, military and naval missions have been established in Bolivia, with the goal of providing education as well as humanitarian and civic assistance. Regarding civic assistance, a group of members of the Venezuelan military engineering corps carries out joint operations with their Bolivian peers in that country’s Northern region.

However, Venezuela’s military presence in Bolivia has become the target of even violent rejection demonstrations that emerged on the part of multiple sectors in that country, like the events of December 2007, when a C-130H airplane of the Venezuelan Air Force that had just landed at an airport in the Amazon region, was attacked by a group of inhabitants and compelled to take off again and seek refuge in Brazil³⁶. Moreover, Bolivian sectors have alleged –among other issues– the presence and the involvement of Venezuelan troops in their country and in the armed suppression of protests against the Morales government; the delivery of both armament for the regime’s defense and anti-riot materiel to suppress members of the opposition³⁷. Likewise, they have warned about the –alleged– political-ideological activities ascribed to a group of Venezuelan military engineers operating in Northern Bolivia³⁸.

According to a study carried out by the Citizens’ Control association in 2010, a review conducted on the acquisition and destination route of the Super Puma helicopters purchased by Venezuela from France derives in the following³⁹:

- In 1989, the Venezuelan Air Force (FAV) receives eight (08) AS-332B1 “Super Puma” helicopters from France.

- In 1999, the FAV receives (08) “Cougar” aircraft units with the following characteristics: six (06) AS-532AC units for tactical employment, and two (02) AS-532UL units for presidential flights. The AS-532AC aircraft units, along with the AS-332B1, are assigned to the 10th Special Operations Air Group and the two AS-532UL units to the 4th Airlift Group.
- On May 28, 2006, the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Commander Hugo Chávez Frías, during his radio broadcast, Hello, President, from Tiahuanaku, Bolivia, orders Secretary of Defense acting at that time, Admiral Orlando Maniglia Ferreira, to send “both ‘Super Puma’ helicopters” to provide support to the Bolivian air force”.
- On June 4, 2006, two (02) “Super Puma/Cougar” helicopters, withdrawn from the flight fleet of the FAV’s 10th Special Operations Air Group are presented at the El Alto air base in Bolivia, showing the flags and number plates (FAB-50 and FAB-751) of the Bolivian Air Force. The aircraft units remained at President Evo Morales’ service as an “indefinite loan”. Shortly after, those helicopters got the FAV’s flags and number plates replaced, but kept the Bolivian ones (double ID and nationality).
- On July 20, 2008, the AS332B1 “Super Puma” helicopter identified with the number plates FAV-7425/FAB-752 of the FAV, at Bolivian President Evo Morales’ service, crashed in the village Colomi, province of Cochabamba. FAV members Maj. Rodolfo Rivas, Lt. Daniel David Bustillos, Sgt. Carlos Jatar, and Aeronautical Technician César Bastida, as well as FAB’s Maj. Raúl Paz Céspedes died in the accident.



- On September 2, 2008, the Air-Force Attaché of the Venezuelan Embassy in Bolivia, Brigadier Gen. (Av) Manuel Silva Lugo, reports that President Hugo Chávez ordered the transfer of another “Super Puma” to Bolivia as a replacement of the one that crashed in the Bolivian territory on July 20, 2008.
- On September 10, 2010, a press release published in the Bolivian Air Force website unfortunately proves that the AS-332 Super Puma “Bolivian presidential helicopter”, which was currently undergoing a technical inspection in the facilities of the Aeronautical Maintenance and Development head office (DIMADEA) at the “El Libertador” air base, province of Aragua, “did no longer belong to the Venezuelan fleet”.

In the case of Colombia, Chávez and Uribe have generated extreme tense situations referred to as supra conflicts, as a consequence of ideological solidarity openly expressed by the Venezuelan government with the Colombian guerrilla groups.

Finally, Chávez threatened to militarily intervene in Honduras in order to reconstitute the ousted President Manuel Zelaya⁴⁰. The Ad-interim Honduran government has denounced the engagement of Venezuelan Army officers in disrupting actions on Honduran territory⁴¹. During the Honduran political crisis, the unauthorized landing of Venezuelan military aircrafts at the San Salvador, El Salvador, and Guatemala City airports was reported. And it is a fact that Zelaya travels in planes with Venezuelan plates and Venezuelan military crews⁴².

Conclusion

Venezuela entered the 21st century with a heavy burden for its society in terms of political polarization, de-institutionalization, lack of independence among the state branches, and a shattered legality, without any option of real power.

The current government –by means of an ideology presented as “protective” against an alleged international threat– has been gradually assuming a series of harmful practices for national security under an extortive scheme for society, damaging state constitutive elements –the population and the legal political system– thus causing massive gaps in the jurisdictional control of the Venezuelan border areas, permeable to international trafficking activities of all kinds, generating threats to regional security.

The Integral National Defense doctrine implemented in Venezuela as of 2004, although not derived yet in an arms race, could generate suspicions within the region, basically due to a lack of transparency related to budget, expenditures, and definite armament procurement. On the other hand, the Venezuelan military perception still prevails as of the threat of an armed conflict with Colombia, a country that would be used –according to this hypothesis– as the route used for an imperialist invasion of the national territory. This hypothesis has created a permanent source of instability between Venezuela and Colombia for the last three years: 2008, 2009 and 2010, with consequences for the whole region.

The consequences of the activation and operation of the Bolivarian National Militia still have to be verified, in regard with their direct and functional dependence on the President

of the Republic, and the risks this poses given hypothetical domestic tensions of becoming a Praetorian Guard. High levels of politicization and lack of professionalism in the National Armed Forces are also another source of concern, because they influence directly the discipline, obedience, and subordination of that institution, vital for the country.

Using the National Armed Forces to launch the “Bolivarian Revolution” and intervene in third countries has found a breeding ground not only in the Alba countries (basically, Bolivia, Ecuador and Nicaragua). The involvement in other countries has irritated spheres close to the armed conflict (Colombia) and will undoubtedly generate discrepancies within the region, where Venezuela is deploying economic resources to leverage its allies and intervene in domestic affairs. This could cause a rupture in the mutual confidence shared by some bordering countries, such as Bolivia and Paraguay, or Ecuador and Colombia, among others.

Venezuela experiences a spiral of unprecedented violence in its history linked to civil insecurity. Factors such as the state’s permissiveness to the existence of illegal armed groups and the high impunity with which they act, place the country in a state of lawlessness that reflects the profound institutional decay in every sphere of the nation. This scenario, which might be the most dangerous of all due to its middle and long-term consequences for the country, has undoubtedly become a threat for the region as well. Seeing Venezuela from an oil-supplier standpoint, this region has not become aware of the distinctively dangerous direction that the so called Bolivarian Revolution is threatening with.

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- ¹ The National Strategic Concept is vested with constitutional rank in Venezuela, according to what is set forth in Article 323 of the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Available at: <http://www.controlciudadano.org/documentos/getbindata.php?docid=558&fieldname=documento>
- ² The National Defense Council's attributions regarding the National Strategic Concept are set forth in Article 38, Numbered Items 3 and 4 of the Organic Law on National Security. Available at: <http://www.controlciudadano.org/documentos/getbindata.php?docid=22&fieldname=documento>
- ³ Chapter VII of the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, related to National Security, encompasses 10 Articles from 322 through 332.
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- ⁹ Venezuela adjoins the following countries: Dominican Republic, Kingdom of the Netherlands, the United States of America, France, Trinidad and Tobago; Colombia, St. Christopher & Nevis, Great Britain, Dominica, St. Lucie, St. Vincent, Grenada, Guyana, and Brazil.
- ¹⁰ The Tascón List, is the name given to a list encompassing more than 4 million people who remained fully recorded as requesting parties of the revoking referendum against the President of the Republic, Hugo Chávez Frías. It was posted in 2004 by former official party's congressman Luis Tascón in his web page, as the National Electoral Council provided him the applicable data at the request of President Hugo Chávez, justifying Tascón's actions as the means to demonstrate the "attempted fraud" to be carried out by the opposition; this list was used as a political discrimination mechanism to fire thousands of public servers in Venezuela and had them forfeit even their social benefits. The Tascón list was improved in a version named "Maisanta List". Both lists continue having devastating effects in terms of the Venezuelans' civil, political, economic, and social rights.
- ¹¹ Civil Association "Citizens' Control". Annual Report 2010. Venezuela: Procurement of Weapon Systems and Military Materiel, 2005-2010. Caracas. Available as of March 16, 2011 at: www.controlciudadano.org
- ¹² Cf. Chávez Frías, Hugo. Chávez's Lines: Grasslands of Affection (Las Líneas de Chávez: Sabanas de Cariño), Caracas, August 23, 2009. Available at: http://www.mij.gov.ve/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1030:isaban-as-de-mi-carino&catid=48:las-lineas-de-chavez
- ¹³ Cf. Caracol Radio: Chávez insists on an existing foreign threat from Colombia, Colombia, July 25, 2010. Available at: <http://www.caracol.com.co/nota.aspx?id=1331814>
- ¹⁴ Cf. El Universal: 90% of military battalions have been deployed to the border, as stated by the Military High Command, Caracas, March 5, 2008. Available at: http://www.eluniversal.com/2008/03/05/pol_ava_bataliones-militares_05A1409039.shtml
- ¹⁵ Cf. Hugo Chávez accuses the Colombian government to fabricate a warfare plan against Venezuela. El Tiempo Journal. Bogotá, January 25, 2008; The President warns that Colombia could be preparing offensive military actions against Venezuela. Bolivarian News Agency. February 3, 2008. President Chávez: "The State of Colombia is Defined As a Terrorist State". Bolivarian News Agency. March 2, 2008; Chávez sends tanks and troops to the Colombian border. El Universal Journal. Caracas, March 3, 2008; And will deploy 10 battalions to the border. President Hugo Chávez ordered the closure of the Venezuelan Embassy. Notitarde Journal. Valencia, March 3, 2008; Commanding Officer Alejandro Tineo, 4th Maracay Division: Tanks and military staff are ready to be deployed to the border. Notitarde Journal. Valencia, March 4, 2008. Ninety percent of the troops assigned to the Colombian border have been mobilized. Bolivarian News Agency. March 5, 2008; Due to conflict with Colombia, "Ciudad Bolívar" ship sets sail from Puerto Cabello Naval Base. El Carabobeño Journal. Valencia, March 5, 2008; Venezuela sends tanks to the Colombian border. Novosti News Agency. March 5, 2008; Venezuela: Troops ready to attack. BBC. March 5, 2008. A New Episode in the Colombian-Venezuelan Tension Is Not a Replication of The Experience Already Undergone. El Tiempo Journal. Bogotá, August 2, 2009; Chávez lashes Uribe in a press conference with international media. EFE News Agency. Caracas, August 5, 2009. Chávez denounced a raid from Colombian troops in Venezuelan territory. Noticiero Digital. Caracas, August 9, 2009. Chávez threatens to close the border between Venezuela and Colombia. Reuters News Agency. Caracas, October 26, 2009, Demanded Colombia to show signs of not launching "attacks" on Venezuela. Carrizález announces a deployment of 15 thousand troops to the border. Notitarde Journal. Valencia, November 6, 2009; A release from the President's Office. Colombia announced to bring Venezuela's "warfare threats" to UN and OAS jurisdictions. EFE News Agency. November 8, 2009; President Chávez made a call to military staff and civilians to defend the fatherland. "Let's prepare for the war; it is everyone's responsibility". Notitarde Journal. Valencia, November 9, 2009; The President ordered the FANB to prepare civilians for war. El Universal Journal. Caracas, November 9, 2009; Chávez orders his Army to prepare for a war against Colombia. Novosti News Agency, November 9, 2009.

- ¹⁶ Cf. El Universal: Venezuela deployed troops in view of a "threat of war", Caracas, July 31, 2010, Available at: http://economia.eluniversal.com/2010/07/31/int_ava_venezuela-desplego-m_31A4277011.shtml
- ¹⁷ The Nation's military defense is only considered in the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as an attribute of the National Armed Forces.
- ¹⁸ Chávez urged the FAN to declare itself an anti-Imperialist and revolutionary group. Bolivarian News Agency. April 12, 2007; Hugo Chávez demanded military officers to declare themselves socialists. Notitarde Journal. Valencia, April 13, 2007; President Chávez. Moral and Lights Command, Bolivarian Armed Forces, will be sworn. National Radio System of Venezuela (Web). April 26, 2007; A new FAN structure was outlined in the Simón Bolívar project. Socialism in the headquarters is based on a civic-military fusion. El Mundo Journal. Caracas, May 14, 2007; Chávez demands the Army to be loyal. The Sao Paulo Journal, Sao Paulo, June 21, 2009; The People and the FAN march together toward a Bolivarian socialist fatherland. Bolivarian News Agency. July 18, 2007; President Chávez: The Army will remain the Revolution's epicenter. Bolivarian News Agency. October 3, 2007; Chávez: The Armed Forces are ready to defend the Venezuelan Revolution. Bolivarian News Agency, June 30, 2009.
- ¹⁹ The Unified Command of the Armed Forces (Cufan, as per its acronym in Spanish) chief declares feeling "comfortable" with socialism. El Mundo Journal. Caracas, April 16, 2007; Gen. Morao: FAN faces the challenge of continuing to strengthen Constituent Engines (Motores Constituyentes). Bolivarian News Agency. July 4, 2007; Gen. Acosta Pérez defended the Armed Forces' role. He claimed that the "Fatherland, Socialism, or Death" motto has been misunderstood. Latest News. Caracas, July 7, 2007; Generals Oropeza Pernalette and Caraballo Gómez provide their statements. 2nd Commanding Officer and Air Forces Inspector advocate for socialism. El Mundo Journal. Caracas, July 31, 2007; Major General (Army) Carlos Freites Reyes: The Military Reserves will have a new socialist and Bolivarian role. Guyana's New Journal. Ciudad Bolívar, August 21, 2007; Air Force's Generals. A socialist military aviation is proposed. Notitarde Journal. Valencia, October 26, 2007; Army's Commanding Officer: Socialism has brought the FAN to life. Bolivarian News Agency. May 5, 2008; Quintana Castro: The Army has joined the geopolitical intention of the Socialist State. Globovisión. Caracas, May 6, 2008; Gen. Alcalá Cordones's "revolutionary and anti-Imperialist" salutation. Noticias 24. June 24, 2009.
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- ²⁵ BBC World: Venezuela: Promoted General "married" to Chávez's government. Yolanda Valery. Caracas, November 18, 2010. Available at:
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- ²⁷ National Assembly: Congressman Mendoza: "We will legislate in favor of disarming the Venezuelan people", Caracas, s/f. Available at: http://www.asambleanacional.gob.ve/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=23155&catid=284%3Anoticias&Itemid=249&lang=es
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- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Cf. Fedenaga: 304 kidnappings reported in the country so far this year. November 4, 2009 Available at: <http://www.reporte360.com/detalle.php?id=13374&c=1>
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Challenges for the Defense Budget after the Economic Crisis A European View

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I thank Astrid Hellmanns for her support in researching this essay.

In Europe, some of the most dangerous effects of the 2008 financial and economic crisis have not been fully understood yet. For almost three years, the focus has been on the financial sector, the job market, and on the stability of the common currency. These were the fields where the immediate effects of the crisis were most damaging and where systemic stability was at stake. Due to massive state intervention, the system did not collapse; and where it crumbled, further state intervention prevented worse. However, any such state intervention comes at a price. In part, that price is obvious, and in part it is hidden. In the obvious sense, “price” is not a metaphor, but an actual price tag attached to the various stimulus packages scrambled together by European governments. This massive spending and the simultaneous loss of revenue have created historic budget deficits and debt. The hidden price comes in many forms – the diminished trust of the citizens in the capitalist system, for example. Or, particularly in Germany, the increased wariness about the European Union’s principles of economic solidarity. In turn, deficit and debt force governments to cut the budget significantly. In almost all European states, as in the U.S., the defense budget is being used as a convenient quarry for saving money, exactly because the adverse effects of cutting defense are (hopefully) long-term and quite abstract – and therefore, also, hidden. As a consequence, many European states are on the verge of losing even basic defense capabilities, despite painful reform efforts to make their military more efficient. Most unfortunately, this is happening at a time in global politics where the traditional guarantor of European security, the United States, is struggling with its own budget crisis and problems of military overstretch and is therefore urging

the Europeans to take on a greater share of the burden of their own defense. Thus, at least for Europe, the financial and economic crisis is about to pave the way for an even more dangerous security crisis.

In this essay, I shall give an overview of how the EU and various European states respond to that challenge. In doing so, I first will outline the key strategic concepts on the EU level of how to cope with the twin imperatives of budget consolidation and maintaining/creating an effective defense. It is important to note that I will deal with “defense” in a narrow sense that relates to military capabilities and department of defense budgets only. Especially in Germany, where the concept of “Vernetzte Sicherheit” (somewhat akin to NATO’s “comprehensive approach”) is very much en vogue, many will point to the increased effort put into civil and preventive measures of security. For the purposes of this essay, however, a focus on hard power as the ultimate guarantor of national security is justified. Accordingly, the second section will provide brief sketches of the situation in four major European states (Germany, France, United Kingdom, and Poland) and analyze how their current defense policies relate to the EU level. The third and concluding section will point out the central problems of the current approaches and give three specific recommendations on how to fix them.

Defense Budgets and EU Strategy

The European economies were hit hard by the crisis. Although Europe’s economic powerhouses, most notably Germany, were recovering quickly, it took the EU states, by and large, longer to regain sure footing than it took threshold countries such as Brazil and China. In fact, some EU member countries such as Greece, Spain, or Ireland are still in the throes of severe crisis. And even a generally strong country like Germany has amassed a national debt of approximately 75% of GDP (compared to, for instance, the U.S. 93%, France 84%, China 19%).¹ As a consequence, all European states face significant pressure to reduce their budgets. With regard to the defense budgets, these cuts hurt even more than they do the U.S. because Europeans start cutting at a much lower, even existential level. As NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen put it: “There is a point where you no longer cut fat; you’re cutting into muscle, and then into bone.”²

The next section’s case studies will explore in greater detail what that means for the defense budgets of various European states. But what is more is that Europe is facing these budget pressures at a politically difficult time. With the ever-increasing number of members now at 27, the EU is experiencing a time of weariness when it comes to further integration. Formulating political initiatives that find a consensus among EU members is becoming increasingly hard, especially since many EU citizens fail to see what advantages the Union and its “Brussels bureaucracy” yield for them. In fact, after the doomed attempt at an EU constitution and the heavy lifting of the Lisbon Treaty, even some of

¹ Estimation of the IMF for 2010. [http://www.economywatch.com/economic-statistics/economic-indicators/General_Government_Gross_Debt_Percentage_GDP/] All web content cited in this essay accessed on May 7, 2011.

² Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Speech at the German Marshall Fund of the United States in Brussels, October 8, 2010. [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_66727.htm]

the most passionate Europeans seem to have run out of steam. These are not encouraging conditions for a concerted effort regarding European defense policy. After all, defense has always been the hardest of all political areas to Europeanize – the failure of the European Defense Community in 1954 has been the archetypal trauma accompanying all future steps towards a common security and defense policy. It underlined that security is the most basic task of the state, its *raison d'être*. Further integration of European defense policy thus, more than any other policy, tinkers with the sovereignty of the member states. Hence it is quite plausible to expect the European states to vanish into military and strategic irrelevance rather than to truly unite on issues of defense and security strategy.

These difficulties notwithstanding, the economic and financial crisis offers some paradoxical glimmers of hope. Saving costs has become a political mantra all over Europe, and further integration of European security and defense policy is a very promising way to relieve national budget pressures. The need to cut national expenses while simultaneously maintaining sound military capabilities is a strong incentive for EU states to further integration or at least to increase military cooperation – be it in research and development, procurement, training, or actual missions.

The basic ideas on how to do that have been familiar for a long time. Europeans do not need to re-invent the wheel, they just have to build a cart around it and get rolling. The three basic concepts are pooling, sharing, and the new toolbox contained in the Lisbon Treaty. *Pooling* means that EU states agree on joint resources and forces. It is no longer necessary nor economically viable for every member state to maintain its own current force structure. Certain parts of the national forces can be brought together with those of another state and used jointly, thus decreasing individual costs and possibly even increasing (or at least maintaining) effectiveness. The Franco-German Brigade is an early example of this principle. Pooling can also reduce costs significantly when applied to common procurement on the EU level. *Sharing* describes the next step of the same logic. Further integration of EU defense policy would allow individual states to focus on their strengths and to discard other parts of their force structure. Certain states could specialize in, say, tactical airlift, while others could specialize in, say, mechanized infantry. The catch, of course, is that then all states would be able to use each other's forces when necessary. So while such a specialization would greatly help to save costs, it requires a reliable political arrangement of shared sovereignty, command, and trust that is very tricky to establish.

The Council of the European Union, in its conclusions of December 9, 2010, underlined the necessity of more coordinated reform efforts among EU states and described a way forward.³ The document breaks down into four key conclusions. First, it explicitly endorses the so-called “Ghent Initiative” of the German and the Swedish ministers of defense from September 2010. The initiative encourages all EU states to undertake a review of their forces, grouping them in three categories: Capabilities that are essential to national security and need to be maintained on the national level exclusively; capabilities that could be maintained in closer cooperation with partners without forfeiting authority over them (pooling); and capabilities that could be abolished when provided by partners instead

³ For the official document see: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/esdp/118348.pdf

(sharing). The Council has set “mid 2011” as time line for further discussion of the preliminary results of this analysis.

The second key conclusion of the Council pertains to the French-British cooperation agreement of November 2010. In what quickly became known as the “entente frugale,” the two major military powers of the EU agreed on a number of cooperative measures to reduce defense spending while maintaining effectiveness. Those propositions include joint use and greater interoperability of present and future aircraft carriers, sharing of military communications satellites, and the creation of a Combined Joint Expeditionary Force with land, sea, and air components. This agreement drew criticism for its timidity – there are actually very few concrete results of the cooperation so far – and for its apparent preference of bilateral over multilateral, EU-wide solutions. The Council’s conclusions, however, commend the agreement “which promise[s] to contribute to improving European defense capabilities.” In other words, better to have bilateral initiatives on defense cooperation than none at all.

Third, the Council emphasized the role of the European Defense Agency (EDA) in fostering further cooperation through coordinating research, development, and procurement. So far, the Agency has not lived up to the high hopes its creation in 2004 engendered. Although it has slowly developed into a conduit between industry and politics, it is still characterized by a lack of ambition that is the result of unclear mandates, national preferences, and – mostly – hesitation on the part of EDA’s chiefs to test the limits of the institution’s potential. The recent Council conclusions explicitly “encourage” them to do just that and show more leadership in identifying possible synergies to be tapped by measures of pooling and sharing.

As a fourth key conclusion, the Council points to the new tools provided by the Lisbon Treaty, especially the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PSC) of Articles 42 and 46 of the Treaty of the European Union.⁴ PSC allows for closer defense cooperation among EU members who are willing and able to do so without affecting the EU-wide state of affairs. On issues of defense, it thus allows for a “core Europe” to initiate further cooperation that might but need not be reproduced on the EU level. As is typical for the EU, PSC has so far been debated in terms of process only (Can there be more than one PSC at the same time? How can EU states join an existing PSC later on, what are the criteria?). Now it is time to come up with substance. For instance, PSC could provide an excellent framework for those nations who want to take the lead in establishing specific force sharing programs. Moreover, PSC is singularly well-suited to shift the debate about defense cooperation from the issue of tight budgets back to the even more important question of what kind of military the EU and its member states need. After all, in order to find a force sharing arrangement that allows for meaningful cuts in national budgets, you should have a clear idea what that shared force is supposed to accomplish. Such strategic concerns, unfortunately, are far from the minds of national defense planners these days who sweat under the heel of their finance minister. It is heartening that the Council in its conclusions tasks the PSC

⁴ A concise and helpful introduction to PSC is Sven Biscop, *Permanent Structured Cooperation and the Future of ESDP*, Egmont Paper No. 20, 2008: <http://www.egmontinstitute.be/paperegm/ep20.pdf>



“with a view to strengthen the EU’s ability to respond to crises.” Crisis response means deployability, effectiveness, and actual fighting capability. As we shall see in the next section, that is a strategic yard stick that is not all that common among the defense reforms of European states.

State of National Defense: Four Sketches

A closer look at four major European states – Germany, France, United Kingdom, and Poland – will reveal how exactly the financial and economic crisis has affected national defense. Given the limited scope of this essay, the sketches of the individual defense budgets, military reforms, and future postures must necessarily remain brief but will nonetheless demonstrate current, worrisome trends in European defense.⁵ A concise assessment of these developments and suggestions for improvement will be given in the concluding section.

Germany

For the past twenty years, the *Bundeswehr*, Germany’s armed force, has undergone constant transformation. With the end of the Cold War, unified Germany had to handle the unique challenge of integrating the armed forces of former Eastern Germany into the *Bundeswehr*. At the same time, the pronounced shift in the international security

⁵ For a similar approach to the one presented here see Hilmar Linnenkamp, *Situationsanalyse ausgewählter Mitgliedstaaten*, in: Hans-Gert Pöttering / Gerd F. Kaldrack (eds.), *Eine einsatzfähige Armee für Europa – Die Zukunft der Gemeinsamen Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik nach Lissabon*, Baden-Baden: Nomos 2011.

⁶ For a more comprehensive set of data see Christian Mölling, Sophie-Charlotte Brune, Marcel Dickow, *Finanzkrise und Verteidigungskooperation: Materialien zu acht europäischen Ländern und den USA*, SWP Working Paper, October 2010. [http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/arbeitspapiere/Finanzkrise_und_Verteidigungskooperation_final_ks.pdf]

environment led both NATO and the EU into a series of out-of-area missions, most notably in Kosovo and, later, Afghanistan. These missions proved a dual challenge for Germany, political and military. Waging war outside of Alliance territory, albeit in the framework of multilateral institutions, was a new experience for the Federal Republic that required enormous (and continuing) political effort as well as a re-interpretation of the German constitution by the highest court of the land, the *Bundesverfassungsgericht*. In addition, Germany as well as many other European partners found out quickly that its military capabilities were hardly adequate to the task of these missions.

While this lesson was being digested, the economic crisis gave a whole new dynamic and seriousness to reforming the armed forces. In fact, the trigger of the current and most far-reaching reform since the founding of the Bundeswehr in 1955 was not a security-political decision by the minister of defense but a budget decision by the minister of finance. As a reaction to the crisis, Germany instated a constitutional amendment limiting new federal debt to 3.5% of GDP. Following this new authority and in order to comply with this *Schuldenbremse* (“brake on debt”), the finance minister in 2010 prescribed every ministry an exact amount of money to be saved over the next four years (later amended to five years). In relation to its overall budget, defense had to cut the most: 8.3 billion Euros between 2010 and 2014 (now 2015). Considering that the annual budget of German defense is about 30 billion Euros, those are staggering numbers.

In a bold move, then-defense minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg used the momentum of those numbers to leverage and kill one of his conservative party’s sacred cows: conscription. The sensibility (and feasibility) of maintaining a conscription army under circumstances that required leaner and more professional forces had been contested for years.



Sold as a cost-saving exercise in dramatic financial times by Germany's most popular minister, protest was suddenly flimsy. As it turns out, however, ending conscription does not save money but creates extra cost for recruitment and competitive salaries – at least in the short and medium term.

Therefore other, less spectacular building blocks of the reform package become even more relevant. Yet very few of them have been decided upon, mostly because of the change at the top of the ministry. Zu Guttenberg had to resign over allegations of plagiarism in his PhD dissertation. His replacement, former minister of the interior and head of the chancellor, Thomas de Maizière, enjoys a reputation as an able manager of government structures and revealed his approach to restructuring the Bundeswehr and the ministry in May 2011 – with many of the details not to be clear before September 2011.

Still, the outline of the reform package is set. The number of soldiers – currently about 252,000 – will be reduced sharply. Most observers think a force structure of about 180,000 most likely. In addition, the organizational structure of the Bundeswehr and the ministry itself will be trimmed. The real savings, however, will not come from cutting personnel but from cutting equipment, both in existence and in projected procurement. Across the board, active weapon systems will be put out of service, including six U206A submarines, 15 Transall transport aircraft, 100 Tornado fighter bombers, and 60 Marder armored tracked vehicles. As far as contracts and international agreements allow, major defense projects will be reduced in scope. Strategic and tactical airlift (A400M transporter and NH-90 and Tiger helicopters) will be affected as well as 37 Eurofighter jets, more than a quarter of the projected 400 Puma armored tracked vehicles, and, very likely, the last transatlantic armament project, the missile defense system MEADS. In general, standardized off-the-shelf solutions will be preferred over customized development.

France

In contrast to the Federal Republic of Germany, France has always been – or at least seen itself – as a great military power. Indeed, in terms of nuclear capabilities, a broad military-industrial base, and the readiness and willingness of a former colonial power to be a decisive actor in global security affairs, France and the UK are exceptional states in Europe today. As a consequence, both have stressed and protected their ability to act independently if necessary. For France with its Gaullist tradition of balancing U.S. influence over Europe, this is particularly relevant. Even its return to NATO's military structures in 2009 did not change this basic rationale – as evidenced by the intervention in Libya in early 2011.

To keep an effective and affordable balance between expeditionary forces and territorial defense, France began reforming its military in the 1990s. In this process, conscription was abolished and defense planning was organized through Five-Year-Plans. Due to the financial and economic crisis, the current plan, 2009-2014, had to be overhauled in 2010. According to the new plan, defense is supposed to save 3.5 billion Euros between 2011 and 2013. Given an annual defense budget of about 40 billion Euros, the cuts are not quite as brutal as in Germany but still difficult to manage.

First saving measures include the closing of sites, both at home and abroad. The military presence in Africa in particular is to be downgraded significantly. Simultaneously, there will be a drastic reduction in the number of the armed forces. The 2008 White Paper on defense already suggested to cut 54,000 jobs (out of about 250,000 total), but even a further reduction would not be surprising. In addition, the modernization of the Mirage 2000 jet fighter will be postponed as will be the acquisition of the aerial refueling and transport airplane MRTT (Multi-Role Tanker Transport).

At the same time, French insistence on a strong and independent military industry leads to some counter-intuitive decisions such as increasing the 2011 order of the Rafale jet fighter from 22 to 33 airplanes. This is to guarantee production despite cancellations by other states. Similarly, systems such as the Harfang drone and the A400M transport aircraft will be seen through despite additional costs because they are regarded as strategically significant – both in terms of military use and industrial context.

Hence, France is particularly interested in saving costs through increased cooperation with European partners. The Franco-British agreement of 2010 was a first step in that direction but it is unclear what the next steps will look like. What is clear, though, is that France will not be able to reach its savings goal and maintain its mission-oriented posture without creating new pooling and sharing agreements with its European partners.

United Kingdom

Like France, the UK has revised its defense in the late 1990s in order to incorporate the new requirements of a changed international scenery. The resulting Strategic Defense Review of 1998 defined the parallel conduction of two major expeditionary missions as the base line for strategic planning. With the Kosovo war and especially after British commitment to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, special forces, surveillance and reconnaissance, and quick power projection received particular emphasis – and additional funding of about five billion Euros to the average annual defense budget of about 40 billion Euros. Thus, Great Britain was the only European country that played an active, independent, and significant role in international military affairs.

However, just like France, the UK reacted to the financial and economic crisis by deciding to reduce its defense budget by 8% until the year 2014. This directive, set forth in the Strategic Defense and Security Review of October 2010, essentially ends the time of Great Britain as a world power. Major operations such as in the Iraq war or unilateral missions on the scale of the Falklands war will no longer be possible with the forces such a budget can sustain. Until 2020, Great Britain's land forces will encompass only five brigades, the overall troops will be reduced from 180,000 to 163,000, the nuclear submarines will not be modernized, and many crucial systems will be put out of service, including tanks, tor-nados, and the aircraft carrier Ark Royal (plus airplanes). Two new aircraft carriers remain under construction because the abortion of the program would be more expensive than its completion – yet they will not be functioning before 2020 anyway.

Of course, such dire prospects serve as an incentive for greater military cooperation with capable partners. However, as the Franco-British agreement indicated, Great Britain is

particularly reluctant to seek this cooperation in multilateral treaties and even less so in the context of European Union frameworks. Although Great Britain supported the conclusions of the Council, recommending pooling, sharing, and similar initiatives on the EU level, it is very much ready to abstain from such action. In part, this is explained by the traditional British distrust of EU institutions. But even more importantly, it reflects the British desire to remain an independent actor with a broader, truly global horizon. They do not want to be tied down to the complicated, expensive, and ineffectual nitty-gritty of EU procurement arrangements (think A400M) but want instead to cooperate directly, exclusively, and on equal terms with partners of reliable and proper standing such as France or the U.S. Since the British defense industry is by far the most competitive European player on the global market and thus less dependent on European arrangements or state backing, this policy of aloofness is easier to sustain for the UK than, for instance, for France. Yet it remains doubtful whether Great Britain can build sufficient bilateral partnerships to compensate the effects of its budget crisis on its military strength. More likely, it will have to resort to multilateral and/or EU agreements in the long term – but until then, it will be lost as a driver behind the urgently needed innovation of such agreements.

Poland

With an annual budget of less than 7 billion Euros, Poland's defense is much smaller than that of the first three states examined here. Still, only Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands spend (somewhat) more on defense than Poland, and it has by far the strongest military among all central and eastern European members of the EU. Poland has managed a successful transformation of its military over the last two decades, the most visible sign of which is the streamlined force structure. At the end of the Cold War, Poland had about 500,000 soldiers; at the beginning of the 21st century, the number was at 130,000. When the shift towards an all-professional army is completed, its size will not exceed 100,000 soldiers.

Poland demonstrated that such a reduction need not mean a loss of effectiveness. Liberated from the Warsaw Pact, Poland puts special emphasis on national sovereignty and international responsibility. So when Poland's security political alignment with the U.S. called for military burden sharing, Poland delivered. To maintain such a prominent role as, for example, in Iraq and Afghanistan, Poland passed a law that fixed the defense budget at 1.95% of GDP. Within the EU, only Greece, France, the UK, and Cyprus reach a higher share. In combination with reduced troop levels that means an improved money-per-soldier ratio, enabling the Polish military to punch at least somewhat above its weight.

Before the crisis, Poland's economy was going strong, and it quickly recovered from the 2008 slump. This roller-coaster ride also affected defense planning. In 2009, the defense budget was cut by 20%, in 2011, it grew by 7%. Poland spends heavily on modernizing its military equipment, planning to invest 35 billion Euros over the next fifteen years in new airplanes, helicopters, and mechanized infantry. Thus, Poland is showing a very different dynamic than Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. Although it is developing from a much lower level, Poland demonstrates that trends in defense spending and force transformation are ultimately a question of political priorities rather than a question of budget constraints. With its firm integration in the so-called Weimar Triangle – a forum

of trilateral cooperation between France, Germany, and Poland – it is to be hoped that Poland can inspire other partners to adopt this view.

Concluding Recommendations

The sketches in the previous section have illustrated two things. First, how the budget pressures downgrade nearly all European defense capabilities. And second, how far the EU member states are from a common European approach that will save costs and secure effectiveness. There are a lot of intelligent solutions and tools to bring them about – from the Ghent Initiative to the Weimar Triangle, from the European Defense Agency to Permanent Structured Cooperation. In practice, however, every state plans and acts for itself. There are two dozen national defense transformations and reforms underway in Europe, but hardly any truly European reform. Unless there develops a greater degree of cooperation and common planning among at least a few of the major powers in Europe, the national militaries are doomed to kluge.

So Europe does not need new processes, tools, and institutions to retain relevance in international security affairs. What it needs is political will and proper leadership to make the best out of a difficult situation. Here are three ideas that might help mustering this will and leadership – and the necessary popular and bureaucratic support.

The EU should produce a regular report on military strategy, development, and procurement that reflects not just a common political approach but also identifies potential for closer cooperation between the member states. Every two years, for example, the EDA in cooperation with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy could present this report. It would require intensive – and regular – debate among all member states about military policy and enforce consensus. It would also allow for sustained qualitative assessments and a reliable evaluation of progress. The current era of scattered initiatives (Ghent, Weimar, entente frugale) would give way to a more focused and substantial approach that would demand and reward greater political effort, visibility, and leadership.

The second idea is to make better use of best practice models. Europeans do have collected a lot of experience in common security over the last two decades. Those experiences range from first steps in pooling and sharing to jointly fought missions and they are contained in existing institutions such as the Eurokorps or the European Battlegroups. There has been too little exchange and discussion of these experiences; if at all analyzed and processed, they vanish in separate bureaucracies. Parliamentarians, EU and national, would be well-advised to press for greater transparency and rigor when it comes to learning from the best practice models buried in these treasure chests. The ideas derived from comparing notes on those experiences might create the political tail wind defense issues in Europe are waiting for.

The third and final recommendation aims at the most basic of European defense: European leaders need to change the tone of the debate. It is all about saving money when it should be about security. Most Europeans do not feel threatened at all, however, and they do not



grasp that their freedom, their wealth, and their values depend on a liberal world order that is in constant peril. Europe benefits enormously from the stability of the international system but in military terms it does relatively little to uphold it. Of course, Europe and especially states such as Germany contribute significantly to international stability through development aid and economic cooperation. International order, though, is never a given; it needs to be created and, sometimes, defended with force. Thus, leaders and elites in Europe need to communicate to the people that hard power capabilities are neither archaic nor dispensable. Otherwise, they will not get the democratic mandate for solid defense expenditures. And while pooling, sharing, and cost-saving exercises can ameliorate the consequences of a lean budget, it is clear by now that security and a responsible role in international affairs come at a price. Europe cannot pool and share its way out of this dilemma. In the end, one needs to buy things – planes, tanks, rifles, computers – and pay the people using them. The sooner Europeans come around to this insight, the more likely they will remain safe, independent, and influential actors in the international arena.



Risks and opportunities for the Defence Budget after the Economic Crisis

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When in the wake of the year 2008 the worldwide crisis embraced further states, not too many expected that it could turn out for good in the case of Poland. When further governments decided to pump in billions into national economies, the Polish government has decided to act in a different manner. Our finance minister Jan Vincent Rostowski, did not bow neither to pressure of the opposition nor has he copied the actions undertaken by other governments and has chosen his own way.

Already in 2009 Poland had decided to generate savings. Donald Tusk, the Prime Minister, announced the measure of looking for areas, which were supposed to be encompassed with cuts. He summoned further ministers and ruthlessly cut their budgets. I remember that expectations towards the Minister of Defence - Bogdan Klich – were the greatest. Considering the fact that the army enjoys one of the largest budgets while we find ourselves within the new reality of a Europe relaxed after the fall of the iron curtain, this seemed to be the ideal sector for cuts.

The fallout of the crisis reached, amongst others, five main modernization programs: Programs concerning air defence, naval forces, command systems as well as communications and pilotless means of reconnaissance. For his efforts in confronting the financial crises, Minister Rostowski received prizes, distinctions and the title of the *Finance Minister of the Year*, amongst others from the prestigious „Banker” magazine in the year of 2009. At the same time, Poland became renown and won recognition as the single country that has been able to omit the painful results of the crisis. In

comparison to crisis stricken and limping Europe we have been able to become an economist „Safe Heaven” – the only state with economical growth. Nevertheless, the satisfaction from such a position has not resulted in the disappearance of any worry with regard our safety from the scope of our every day interest. Also bearing in mind our experience of success in economic reforms in early nineties we support the strict fiscal measures advocated by Germany and the Nordic countries. Unfortunately, the side effect of them is reduction in military spending.

In order to be able to understand the position of Poland we ought to remind ourselves of its present situation. The Polish state as well as other post-communist countries, in a much more careful manner than other countries, firmly follows the adopted positions and policy decisions of contemporary Russia. Russia continues to consider the states in Eastern Europe as part of its own sphere of influence, and attempts to establish a division between them and the western European States. The issue of the security of Poland is in a permanent way connected to its geographical location – i.e. the vicinity of Russia and the fact of Poland being the biggest border country of the European Union and NATO. Unfortunately NATO is not ready yet to establish it's bigger military installments in the region, comparable with those existing in Germany. Therefore the potential of Polish state combined with it's geographical position increases Poland's responsibility for maintaining security in broader East Central European Region. This is why the ongoing process of modernization and professionalization of our army is of highest importance not only to us, but also to the rest NATO members including most vulnerable Baltic States.

As a Polish politician for several years now preoccupied with international issues and amongst others, being responsible for the co-ordination of inter-parliament contacts, I am able to responsibly guarantee that the issue of safety has always been treated by us as being inseparably connected to the discussion on the topic of the safety of the whole European Union. As a citizen of a former USSR satellite country it is hard for me to welcome the returning, almost boomerang-like, power oriented aspirations of Moscow. Anxiety has been subject to increase when Russia attacked sovereign Georgia (one of the states encompassed within the Polish initiated Partnership Program) and then ignored all of the points of the cease fire agreement, which was set forward by Nicolas Sarkozy, the French President. AN other example of Russia's new assertiveness is provided by the recently completed, huge Russian military maneuvers, which were held on the polish border and which were known under the codenames of ŁADOGA and ZAPAD. In those maneuvers the assumed enemy was constituted by Poland. These events have been mirrored in the questions which I have addressed to the European Parliament, as well as through the statements which have been made by the Polish Foreign Affairs Minister Mr. Radosław Sikorski. Unfortunately, until now, in my opinion, these questions have not met with any adequate reaction. The aforementioned military maneuvers are hostile statements and they have to be taken into the consideration in the process of discussing the issue of national safety.

Russian defence expenditure this year alone will amount to 63 billion USD, which constitutes almost 1/5 of the whole budget of the Russian state and represents a significant increase in comparison to 2010 (42 billion USD). Moreover, the Russian government has initiated the implementation of a new military force arming- and modernization program,

which will last until the 2020 and which foresees the purchase and modernization of military equipment amounting to a total of 650 billion USD within the aforementioned period.

Nevertheless, military challenges are not only ones constituted in certain time perspective in Eastern Europe. Nowadays we may observe the growing number of worldwide proof that the issue of standardization of the military industry, in such manner so that it could constitute the area of budget cuts, but at the same time did not lose its value, is beginning to become much more urgent.

Only two years have passed since Europe has agreed to conclude the Lisbon Treaty and invested onto clear institutionalism – amongst others by Herman Van Rompuy's nomination to the post as President of the European Council as well as Catherine Ashton as the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Their task is it to fill the general outlines of the Lisbon Treaty with adequate content.

At the same time an ongoing discussion is conveyed with regard to the further direction of integration. Beside the discussion with regard to the common fiscal policy and budget regimes - fundamental to the future of the European Union and taking place as the result of the issue of defence is most frequently brought up. Despite the scale of the difficulty of the aforementioned challenges, Poland has decided to make defence-related questions one of the priorities of its Presidency, which started on the 1st July 2011. The Minister of Defence of the Republic of Poland B. Klich declared that one of the goals of the Polish presidency will be constituted by the initiation the discussion of bringing the European Union and NATO closer, in order to avoid for the occurrence of any doubling of operation of the two aforementioned organizations as well as bearing of unjustified costs subject to the aforementioned. In December 2010 the Foreign Ministers of Poland, France and Germany submitted a joint letter to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, in which they underlined the necessity for the adoption of a "fresh" approach to CSDP as well as intensification of the co-operation with NATO. One thing is sure is that after a half year long presidency of Poland we will be able to obtain a substantial amount of clarity topped with the fact that nothing shall mobilize as every day cooperation, within which we are faced in Libya. The review of topics, which the European agenda will consist of, constitutes the subject of the hereinafter article.

Before we start, we should state a few remarks with regard to the approach towards the problem that we face. The Lisbon Treaty provides the European Union with whole and particular competences with regard to safety and defence, amongst others, and determining tasks of the European Defence Agency (EDA). From the moment of adoption of the Treaty what may be observed is the insufficient activity of the European Union (European Committee, European External Action Service) within the aforementioned area. Cooperation within the military as well as co-operation of military and defence industries of member states and activities coordinated by the EDA are much more required today than at any other time in the past. Nevertheless without a political strategy for the development of the defence industry, such activities will not be able to lead to any changes enabling the European Union to meet the demands of the future as well as the attainment

of the position of the global player. What is therefore necessary is the urgent initiation of a general European dialogue with regard to security and defence, which should, to a large extent, lead to the defining of the vision for the future, which the European Union faces as the unified body, and which the European Union wishes and would like to manage. Only in the occurrence of such a case will it be possible for a clear cut determination of the CSDP tasks, and what is extremely important within the context of the ongoing economic crisis, the definition of areas where particular defence sectors of member states may be effectively coordinated. In other words, the coordination of the European defence policy as well as cooperation of European defence industry will be valid and justified only when Europe possess a clearly defined vision, on what type of military equipment Europe needs in long term perspective. Moreover, what is necessary is the conveyance of the aforementioned reliable debate with regard the future environment of international security, within which the European Union will function in the future. Without the aforementioned debate as well as an adequate dialogue, which will result in the undertaking of particular decisions within the area of defence, the positive activities undertaken by EDA, bilateral and multilateral initiatives of particular member states, will introduce only a fragmentary success. The European Union as the whole will be sentenced to further reductions within defence budgets of its member states, which in the long term perspective shall result in the decrease of military possibilities as well as the global influence of Europe upon the formation of a new international reality, and the world after the crisis shall be a less Western World.

Foreign policy is not the subject of dictating or imposing of one's own opinion onto others. We practice compromise as the Members of the European Parliament every day in the buildings of the Parliament in Brussels and Strasbourg. If you are unable to effectively reach a compromise in Europe, you simply do not exist. The art of compromise and sometimes finding common grounds for contrary priorities is in the case of a conversation on the topic of defence an inseparable issue, with the superimposing degree of complication of the mutually existing relations as well as systems presents between the countries.

The immanent section of such a general European dialogue should be also constituted by the issue of EU-NATO relations (the issue of conflicting-competences, redundant-infrastructure etc.). Both organizations convey foreign missions within the same parts of the world, with the commitment of military forces from the same member states, nevertheless functioning as part of two completely separate structures. Especially in the era of economic crisis and in the era of military budget cuts within European Union member states, the continuation of such a situation seems to be unjustified.

Upon this issue overlaps a fact that the scale of the reduction of European military and defence expenditure generates a justified concern for the USA, for which within time perspective, such will result in the increase of expenditure towards worldwide military missions (especially in the case of Afghanistan). Currently only 5 out of 28 of NATO members fulfill the obligation of devoting 2% of GDP annually towards defence oriented projects. Recent reductions of defence budgets conveyed in connection to the global economical crisis introduce a real threat of deterioration of the aforementioned tendency, at the expense of the USA as well as military capabilities of NATO as a whole.



In accordance with this trend, in the last two years, European NATO members have reduced expenditure towards defence by about 45 billion USD.¹ Cuts within military budgets in the majority of European countries currently reach the level of 5 to 10%, in some cases reaching as much as 50%.² In the next three years, Germany is planning to reduce the budget of its Ministry of Defence by 11 billion USD, abandon the general military draft as well as decrease the size of its military from 240 to 180-160 thousand soldiers. The Netherlands is planning to decrease the number of Defence Ministry employees by 15%. In the upcoming years, the United Kingdom is planning to reduce defence expenditure by 8%. Before 2013 Italy will decrease its defence ministry budget by 10%. France is planning to decrease the budget of the ministry of defence by 5 billion Euros within the next three years and on top of that is also planning to decrease the number of civil and military employees of the Ministry of Defence by about 50 thousand employees.³ If Jane's Defence forecasts are to be believed, the combined defence budgets cuts of Great Britain,

¹ NATO Secretary General A.F. Rasmussen at a press conference in Brussels, 7 February 2011. Accessible at: <<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/db0fb476-32fd-11e0-9a61-00144feabdc0.html#axzz1FjMy3BbJ>>. Accessed on: 7 Feb. 2011.

² MAGRASSI Carlo., Better Spending in Security and Defence, address on European Security Foundation Conference on "New Development in ESDP", Brussels, 5 October 2010. Accessible at: <<http://www.eda.europa.eu/newsitem.aspx?id=677>>. Accessed on: 6 Oct. 2010.

³ European powers cut defense budgets. In: United Press International, June 2, 2010. Accessible at: <http://www.upi.com/Business_News/Security-Industry/2010/06/02/European-powers-cut-defense-budgets/UPI-78681275513003/print/>. Accessed on 2 Jun. 2010.

France and Germany alone, between the years of 2010-2014, will total 23 billions USD.⁴ Such significant cuts in expenditure devoted towards defence may result in the significant decrease of military capability of European states as well as NATO. Within the dynamically changing environment of international security this would de facto represent the limiting of the presence of NATO within crisis areas all over the world, as well as limiting of the responsibility for the ensuring of international security and stability. (...)

The consequences of budget disciplining actions as well as limiting of expenditure towards defence upon the European continent could be even more severe in the context of the global role and meaning of Europe. All that needs to be considered are the tendencies within the military budgets of states upon other continents (potential rivals). For example, this year China will continue to increase its defence expenditure (in accordance to official data, many experts however believe those to be underestimated) - by 12,7%, i.e. 91,5 billion USD; in 2010 this increase amounted to 7,5% in comparison to 2009).⁵ In 2011 the United States increased its basic Department of Defence budget (without foreign missions) by 7 billion USD (up to the level of 533 billion USD) and are announcing to further increase it to 553 billion USD in 2012.⁶ India is increasing defence expenditure in 2011 by 11,6% (up to the level of 46 billion USD).⁷ What should be added is the fact that the share of Asian states within nationwide expenditure devoted towards defence is still subject to constant increase (from 24% in 2007 up to the foreseen 32% in 2016).⁸ A similar contrast can be observed through observing the role of the European industry sector worldwide. In accordance to SIPRI data from the year 2009, from amongst 20 largest arms manufacturers were only six European based firms (BAE Systems, EADS, Finmeccanica, Thales, SAFRAN and Rolls Royce).⁹ The Minister of Defence of the Republic of France, H. Morin stated directly that without greater expenditure towards defense Europe is encumbering the risk of becoming “a protectorate” within the world dominated by the United States and China.¹⁰

All of these occurrences constitute the subjects of vivid discussions both within the European Parliament as well as other European Union institutions, as well as within the particular European Union member states. Thus executing the review of possibilities and challenges which Europe is currently facing, within the context of changes indispensable

⁴ ANDERSON G., BELL M.: European companies warned of lure of sovereign wealth funds, *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 14.12.2010.

⁵ China says it will boost its defence budget in 2011. In: *BBC Business News*, 04.03.2011. Accessible at: <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-12631357>> Accessed on: 4 Mar. 2011.

⁶ ENGLER Mark, US military spending marches on. In: *The Guardian*, 28.02.2011. Accessible at: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2011/feb/28/us-military-public-finance>> Accessed on 28 Feb. 2011.

⁷ India ups defence budget 11.6% to overhaul military, *Business Times*, 01.03.2011. Accessible at: <<http://www.business-times.com.sg/sub/news/story/0,4574,428210,00.html>> Accessed on 1 Mar. 2011.

⁸ BRADDON Derek, What lies ahead? defence, budgets and the financial crisis. In: *NATO Review 2009 World financial crisis: what it means for security, 2009*. Accessible at: <<http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2009/FinancialCrisis/Defence-Budget-Financial-Crisis/EN/index.htm>>

⁹ The SIPRI Top 100 arms-producing companies, 2009. In: *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute webpage*. Accessible at: <<http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/production/Top100/>>

¹⁰ AMES Paul, Ministers agree to push forward pooling and sparing. In: *Europolitics*, 24.09.2010 Accessible at: <<http://www.europolitics.info/sectoral-policies/ministers-agree-to-push-forward-pooling-and-sharing-art282145-13.html>> Accessed on 24 Sep. 2010

for implementation we shall have a look at „standard” (upon the national level) as well as „non-standard” (at the general European level) methods of activity. Taking a look at „standard” methods of introduction of savings within military budgets and we are able to distinguish the following groups of costs:

Operational costs – which encompass both the costs of conveying foreign missions as well as every day costs of functioning of military forces (fuel, ammunition etc.)

The majority of European states are forced to cope with the necessity of bearing direct and indirect expenditure connected to the participation within foreign missions (replacements, maintenance of equipment etc.). Pulling out from such missions is for the majority of European countries a risky task from the political point of view shaking creditability in the eyes of allies. Therefore the possibilities for the reduction of operational costs are for the majority of European defence ministries significantly limited.

Costs of personnel – Altogether European countries possess about 1,7 million soldiers at their disposal and they spend around 51% of their resources towards upkeep and maintenance of their soldiers (2009). In comparison, in the United States (1,4 million soldiers) the costs of personnel upkeep amount to 21% of the budget of the Department of Defense. The American experience may therefore constitute an interesting example to be followed by European countries, many of which, as it had already been mentioned, have already initiated the implementation of reforms aimed at the decrease of employment within the defence sector, the abandonment of obligatory military draft etc. Savings seem to be much more significant within the aforementioned group, especially if we consider the comparison of the level of expenditure devoted towards to the upkeep and maintenance of military personnel in Europe and in the United States.

The costs of investments – This area provides a great potential for savings, while at the same time constitutes a potential risk of deepening of the technological gap between Europe and the USA (in the future also with other global rivals). In accordance to the decision of the Steering Council (at the ministerial level) of the European Defence Agency, the target value of equipment purchases within defence budgets of European Union members should amount to 20%, with 2% of the amount being devoted towards development and research works. The decision which is likely to go within the adequate direction, underlines the meaning of technological development to the future of the defence sector. What needs to be remembered is the fact that the de facto expenditure of the European Union member states towards research and development projects is subject to gradual and constant decrease ever since 2006 and constitute 1/6th of funds devoted to research and development works spent in the USA. Therefore the gap is broadening. Who is spending that, EU or UAS? And what is the counterpart spending?

Whereas with regard to non-conventional methods of generating savings in defence-spending within the European context, such are, above all, connected to the possibilities of cooperation as well as to instruments, which are already functioning within the aforementioned scope upon the European continent (all that needs to be enumerated are: mutual military bases, specialization, mutual orders of equipment).

The possibilities of European cooperation within the scope of defence encompass at least two possible methods of cooperation: what I mean is bilateral and multilateral cooperation between particular states, as well as cooperation on a general, European Union based level.

The excellent and promising example of the first type of cooperation is constituted by the British-French agreement dated 2nd November 2010. The agreement has been concluded in the spirit of Declaration from Saint Malo (1998), which consists of two treaties, and amongst others, foresees the formation of mutual military basis, mutual projects within the scope of nuclear deterrence, equipment policy and communications.¹¹ What needs to be underlined is that the aforementioned agreement foresees almost instant implementation of particular, introducing real savings, solutions within the situation, within which an unsettled discussion is still taking place with regard to the future shape of the European defence policy as well as the shape of the defence industry. As a result the French-British cooperation may constitute a fundamental example for the future of defence policy as well as European industrial defence systems. Thus by strengthening military capabilities of both countries, the agreement de facto strengthens military capabilities of the European Union as the whole (British-French treaties are connected to the cooperation, amongst others within the scope of cyber safety, satellite communications, safety at seas – issues touched upon within the Lisbon Treaty). The foreseen formation and establishment of common military units and bases meant to be applied in foreign missions, constitutes a further step, which may lead to the establishment of broader general European structures, possessing at their disposal real (and not only theoretical) possibilities for operational activity. Speaking of cooperation at the European Union level, two possible options of cooperation may be analyzed:

- Establishment of a unified general European arms market and the consolidation of the European defence industry.



The concept for the establishment of a unified arms market and the consolidation of the European defence industry faces numerous challenges. First of all, considering the specifics of the sector, this type of consolidation will require even stronger integration at the political level (safety and sovereignty of particular states). Second of all, the process of consolidating the defence industry will de facto also bring with it the necessity of liquidating of the number of companies within the particular member states, which for the government of such states constitute an aspect of significant importance (in accordance to the assessments of the European Committee within defence industry of European Union states, there are on average 1,6 million people employed within this sector). Third of all, what needs to be remembered, are the differences which are present between various European Union member states, regarding policies of regulating the public and private sector. In Great Britain, Denmark or the Netherlands, the public and private spheres are regulated separately, while, for instance, in France the border between the aforementioned spheres are relatively “liquid”. Moreover, what is understood is that the majority of European states are still considering investments within the defence industry sector upon the general European level, based upon the principle of even division of benefits (*juste retour*).¹² Moreover, amongst European countries there exist a number of divergences in the approach to the idea of broader cooperation within the defence sector (the example may be constituted by the veto of Great Britain with regard to the increase of the budget of the European Defence Agency, as well as even questioning the legitimacy and workability of such an institution). Fifth of all, possibly the most important factor, is that the consolidation and concentration of defence industries of European Union member states, may by itself lead to the diminishing of the potential of the consolidated defence industry sector. This is connected to the potential threat of the establishment of monopolies within the sector of arms manufacturing, a fact that per se will have a negative impact upon the innovation of the given sector. Within the aforementioned scope, the United States may once more could serve as an example, where the successes of arms manufacturers as well as the unparalleled technological progress within the military and defence industry, are to a great extent connected to the rivalry of particular manufacturers of military equipment with regard to the winning of orders from the Department of Defense. What needs to be remembered is the fact that the current worldwide financial and economical crisis, has not led to the formation of any serious and “seriously” considered concepts of consolidation of the defence industry sector comparable to the nationwide scale in the USA. Pluralism and healthy competition constitute the real conditions of technical progress within every area, especially within the defence industry.

(...) The fact which is missing within the context of the ongoing economical crisis is the coordination of the aforementioned cooperation upon the European level in order to omit the costly redundancy of projects and programs. What is necessary is the undertaking of comprehensive initiatives, which lead to the more effective application of shrinking assets within defence budgets of member states.

¹² LAWRENCE Tony, Europe's Defence in Times of Economic Crisis. In: International Centre for Defence Studies, 14.01.2011. Accessible at: <[http://www.icds.ee/index.php?id=73&L=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=802&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=100&Hash=69e1a85d1b](http://www.icds.ee/index.php?id=73&L=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=802&tx_ttnews[backPid]=100&Hash=69e1a85d1b)> Accessed on: 14 Jan. 2011.

Tightening of cooperation as part of the broadly understood defence, I understand as:

- Harmonization and introduction of coherent hardware requirements, which would allow for an increase in standardization and compatibility,
- Coordination of expenditure devoted towards research and development (R&D), as part of the European Defence Research & Technology Strategy¹³
- The development of mutual arms programs,
- Strengthening of mechanisms of competitiveness upon the European arms market, in order to stimulate the rivalry and cooperation amongst manufacturers (with the consideration of the specifics of particular markets of member states).

Adoptions of such approaches provide the greatest hopes for effective activities and rapid effects. In connection to the existing divergences, Europe must temporarily base its activities on already functioning tools. One of the already existing instruments and areas of cooperation is constituted by the European Defence Agency (EDA). On the 9th December 2010, at the meeting in Brussels, ministers of defence of the European Union member states have agreed with regard to the necessity of tightening of cooperation within the defence industrial sector in order to decrease the costs of the economical and financial crisis and have backed the German-Swedish proposal for the conveyance of the analysis of all of the potential areas where the tightening of such cooperation is possible.¹⁴ Ministers have also summoned EDA to intensify works over the identification of such areas. Despite the existing problems and divergences (upon the aforementioned meeting Great Britain has again blocked the proposal for the increase of the EDA budget by 3,8%), the above described meeting constitutes an important step in the direction towards the development of cooperation within the area of defence on a general European level.

EDA, which does not possess any competence within the scope of public orders, could become the means of coordination of the process of cooperation of defence industry sectors of the European Union member states. What needs to be remembered is that numerous such cooperation programs have been existed for dozens of years and have produced excellent results.

What needs to be remembered is that Poland wants to move forward. Within the last weeks we have agreed that one of the subjects which will be discussed will be constituted by our proposal connected to the introduction of the principle in accordance to which stabilisation missions which are executed under the flag of the European Union, would be financed directly from the budget. I am a staunch supporter of the aforementioned idea and I hope that it will contribute to the increase of the effectiveness of European Union military forces.

¹³ EU should boost European Defence Agency funding on R&D. In: European Security and Defence Assembly, Assembly of WEU, Paris, 01.12.2010. Accessible at: <http://www.assembly-weu.org/en/presse/cp/2010/49_2010.php> Accessed on 1 Dec. 2010.

¹⁴ EU urges defence collaboration, UK blocks budget. In: Money Control, 10.12.2010. Accessible at: <http://www.moneycontrol.com/news/world-news/eu-urges-defence-collaboration-uk-blocks-budget_504345.html> Accessed on 10 Dec. 2010.



Regional Agenda for Nuclear Disarmament

Gioconda Úbeda

Ambassador Gioconda Úbeda is the Secretary General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) as of February 1, 2010. This article does not reflect the beliefs of OPANAL, but is rather the author's personal responsibility

In this article, I am drawn to address the challenges currently faced by the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) within the renewed agenda for nuclear disarmament, not without a previous recognition to the initiative and efforts carried out by the Latin American states to declare the region as a militarily denuclearized zone. The first advance towards the negotiations by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, known as the Tlatelolco Treaty, was the joint declaration dated April 29, 1963, subscribed by the Presidents of Mexico, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador and Chile, within the post-war arms race¹ framework, a few months after the Missile Crisis of 1962 between the two major nuclear powers (the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America). Under those circumstances, Latin America proclaimed their decision to start the political negotiations with the international community in order to be declared a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone (NWFZ). This, with the resolute purpose of avoiding a similar experience to happen again and also to sign an agreement that would establish “the commitment of not manufacturing, receiving, storing, nor testing nuclear weapons or nuclear launching devices”², through which the Latin American

¹ United States of America, 1945; Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, 1949; United Kingdom, 1952; France, 1960; and China, 1964.

² This commitment, as expressed in the Joint Declaration signed by the five Presidents, was thoroughly formalized in Article 1 of the Tlatelolco Treaty through the following text: “1. The Contracting Parties commit themselves to use those nuclear materials and facilities subject to their jurisdiction exclusively with peaceful purposes, and to prohibit and avoid the following actions in their respective territories:
a. The testing, use, manufacturing, production or purchase, by any means, of any nuclear weapon, by

region would obtain security guarantees from the nuclear powers regarding the non-use of such weapons in the region, and, simultaneously, the member states would be guaranteed their right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

That same year, on November 27, the UN General Assembly “...embraced the 1911 (XVIII) resolution through which it declared its support and encouragement to the Latin American initiative...”.³ Four years later, on February 14, 1967, the Tlatelolco Treaty was submitted to signature and it came into effect in 1969.

With the purpose of refreshing our memory and strengthening the political will of the member countries of the OPANAL, I quote the words expressed by former UN Secretary General, U Thant, to the Preparatory Commission for the Denuclearization of Latin America (COPREDAL) on February 12, 1967, on the occasion of the Tlatelolco Treaty approval: “*The Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America is an important stage in the long, difficult search for disarmament... It also sets forth the required by-laws towards the creation, for the first time in history, of a denuclearized zone in a populated area of the world... The Latin American nations can, with ample justification, take pride in what they have wrought by their own initiative and through their own efforts.*”

The Tlatelolco Treaty contributions

This was a novel treaty in many aspects; I am briefly citing some of them with historic significance and political relevance:

- a) It created the first nuclear weapons-free zone in a densely populated region, for which it formed the Tlatelolco System, comprised by the treaty itself, its two additional protocols,⁵ and the agency for the prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). Still today, the OPANAL is the only specialized agency created by a NWFZ⁶ intended to safeguard the compliance with its purposes, which should be valued as a Latin American/Caribbean legacy in favor of the efforts made to maintain the region free of nuclear weapons and to firmly keep contributing towards a total and general nuclear disarmament. At present, the

themselves, whether directly or indirectly, through third-party mandates or otherwise; and b. The reception, storage, installation, emplacement or any other way of possession of any nuclear weapon, whether directly or indirectly, by themselves, through third-party mandates or otherwise. The Contracting Parties also commit themselves to refrain from performing, encouraging or authorizing, whether directly or indirectly, the testing, use, manufacturing, production, possession or control over any nuclear weapon, as well as from participating in it in any way.”

³ Revista Mexicana de Política Exterior (Mexican Foreign Policy Magazine), No. 50, 1996, page 12

⁴ Extracted from the message addressed by Hon. Alfonso García Robles, on the 10th Anniversary of the Tlatelolco Treaty, page 23, OPANAL publication, 1977.

⁵ Protocol I. For those States with a de jure or de-facto territory under their responsibility within the zone. Ratified by the United States of America, France, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Protocol II. For those states owning nuclear weapons, for them to observe the military denuclearization in the zone. Ratified by the five acknowledged nuclear powers.

⁶ The Pelindaba Treaty, which was enacted in 2009, stipulates in Article 12 the creation of an African Commission on nuclear energy targeted to ensure the execution of the contract; as of today, we have knowledge that it has been officially set up and is expected to be normally running in the near term. For more details, see Pelindaba Treaty, Annex III.

OPANAL bodies are committed to strengthening the Agency to ensure a greater political involvement of our NWFZ in the renewed interest of the international community, in order to move forward into the complete and irretrievable elimination of nuclear weapons.

- b) Back then, the Tlatelolco Treaty was an important contribution to international law and at the same time, it was a benchmark and an inspiration to other NWFZs that subsequently emerged: In 1985 with the Rarotonga Treaty in the Southern Pacific (18 years after the Tlatelolco Treaty); in 1995, with the Bangkok Treaty in Southeast Asia; and a year later, with the Pelindaba Treaty, in the African continent⁷. The latter, together with the treaty that created the Central Asian NWFZ, became effective in 2009, all of them which today make five NWFZs, and Mongolia as a state unilaterally declared free of nuclear weapons⁸.
- c) This characteristic has enabled our NWFZ, led by Mexico and with the active involvement of the OPANAL, to organize in Mexico City in 2005, the 1st Conference of member states Involved in the treaties that create the NWFZs, and to coordinate this year the 2nd Conference in New York under the responsibility of Chile. These conferences and their corresponding final documents represent the starting point for the political coordination tasks agreed upon by all five NWFZs plus Mongolia in order to implement the international agenda with shared-interest issues.
- d) Latin America and the Caribbean constitute the only NWFZ which has two additional protocols, besides the treaty, signed and ratified by all the powers linked to them. However, at the time the additional protocols were signed and/or ratified, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France and Russia performed interpretative statements to the text. This fact became a pending issue to be resolved in order for the nuclear powers to achieve the consolidation of those negative security guarantees in the region. This is why conversations with the powers linked to the Tlatelolco Treaty protocols started in 2010, particularly concerning to the additional protocol, I related to the military denuclearization of the zone encompassed by the Treaty, in order for the interpretative statements carried out at the moment of its signing and/or ratification to be modified or revoked.
- e) Article 17 of the Tlatelolco Treaty, also set forth the right of the member states to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It was also incorporated by the Treaty for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons known as NPT, which became effective in 1970, one year after the Tlatelolco Treaty. It is clear that the right also entails the obligation to meet the control and verification system set forth by Article 12 and subsequent articles of the Tlatelolco Treaty, also a novelty at that time. Today it is necessary to reflect on that system in relation to other verification and control mechanisms conducted worldwide by the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) , and bilaterally, by the Argentine-Brazilian Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC).

⁷ Note that except for the Tlatelolco and Rarotonga Treaties, the rest became effective during the Post-Cold War period.

⁸ Declared on September 25, 1992, and effective as of February 3, 2011.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREE ZONE	TREATY	ADDITIONAL PROTOCOLS
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	<p>TLATELOLCO</p> <p>Open for signature on February 14, 1967, and became effective on April 22, 1969 with 12 states. To this date, all 33 States in the region are members. Created the OPANAL in 1969.</p>	<p>Protocol I. For those states with a de jure or de-facto territory under their responsibility within the zone; signed and ratified by United States, France, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.</p> <p>Protocol II. For those states in possession of nuclear weapons to observe the denuclearized nature of the zone. Signed and ratified by all 5 Nuclear States</p>
SOUTHERN PACIFIC	<p>RAROTONGA</p> <p>Open for signature on August 6, 1985, and became effective on December 11, 1986. There are 13 member states .</p>	<p>Protocol I. For those states with a de jure or de-facto territory under their responsibility within the zone. Signed and ratified by France and the United Kingdom; the United States has only been a signatory.</p> <p>Protocol II. For those acknowledged nuclear states to observe the denuclearized nature of the zone. Signed and ratified by France and the United Kingdom; the United States has only been a signatory.</p> <p>Protocol III. For the acknowledged nuclear states not to perform nuclear tests in the area. Signed and ratified by France and the United Kingdom; the United States has only been a signatory.</p>
SOUTHEAST ASIA	<p>BANGKOK</p> <p>Open for signature on December 15, 1995 and became effective on March 27, 1997. Ten member states.</p>	<p>One Protocol. For those acknowledged states in possession of nuclear weapons to observe the denuclearized nature of the zone. No state has signed it yet.</p>
AFRICA	<p>PELINDABA</p> <p>Open for signature on April 12, 1996 and became effective on July 15, 2009. There are currently 28 member states. The Treaty, in Article 12, anticipates the creation of the Commission on Nuclear Energy, which has been recently set up.</p>	<p>Protocol I. For those acknowledged nuclear states to observe the denuclearized nature of the zone. Signed and ratified by China, France and the United Kingdom; the United States and Russia have only been signatories.</p> <p>Protocol II. For the acknowledged nuclear states not to perform nuclear tests in the area. Signed and ratified by China, France and the United Kingdom; the United States and Russia have only been signatories.</p> <p>Protocol III. For those states with a de jure or de-facto territory under their responsibility within the zone. Signed and ratified by France. Spain has not signed yet.</p>
CENTRAL ASIA	<p>CENTRAL ASIA</p> <p>Open for signature on September 8, 2006, and became effective on March 21, 2009. It has 5 member states.</p>	<p>One Protocol for all five recognized states in possession of nuclear weapons to observe the denuclearized nature of the zone. No state has signed yet.</p>

OPANAL Challenges and Trials

Forty-four years have gone by and, just like then, the OPANAL is again dealing with recurrent challenges and emerging trials. One just has to remember the entire process to obtain the signatures and ratifications from the States in the region, where the agency served as a flexible, effective multilateral forum in the negotiation of agreements that enabled the 33 states to become members of the Tlatelolco Treaty. Among those agreements are the three amendments performed to the Treaty in the early '90s (1990-1992), which enabled the incorporation of Argentina, Chile and Brazil; the Caribbean countries which consolidated as states after 1967; and Cuba, who signed it in 1995 and ratified it in 2002. The flexibility in making decisions also enabled the system of Tlatelolco to fit into the control and verification needs between Brazil and Argentina as to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, thus creating the ABACC. This bilateral body has subscribed agreements with the IAEA and the OPANAL. It is imperative that the OPANAL renews the cooperation and coordination relationships with both agencies in this new juncture.

As it is known, at the end of the Cold War, it was thought that the nuclear disarmament would finally become possible, but the opposite has been proven. Therefore, in the NPT Review Meeting held in 1995, the states decided to indefinitely extend such treaty. Five years later, during the conference held in 2000, all 189 NPT member states unanimously ratified, in the final document, “an irrefutable commitment made by those states in possession of nuclear weapons to gradually but completely eliminate their nuclear arsenals as the way to nuclear disarmament”, or fashionably known as “toward the nuclear zero”. The following events are also known as part of history: nothing relevant has occurred within a decade, and even the Disarmament Conference didn't reach any agreements in 15 years, which has caused the negotiations on the Treaty for the prohibition on production of fissile materials to come to a dead spot.

Today, it is clear that the post-Cold War illusion was, in fact, just an illusion, and that on the contrary, new challenges and threats have emerged along with new opportunities to advance toward a total, comprehensive disarmament. 2010 has been witness to some advances on nuclear disarmament; however, these are only a few steps in the long, complex road towards a total, comprehensive, and irretrievable nuclear disarmament. I will refer to some of them as follows:

- The signature –and in the early 2011, the enactment– of the new START by the United States of America (USA) and the Russian Federation, for the reduction of offensive strategic weapons.
- Revision of the USA nuclear position; and more recently, of the United Kingdom.
- The consensual adoption of the final document by the member states of the VIII Conference for the NPT Examination, held on May 2010, in which an agenda of actions was determined, a measure that was accurately commented by the Mexican delegation during the recent meetings of the I. United Nations Commission: “it represents the starting point toward the eventual concretion of a world free of nuclear weapons; it is the critical path to channel those efforts with precise actions”⁹.

⁹ Words expressed by Ambassador Pablo Macedo at the I United Nations Commission held in New York on October 15, 2010.

To this context, it is necessary to add the increasing interest shown by countries worldwide, including the Latin American/Caribbean region, towards the production of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes (the IAEA has mentioned the existence of 65 interested countries, 11 of which are from Latin America¹⁰), which represents new challenges to the region in terms of guaranteeing the development, without discrimination, of such energy for those interested countries, and concurrently, ensuring that its use shall only be for civil purposes.

Going back to the OPANAL challenges, these are some I have been mentioning throughout this article, in addition to the ones that are emerging related to the renewed international agenda, particularly within the last two years. In my opinion, together they constitute the Agency's political agenda, which is the agenda of all 33 member states of the Tlatelolco Treaty. We can't postpone addressing those challenges and that agenda. The so called 'lost decade for nuclear disarmament', with some exceptions, has also been a lost period of time for the Agency.

As I mentioned earlier, the Agency's political agenda is made up of challenges; therefore, I will list the most relevant, in order to provide the reader a closer look but without including each topic's details.

- f) The strengthening of the OPANAL. What matters most in this objective is the political will of the governments as well as agreeing upon efforts. The strengthening process has started; in this regard, it is relevant to mention, the OPANAL task coordination at the UN headquarters in New York and in the Conference for Disarmament in Genève, a responsibility undertaken by the member states on a rotational basis. Additionally, this strengthening is evident in the dynamics of those tasks carried out by the council and the Secretary General, along with the renewed Agency's political agenda, which in part is made up by the topics mentioned below.
- g) Another working area is the negotiation for the amendment or elimination of the interpretative statements performed to the additional protocols of the Tlatelolco Treaty by the nuclear powers. Consolidating the military denuclearization scheme has been and still is an essential objective for the OPANAL; therefore, it is essential that the nuclear powers amend or eliminate the interpretative statements performed at the moment of signing and/or ratifying the additional protocol II of the Treaty. The conversations held with the four nuclear powers who issued those statements began last year; this will be a good year to resume them.
- h) The analysis of the Tlatelolco control system in relation with the international verification system and the sub-regional experiences. This happens, among other reasons, due to the restoration of the cooperation and coordination with other related agencies, such as the ABACC and the IAEA. These agencies are also adapting to the new agenda in terms of nuclear issues.
- i) The role performed by OPANAL as to the peaceful use of nuclear power. The states developed this right, which broadly expresses the way in which the agency would be linked to the expansion of the peaceful use of such energy by the states of the region.

¹⁰ Report issued by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to the Governors Council at the General Conference (GOV/INF/2010/12-CG(54)/INF/5, September 7, 2010, page. 11, Spanish version.

That interrogation still lacks an answer, and constitutes one of the significant topics to be discussed in the OPANAL.

- j) Education for nuclear disarmament. In 2011, the OPANAL will continue with the online course on nuclear disarmament issues in Spanish, and expects its English version to start. This will enable a greater coverage among the agency members, other NWFZs, and other interested countries or organizations of the civil society.
- k) Political coordination with other NWFZs and Mongolia. As stated before, this region has been in charge of organizing and coordinating both Conferences of member states of those treaties that create the NWFZs and Mongolia. Each conference has consensually adopted a final document, prioritizing among the agreements, the political coordination between them for dialog and cooperation. Considering that 114 states are members of all five NWFZs created so far, coordination becomes highly complex, mainly because the Latin America and the Caribbean NWFZ is the only one that has its own, specialized agency; most of the remaining ones have a focal point that rotates among the member states. In 2011 and the subsequent years, this will be a topic which will require special attention in the agency's tasks.
- l) Coordinating efforts with the civil society towards nuclear disarmament. Nuclear disarmament will not be possible if we don't work together by complementing actions oriented to that particular purpose. In this regard, we have given special attention to identifying shared interest areas that could be implemented with domestic and international NGOs.

Conclusion

The Tlatelolco Treaty was innovative in many respects and remains a pioneer in others. The new international scenario claims greater enthusiasm in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation processes. It also demands additional presence to guarantee the states' right to the development and use of nuclear energy for civil purposes, with the corresponding international obligations. The Latin America/Caribbean region has to perform its applicable role in this new juncture, as it did over 44 years ago. This is not an option, but a responsibility.

In the past, the region committed itself to nuclear non-proliferation, and all 33 States have complied. Presently, everyone keeps this hope alive: That the powers in possession of nuclear weapons comply with their commitment to disarm. We are aware that this is neither an easy nor an immediate goal, that the road is long and complex... very complex, and that the efforts to make it possible are a task for all: For the Tlatelolco member states, the OPANAL Council and the secretary general. It is a task involving all of us: the states in possession of nuclear weapons, the NWFZs, the multilateral forums and the civil society.

Programme

Wednesday, November 3rd 2010

Welcome

Peter Fischer-Bollin

Representative of the Konrad Adenauer
Foundation in Brazil (KAS)

Luiz Felipe Lampreia

Ambassador and Honorary Vice-Chairmen
of the Brazilian Center for International
Relations (CEBRI)

João Pacheco

Ambassador and Head of the European
Union's Delegation in Brazil, EU

Opening Conference

**Security Perspectives for South America
and Europe**

Nelson Jobim

Minister of Defence, Brazil

Jaime Ravinet

Minister of Defence, Chile

Klaus Naumann

General and Former Chairman of the
Military Committee of the North Atlantic
Treaty
Organization (NATO), Germany

Moderation

Peter Fischer-Bollin

Representative of the Konrad Adenauer
Foundation in Brazil (KAS)

Thursday, November 4th 2010

Workshop 1

Peace Operations and Strategic Security

Floriano Peixoto Vieira Neto

Major-General and Former Force
Commander of the United Nations
Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MINUSTAH, Brazil

Elissa Golberg

Director General of the Stabilization and
Reconstruction Task Force (START) in the
Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs
and International Trade, Canada

Babu M. Rahman

Head of the Planning and Countries Team
in the Stabilization Unit, United Kingdom

Facilitator

Clóvis Brigagão

Director of the Center for American
Studies, Candido Mendes University, Brazil

Workshop 2

**Tendencies of Armament in Latin
America and Europe**

Rocío San Miguel

President of the Civil Association Citizen
Control for Security, Defence and National
Armed Forces, Venezuela

Markus Kaim

Head of the International Security Division, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Germany

Eduardo Pastrana Buelvas

Director of the International Relations Department of Pontificia Javeriana University and Editor of the Magazine Papel Político, Colombia

Facilitator

Alfredo Valladão

Professor of SciencesPo, University of Paris, France

Conference

Challenges for the Defence Budget after the Economic Crisis**Sergio Abreu**

Member of the Senate, Uruguay

Pawel Zalewski

Member of the European Parliament, Poland

Raul Jungmann

Member of the Federal Parliament, Brazil

Roderich Kiesewetter

Member of the Federal Parliament, Germany

Moderator

Patrick Keller

Coordinator of Foreign Policy and Security at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation Berlin, Germany

Panel

The Current Debate on Nuclear Disarmament**Gioconda Úbeda Rivera**

Ambassador and Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), Costa Rica

Mark Fitzpatrick

Director of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Programme International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), United Kingdom

Roland Kobia

Ambassador and Head of the European Union Delegation in Azerbaijan, EU

Moderator

Roberto Abdenur

Ambassador and Board Member of the Brazilian Center for International Relations (CEBRI), Brazil

Final Remarks

