



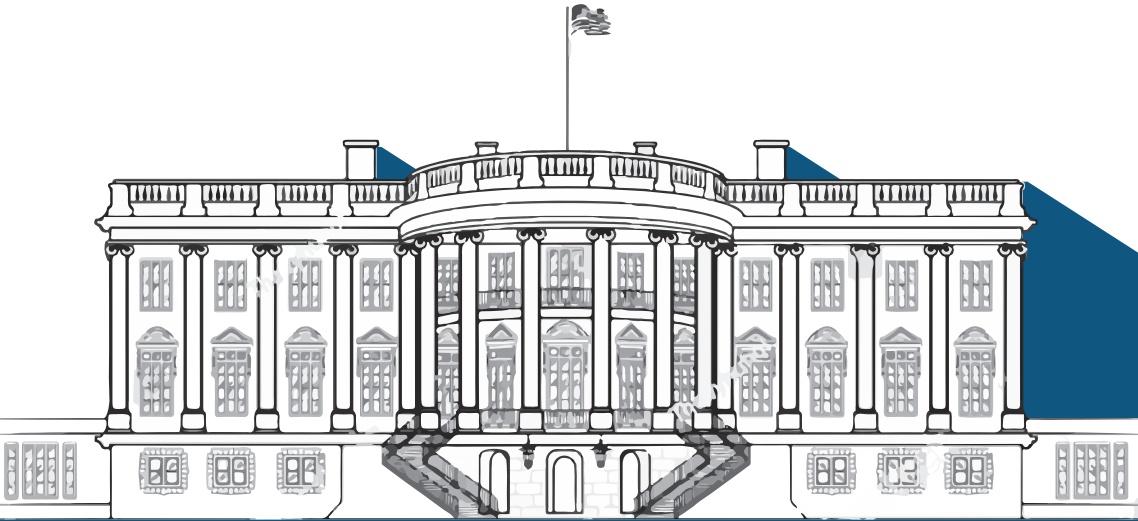
**IDEI**

INSTITUTO DE ESTUDIOS INTERNACIONALES

PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DEL PERÚ



# The Foreign Policy of President Donald Trump and its impact on Latin America



FABIÁN NOVAK

SANDRA NAMIHAS



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AND ITS IMPACT ON LATIN AMERICA**





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Fabián Novak  
Sandra Namihás

2018

*The Foreign Policy of President Donald Trump and its impact on Latin America*  
Issue: 500 copies

1<sup>st</sup> ed., December 2018

Statutory Deposit at the National Library of Peru Number 2018-16200

ISBN N° 978-9972-671-56-2

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Cover design: Interactiva Studio

Printed at: EQUIS EQUIS S.A.  
Tax Payer Number: 20117355251  
Jr. Inca 130 - Lima 34  
Lima – Peru

Printed in Peru

December, 2018

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## **Acknowledgments**

*The authors of this book wish to express their special acknowledgment to Soledad Castillo Jara, Italo Laiza Cuyubamba and Ana Paola Vergara Lamadrid, for their collaboration in collecting information for this work. Their great sense of responsibility and diligence in research signals a successful path for them in international studies.*



## Prologue

Donald Trump's election as president of the United States of America has given rise to various academic, journalistic and biographical publications, which not only try to portray his characteristics, but also analyze the policies that he has been developing both internally and externally, as well as their impact across the world.

And this is because Trump showed signs that were unusual in American politics since the election campaign, which caused confusion and even fear among his historic allies and, even more so, among his rivals.

In this regard, the Institute of International Studies (IDEI) of the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru, supported by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS), considered it important to develop a research project that would precisely analyze the characteristics of President Trump's foreign policy, establish its similarities and differences with the policies executed by other US presidents, and measure the impact that this policy has been having in different parts of the world, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean.

To do so, the authors decided to divide the work into four parts. The first is intended to review the foreign policy of the United States of America towards Latin America and the Caribbean between 1826 and 2016, in order to establish the different features or permanent guidelines of this policy towards the region.

The second analyzes President Donald Trump's foreign policy guidelines in relation to Europe, Asia and the Middle East, while the third part exclusively deals with the features of this policy towards the Latin American and Caribbean region. In this sense, Trump's policy is studied in its commercial, migratory, environmental, democracy, cooperation, and other aspects.

Finally, based on the information analyzed in the three previous chapters, the fourth part of this work develops the general and distinctive characteristics of foreign policy that President Trump has executed during the first 20 months of his term, that is, from January 2017 to September 2018.

Preparing this work has required wide reading of literature related not only to the history of American foreign policy but also to the current policy executed by president Trump; hence not only scholarly sources but also journalistic sources have been used for the latter period.

It should be noted that the analysis carried out in this work is based on foreign policy actions executed by President Trump and not on statements or proposals that have not been materialized. This is done with the purpose of being objective and truthful and not falling into the field of speculation.

Definitely, a limitation for the drafting of this book was the fact that President Trump is halfway in his administration term. However, we also believe that sufficient time has elapsed and numerous important foreign policy actions have been carried out that allow drawing significant conclusions.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and especially to its representative, Sebastian Grundberger, for the invaluable support provided to this project.

The authors

Plaza Francia, September 25, 2018

# Chapter I

## Summary of the United States of America Foreign Policy vis-a-vis Latin America and the Caribbean between 1826 and 2016

### 1.1. Evolution of the United States of America Foreign Policy vis-a-vis Latin America and the Caribbean

#### 1.1.1. From isolationism to expansionism and interventionism (1826-1933)

Since its independence, the founders of the United States of America (USA) assumed that they had a mission to fulfill in the world, that is, they saw themselves as a chosen people to lead the world; this was known as the “American exceptionalism”<sup>1</sup>. However, in parallel, since George Washington times, the USA kept a strong isolationism (the so-called “splendid isolationism”) in order not to be contaminated with the problems that prevailed in other parts of the world, especially in Europe. Thus, Washington, in his farewell speech of September 17, 1796, understood that it was “unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her [Europe’s] politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities. Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course [...]” (Kissinger, 2001, p.26).

The idea was, to a great extent, to become strengthened as a State before embarking on the adventure of seeking global leadership (Calderón, 2000, pp.9-10). Likewise, this isolationism should be extended to the entire American continent, as the United States understood from the beginning that it was its natural area of influence.

In this sense, the words uttered by the third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809) when referring to this continent, are revealing:

[...] in whatever governments they end, they will be American governments, no longer to be involved in the never-ceasing broils of Europe [...] America has a hemisphere to itself: it must have its separate system of interests, which must not be subordinated to those of Europe. The insulated state in which nature has placed the American continent should so far avail it that no spark of war kindled in the other quarters of the globe should be wafted across the wide oceans which separate us from them. And it will be so. (Raymont, 2007, pp.29-30)

---

<sup>1</sup> This is a vision that has marked American politics all along its history. In that regard, Abraham Lincoln characterized the USA as “the last best hope of Earth,” George W. Bush pointed out that America is the only one qualified to lead the world,” while Barack Obama stated: “I believe in American exceptionalism” (Odrizola, 2017).

In 1823, the fifth US president, James Monroe (1817-1825), clearly defended the separation between the New World and Europe, because he also understood that the Old World power struggles did not harmonize with America's historic mission, which was to achieve a life of peace, freedom and justice. Even when pronouncing his famous phrase "America for the Americans"<sup>2</sup> Monroe intended to send a clear message to Europe, where the Spanish and Portuguese empires aimed at keeping or recovering their colonies. It was hence a doctrine that was essentially defensive in its origins, because it sought to reject any armed expedition of the Holy Alliance that sought to destabilize the nascent American republics, noting that such a purpose would imply an unfriendly attitude toward the United States.<sup>3</sup> (Merk, 1966, pp.11-21; Mendieta, Espinosa-Saldaña, Escalante, Jiménez, Farje, Arequipeño, and Canepa, 1993).

Beyond the aforementioned, this doctrine did not mean that the US had special concern for the affairs of the American continent, as demonstrated by its minimal participation in 1826 in the Congress of Panama convened by Simon Bolívar or by its almost null intervention in the wars of independence in the region with the exception of Cuba in 1898. It was all about preserving America free of all outside influence.

However, the Monroe doctrine evolved over time, adopting a content that was different from the one it originally had (defensive character) and became the rationale of the American expansionism of that time. And it is that Monroe himself would come to defend the expansion of the United States towards the West, since he understood that it was necessary to become a great power, not perceiving that it contradicted its initial approach. Monroe, verbatim, pointed out:

It must be obvious for all, that the further the expansion is carried, provided it be not beyond the just limit, the greater will be the freedom of action to both governments [state and federal] and the more perfect their security; and in all other respects, the better the effect will be to the whole American people. Extent of territory, whether it be great or small, gives to a nation many of its characteristics. It marks the extent of its resources, of its population, of its physical force. It marks, in short, the difference between a great and a small power. (Kissinger, 2001, p.25)

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<sup>2</sup> According to several historians, the Monroe doctrine was actually formulated by Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, who would subsequently become a US president (1825-1829).

<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, it must be remembered that the USA did not oppose the British occupation of the Malvinas Islands in 1833 and did not use force to repel the French occupation of Mexico in 1862 (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, p.3).

Thus, in 1843, President John Tyler (1841-1845) used this doctrine to justify his campaign to annex Texas to the Union and then Democratic President James K. Polk (1845-1849) also used it to annex half of the Mexican territory to the US, and even to promote an expansionist program that included Cuba, a policy that was only temporarily halted by the Civil War (Smith, 1984, pp.246-247, Mendieta et al, 1993). Then, in 1868, President Andrew Johnson resumed expansionism, but this time by buying Alaska (Kissinger, 2001, p.31).

Another US axiom was added to the Monroe Doctrine that would reinforce its expansionism, we refer to the so-called “manifest destiny”, according to which the US was predestined to lead not only the American continent but also the world.

This thought was the work of the American journalist John O ‘Sullivan when referring to the question of the annexation of Texas and Oregon (Garrido, 2012, p.47). Specifically, in his article entitled “Annexation,” published in the Democratic Review in 1845, he noted: “The fulfillment of our manifest destiny to *overspread the continent* allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions”.

Other authors, however, attribute this proposal to the southern journalist and publicist J.D.B. de Bow, who pointed out in 1850:

We have a destiny to perform, “a manifest destiny” over Mexico, over South America, over the West Indies and Canada. The Sandwich Islands are as necessary for our eastern, as the gulf Isles to our western commerce. The gates of the Chinese empire must be thrown down by the men of the Sacramento and the Oregon, and the haughty Japanese trampers upon the cross be enlightened in the doctrines of republicanism and the ballot box. The eagle of the republic shall poise itself over the field of Waterloo, after tracing its flight among the gorges of the Himalaya or the Ural Mountains, and a successor of Washington ascend the chair of universal empire! (Comellas, 2001, p.57)

It is also during those times that the use of the word America was born to refer to the United States and not to the entire continent, even using the “American” name to refer to its nationals, although in reality it includes all the natives of the Americas (Ospina, 2012, p.44).

Towards the end of the 19th century, the USA sought to approach the rest of the countries of the American continent with the purpose of consolidating their leadership through consensus. This occurred in 1889 when James G. Blaine, Secretary of State of that country, under the presidency of Republican Benjamin Harrison (1889-1893), convened the First International Conference of American States in Washington D.C. to discuss trade and defense issues that particu-

larly interested the northern power. Although this initiative was received positively by most of the American countries, it was resisted by Argentina and Chile due to differences in its commercial interests; This eventually led to a significant number of US proposals in the conference being rejected, although it was accepted to establish the permanent secretariat of that conference in Washington (Smith, 1984, p.247). In any case, beyond said difficulties, this meeting was important because it initiated the movement known as Pan-Americanism that later led to the creation of the Organization of American States (OAS) at the 1948 Inter-American Conference of Bogotá (Orrego Vicuña, 1992, p.31; Raymond, 2007, pp.29 and 31).

The approach continued in 1898, although differently, when the government of Republican William McKinley (1897-1901), was involved just once in the independence of a country in the region; we refer to Cuba vis-a-vis Spain. This support was due to the US interest in strengthening the Caribbean as its zone of influence but also to consolidate the withdrawal of the Spanish empire in the region (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, p.3). This was enshrined in the Treaty of Paris of December 10, 1898, signed between the United States and Spain and by which the latter yielded the islands of Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines to the US, and recognized the independence of Cuba, where the US troops remained until 1903 (Urbaneja Clerch, 1998, p.199).

The US relationship with the region was radically transformed when Republican Theodore Roosevelt took office as president (1901-1909). A successor of the assassinated William McKinley, under who he served as vice-president, Roosevelt developed the policy of the big stick, based on a supposed African proverb: “Speak softly and carry a big stick, so you will get far”, seeking to reflect with this the convenience of combining diplomatic persuasion with violence, and pacts and agreements with military interventions. Although Roosevelt had already used such a phrase in 1900, it was in his speech in Minnesota, on September 2, 1901, that he made it official (Linares, 1993, p.67; ER Services, s / f; Encyclopaedia Britannica, s / F).

In effect, Roosevelt gave the Monroe doctrine as the ideas of “manifest destiny” and of the “civilizing mission”<sup>4</sup> its most interventionist interpretation. In his speech of December 6, 1904, he proclaimed a general right of any “civilized nation” to intervene, a right that only the US had in the American continent, adding

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<sup>4</sup> In the 19th century, USA propagated that its Anglo-Saxon culture was superior to others, for which they not only had the right to expand but also to carry out a civilizing mission in the places they occupied. This served as justification for occupying the Philippines, the Hawaiian Islands, Guam, among others, whose populations were the object of such a mission. President McKinley then maintained that his wars were “humanitarian missions” (jpnora, 2015, April 9; Itulain, 2017, July 12; Scarfi, 2014).



that it would, consequently, exercise its international police power<sup>5</sup> in cases of malice or incompetence of a government in the region, which therefore guaranteed the presence of only like-minded governments regarding the United States. (Kissinger, 2001, p.33)

Thus, the interventionist policy was initiated, particularly in Central America and the Caribbean<sup>6</sup>, but even in South America, when Roosevelt propitiated the rebellion of the great Colombian province of Panama. It must be remembered that at that time Panama was part of Greater Colombia until it reached its independence in 1903, which eventually allowed the United States control of the Panama Canal, a project that had been rejected by the Great Colombian Congress (Smith, 1984, p.248, Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, p.4). In fact, on November 18, 1903, that is, a few days after Panamanian independence, John M. Hay, US Secretary of State, and Philippe Bunau Varilla, Panama extraordinary envoy, signed a treaty for which the Central American country would grant the US an area 10 miles wide in perpetuity, on which the US was conferred rights, power and authority that the US “would possess and exercise” as if it were sovereign of the territory, in addition to the exclusive application of its police and judicial jurisdiction (Articles II and III). In addition, the treaty enshrined the payment in favor of Panama of \$ 10 million and the US undertook to guarantee and maintain Panama’s independence (Article I). President Roosevelt’s phrase about this is famous:

I am interested in the Panama Canal because I started it. If I had followed traditional, conservative, methods, I should have submitted a dignified state paper of probably two hundred pages to Congress, and the debate would have been going on yet. But I took the Canal Zone, and let Congress debate, and while the debate goes on, the Canal does also. (González Casasbuenas, 2002, p.74)

This interventionism in the region contributed to the growth of US interests in Central America -commercial, naval, railroad, banking, among others- which reinforced Roosevelt’s desire to promote interventions in the continent (Linares, 1993, p.67).

Roosevelt’s policy and the so-called “dollar diplomacy”<sup>7</sup> were the underpinning subsequently used presidents such as Republican William Howard Taft (1909-

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<sup>5</sup> In his annual address to the US Congress, Roosevelt said: “The United States would become the policeman of the Western Hemisphere” (Smith, 1984, p.249).

<sup>6</sup> Thus, in 1905 the US government intervened in the Dominican Republic to guarantee the payment of certain debts contracted with European and American creditors.

<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, the US Government promoted the expansion of US companies’ interests and presence in Latin America, considering that this was a good mechanism to ensure US hegemony in the region (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, p.4).

1913)<sup>8</sup>, Democrat Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921)<sup>9</sup>, and Republicans Warren G. Harding (1921-1923) and John Calvin Coolidge Jr. (1923-1929)<sup>10</sup> to send troops to Cuba, Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Dominican Republic. Even these governments saw no contradiction between this interventionist policy and the principle of self-determination that they also defended, since they understood that a good government created the necessary conditions to achieve “constitutional freedom” (Raymont, 2007, pp.32-33, Linares, 1993, p.66).

This interventionist wave generated a consequent adverse reaction in the region, awakening Latin American nationalism and the beginning of an anti-American sentiment that was expressed even in the literary works of the Nicaraguan Rubén Darío, the Argentinean José Manuel Estrada, the Uruguayan Enrique Rodó and the Brazilian Machado de Assis (Raymont, 2007, p.34). This tense relationship was also evidenced in the Sixth Pan American Conference held in Havana in 1928, where confrontation between some delegations -like the Argentinean against the US- gave the impression that this was the end of Pan-Americanism (Smith, 1984, p.249).

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<sup>8</sup> During Taft’s administration, the US intervened Nicaragua in 1912 to collect debts agreed with US creditors (Smith, 1984, p.249).

<sup>9</sup> In this presidential period the so-called “moral diplomacy” prevailed, according to which, in Wilson’s own words in a speech given before the US Congress, on December 8, 1914: “Dread of the power of any other nation we are incapable of. We are not jealous of rivalry in the fields of commerce or of any other peaceful achievement. We mean to live our own lives as we will; but we mean also to let live. We are, indeed, a true friend to all the nations of the world, because we threaten none, covet the possessions of none, desire the overthrow of none.” (Kissinger, 2001, pp.40-41). However, in practice, his Government intervened in Haiti in 1915 also for the collection of debts contracted with American creditors. Marines were even sent to Veracruz (Mexico) and troops under the command of General John Pershing in northern Mexico (Smith, 1984, p.249, Linares, 1993, p.68). This policy of intervention was even duly safeguarded by Wilson when preparing the Covenant of the League of Nations when insisting on inclusion of article 21, which is expressly established: “Nothing in this Covenant shall be deemed to affect the validity of international agreements such as treaties of arbitration or regional understandings like the Monroe doctrine, for securing the maintenance of the peace” (Moniz, 2010, pp.47-48).

However, at the same time, President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s good-neighbor policy is considered to have originated in Wilson’s plan to unite the American republics in a Pan-American alliance of non-aggression and mutual aid (Linares, 1993, p.68).

<sup>10</sup> Although in the case of Harding an attempt was made to moderate the abuses committed in the occupations of Haiti and Nicaragua and the intervention in the Dominican Republic was ended, Coolidge and his Secretary of State Frank Kellogg resumed the interventionist policy by sending 5,000 troops to Nicaragua (Raymont, 2007, p.36).

This led the next Republican president Hervert Hoover (1929-1933) to seek to improve relations with Latin America and the Caribbean. In this sense, he made a trip through South America (which included Argentina, the main opponent of US policy) and sought to collaborate in the definitive solution of the boundaries between Peru and Chile after the Pacific War. On this last, Hoover accepted to send a memo containing the bases of the agreement on Tacna and Arica, as long as they were previously agreed between Peru and Chile, which was accepted by these countries; thus, on May 15, 1929, President Hoover sends the final bases of the final settlement to both countries (Wieland, 2017, pp.56 and 63, Ulloa, 1987).

Also, during this administration, Secretary of State Frank Kellogg declared before the Senate his disagreement with the addition that Roosevelt had made to the Monroe Doctrine in the sense of giving the United States a police power, to which President Hoover added that the US Government should not use force to secure contracts with foreign states (Mendieta et al, 1993). Therefore, during his presidency, the Marines were removed from the countries that had been previously occupied, with the exception of Haiti (Smith, 1984, pp.249 and 250).

Despite the good intentions of Hoover's Government, the economic depression in the USA in those years as a result of the of the stock market collapse led the government to implement a protectionist policy through the Smoot-Hawley Law of July 17, 1930 (which unilaterally raised tariffs on imported products), which had a negative impact on the region that kindled resentment against the superpower. Likewise, the crisis provoked a wave of dictatorships in the region - such as that of Getúlio Vargas in Brazil at the end of 1929, Carlos Blanco Galindo in Bolivia, Luis Miguel Sánchez Cerro in Peru and José Félix Uriburu in Argentina in 1930 - besides political destabilization in Chile in 1931, events that led to greater estrangement and tensions between the United States and the region. In 1932, the Chaco War between Bolivia and Paraguay began, which was also a source of discord with the power of the north.

### **1.1.2. Roosevelt's good neighbor policy (1933-1945)**

It is in this period, under the presidency of Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt, that the US leadership in Latin America was definitively consolidated by displacing Great Britain and the rest of European countries to a second place. The fundamental reason for this was the greater amount of US investment in the region, as well as the increase in commercial exchange (1,700% between 1914 and 1939), a result of the disconnection between Latin America and its European suppliers due to the two world wars (Calderón, 2000, p.32).

Likewise, President Roosevelt took a radical turn to US foreign policy vis-a-vis Latin America and the Caribbean. In its four terms, his purpose was to try to leave behind the factors of confrontation and resentment that had character-

ized the previous period, reinforcing Pan-Americanism and seeking a continental alliance based on mutual respect but also on certain common values such as freedom and democracy. In this regard, Roosevelt called it the good neighbor policy, whose effectiveness became a pillar of his foreign policy (Freidel, 1990, p.211).

Roosevelt was aware of the difficult situation that both Europe and Asia were going through on the verge of war, but also of the economic crisis of his own country, which is why he deemed it convenient to focus on the American continent. This was one more reason to promote the good neighbor policy included in his message of March 4, 1933, reaffirmed in his speech on April 12 of that same year and in that of January 3, 1936 after his re-election.

In the second message to the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, President Roosevelt said:

In my Inaugural Address I stated that I would “dedicate this Nation to the policy of the good neighbor [...] the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors”. Never before has the significance of the words “good neighbor” been so manifest in international relations.

[...]

Your Americanism and mine must be a structure built of confidence, cemented by a sympathy which recognize only equality and fraternity. (Roosevelt, 1938a, pp.130-131)

In the 1936 address he pointed out:

Among the Nations of the great Western Hemisphere the policy of the good neighbor has happily prevailed. At no time in the four and a half centuries of modern civilization in the Americas has there existed—in any year, in any decade, in any generation in all that time—a greater spirit of mutual understanding, of common helpfulness, and of devotion to the ideals of self-government than exists today in the twenty-one American Republics and their neighbor, the Dominion of Canada. This policy of the good neighbor among the Americas is no longer a hope, no longer an objective remaining to be accomplished. It is a fact, active, present, pertinent and effective. (Roosevelt, 1938b, pp.8-9)

Thus, a few months after assuming his mandate, Roosevelt ordered Cordell Hull -his Secretary of State- to attend the Seventh Inter-American Conference of Montevideo in 1933 -the first in which a US official of that rank participated- where the very clear instructions given by the US president were conveyed, stating that “if we establish categories in the international relations of the United States, Pan-American policy occupies the first place in our diplomacy” (Raymond, 2007, p.43). In addition, at the end of the conference, Hull visited a dozen

Latin American countries transmitting the presidential message. This visit was also useful for the negotiation of bilateral trade agreements with Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Cuba (Raymond, 2007, pp.43 and 54).

Subsequently, President Roosevelt made his first visit to the continent to attend the Inter-American Conference for the Consolidation of Peace, to be held in Buenos Aires in November 1936, and was acclaimed by the population. Roosevelt confirmed in it his purpose of maintaining peace in the region and its economic and social improvement, all based on a relationship among equals.

From the beginning, President Roosevelt began to adopt certain measures aimed at improving the relationship with the Latin American and Caribbean region, and thus allow practical effect to the good neighbor policy, for which he had the support of Congress and the American people themselves. The following are among these measures:

- a) Renunciation to territorial expansionism. As early as July 1928, in the article entitled *Our Foreign Policy: A Democratic View*, Roosevelt called American unilateral interventionism intolerable (1928, p.584). Already as president, on December 29, 1933, he noted:

It therefore has seemed clear to me as President that the time has come to supplement and to implement the declaration of President Wilson [the United States will never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest] by the further declaration that the definite policy of the United States from now on is one opposed to armed intervention. (Roosevelt, 1933)

- b) Renunciation to interventionism in the States' internal affairs, by authorizing his Secretary of State Cordell Hull to sign the Convention on Rights and Duties of States at the Seventh Pan American Conference held in Montevideo in 1933. Its Article 8 stated that "no State has the right to intervene in the internal or external affairs of any other State".
- c) Withdrawal of the remaining marines from Nicaragua in June 1933.
- d) Abolition of the Platt Amendment (1934, May 29). It should be remembered that this amendment was introduced as an annex to the Cuban Constitution during the first US military occupation of the island, and that it was intended to impose a series of limitations on the political and territorial sovereignty of Cuba in favor of the United States.
- e) Subscription of an executive agreement to withdraw American troops from Haiti, which were effectively withdrawn in 1934.

- f) The beginning of negotiations with Panama, during his first year of government, to end the right enshrined in favor of the United States to “protect” the independence of the Central American country, under the treaty of 1903. Subsequently, with the General Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation (Arias-Roosevelt Treaty), signed on March 2, 1936, the US agreed to end the interventionist policy in Panamanian internal affairs.
- g) The decision, in April 1935, that the United States join the ABCP (Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Peru) mediation group to promote the celebration of an armistice between Bolivia and Paraguay that were then involved in the Chaco War, which materialized in the Buenos Aires Protocol of June 12, 1935 ( Novak and Namihás, 2013, p.113).
- h) The creation of a collective consultation mechanism to face any threats to a country in the region -initiative presented at the Buenos Aires Conference of 1936 and confirmed at the Eighth Pan American Conference in Lima in 1938 and at the Ninth Conference held in Havana in 1940-, that later led -after Roosevelt’s death- to the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR).
- i) Finally, the assertion that the issue of human rights would become a topic of permanent concern on the part of the United States, as evidenced in his speech on the “four freedoms” delivered on January 6, 1941 (Calderón, 2000, p.14).

This merited, as was expected, a positive response in the region, as pointed out by Woods (1979, p.6):

Latin America welcomed the good neighbor policy both for its apparent spirit and for its substance. To many it seemed that at last the United States intended to treat the American republics as a community of nations, each with its own culture and political legacy, and each with the right to formulate national and foreign policies with absolute independence from all external interference. (p.6)

Andrade considers, in the same sense that (1976):

Franklin Roosevelt deserves all the credit for repudiating the policy of the “big stick”, proposed by his cousin Theodore. With that, he set aside a century of fear and distrust that had divided Latin Americans from Americans. In a sense, with the good neighbor policy, the United States established itself as a liberator of the masses from misery, oppression and slavery. (p.54)

In this line, when the US is attacked by Japan in Pearl Harbor on December 8 1941, the Latin American states united around the northern power giving it its backup and support.

Roosevelt also maintained permanent contact with Latin American leaders, for example meeting with President Getúlio Vargas in Brazil in 1943, or with President Ávila Camacho in Mexico in that same year, thus becoming the first US president to make an official visit to his neighbor (Raymont, 2007, p.52).

However, all of the above should not lead one to believe that Roosevelt did not have to face crisis situations with the region in the long period in which he was president of the United States. For example, during his term: the Chaco war between Bolivia and Paraguay continued and ended; Peru and Colombia had a dispute over the Leticia area; Argentina decided to support the Axis powers in World War II; Mexico confiscated land and US-owned oil companies; and there was also the first Cuban crisis that put into question the principles that Roosevelt himself had proposed to the region (Raymont, 2007, p.52). However, these problems could be finally overcome, the most important being the Cuban crisis.

This crisis was the result of a popular rebellion against General Gerardo Machado's tyranny and whose fall, on August 12, 1933, was managed by the US Secretary of State Sumner Welles. In effect, Welles threatened Machado with taking the US Navy to Cuban ports, if the dictator did not choose to withdraw from power. While this action by the Roosevelt government contradicted its commitment not to intervene in internal affairs, it did so in response to the still-current Platt Amendment. Machado's fall initiated Diplomat Carlos Manuel de Céspedes's provisional government. He was in turn overthrown after the so-called *sergeants' revolt* led by Fulgencio Batista on September 4, which is known as the second Cuban crisis. This sergeant -who was promoted to colonel a few days later- ended up being backed by the US, after Sumner Welles was changed for Jefferson Caffery, who identified in Batista the necessary leader to restore order in Cuba (De la Cova, 2017, pp .21, 22, 28, 31, 47 and 48). As it is known, Batista remained in power for 25 years, until his overthrow after the Cuban Revolution.

### **1.1.3. Truman's and Eisenhower's lack of interest in the region (1945-1961)**

The international scenario that the president of the Democratic Party Harry S. Truman (1945-1953) had to face was very different from what his predecessor had had to assume.

Indeed, after the Second World War, the US completely devoted itself to rebuilding Europe and maintaining its presence in Asia, neglecting the Latin American region. Another fundamental fact was the emergence of the USSR as an antagonistic world superpower that had to be faced in what was called the Cold War. A third fact was the fall in the prices of raw materials, also as a result of the end of the war, which caused a serious economic crisis in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Additionally, Truman did not show a personal interest in the

region, so during his first two years in office, he let the State Department handle exclusively relations with Latin America and the Caribbean<sup>11</sup>. But the underlying problem was that the US had grown as a power, reaching the dimension of global superpower, which forced it to rethink its interests and priorities not only in the world but specifically in the region.

The first sign of change in the US policy towards Latin America and the Caribbean took place in January 1949, when President Truman grouped Latin America with Asia and Africa, for whom he designed his so-called Four Points program, which consisted in granting technical assistance to the new category of “underdeveloped regions” of the world and to promote American private investment in them, very different from the Marshall Plan in which the US State itself with its official funds supported the recovery of Europe<sup>12</sup> (Ospina, 2012, pp.293-294).

As early as 1948, on the occasion of the Ninth Inter-American Conference held in Bogota, Colombia, Latin Americans had tried to get US commitment to greater cooperation or economic assistance, to which US Secretary of State George Marshall flatly refused. This refusal in some way advanced the measures that would be adopted by Truman the following year, generating great discouragement in the region. In the words of former Secretary of State Sumner Welles (2007):

The feeling against that country in the Bogota Conference was more bitter than at any Inter-American meeting since the Havana Conference in 1928. The United States had failed to show any comprehension of our neighbors’ most vital problems. (p.112)

Likewise, democracy would no longer be a shared value with the region, while Truman began a period of support and recognition of iron-fisted Latin American and Caribbean dictatorships whenever they were useful for his policy of containing communism.

On the other hand, after the meeting held in Rio de Janeiro in 1947 in which the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR) -which would serve as a model for the subsequent NATO charter- was subscribed, it became clear that the security issues linked to the fight against communism would become the main agenda item with Latin America and the Caribbean.

Regarding the latter, it should be specified that after North Korea invaded South Korea, the US sought a more active participation of the region in the fight against

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<sup>11</sup> It was only in 1947 that Truman visited Mexico and Brazil.

<sup>12</sup> A proof of this is that US cooperation to the region only reached 79 million dollars between 1949 and 1952 as compared to 18 billion dollars received by the rest of the



communism, convening a special conference of OAS foreign ministers, which took place between March 26 and April 7, 1951. However, it only resulted in the approval of the so-called Declaration of Washington denouncing the communist aggression in the region and affirming that it endangered democracy and freedom in the continent (OAS, 1951).

All these measures led the region to clearly realize that it had ceased to be one of US foreign policy priorities and had become the “backyard”<sup>13</sup> which had simply to be guarded against any communist penetration. Moreover, countries that had participated alongside the United States in World War II -like Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay, among others- and that somehow hoped to be rewarded for such support, felt doubly frustrated.

Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower’s US presidency (1953-1961) only meant a deepening of the distance with Latin America and the definitive abandonment of the good neighbor policy.

In this regard, fiscal policy was extremely restrictive during this Government. It kept minimum amounts of cooperation towards the Latin American and Caribbean regions. In addition, Eisenhower placed inter-American affairs within the global struggle against the USSR, which was evidenced by support to Latin American dictatorships whenever they were against communism, even decorating dictators such as Venezuela’s Marcos Pérez Jiménez, Nicaraguan Anastasio Somoza or Peruvian Manuel A. Odría. Likewise, the policy of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles -for whom neutrality during the Cold War was immoral- imposed a spike in armamentism to defend against the communist threat as well as against the insurrection wars promoted by the USSR (Mendieta et al, 1993 Ospina, 2012, pp.308 and 323).

Similarly, this Government resumed the interventionist policy abandoned during the Roosevelt government, causing the fall of Jacobo Arbenz’s Government in Guatemala in 1954, on the pretext that this regime was tilting to communism, when in reality it was to defend the interests of an expropriated company, the United Fruit Company (the world’s leading producer of bananas), which had had Secretary of State Dulles among its partners (return to the “dollar diplomacy”). Arbenz was replaced by Carlos Castillo Armas who was assassi-

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world (Raymont, 2007, p.93).

<sup>13</sup> An expression used by US politicians since the nineteenth century to refer to the countries located from the Rio Grande, considered as part of their area of influence. The last politician to use it publicly was former Secretary of State John Kerry, before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives in 2013 (Notimex, 2013, April 17).

nated in 1957, starting a long and bloody revolution that left 100 thousand dead (Smith, 1984, p.251).

On the other hand, there was no awareness among US foreign policy top operators about the region's neglect. This is evidenced by the statements of President Eisenhower and his Secretary of State Dulles, respectively:

I think there is a lot we can do to improve our relationship with them, but I am not so sure that the president of the United States can find in these days the time necessary to make one of those trips, with the physical weariness that implies and other characteristics. (Raymont, 2007, p.120)

I think we are paying a lot of attention, in fact, unusual attention, to our relations with all the American States. (Raymont, 2007, p.121)

This is why, Eisenhower's re-election in 1956 distanced Latin American countries' prospects about receiving American cooperation. Not even after the trip of Milton Eisenhower -the American president's brother, around 10 American republics and after his report where he gave account of the great dissatisfaction existing in the region, were changes tried in US foreign policy (Delgado, 1992, p.477; Tulchin, 1988, p.471).

It was only as a result of two events that the US began to become aware of discontent in the region. The first of them was that some Latin American countries approached extra continental partners -such as the USSR- in search of cooperation, even those with governments like Carlos Ibáñez's in Chile. The second event -and undoubtedly the most important one- was the disastrous tour by Vice President Richard Nixon in 1958, who was violently received by protesters in Peru and Venezuela, which generated intense debate in Congress and the US media to analyze the cause of this reaction (Tulchin, 1988, p.472).

However, far from acknowledging this discontent, the Eisenhower administration showed no interest in a real change in political and economic relations with the region. This was demonstrated when the US rejected Juscelino Kubitschek's initiative in 1958. This Brazilian President (promoter of developmentalism and the construction of Brasilia) precisely aimed at rethinking the continental relations to launch the so-called Pan-American Operation - OPA. This initiative had three objectives: a) to increase US economic cooperation; b) to create an inter-American development institution; and, c) to develop Latin American regional markets. However, the USA only supported the second objective by backing up the creation of the Inter-American Development Bank, as a way to promote economic and social development in the region (Soares Simon, 2012, pp.145-148).

Finally, it was during this governmental period that the Cuban Revolution took place. In fact, on July 26, 1953, Fidel Castro rose up against Fulgencio Batista's government by attacking the Moncada barracks, for which he was imprisoned until 1955. He then went into exile in Mexico where he created the "July 26 Movement" and returned to Cuba in 1956 through the Sierra Maestra, where he waged a guerrilla war against Batista's dictatorship. After three years of struggle, on January 1, 1959, he succeeded in overthrowing the dictator accompanied by his brother Raúl Castro, as well as the revolutionaries Camilo Cienfuegos and Ernesto "Che" Guevara. In May of that same year, he initiated the agrarian reform and proclaimed the socialist character of the revolution. The latter generated special concern on the part of Eisenhower's administration; however, it was the measures adopted between June and September 1960 -the confiscation of American companies such as refineries, sugar mills, electric companies, among others; added to the establishment of relations with the USSR- which caused the commercial embargo imposed by the United States against the island in October of that year, in the breaking of diplomatic relations in January 1961 (Gómez, 2015, February 19).

#### **1.1.4. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress (1961-1963)**

Democratic President John F. Kennedy sought to recover the level of relationship with Latin America that President Roosevelt had attained, in the conviction that the greatness of the United States depended to a great extent on strengthening its areas of influence, and that it was necessary to promote economic and social reforms in the region with the aim of preventing further revolutions -like the Cuban one- in the region, which would incline these countries to the communist bloc. As Kennedy himself pointed out: "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable" (Kennedy, 1962, March 13).

However, the great problem for that purpose was the plan to invade Cuba approved during the Eisenhower administration (Bay of Pigs Operation, April 1961), in order to overthrow the Castro regime and regain its influence on the island. It was an operation in which the CIA prepared and equipped a brigade of Cuban exiles to carry out a counter-revolution, which from the beginning had no chance of succeeding, given the numerical difference and the combatants' equipment (1,200 counter-revolutionaries versus 60,000 revolutionaries with experience in combat and with heavy artillery) and the popular support that the revolution counted on (Smith, 1984, p.252).

It was to cushion the effects of this operation that Kennedy delivered a speech to the Latin American ambassadors accredited in Washington at the White House early on, that is, on March 13, 1961. There he proposed the so-called *Alliance for Progress*. Likewise, in December that year, Kennedy decided to make his first

visit to the region, meeting with the progressive presidents Rómulo Betancourt of Venezuela and Alberto Lleras Camargo of Colombia (Ospina, 2012, p.416).

The plan proposed by Kennedy was drawn up by economists recruited by his government, who were followers of the school of economic development and who had also participated in the Marshall Plan. They were convinced that -if the United States promoted global development- it would not only consolidate American leadership but would also provide vitality to the mission it was called to fulfill (Raymont, 2007, pp.166-167).

The plan -which would be formalized in an agreement held at the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Punta del Este in August 1962- would be supported by a one-billion-dollar fund per year comprised by loans and donations. It intended to achieve five fundamental objectives: agrarian reform, employment increase, housing promotion, as well as health and education improvement. In Kennedy's words:

Therefore, I have called on all people of the hemisphere to join in a new Alliance for Progress, a vast cooperative effort, unparalleled in magnitude and nobility of purpose, to satisfy the basic needs of the American people for homes, work and land, health and schools.

[...]

Let us once again transform the American continent into a vast crucible of revolutionary ideas and efforts —a tribute to the power of the creative energies of free men and women— and example to all the world that liberty and progress walk hand in hand. Let us once again awaken our American revolution until it guides the struggle of people everywhere —not with an imperialism of force or fear— but the rule of courage and freedom and hope for the future of man. (Kennedy, 1961, March 13)

The plan also had certain statistical objectives. Thus, for example, its implementation was expected to achieve an increase of 2.5% per annum in the per capita income of the countries in the region, a minimum 20-billion-dollar US investment in the following 10 years, etc. Likewise, stable prices were expected for commodity exports, public housing and health programs, taxation, educational, agrarian and public administration reforms (Raymont, 2007, p.184).

During the Kennedy administration, an interesting project known as the Peace Corps was also carried out, which would be aimed at promoting participation of young American volunteers in different missions in developing countries, which would allow exchanging experiences, promoting peace and friendship, as well as increasing intercultural understanding between the American people and other peoples in the world such as those in Latin America. The initiative

arose in 1960 during the electoral campaign, when Kennedy arrived at the University of Michigan and asked in front of 10,000 students (Berman, 2011, p.4):

How many of you, who are going to be doctors, are willing to spend your days in Ghana? Technicians or engineers, how many of you are willing to work in the Foreign Services and spend your lives traveling around the world? (Kennedy, 1960)

This program was complemented with another equally important now; it is about the joint civic-military actions between USA and Latin American Armed Forces, which aimed to benefit both their neediest populations and the image of the US military in the region. Finally, another Kennedy project was to have the US Armed Forces develop training for Latin American Armed Forces in anti-subversive warfare, which would not only allow them to carry out preventive work against armed groups in the region at that time, but also establish strong ties between the US military sectors and Latin America (Feres, 2008, p.155; Ianni, 1970, p.88).

Although this generated great enthusiasm among Latin American leaders who saw in Kennedy the possibility of returning to the good neighbor politics, it actually created a number of difficulties by which such idea did not get to materialize. In the first place, Latin America saw Kennedy's speech in favor of the region as a contradiction with at the same time executing the plan to invade Cuba and, after it failed, its decision to deny aid to Latin American countries that did not join to the Cuban embargo decreed by Washington<sup>14</sup>. Second, the implementation of the Alliance for Progress was in excessively delayed by the US bureaucracy, which took two years to approve its funds and plans. Additionally, Congress cut the foreign aid program in 1962 and with it the funds for this plan. Third, some Latin American countries protested about the linkage of US loans and donations, and the obligation to acquire equipment and machinery from that country for the specific project. Fourth, the forecasts that US investors would place capitals of not less than 300 million dollars a year in the region were very far from reality. Thus, in the first five years of the Alliance, investment totaled 91 million dollars. Fifth, the efforts to strengthen democratic institutions

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<sup>14</sup> Regarding the isolation policy, one should remember the American initiative supported by several Latin American countries to suspend Cuba from the OAS at the Eighth Consultation Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers of that organization, held in Punta del Este (Uruguay) from October 22 to January 31, 1962, which was approved with 14 votes in favor, 1 against (Cuba itself) and 6 abstentions (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico). This measure was also adopted in relation to the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB).

The so-called Missile Crisis in October 1962 in Cuba must be added to this, which almost led to an armed confrontation between the two super powers of the time, USA and the USSR.

in the region proved useless, since not only were there dictatorships -Stroesser in Paraguay and Duvalier in Haiti-, but also there was a massive overthrow of democratic governments, such as: the Argentinean Arturo Frondizi (1962), the Peruvian Manuel Prado (1962), the Dominican Juan Bosch (1962), the Guatemalan Ydígoras Fuentes (1963), the Ecuadorian Emilio Arosemena (1963), the Honduran Villeda Morales (1963), the Brazilian João Goulart (1964) and the Bolivian Víctor Paz Estenssoro (1964) (Raymont, 2007, pp. 174, 176, 187, 189, 190).

All of the above led the region to envision the possibility of suffering a second frustration about establishing a new and substantive relationship between the United States and Latin America and the Caribbean, which would unfortunately be confirmed in the following years.

#### **1.1.5. The end of the Alliance for Progress (1963-1974)**

With the violent assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy on November 22, 1963, Vice President Lyndon Baines Johnson assumed the country's leadership (1963-1969) and his first words seemed to indicate a continuity in Kennedy's policy towards the region. In effect, Johnson stated: "We know of no more important problems anywhere, anytime, than the problems of our neighbors. We want to see our relations with them be the very best" (Johnson, 1963).

Regrettably, his Government had to face at least four crises in Latin America that it approached in total contradiction with this initial discourse. This was understood by the region as an abandonment of President Kennedy's initiatives by the region (Smith, 1984, p.253).

The first was a rebellion of Panamanian high school students in the Canal Zone in January 1964, who protested against not including the Panamanian flag in that area. This action was strongly repressed by the US police with the consequent death of 20 students and more than 300 injured, which led the Panamanian government of Rodolfo Chiari to request a review of the canal agreements with the US, but also to face that country in international forums such as the OAS and the UN, and finally to the breakdown of relations. After three months, diplomatic relations were restored, although the Panamanian people's resentment remained intact (Raymont, 2007, pp.198 and 200). In Raymont's words (2007):

From its inception, perhaps inevitably, the Panama crisis was seen by Washington to a large extent in terms of the Cold War. But for most Latin Americans the canal continued to represent a legacy from Teddy Roosevelt's times, of manifest destiny, and violation to the sovereignty of a sister republic. (p.202)

The second crisis faced by Johnson was the Cuban threat to cut off the water supply to the Guantánamo base, which finally managed to be overcome in a few days. The third was much more serious, as it involved the decision of Johnson to send more than 2,000 US Marines to the Dominican Republic in April 1965 to quell a rebellion of young officers who had deposed the provisional and conservative government of Donald Reid Cabral, a decision that ended up blurring the image of his government before the entire region, which immediately convened a consultative meeting of the OAS. The situation worsened when several demonstrators looted the International Development Agency (USAID) mission and fired on the embassy which led Johnson to send 22,000 more marines (Raymont, 2007, pp.204-207; Mendieta et al, 1993, Smith, 1984, p.253). It is at this moment that the US president manifests the doctrine that bears his name, according to which the US never again would allow the establishment of a communist regime in the Western Hemisphere (Rabe, 2006, p.48), which generated fear throughout the region due to the resumption of the policy of invasions.

Finally, the fourth crisis occurred as a result of the overthrow of João Goulart's government in Brazil, which was overthrown on March 31, 1964, by a group of soldiers who would remain in power for more than a decade, establishing a bloody and violent dictatorship. The favorable treatment and immediate recognition of the Johnson's Government to this dictatorship led by General Humberto Castelo Branco, generated concern in the region, even more so when it implied a break of the constitutional order in a country like Brazil with a long democratic tradition.

As for Peru, there were also some incidents during the Johnson's Government, who imposed the application of the Kuchel and Symington amendments for the seizure of American fishing vessels within the Peruvian maritime domain of 200 nautical miles as well as for the acquisition of Mirage III aircraft from France, both measures decreed during the first government of Fernando Belaúnde Terry (Linares, 1993, p.152).

The US ended up by completely abandoning the Alliance for Progress proposed by President Kennedy, during the presidential term of Republican Richard Milhous Nixon (1969-1974). This was in consideration of the fact that the Vietnam War generated high costs, and that the quest to put an end to it practically took over much of the US foreign agenda. Additionally, the efforts for an opening with China and for lower tensions with the USSR relegated Latin America to the background. Moreover, the Nixon administration bureaucrats were disenchanted with the region, due to the successive coups that led to numerous dictatorships, which also deepened the economic and social crisis of their respective countries. Faced with this situation, the Nixon government asked what was the

real importance of Latin America in the face of the United States' global interests, and his response that not beneficial for the continent. This explains why during his six years in office, Nixon never visited Latin America, which led many experts and politicians of the time to name his policy towards this region with the phrase "no profile" (Raymont, 2007, pp.217-220).

Nevertheless Nixon seemed to have some interest in the region at the beginning of his term when he sent Governor Nelson Rockefeller to take an extensive trip through 16 Latin American countries<sup>15</sup> This resulted in the report on Quality of Life in the Americas, with a set of recommendations, almost none of them was implemented by the Government. Likewise, President Nixon's initial declarations to reach a system of generalized trade preferences for all developing nations, including Latin America (which translated into the elimination of many barriers imposed by the US on Latin American exports, both raw materials as manufactured products), never materialized, because such measures required the approval of Congress, which was contrary to an action of this type (Raymont, 2007, pp.221-222; Ospina, 2012, p.459).

One of the few regional issues that were a matter of concern for the Nixon administration was the entry of the leftist Salvador Allende to the presidency of Chile (1970). Thus, the US president ordered the CIA to prevent the election of this candidate and then his inauguration. Failing to achieve these objectives, Nixon developed a destabilization campaign and then support for General Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship after the coup of September 11, 1973 (Smith, 1984, p.253, Rabe, 2006, p.56).

Likewise, in the case of Peru, General Juan Velasco Alvarado's military government -started in October 1968- caused a major shift in relations with the United States, as it went from alignment with Washington to the formulation of a more independent position. Additionally, several incidents were caused by successive measures dictated by the Peruvian Government (Madalengoitia, 1987, p.294). Thus, there was a diplomatic incident for a new detention of US-flagged fishing vessels within the 200 miles of the Peruvian maritime domain, which led the Nixon Government to suspend the sale of military equipment to Peru. As a response, this country expelled a US military mission and the visit to Lima of the Rockefeller mission was rejected (Nieto, 2005, p.202).

The situation worsened when the Peruvian dictator carried out the following actions (Ospina, 2012, pp.458-459, Madalengoitia, 1987, p.298, Linares, 1993, pp.125 and 153, Nieto, 2005, p.202):

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<sup>15</sup> Cuba and Chile were excluded, while Peru and Venezuela did not invite the Mission.



- a) the expropriation of US investments, which gave rise to the threat by Washington of applying the Hickenlooper amendment (which did not materialize) and the Pelly and Gonzales amendments, for which the IDB withheld loans from the Peruvian military government and which would later be lifted by the Green-De La Flor Agreement;
- b) the subscription of a commercial agreement with the USSR and then with China and Cuba;
- c) leading a regional government so that the OAS cancel the sanction it imposed on Cuba in 1964 and so that the TIAR be reformed towards a more autonomous vision from that of the USA;
- d) the purchase of weapons from the USSR which broke the American continental security scheme, becoming the second country in Latin America -after Cuba- that made an important acquisition of weapons from that power;
- e) the taking of the media that was perceived by the Nixon government as a socialist measure that indicated a turn in the Peruvian political process; and,
- f) the decision to enter the Non-Aligned Countries Movement.

Nonetheless, President Nixon never came to perceive Peru or his Government as a critical case, as he considered the socialist government of Salvador Allende in Chile; the aforementioned Green-De La Flor agreement contributed to this perception (Madalengoitia, 1987, pp.296-297).

#### **1.1.6. The sterile attempts by Ford and Carter to approach the region (1974-1981)**

After the Watergate scandal and in view of the resignation of President Nixon, Republican Gerald Rudolph Ford assumed the presidency of the United States (1974-1977), and his policy toward Latin America did not transcend.

However, four aspects should be highlighted: the first regarding the talks with Cuba to reach certain agreements, which were unfortunately frustrated when Cuba decided to get involved in Angola's civil war. The second aspect was President Ford's greater concern for human rights, which was evidenced when he made public his repudiation of the human rights violations by the dictatorships in Argentina, Brazil and Chile, notwithstanding the ideologies they represented. A third aspect was approaching the main Latin American actors such as Argentina, Brazil and Mexico. And finally one last aspect was his moderate anti-communist stance, giving greater freedom of decision. The latter became clear when, in October 1975, the countries in the region decided to create the Latin American Economic System (SELA) that did not include the United States, but included Cuba, a fact that was greeted by the US administration, also promising its support whenever its members deemed it convenient (Raymont, 2007, pp.243-245).

As for Peru, General Francisco Morales Bermúdez's military government normalized relations with the US, motivated in part by the country's economic situation that forced him to seek international financial support. The measures adopted by the new Peruvian government halted the reforms and nationalizations, as well as Henry Kissinger's visit to Lima, contributed to this change, ending in the expulsion of leftist generals Fernández Maldonado, De La Flor and Graham from the regime (Madalengoitia, 1987, p.300). In this sense, the military government would maintain a good relationship with American commercial banks, obtaining successive loans. However, US and international financial banks led by the great power withdrew their loans to Peru due to its government's decision to acquire Sukhoi 22 aircraft from the USSR. In addition, Peru held the presidency of the Group of 77 and recognized the state of belligerence in Nicaragua, which also caused evident discomfort in the Ford government (Linares, 1993, p.153; Madalengoitia, 1987, pp.301-302).

The inauguration of Democrat James (Jimmy) Carter to the presidency of the USA (1977-1981) generated some positive expectations in the region, particularly in progressive sectors, because during the electoral campaign, Carter was favorable to a strong defense of human rights notwithstanding the ideology of the government that violated them (a position attributed to his idealism because of being a Baptist preacher), but also because of his insistence that the US should move away "from an attitude of paternalism or of rewards and punishments when a South American country is not convinced by us" (Raymont, 2007, p.257; Linares, 1993, p.74).

However, around the political relationship with the region, Carter did not have a program -whether partial or comprehensive- to address continental problems as Roosevelt and Kennedy did. Despite this, during his term some there were some especially important events.

Regarding the issue of human rights, when he was already in his presidency, Carter denied all kinds of economic and military aid to those countries where these rights were infringed (Mendieta et al, 1993). This policy was applied, for example, to the governments of Argentina and Chile but also to Central American governments, even though their line was favorable to the northern superpower. However, at the end of his administration, Carter gave in to the Salvadoran dictatorship, fearing that this country would become a new Nicaragua (Raymont, 2007, p.263). And this is because Carter was aware that the issue of human rights had not been a constant in the various US administrations, which is why he sought to apply a more consistent policy. Specifically, Carter understood that:

I do not say to you that we can remake the world in our own image. I recognize the limits on our power, but the present administration —our government— has been so obsessed with balance of power politics that it has often ignored basic American values and a common and proper concern for human rights.

Ours is a great and a powerful nation, committed to certain enduring ideals and those ideals must be reflected not only in our domestic policy but also in our foreign policy. There are practical, effective ways in which our power can be used to alleviate human suffering around the world. We should begin by having it understood that if any nation [...] deprives its own people of basic human rights, that fact will help shape our own people's attitude toward that nation's repressive government [...] Now we must be realistic [...] we do not and should not insist on identical standards [...] We can live with diversity in governmental systems, but we cannot look away when a government tortures people or jails them for their beliefs. (Carter, 1996, pp.142-143)

Carter's commitment to human rights was also reflected in the support given to the American Convention on Human Rights, which led to ratification by several countries in the region. Additionally, the US increased the budget and staff of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights based in Washington to multiply their work. Finally, his message caused a considerable decrease in disappearances and political prisoners in various countries of America, now aware that human rights were a priority for the superpower (Pastor, 1986b, p.212).

Regarding its bilateral relations, undoubtedly the most important issue in this administration vis-a-vis the region was that of the Panama Canal. In 1964, as a result of popular pressure, the USA and Panama began conversations to review the agreements on the canal, which were interrupted by external and internal reasons in both countries. However, in 1974, the situation entered a critical phase when General Omar Torrijos and the National Guard annulled the elections and took power. Since then, the revision of the treaty became a national cause in the Central American country. Carter, meanwhile, considered that negotiating the agreement would mean a good opportunity to resume relations with the region and start a new era, so he spent a lot of time getting the two-thirds majority he required in the Senate for approval. Nevertheless, when Carter himself gave this negotiation a substantive character, he generated an indirect and perhaps undesired effect, which was to turn the aforementioned negotiation into a Latin American cause. Proof of this was the message sent to President Carter by the presidents of Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Venezuela, who urged him to accelerate negotiations for a new treaty on the canal, adding that the Panamanian cause pertained not only to a nation but to all Latin America. They concluded that if this treaty were not negotiated, a barrier would be created in the good relations with the region. Finally, in 1977, Carter achieved approval of the two treaties that had been negotiated, although this did not mean a relaunching in relations with Latin

America but rather a weakening in the domestic front, in view of positions such as those of Ronald Reagan, then California governor<sup>16</sup> (Raymont, 2007, pp.264-267; Pastor, 1986b, pp.202-204).

Another issue that affected negatively the attempt to relaunch of US - Latin America relations was the Nicaragua affair. As is well known, the civil war in that country began during the first year of Carter's administration and intensified in 1978 after the murder of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, the editor of the newspaper *La Prensa* and main opponent of Anastasio Somoza's dictatorship. The Somoza family had controlled the country since 1934 and had committed a number of abuses and human rights violations, which led an important sector of the Nicaraguan population to rise up against the Somoza dictatorship by joining the Sandinista National Liberation Front (Pastor, 1986b), p.221). In this context, Carter addresses a letter to Somoza (1978) in which he praised his efforts to achieve greater respect for human rights in his country, which was interpreted by the rest of Nicaragua as an endorsement of the dictatorship that had been cruelly repressing the opposition. As of that moment, the USA lost legitimacy for the Nicaraguan population regarding what should be their future after Somoza's resignation of the presidency and flight to Miami (July 17, 1979), despite the fact that the White House had finally forced the resignation (Raymont, 2007, pp. 269-271; Fonseca, 2001). In any case, the Sandinista junta that took power accepted Cuba's advice and implemented a clearly left-wing government that befriended the USSR, which not only meant a further setback for Carter in internal public opinion but also a failure of its foreign policy, not being able to prevent another country in the region from leaving US sphere of influence during the Cold War.

Also, General Carlos Romero assumed the presidency in July 1977 in El Salvador, after the scandal caused by the fraudulent elections held on February 20, which led to uprisings of the population that ended up being massacred by the army. The Carter government adopted some economic sanctions against this, also threatening to cut military aid. Meanwhile, right-wing terrorist groups (death squads) began to operate and generate numerous deaths, all of which led a group of young liberal officers to successfully overthrow General Romero in October 1979. However, the Governing Board established by these failed to

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<sup>16</sup> Thus on March 31, 1976, in his television appeal for the presidential nomination, candidate Reagan said: "Well, the Canal Zone is not a colonial possession. It is not a long-term lease. It is sovereign United States Territory every bit the same as Alaska and all the states that were carved from the Louisiana Purchase. We should end those negotiations and tell the General: We bought it, we paid for it, we built it, and we intend to keep it "(Reagan, 1946, March 31). However, Carter had a different concept when he said "We will demonstrate that as a large and powerful country we are able to deal fairly and honorably with a proud but smaller sovereign nation" (Carter, 1978, February 2).

stop the wave of murders. In 1980, the situation worsened when Salvadoran archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated while celebrating mass in the cathedral, turning it into one of the 9,000 deaths that year. Four American Catholic missionaries fell victim to Salvadoran soldiers, an action that caused the suspension of all economic and military aid to that Government from the United States. Finally, in 1981, two other Americans were killed, but this time by the death squads, leading Carter to send military aid to the Nicaraguan government. Carter finished his term without making any progress on the Salvadoran affair, rather leaving the impression of contradictory and insufficient decisions (Raymont, 2007, pp. 276-277; Pastor, 1986b, p.228).

As for Carter's foreign policy towards Mexico, he did not get better results either. In fact, a number of issues came up between both countries in which they held opposite views such as the sale of Mexican natural gas, the fight against drugs, the contamination of border rivers, Carter's Central American policy (in particular regarding the US sale of military equipment to El Salvador and its opposition to the Sandinista regime), among others. In February 1979, Carter tried to improve the bilateral relationship by visiting Mexico, but this did not achieve the desired effect (Raymont, 2007, p.278; Pastor, 1986b, p.216).

Regarding the Caribbean countries, Carter realized his proposal for creating the Caribbean Group of Cooperation for Economic Development in December 1977. It was directed by the World Bank and included 31 countries and 15 international institutions. The purpose of this group would be to increase foreign aid to this region, which actually occurred when the amounts of cooperation that it received increased fourfold (Pastor, 1986b, p.217).

As far as Cuba is concerned, the Carter administration successfully concluded negotiations on fishing and maritime boundaries, after which they agreed to establish "sections of interest" (instead of embassies) in each capital on September 1, 1977. In the summer of 1979, Castro freed American political prisoners as well as those who had dual citizenship. However, Cuba's military cooperation with the USSR in Africa prevented any substantial improvement in its relations with the US. (Pastor, 1986b, p.218). As Carter pointed out:

There is no possibility that we would see any substantial improvement in our relationship with Cuba as long as he's [Castro] committed to this military intrusion policy in the internal affairs of African people. (Pastor, 1992, p.36)

Finally, regarding Peru, the Carter regime saw its return to democracy with enthusiasm, and it was encouraged by Washington in its quest to consolidate a democratizing process in the region. (Madalengoitia, 1987, p.300).

### 1.1.7. Reagan, between “friendly” autocratic and totalitarian regimes (1981-1989)

Republican Reagan’s government began with strong criticism of Jimmy Carter’s foreign policy, particularly towards the Latin American and Caribbean region (Linares, 1993, p.76, Van Klaveren, 1987, p.329). Intellectual support for this criticism came from Jeane Kirkpatrick, professor of Political Science at Georgetown University<sup>17</sup>, who made Carter responsible for Somoza’s fall and sandinista rise in Nicaragua, as well as for the emergence of left leaders in the region. She also she described his policy as “sentimentalist” because of his excessive concern for human rights, which in her opinion he should moderate in view of the fight against communism. She finally concluded that it was necessary to distinguish right and left dictatorships. She called the former, *autocratic regimes*, which should be supported whenever they committed themselves to fight communism. The latter, she called *totalitarian regimes*, and the United States had to fight them (Pastor, 1986a, pp.8-9, Raymont, 2007, pp.281 and 283, Ospina, 2012, p.513, Linares, 1993, p 79).

Accordingly, one of Reagan’s first measures was to eliminate Carter’s economic sanctions against various Latin American dictatorships for human rights violations, as they were regimes contrary to communism, for which they were considered *friendly authoritarians*. Thus, according to Reagan, “it was not surprising that friendly nations like [the military governments of] Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador were snubbed by Carter’s policies” (Pastor, 1986a, p.8). Even in the case of El Salvador, the unpunished killings of Americans did not lead to tighten US policy to said country. On the contrary, US ambassador Robert White was dismissed for speaking publicly in favor of suspending military aid to the Salvadoran regime until the perpetrators were found. Moreover, in President Reagan’s first year, military assistance to El Salvador tripled (Raymont, 2007, pp.288-289). In this sense, Reagan looked to Latin America as an instrument to win the Cold War.

On the other hand, Reagan’s regime was particularly interested in counterinsurgency, both overt and covert, on the understanding that it could be a tool to take pro-Cuban or Soviet regimes out of power and establish similar regimes. This became evident both in financing the “contras” in Nicaragua and in using Honduran territory for their training, which not only caused repudiation in the region but also a sentence of the International Court of Justice (Raymont, 2007, p.286; Smith, 1984, p.254). Reagan’s policy was simple in the case of Nicaragua and El Salvador, because it basically consisted of pressing and intervening to achieve the fall of the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, and the guerrilla capitu-

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<sup>17</sup> Jeane Kirkpatrick became Permanent Representative of the US in the United Nations under Reagan’s government.

lation in El Salvador. Both objectives were unreal and were not achieved. This same policy was applied in Panama when aid was reduced because of President Nicolás Ardito Barletta's resignation, due to pressure by the military in 1985, and also when, after some time, he imposed an economic boycott to force the resignation of General Manuel Antonio Noriega, an objective that was not attained (Pastor, 1986a, p.42, Raymont, 2007, pp.292-293).

Likewise, Reagan affirmed the US right to act unilaterally, that is, outside the multilateral framework and international organizations such as the UN and in particular the OAS and, hence, against international law. Undoubtedly the most obvious case of this feature of the Reagan administration was the invasion of Grenada.

In Grenada the decision was made to build a new airport in Punta Salinas with Soviet funding and Cuban technical advice. This was seen by the US State Department as the establishment of a future Soviet-Cuban base from which, they pointed out, maritime routes could be intercepted in the Caribbean, Venezuelan oil fields could be threatened, guerrillas could be transported to Africa, etc. (Ospina, 2012, pp.515-516). This fact added to successive coups led by Bernard Coard and Hudson Austin - who ended up executing President Maurice Bishop - were the real causes that led to the invasion of the island on October 25, 1983 (Smith, 1984, p.255). To do so, the USA decided to undertake the Urgent Fury operation with Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, with which he sought to give the appearance of a collective intervention to what was actually a unilateral intervention.

However, as the Reagan administration progressed, it began to realize that support to dictatorships caused more problems than solutions, particularly because Congress and the American public began to criticize support given to unacceptable regimes, since some of these turned against the interests of the great power (Pastor, 1986a, p.41). Thus, with regard to the Argentinean dictatorship, the Falklands invasion in 1982 must be remembered. It not only generated surprise for the Reagan administration but also meant a breaking point in the alliance between them, when the US declared it was faithful to fulfill its commitments with NATO and therefore with Great Britain (Raymont, 2007, pp.294-295). This and the progressive fall of the dictatorships that Reagan supported changed the course and since 1983 the US again placed human rights as a fundamental condition to receive economic and military aid from the United States. (Raymont, 2007, p.300).

Regarding the latter, several democratic presidents assumed government in Latin America, such as Raúl Alfonsín in Argentina, José Sarney in Brazil, José María Sanguinetti in Uruguay, Fernando Belaúnde in Peru, among others, which

also induced President Reagan to change in relation to the region. This was reaffirmed when in 1985 Forbes Burnham died after ruling Guyana for 25 years and when 1986 Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier in Haiti and Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines were overthrown, bringing about the definitive abandonment of the Kirkpatrick doctrine and a greater commitment with democracy and human rights (Raymont, 2007, pp.304-305; Linares 1993, p.79; Pastor, 1986a, p.30).

In this sense, another positive change in the Reagan administration was its acceptance of greater flexibility in connection to payments of Latin American foreign debt, that amounted to approximately 400 billion dollars.<sup>18</sup> In the same vein, Reagan accepted the principle of “shared responsibility” regarding the fight against drugs, a Latin American thesis that sought to make all States participating in the chain of illicit drug trafficking responsible (Raymont, 2007, p.301). Hence, it was during his government that the US passed the International Narcotics Control Act (1986)<sup>19</sup>, This act created a unilateral certification system, under which the US unilaterally evaluated countries related to illicit drug production or trafficking, determining whether or not they complied with the obligations they had assumed within the framework of the United Nations and collaborated with the US authorities. In case of non-compliance the US could order suspension of aid military, tariff preferences and guarantees for US investments in such countries. In addition, drug trafficking was identified as a national security problem during this government, literally raising the need to wage a war on drugs, in which police and military had a role to play (Linares, 1993, p.77).

A final positive aspect was his policy towards the Caribbean. In this regard, the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) was launched in February 1982 after studies conducted by a commission chaired by Henry Kissinger. It consisted of commercial facilities, an investment program with tax incentives, financial assistance amounting to 350 million dollars and another amount for military aid. This initiative was very successful in increasing trade and investment (Pastor, 1986a, p.22, Raymont, 2007, p.287).

As regards Peru, certain elements of tension with this Latin American country emerged during Reagan’s government. First, with Fernando Belaúnde’s govern-

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<sup>18</sup> At the end of the eighties, most Latin American countries had failed in their development model, also acquiring a large foreign debt that exceeded their ability to pay, which led to a serious crisis. In this context, the only viable alternative was a change in the development model and a softening in debt payments, an alternative that would be the main offer of President Reagan’s successor, George H.W. Bush (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, p.5).

<sup>19</sup> This law was passed after DEA agent Enrique Camarena’s murder in 1985 torture against agent Víctor Cortez in 1986.



ment (1980-1985) due to commercial problems arising from US protectionism that hindered entry of Peruvian textiles into the United States and to retraction of credit from US banks caused by the debt crisis, a situation that worsened when Peru was unable to comply with the debt renegotiation agreements with the Paris Club and entered into default with US private commercial banks. (Linares, 1993, pp.153-154). President Belaúnde traveled to Washington to meet with the US president precisely to resolve this situation and obtain US support before the International Monetary Fund and international banks, but he did not get any support (Madalengoitia, 1987, p.316).

Another problem stemmed from the weakness shown by the Peruvian Government in the fight against drug trafficking, which led the US House of Representatives to reduce aid by 50% (Madalengoitia, 1987, p.316). Besides, a new point of friction arose in relation to the Peruvian position regarding the Falklands War between Argentina and Great Britain. Although at the beginning, Peru's mediation initiative in coordination with Washington placed it in a situation of clear alignment, the situation changed when the United States chose its commitments with NATO and therefore with Great Britain, and Peru rather led a position to support Argentina, which had become antagonistic to the United States. One last problem to highlight occurred when Belaúnde's government decided to authorize the Eastern airline to fly to Santiago and La Paz, under an agreement signed with the United States in 1946. This generated the reaction of the Faucett and AeroPerú companies as well as of the Peruvian Air Force who were opposed to said authorization, all of which led the Peruvian Government to annul the measure, thereby causing a new incident in the bilateral relationship (Madalengoitia, 1987, pp.304-305 and 310).

The problems continued with the first of Alan García's governments (1985-1990) due to his position on paying the foreign debt and his harsh criticism of US policy in Central America. On the former, the USA applied to Peru the Brooks-Alexander Amendment for late payment of interest on military aid loans and Amendment 620K for late payment of principal and interest on loans granted under the Foreign Aid Law (Linares, 1993, pp.125-126, 154). Regarding the latter, the Peruvian proposal to form the Contadora Support Group in 1985 increased Latin America's role in the search for a negotiated solution to the Central American crisis. This contrasted with the military solution proposed by the Reagan administration, adding a new dissent in the relationship with the superpower (Madalengoitia, 1987, p.318).

### **1.1.8. The return to good relationships with George H.W. Bush (1989-1993)**

The Republican government of George Bush called itself a "more friendly and moderate" regime towards Latin America, which materialized in practice by offering payment aid to Mexico and the rest of Latin American countries in the for-

eign debt crisis, in seeking a negotiated and non-military solution to the Central American problem (Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua) and in its tendency not to act in isolation but within the framework of international organizations, with the exception of extreme situations such as those of Panama, where US national security was at stake.

Regarding the foreign debt issue, Bush was interested in alleviating Latin American countries and thereby contribute not only to strengthening their democracies but also to promote reforms towards free markets and attraction of foreign investment. Indeed, the so called "Washington Consensus" was set up by British economist John Williamson at the end of the 1980s, consisting of 10 major principles of economic policy promoted by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank - both with headquarters in the US capital- and that Latin American countries should accept as a condition to negotiate the restructuring of their debt (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, pp.5-6).

In this regard, in order to alleviate the burden of foreign debt as a necessary condition to create an attractive climate for investment, Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady drafted a plan to write off debt or to set up payments with more flexible terms, in return of which debtor countries should implement the above mentioned reforms. This was complemented with the Baker Plan so that the US increase its share in the IDB to support these reforms and debt restructuring in Latin American countries. In addition, the reduction of the debt burden would not only occur with commercial banks but also with official entities. Besides, the two plans included negotiating tariff reductions on products of interest to the region, creating a fund to facilitate privatizations, debt swap for natural resources (consisting of allowing interest on the debt to be paid in local currency to funds that would be used to develop ecological projects) and, in general, create a continental free trade zone (Raymont, 2007, pp.312-314 and 319; Perry, 1990, pp.108-109).

In Bush's words:

From the northern tip of Alaska to the southernmost point of Tierra del Fuego, we share common heritages. Our people can trace their roots to all the nations of the world. We share ties of culture and of blood and of common interest. And now, as democracy sweeps the world, we share the challenge of leadership through example.

We can lead the way to a world freed from suspicion and from mercantilist barriers, from socialist inefficiencies. We can show the world how prosperity preserves the social order, and the land, air and water as well. We can show the rest of the world that deregulation, respect for private property, low tax rates, and low trade barriers can produce vast economic returns. We can show the rest of the world how to build upon each other's strengths, rather than preying upon weaknesses.

[...]

If we can build a hemisphere devoted to freedom, one that prefers enterprise to envy, we're going to create our own new world order. (Bush, 1991, June 27)

As for the Central America problem, Bush's government was pragmatic and backed up peace negotiations that Central American governments were promoting through the Contadora Group<sup>20</sup>, a process that would finally lead to the Esquipulas agreement.

Bush proposed Mexico to establish a North American free trade zone that would hence include Canada. This proposal was welcomed by Mexico, whose president, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, undertook an internal and external campaign aimed at achieving that goal. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was finally subscribed on October 4 1988 following a negotiation period. This would be the first of a succession of agreements that the superpower would subscribe with various countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

In the case of Panama, the USA tried to carry out an intervention through the OAS with the intention of acting collectively and not in isolation. President Reagan had already unsuccessfully sought a negotiated way out of power for General Noriega and then applied a financial blockade. The situation, therefore, was quite complex for President Bush, who was beginning to be internally criticized. The crisis would end up unleashing when the dictator refused to acknowledge the elections results that proclaimed Gustavo Endara as the winner, and also ordered the opposition leaders to be beaten. This caused a reaction from the US government that unilaterally applied a financial boycott. However, given the failure of this measure, in December 1989, the decision was made to invade Panama, capture Noriega and take him to the United States to be prosecuted for drug trafficking (Smith, 1984, pp.255-256). Although this measure was condemned by all the countries in the region, it was not in defense of Noriega but because of the violation of Panamanian sovereignty (Raymont, 2007, pp.325-326).

The fall of the USSR and the consequent end of the Cold War led President Bush to redesign US foreign policy based on new objectives and interests. It meant, to a great extent, to face a new order in which the enemy of forty years would not be present. In Bush's words:

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<sup>20</sup> The Contadora Group -made up of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela- was incepted in January 1983 and it was supported by the Contadora Support Group or Grupo de Lima since July 1985, in turn made up by Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay. Both were known as the Group of Eight.

We envision an association of nations that transcends the Cold War. An association based on consultation, cooperation and collective action, especially through international and regional organizations. An association united by the principle and the rule of law and supported by an equitable distribution of costs and commitments. An association whose goals are to intensify democracy, increase prosperity, strengthen peace and reduce arms. (Calderón, 2000, p.4)

This redesign should include the Latin American and Caribbean region, for which the US administration argued the need to promote democracy and strengthen free trade among their countries.

In this context, Bush made an extensive trip through South America at the end of 1990, after successive visits to Mexico and Central America. In this journey he announced his intention to strengthen democracy in the region. It was then that, within the framework of the OAS, he sought to achieve a greater commitment of the continent to democracy. This led the OAS General Assembly to approve resolution 1080 - Santiago Commitment - on June 5, 1991, fostering democracy and the renewal of the inter-American system. The resolution gave the Secretary General and the Permanent Council new powers in the face of breaks of constitutional order. This resolution was applied early to the Haiti, Peru and Guatemala cases. Also, the Washington Protocol was approved in December 1992. It reformed the OAS Charter, providing a more solid foundation for strengthening democracy in the region, since it ruled suspension of the member state that interrupted democratic process (Calderón, 2000, p.65). With this, the USA was definitively abandoning the policy aimed at protecting like-minded dictatorships in the region, which had also lost its meaning in a context in which the US it was the only superpower in the world (Raymont, 2007, p.328).

On the other hand, President Bush proposed the Initiative for the Americas on June 27 1990. It consisted of supporting the liberalization of Latin American economies (privatizations, deregulation, elimination of tariff barriers, policies to attract foreign investment, etc.) and opening their markets. In addition, the initiative implied the possibility of concluding bilateral trade agreements that would eventually lead to a large free trade area from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. In the field of investment, the IDB proposed the creation of a fund of 300 million dollars per year for five years, and in general, the promotion of foreign and public investment in Latin America (Mendieta et al, 1993; , 1993, pp.80, 113-114).

Finally, regarding Peru, a first positive aspect during the Bush administration was its recognition of the principle of shared responsibility in anti-drug matters, which was perfectly compatible with the Peruvian position. This resulted in the enactment of the Andean Trade Preferences Act in December 1991, under which the US granted commercial facilities to Andean countries committed to

fighting drugs. Thus, while Bolivia and Colombia acceded to the benefits of this law in July 1992, Ecuador and Peru did so in 1993. On the other hand, Peru and the USA signed the Agreement on Drug Control Policy and Alternative Development that would allow greater collaboration to achieve this goal (Linares, 1993, pp.129 and 132). A second positive aspect was that the USA strongly supported President Alberto Fujimori's government (1990-2000) decision to reinsert the country in the international financial system and to assume a free market policy<sup>21</sup>.

However, two situations would cool down the relationship: firstly, President Fujimori's self-coup on April 5, 1992, generated President Bush's decision to put pressure on Peru for its return to democracy. Bush acted bilaterally and within the framework of the OAS, which ordered the Peruvian president to assume the so-called Bahamian Commitment in May 1992, before the OAS countries. It consisted of a timeline for a return to democratic institutions. The second situation was the concern of the US Department of State and Congress for the human rights violations perpetrated as a result of the anti-subversive struggle, which led to cuts in economic and military aid to Peru. (Linares, 1993, pp.127, 129 y 130-132).

#### **1.1.9. Bill Clinton, expansion of democracy in the region and frustration with the FTAA (1993-2001)**

Along the first years in the government of Democratic President William (Bill) Clinton, the rhetoric favorable to Latin America was positive, although it did not find an echo in reality. This is due to the fact that its foreign policy focused on seeking American economic prosperity, concentrating on its internal needs, modernizing its armed forces and consolidating democracy in the post-Cold War world ("democratic widening doctrine") (Linares, 1993, p. 86-87). Clinton, moreover, ruled out the role of the United States as an international gendarme, a role that should be fulfilled by the UN and international regional organizations (Calderón, 2000, p.5).

With respect to the region, President Clinton sought a continental society based on respect for human rights, consolidation of democracy, development of economic reforms and establishment of free trade in Latin America and the Caribbean (Linares, 1993, p.89). To this end, Clinton convened the heads of state and government in the Americas to a continental meeting in Miami that would be called Summit of the Americas, which would be held from 9 to 11 December 1994. This included the presence of 33 countries and undoubtedly marked a positive milestone in US relations with the region, as it would be the first meet-

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<sup>21</sup> The US Government actively participated in the so-called Support Group, made up by Japan and other countries to support the reintegration of Peru into the International

ing with these characteristics that was held since 1964, under the administration of Lyndon B. Johnson (Calderón, 2000, pp.55- 56).

The Declaration of Principles and the Action Plan were signed at this meeting - to which Cuba was not invited -. These instruments established preservation and strengthening of democracies as priorities in the region:<sup>22</sup> through promotion of prosperity thanks to economic integration and free trade, eradication of poverty and sustainable development together with conservation of the environment (Palmer, 1998, p.24, Valverde Loya, 1998, p.238) . Also, Clinton presented his most important proposal for the region at this meeting. It took up President Bush's initiative, the creation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) for 2005. It would be based on existing bilateral and subregional agreements and take into account the various levels of development as well as the size of the economies in the hemisphere. As a first step, Clinton offered to incorporate Chile into NAFTA for the next continental summit, scheduled for 1998 in Santiago, Chile (Linares, 1993, p.121, Raymont, 2007, pp.344-345, Calderón, 2000, p.59) ; Moniz, 2010, p.53).

However, this last offer was frustrated in the US Congress mainly due to the opposition of trade unions and environmentalists (Ospina, 2012, p.576). Two months before leaving the presidency, a bilateral trade agreement with said country was signed. That was not well received by Brazil, which at that time was looking to incorporate Chile to Mercosur. This, added to Clinton's failure to obtain authorization from Congress to act quickly in commercial matters and to Brazil and Argentina's opposition to the FTAA, discouraged the initial enthusiasm of the Latin American countries that had welcomed this initiative, a feeling that deepened when Clinton did not visit any country in the region throughout his first term in office. Indeed, the US president just made his first official visit to Mexico in May 1997 (where he supported President Ernesto Zedillo's political and electoral reforms and highlighted his support for the approval of NAFTA by the US Congress) and to Central America (offering commercial benefits that would materialize four years later). In October of that same year, Clinton traveled to Venezuela (where he promised Rafael Caldera US investment in the local oil industry and called for greater cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking), Brazil (where, together with Fernando Henrique Cardoso, they announced the intention to begin negotiations in 1998 for a commercial agreement that never took place) and Argentina, where he offered President Carlos Menem to incorporate his country as a strategic ally of NATO, in recognition of his collab-

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Monetary Fund. (Linares, 1993, p.128).

<sup>22</sup> It was established that democracy was the only political system that guaranteed human rights, rule of law, cultural diversity, pluralism, right of minorities and peace among nations. The latter recalled the Wilsonian theory of "democratic peace," according to

oration in United Nations peace missions and of his participation in the war of the Persian Gulf (Valverde Loya, 1998, pp.242-244, Raymont, 2007, pp.344-346 and 354, Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, p.8).

In anti-drug matters, although Clinton was initially against militarization as a policy, he finally did it in the Colombian case through the so-called Plan Colombia to which he assigned 1.3 billion dollars. This support would be fundamental for the later cornering of the FARC by the Colombian armed forces. The FARC would finally laid down their arms in June 2017.

In the field of democracy, Clinton proposed the democratic widening doctrine, consisting of incorporating nations into an international community of market democracies. This in turn was based on the approach of "democratic peace", according to which in democracy the risk of armed conflicts, breach of international commitments, terrorism or environmental degradation is lower. It was understood that the greater the number of democracies and the closer they are, the more secure and prosperous Americans will be (Valverde Loya, 1998, pp.239-240).

It is in this context that Clinton had to face the decision of Guatemala's president Jorge Serrano (May 25, 1993) to suspend the Constitution and dissolve Congress and the courts. Faced with this, the US government suspended all aid to that country, urged the other states to take the same decision and pressured the Serrano government to return to democratic institutions. Finally, Serrano ended up resigning, and democracy was restored in Guatemala (Linares, 1993, p.104). As for Haiti, President Clinton was finally backed by the UN Security Council through resolution 940 of July 31, 1994, for a military intervention in that country, in order to reinstate Jean Bertrand Aristide's government that had been overthrown by General Raoul Cédras. The intervention materialized in October that year (Ospina, 2012, p.254, Linares, 1993, p.92). Similarly, the election of Hugo Chávez as president of Venezuela and his inauguration on December 6, 1998, generated great concern.

The case of Cuba stands out regarding bilateral relations. It should be noted that the Clinton administration maintained a tough position supporting the Torricelli proposal to tighten the embargo against the island, which was criticized by most countries in the region. Notwithstanding the latter, the tightening continued and Clinton enacted the Helms-Burton Act that angered even extra-continental partners such as the European Union, while the norm sought to sanction non-US companies and their directors who traded with Cuba. (Raymont, 2007,

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which democracies do not wage war against each other. Additionally, it was agreed to strengthen the OAS Unit for Democracy Promotion (Calderón, 2000, p.57).

pp.337, 339 and 351). On the other hand, Clinton would enter into talks with the Cuban government to amend the Cuban Adjustment Act, in such a way that any person who left Cuba illegally and entered the US. was authorized to obtain the permanent residence card; what would not happen with the Cuban citizens who were intercepted at sea, because they would be returned to Cuba (“dry feet, wet feet” policy). This amendment was approved in 1995 and was in force until January 12, 2017, final days of the Barak Obama administration (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, pp.6-7).

In the case of Peru, relations with the United States revolved around the “six D’s” (in Spanish), that is, democracy, human rights, drugs, defense, debt and economic development (Scott Palmer, 1998, p.25). In this regard, there were some problems that affected the bilateral relationship. The first was the US decision, adopted in February 1993, to suspend its participation in the second Peru Support Group in which it would contribute 105 million dollars out of a total of 410 million dollars, due to the human rights situation in Peru, mentioned in the State Department annual reports and in the allegations of Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, among other entities (Linares, 1993, pp.136-137, Calderón, 2000, p.70). A second closely related fact was the decision by the International Monetary Fund board, at US request, to suspend the signing of the agreement by which Peru would be again declared eligible to access international credits, which would allow it to specifically access a loan of 1.4 billion dollars (Linares, 1993, p.137). Both measures forced the Peruvian Government to resolve specific cases of human rights violations in which the United States had placed special interest, to subscribe an agreement with the Red Cross International Committee and to initiate a dialogue with the National Coordinator of Human Rights, with which the Clinton Administration decided to lift both vetoes (Linares, 1993, pp.137-138). From 1995, a positive change in the relationship was generated by expanding the bilateral agenda. Thus, since 1996, Peru was certified by the USA in the anti-drug fight, which would allow it to have access to the commercial benefits of the ATPA. As of 1997 it was declared eligible for military financing by the US Congress. Between 1996 and 1997, Peru managed to refinance its public debt with the Paris Club and its private debt under the Brady Plan, in both cases with the support of the United States. And, likewise, Bill Clinton’s Government supported the Peruvian government in 1996 regarding the handling of the crisis of the hostages taken by the MRTA terrorist movement under the US constant principle that it does not negotiate with terrorists. Besides, the US incorporated the MRTA and the Shining Path in the list of terrorist movements of the world in October 1997 (Scott Palmer, 1998, p.30). However, since the end of 1999, frictions began again due to issues related to democratic institutions in Peru, in particular, by President Fujimori’s decision to run for a third presidential term, which would generate successive pronouncements by the US government, its active leadership for an OAS inter-



vention and the implementation of the Coverdell-3521 amendment for the purpose of suspending all economic aid to Peru if no progress was made in the democratic system (Calderón, 2000, pp.72 and 86).

#### **1.1.10. George W. Bush's national security doctrine (2001-2009)**

The inauguration of Republican George W. Bush as President of the US was very auspicious in terms of relations with Latin America and the Caribbean, even the president-elect himself had clearly stated that Latin America “is our priority as a neighbor “ (Fernández de Castro, 2001, p.56). This sentiment not only remained in the speech but also translated into a series of facts and decisions adopted in the first months of his Government. Thus, we have his support expressed to the implementation of Plan Colombia, his determination to insist on the FTAA project, his announcement that Mexico would be the first country he would visit, which materialized only 20 days after taking office, conducting interviews with five other Latin American leaders in the first 3 months of government, his attendance at the Summit of the Americas in Quebec on April 20, 2001 - where he supported the approval of the “democratic clause” linked to free trade agreements - as well as his subsequent support for the approval of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, at the OAS General Assembly held in Lima on September 11, 2001 (Ospina, 2012, pp.598-599, Fernández de Castro, 2001, pp.58-59).

However, the terrible attacks of Al Qaeda against the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington and a third that occurred in Pennsylvania occurred on that same day. The last time the US territory had suffered an armed attack was when the British burned Washington in 1814. Some also remember the bombing of the military bases at Pearl Harbor. In this case it was a territory that had been annexed in 1898, but it only became part of the United States on August 21, 1959, when it became the 50th State of the Union (Chomsky, 2002, p.19; Belmont, 2003, p.23).

These unprecedented attacks determined a radical change in the priorities of the new US president, giving rise to what became known as the Bush doctrine, which left behind the containment or deterrence policies of possible enemies to assume a national security doctrine<sup>23</sup> where military aspects would prevail over political ones (Ospina, 2012, p.599) and he framed a frontal fight against terrorism, using unilateral intervention actions, regardless of international organizations, and with this, international law was violated. Bush pointed out that the US would not hesitate to act on its own, if necessary, to defend the country's interests and security (Busso, 2003, p.13).

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<sup>23</sup> The US National Security Strategy was presented by President George W. Bush on September 20 2002.

Thus, Bush would establish a list of countries (Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and North Korea) which he would call the “axis of evil” that had to be fought because they were United States enemies. (Youngers, 2002, p.41). In this regard, it would clearly indicate in its National Security Strategy that the US would not allow any foreign power to dispute its military power and would likewise propose preventive military action against the states that are part of the list mentioned (Busso, 2003, p.13). Likewise, military actions would be directed against terrorist groups regardless of the territory where they were found, becoming a universal enemy that is difficult to identify. Finally, this doctrine would also relativize the protection of human rights by putting US security first. (Belmont, 2003, pp.16 and 24).

While it is true that the fight against terrorism has focused on other parts of the world, determining a certain marginalization of Latin America vis-a-vis the United States (Belmont, 2003, p.21), it cannot be denied that the security doctrine has not reached the region. Specifically, the USA It should have a high strategic interest in Colombia, since there were three groups (the FARC, the ELN and the paramilitaries) that the State Department considered terrorist organizations. On the contrary, Castro’s Cuba and Chávez’s Venezuela were perceived as part of the Latin American axis of evil (Youngers, 2002, p.43).

Likewise, President Bush’s decision to intervene in Iraq fractured the solidarity of the region, as the majority opposed it, causing the relationship to cool down. Additionally, the FTAA definitely failed (due in large part to opposition by Brazil and questioning by Argentina), which held back US interest to promote free trade throughout the region. Then the US focused on the signing of bilateral free trade agreements with certain countries such as Peru (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, p.11).

USA estrangement from the region facilitated resurgence of the left in various countries. Thus, in 2008, 11 of the 18 countries of Central and South America were governed by presidents of the left or center-left who began to question neoliberalism (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, p.11), commercial opening, foreign investment, among other values and models promoted by the superpower. Even representative democracy itself would be called into question by some of these countries, implementing a number of constitutional reforms to hold power perpetually. This generated a somewhat delayed reaction of the Bush administration aimed at reducing the Venezuela’s influence in the region led by Hugo Chávez, through a discreet diplomacy that did not achieve its containment purpose (Reid, 2017, p.335).

As for immigration policy, more than 8 million migrants arrived in the United States in the first five years of the 21st. Half of them did so illegally, despite the

fact that President Bush had adopted a more restrictive policy against illegal migrants since 2001 as a result of the attacks against the Twin Towers. Thus, Bush continued with Operation Guardian launched by President Bill Clinton in 1994, consisting in the construction of a wall on the 3,180 km of the border with Mexico, seeking to reduce Mexican and Central American migration to the United States. (Morgenfeld, 2016a, p.16).

Additionally, President Bush would sign a treaty with Mexican President Felipe Calderón whereby they recognized their shared responsibility in the fight against drug trafficking and the former committed to channeling US aid through the Mérida Initiative. This aid would consist of providing technical assistance to the Mexican security system and its judicial institutions. In addition, the so-called Bilateral Security Cooperation Group was established, which would serve as a follow-up body with respect to fulfillment of stated objectives. The Secretary of State and the Secretary of the National Security of the United States were to participate with their Mexican peers (Reyes, 2017, pp.8-10).

#### **1.1.11. Barak Obama and his approach to the region (2009-2017)**

When Democratic President Barak Obama took office in January 2009, he concentrated his work agenda mainly on resolving internal problems, in particular, to face the serious economic crisis left by his predecessor; as a result of interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq. His policy ended up being successful because at the end of his term the crisis had been reversed, there was economic growth, US currency was consolidated as a world reserve and the banking system proved solid (Molteni, 2016, p.45).

However, this meant sacrificing US leadership in some way in a number of topics on the global agenda. And it is because Obama was convinced that the US should not remain the guarantor of global order as it had been since the Second World War, as it was economically unsustainable, then affirming his vocation for multilateralism. In Molteni's words (2006):

It is important to note that Obama considers that there are limits to the proclaimed American "exceptionalism" -based on its geopolitical characteristics that transform it into the indispensable nation- when applied to the direction of world events. In his opinion, the United States is not essential to solve all problems, nor responsible for the maintenance of world order, because it is a difficult and expensive management and often has no connection with US own security needs. [...] He understands that its task is to get other Allied States to act on their own, without waiting for Washington to fight or guide them; otherwise they only have advantages [...] by relying on the United States for their security, without responding for that help. (p.14)

This position is fully shared by Palacio de Oteyza (2017), when he concludes the following about Obama's foreign policy:

Ultimately, it is about avoiding constant omnipresence in all international affairs, in the traditional hegemonic way, and not measuring real power exclusively in terms of "hard power", military and economic. Obama understood that the readjustment of world power that began in the first decade of the 21st century with the rise of emerging economies, changes in vast regions of the world and interdependence as a result of globalization, would condition the US scope of action in the future. He realized that nobody dominates the world and that the United States, despite being "the most powerful nation on earth," can not do everything alone [...]. (pp.53-54)

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the fact is that Obama had to dedicate efforts to restore the image of the United States on the external level, in particular, vis-a-vis its traditional European partners and other parts of the world, because these had felt mistreated by the unilateralism displayed by President Bush. He also focused his interest in improving relations with the Muslim world, reduced US participation in Afghanistan and Iraq, negotiated agreements in the nuclear field with Russia and Iran, and contained China in Asia - by means of the pivot politics then called rebalancing<sup>24</sup> (Abad, 2017, p.319)— and foster peace in the Middle East (Molteni, 2016, p.4). These measures were not exempt from criticism, such as having distanced themselves from their traditional partners in the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Israel), not having achieved respect or fear from countries such as Russia, Iran or North Korea, an erratic policy in the face of the Arab Spring, late recognition of the seriousness of the civil war in Syria and Iraq in mid-2014, limited action against the Islamic State, among others (Molteni, 2016, pp.5-6).

Regarding Latin America, early on at the Summit of the Americas held in Trinidad and Tobago between April 17 and 19, 2009, Barak Obama invited the countries of the region to form an egalitarian society based on mutual respect, on common interests and on shared values, which marked a clear difference with its predecessor, announcing a new type of relationship between the US. and the region (Smith, 1984, p.266; Reid, 2017, p.336).

This position would be put to the test very shortly after (June 2009), when the Honduran president Manuel Zelaya was dismissed following a decision of the

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<sup>24</sup> To achieve this purpose, Obama set himself four objectives: 1) to position 60% of the US fleet in the Asia-Pacific; 2) Enhance dialogue with countries with which China has territorial conflicts; 3) negotiate the TPP as a counterweight to the Chinese presence in commercial matters; and, 4) maintain all mechanisms of dialogue with China open (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, February 8, p.4).

Supreme Court of Justice that condemned him for the commission of serious crimes, being replaced temporarily by Roberto Micheletti. Both Brazil and the ALBA countries that make up the OAS considered this a coup d'état and demanded immediate reinstatement of Zelaya, which never happened. Initially, Obama supported this request within the OAS, which was criticized as he had not weighed the Honduran president's attachment to the ALBA countries, evidenced in his decision to formally incorporate Honduras into this bloc in August 2008. Nevertheless, the defenders of Obama's decision emphasized that it was a principled position of respect for the multilateral mechanism, differentiating himself from George W. Bush's foreign policy. However, later Obama would promote mediation through Óscar Arias, the Costa Rican president, knowing that he would only achieve an advance of the general elections date that would allow the rise to power of a candidate opposed to the ALBA and, therefore, favorable to the interests of the US. (Novak, 2009).

However, it will be during his second term in office that Barak Obama would regain some leadership in the region by adopting a set of actions that would be supported by all or a large part of its members. The first of these was the refusal to acknowledge the victory of Nicolás Maduro in 2013 until a recount of the votes was made, mobilizing the European Union and the OAS to do so. Subsequently, the Obama administration imposed a set of sanctions on various authorities of the Venezuelan regime, blaming them for violating the human rights of the civilian population in the social protests that took place in Venezuela in 2014 or for their links to drug trafficking (Reid, 2017, p. 337). Washington even described Venezuela as an "unusual and extraordinary threat" to US national security. (Colmenares, 2018, p.18).

As for Colombia, the Obama administration gave clear diplomatic support to the peace process in that country. In effect, Obama supported the negotiations carried out between the Colombian Government and the FARC to arrive at a peaceful solution to the armed conflict. Thus he appointed Bernie Aronson as special envoy of his government for these negotiations. Also, during his visit to Cuba, Secretary of State John Kerry met with government negotiators but also with those of the FARC, which marked a historic milestone, if one takes into account US policy of not to meet or agree with terrorists. Finally, Obama managed a package of economic aid amounting to 450 million dollars for implementing the peace process (Reid, 2017, p.337, Bassets, 2016, July 10).

On the other hand, we can highlight the decision made on December 17, 2014 to reestablish diplomatic relations with Cuba, remove the island from the list of states that promote terrorism, lift the ban on travel by Americans to the island and progressively conclude with its isolation. In addition, Barak Obama eliminated the restrictions on sending remittances from Cuban-Americans to their

relatives in Cuba and established facilities for bilateral trade and conducting banking transactions (Gilberto Bosques International Studies Center, 2017, October 9, p.12). ). This rapprochement was crowned at the Summit of the Americas held in Panama, when the historic presidential meeting took place on April 11, 2015, between Barak Obama and Raúl Castro, a bilateral meeting that had not taken place since 1959 when President Fidel Castro met with Vice President Richard Nixon (Reid, 2017, p.336). A year later, Barak Obama would officially visit Cuba (BBC World, 2016, March 20). In total, at the end of his Government, 22 bilateral agreements were signed with Cuba that included such diverse topics as the fight against drug trafficking, the elimination of the “dry feet, wet feet” policy, the establishment of regular air connections, protection of marine species, the fight against cancer and the Ebola epidemic, among others (Alzugaray, 2017, p.215).

Another highlight in the Obama administration was the creation of the Alliance Plan for Prosperity of the Northern Triangle - APTN, prepared by the governments of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras with advice from the United States and IDB financing. It was approved in Washington D.C. in December 2014, and its purpose was to address the causes that had been generating strong migrations of Central American minors unaccompanied by their relatives (more than 60,000) to the United States. In 2015, Obama requested a one-billion-dollar support for this plan from Congress; in December 2016, 750 million dollars were approved and in 2017 another 655 million dollars were approved. Although migration continued, it declined significantly as of 2017 (Villafuerte Solís, 2018, pp.95, 98-99).

Obama also promised broad immigration reform. However, he could not implement it due to opposition from Republicans in the House of Representatives but also due to the judicial blockade of a presidential executive action aimed at curbing deportations, especially undocumented youth and parents with children who had permanent residency or US citizenship; thus, finally, during his Government an average of 400 thousand illegal migrants were expelled per year (Morgenfeld, 2016a, pp.17 and 21).

Two other issues of global scope but with direct and positive impact in the region were the signing of the Paris Agreement on climate change in December 2015 (we should bear in mind that several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are particularly sensitive to the effects of this phenomenon) and the negotiation of the Trans-Pacific Treaty - TPP, which included countries in the region such as Chile, Mexico and Peru (Palacio de Oteyza, 2017, p.52). This last agreement was promoted not only for economic reasons but particularly for geo-economic reasons, since the US sought to achieve various purposes, such as: a) promote an international trade and investment regime of last generation

according to its principles and based on its interests in the Asia-Pacific; b) obtain a preponderant role in this region, especially in the face of China's resurgence; c) use this agreement to deepen its economic partnership with Japan; and, d) encourage political, economic and social reforms in Vietnam and Malaysia through this agreement (Vega and Campos 2017, pp.795-796).

A final highlight was the intense contacts between President Obama and the Latin American and Caribbean heads of state, as well as with his Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (she made 24 trips to 18 countries in the region until 2012), which evidenced a fluid dialogue between these and the superpower (Garrido, 2012, p.54).

It was undoubtedly a period of rapprochement and greater concern on the part of the United States vis-a-vis the region.

### **1.2. Distinctive features or permanent guidelines of US foreign policy towards the region**

In the eighteenth century, both foreign policy and US security policy defended and promoted certain values and ideals that constitute the "American creed" and that have been the basis of their national identity (Huntington, 1996, p.251).

In effect, values such as freedom (political and economic), equality, human rights, representative government and private property have been a constant in the political discourse of the superpower.

However, after a brief review of US foreign policy towards Latin America and the Caribbean it is possible to conclude that although these values and ideals have been permanent in discourse, they have not always had a correlation in reality. Indeed, we have been able to see how in some moments the USA opted for isolationism (Washington, Jefferson, Monroe, etc.), in others this country deployed continental and world leadership (F. Roosevelt, GHW Bush), and even went so far as to establish intervention as part of its foreign policy (T. Roosevelt, Kennedy, Johnson, etc.).

Also, some US administrations chose to act unilaterally (Reagan, G. W. Bush), while others were clearly inclined towards multilateralism (G.H.W. Bush, Clinton, Obama). There have also been administrations that have promoted free trade, deregulation, privatization, the elimination of trade barriers and the promotion of policies to attract foreign investment (GHW Bush, Clinton, GW Bush) and others that have applied protectionist policies, as was the case with President Hoover in the 1929 crisis. As for the promotion of democracy -another pillar of US foreign policy-, there are also ups and downs. Although several presidents (Ford, GHW Bush, Clinton, Obama) sought to support democratic regimes

in the region by rejecting dictatorships of any origin, there were others that did not follow the same line (Truman, Eisenhower, Johnson, Nixon, Reagan). Finally, human rights were not an exception either, given that in some presidential periods their strengthening and respect was sought (Carter) and in others they suffered a clear deterioration (Reagan, G.W. Bush).

In other words, in our opinion, US foreign policy towards Latin America and the Caribbean has not followed permanent guidelines, values and principles but, given the needs or interests that the situation demanded or because of the particular assessment that each president had of the region, these have been rather fluctuating, regardless of whether the American president came from the Democratic Party or the Republican Party.

The same has happened with US interest towards Latin America and the Caribbean, that is, although presidents such as F. Roosevelt, Kennedy or G.H.W. Bush were particularly concerned to prioritize relations with the countries in the region, others - the vast majority - were not.

In this sense, Coronado (2005, p.159) argues that when reviewing US foreign policy towards Latin America and the Caribbean there is often a feeling of frustration and disappointment as well as a feeling that the region is located in a relegated place on the superpower's list of priorities.

Indeed, while the presence and leadership of the United States in the region, regarding trade, investment and cooperation has been fundamental, as well as in the values and principles we share, it can be pointed out that except for specific moments, our relations have not had the intensity or diversity that the region expected.

This finds its explanation in several factors:

- a) Since 1945, the USA became a global superpower which led it to rethink its interests and priorities in terms of foreign policy. Europe becomes its priority followed by Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean were relegated.
- b) Linked to the above, the low political, economic and military weight of the Latin American and Caribbean region as well as the absence in the region of large crises that would call the US attention have contributed to maintain the superpower's priorities.
- c) Likewise, the good intentions towards the region that many US governments had at the beginning of their term were frustrated by successive global (World War II, Cold War) or internal (crisis of 29 ; 11/9) crises that changed the super power's focus.



- d) The US foreign policy complex structure -in which not only the President of the Republic and the State Department intervene, but also Congress and other private actors- tends to generate overlapping of powerful groups' interests.
- e) Absence of a comprehensive strategy by the US that understands and attends the priorities of the region. Except for Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, and to a lesser extent George H.W. Bush, no other US president designed a comprehensive plan for the region.

The contents of this chapter will be particularly useful when analyzing President Donald Trump's foreign policy towards the region, since it will allow to establish which aspects of his policy are really new and which are not.



## **Chapter II**

# **President Donald Trump's Foreign Policy Guidelines in Connection to Europe, Asia and the Middle East**

The election of Republican Donald Trump as president of the United States of America has led to various studies and analysis, as a result of the features in his character and of his approach to internal and external policy.

Beyond the internal reasons that could explain this choice<sup>25</sup>, most agree in establishing that this not only implies a change at the helm of the superpower but is in itself a symptom of the structural changes that have been gradually occurring in the world (Orjuela, Chagas-Bastos and Chenou, 2017 , p.109).

Indeed, Trump's election took place amidst the emergence of strong nationalism (cultural and economic) in the world, the emergence and consolidation of extreme right political parties or movements, isolationist or polarizing movements, and xenophobic approaches, which question integration, globalization and, generally, the international liberal order created at the end of the Second World War (Orjuela, Chagas-Bastos and Chenou, 2017, pp.107, 109 and 110; Stockes, 2018). For this reason, many analysts argue that Donald Trump's election will not only be the cause of a number of transformations in US foreign policy but that it is also a consequence of his time.

Next, we will establish what have been the guidelines in Donald Trump's foreign policy towards regions or sub-regions -with the exception of Latin America that is addressed in the third chapter of this work- of particular relevance for this administration. This will also serve as the general framework for the final chapter.

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<sup>25</sup> For example, dissatisfaction among the white American middle class due to their low wages, unemployment and the closure of factories (Gambina, 2016, pp.115-116). Likewise, rejection of the system and of the traditional American political class, as well as disenchantment with the economic situation, despite the improvement achieved during the Obama administration. Therefore, Trump focused his speech on poor whites, especially in rural areas, and took advantage of his being an outsider. The tycoon not only beat Clinton, but also crushed Jeb Bush, Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio in the Republican primary, three career politicians who were favorites to achieve the party's nomination. Trump "channeled the fury of average Americans against Washington, knew how to exploit their anxiety about the present and their fear about the future. He spoke to the pain they felt for working very hard and being forgotten "(Reston and Collinson, 2016, November 9; Ten, 2016, November 9; Rodríguez, 2016, November 10).

## **2.1. Europe**

In recent years, Europe has had to face a number of problems linked to the integration process itself, fundamentally damaged by the departure of Great Britain, which must be added to a major economic crisis. Similarly, this continent has been concerned by the emergence of far-right groups that have begun to achieve power quotas and, also, the fact that complex security scenarios have been developing as a result of various events such as the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 or the terrorist attacks perpetrated by the Islamic State in various European capitals. The latter has led the vast majority of countries in this continent to increase spending on defense (such as Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Spain, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta), Poland, Czech Republic and Romania), but also to strengthen cooperation within the NATO framework, which was recorded in the Welsh and Warsaw summits (Kellner, 2017, pp.99 and 106).

In this difficult context, Donald Trump's election implied a series of questions for Europe mainly with regard to what it would mean in the transatlantic relationship, particularly in matters of security and trade.

In terms of security issues, it should be remembered that candidate Donald Trump supported Brexit and far-right populist candidates, calling NATO obsolete due to its lack of results in the face of jihadist terrorism, hinting at the superpower's loss of interest in said international organization, vital for the security of Europe (Palacio de Oteyza, 2017, p.66; Kellner, 2017).

On this last issue, already as president, Trump corrected himself but asked the member countries of this body to comply with the constitutive treaty regarding national contributions for its maintenance, demanding a higher level of commitment from its European partners. As is known, the United States covers 72% of the NATO budget while the other 28% is distributed between 27 European countries and Canada. Specifically, Trump demands that its European NATO allies comply with contributing 2% of their national GDP to the expenses of the organization as ordered by their own treaty of creation. This was clear at the Brussels meeting of May 25, 2017, in which he also added that the European allies had to cover the debts accumulated with NATO after several years of not having respected the quota. Trump's request, while fair - as long as it is protected by the treaty of the organization - is impossible to fulfill in a short time. Moreover, most agree that 2024 is too soon to achieve this purpose in a scenario of economic crisis, where there are extremist forces within European countries offering populist solutions. For the rest, Europeans lack the administrative capacity to handle an increase in weapons and equipment so drastic in a short time (El Comercio Editorial, 2017, October 13; Kellner, 2017, p.102, Arbiol, 2017, p.268).

As if this were not enough, Trump omitted to affirm his embracing of article 5 of this organization in the aforementioned Brussels Conference,<sup>26</sup> which worried the Europeans who expected a confirmation of this defensive pact vis-a-vis the effectiveness of the Russian threat. The problem with Russia is not only the illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula, but the redesign of its military arsenal and the development of a web system that is being used to undermine stability and intervene in Europe and USA electoral processes (El Comercio Newsroom, 2017, October 13; Kellner, 2017, p.102, Arbiol, 2017, p.268). Consequently, it is only logical that Europe aspires to have total clarity about US commitment in view of any threat that seeks to affect the sovereignty or integrity of NATO members.

However, in contradiction with the aforementioned, President Trump has continued to support Eastern Europe countries. Specifically, the US has ratified its commitment to Ukraine, has continued the construction of air bases in Romania and continue with the turnover of troops in the Baltic countries and Poland (Arbiol, 2017, p.260). Also, Trump has requested an increase in the US contribution to NATO from 53.504 million dollars to 70.177 million dollars for the 2019 budget, which has increased the confusion of his European partners (La Vanguardia Drafting, 2018, February 12).

All the above has generated a deep reflection on the part of European countries that feel the need to have greater autonomy in terms of security in order not to continue depending on the vagaries of the superpower. This became very clear on May 28, 2017 in the Bavarian town of Trudering, when German Chancellor Angela Merkel noted: "the times in which we could fully trust each other have been left behind, I have so experienced in recent days, hence I can only say that we Europeans must really take the reins of our destiny" (Kellner, 2017, p.104).

This explains why countries such as Germany, France, Spain and even Italy insist on the ambitious goal of strengthening the Common Security and Defense Pol-

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<sup>26</sup> NATO, Article 5: "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area. Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security."

icy in order to have a strong European army. This goal, however, is not shared by all; thus, countries that feel directly threatened by Russia - such as Croatia, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic and Romania - consider NATO and the United States as the main guarantors of their security, so that a European army is perceived as a weakening factor of that guarantee. Perhaps this is why the need to reconcile both positions to achieve greater cooperation between NATO and the European Union, following the route outlined in the 2016 NATO Summit, is starting to get support.<sup>27</sup> In this way, Europe can strengthen its own security structure but at the same time consolidate NATO as a European pillar (Kellner, 2017, pp.109-110, Palacio de Oteyza, 2017, p.68). Likewise, Europe would benefit because it would achieve greater autonomy in the protection of its own security, to the detriment of American influence in the Old World, which has prevailed since the end of the Second World War.

A second problem that has arisen between the US and the European Union is commercial. Thus, as a candidate, Donald Trump called the European Union a commercial competitor and questioned the trade agreement with that bloc. Later, Trump, as president, moderated his criticism and left in suspense for some time an announced imposition of tariffs against certain European products.

However, at the end of May 2018, President Trump finally decided to impose tariffs of 25% on steel and 10% on aluminum imported from the European Union, after talks aimed at maintaining exemptions failed. This prompted an immediate response from the European Union stating that it would apply countermeasures to the US. (RPP Newsroom, 2018, May 31). Thus, the European Commission approved imposition of tariffs on the superpower as of July 2018, after having notified the WTO and filed a complaint on June 1, in response to the imposition of tariffs on steel and aluminum, whose damage is estimated at 6.4 billion euros. The products subject to the measure are sweet corn, orange juice, blueberries, makeup, tobacco, construction materials, etc. (EFE, 2018, June 6). As Steinberg points out:

[...] the EU has chosen to stand up to Trump and defend the multilateral trade order, which reinforces the vision of the EU as a normative power, even at the cost of economic damage that will now be more substantial by the more than predictable tariff escalation. It is a courageous position that the EU probably had been preparing for some time in case the US administration began to undermine the multilateral system explicitly. In some way, the EU has felt the moral obligation to protect the system, in the conviction that other countries (from Canada, Japan or South Korea to the Mercosur countries or Mexico, but even China) will join in, so that the system can survive even without the US (March 6, 2018).

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<sup>27</sup> For more information, see: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/es/press/press-releases/2016/12/06/eu-nato-joint-declaration/>

In other words, Europe not only maintains its principles of defense of free trade but also legitimately uses the tools that the system offers to defend itself from unilateral US action.

A third problem between the US and Europe has been Trump's decision to freeze, until further notice, the negotiations that were taking place for the creation of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). This initiative, launched in 2013, sought to reduce trade barriers between the United States and the European Union as well as to reconcile the differences in regulatory matters in order to reach an economic block that would account for more than 30% of the gross world product. By the end of 2016, 15 negotiation meetings had been held, but everything changed in April 2017 (Thomas, 2017, pp.1-4), when President Trump acknowledged the need to reach some kind of agreement with Europe. In practice, the negotiations stopped. It is, in short, another example of President Trump's lack of attachment to trade partnerships and also an additional reason for distancing himself from Europe.

## **2.2. Russia**

As for Russia, although during the electoral campaign both Trump and Putin showed coincidences, the truth is that bilateral relations remained tense during the first year of the US president's government.

Indeed, during the campaign Trump raised the desirability of collaborating with Russia to destroy the Islamic State in Syria. This was based on the fact that although the Russian presence disturbed initial USA plans in that country, there was also awareness that Russia had played an important role in the Islamic State's failure to march on Damascus, thanks to its actions in the North Caucasus and support for Bashar al-Ásad's regime.

However, a number of events that occurred shortly after Trump assumed the presidency of his country, defeated his purpose of partnering with Russia. Thus, the US Congress has not only increased sanctions against the Eurasian country due to the annexation of Crimea, but also limited the President's capabilities to mitigate them. Besides, the growing US military presence in Eastern Europe and in particular missile defense placed in Poland and Romania, have triggered the Russian reaction. Investigations and findings that began to appear about Russian interference in the US presidential elections of 2016 in favor of Trump's candidacy complete the picture (García, 2018, January 18).

The disagreements with Russia extended to its involvement in Syria. So, on April 7, 2017, USA launched a series of cruise missiles at a Syrian air base in response to the fact that a Russian warplane had dropped a chemical bomb in the town of Khan Shaykhun in Idlib province, a fact that was condemned by Russia (Hen-

riksen, 2018). Then, on April 13, 2018, USA made a second attack, but this time together with France and the United Kingdom, in view of a new use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime, which generated a pronouncement by Russian leader Vladimir Putin.

A new example of the crisis in US-Russian relations came with the approval of the new US National Security Strategy on December 18, 2017. In its third pillar concerning national interests to be protected, called Preserving Peace through Force, it identifies Russia as a country that divides Western allies from NATO and the European Union, but also accuses it of using subversive tactics to interfere in the domestic affairs of different countries in the world, to conclude that Russia seeks to restore its status as a great power and establish spheres of influence near its borders (President of the United States of America, 2017, pp.25-26).

In this line, the Vostok-2018 military maneuvers are worth mentioning. They were carried out in conjunction with the Chinese People's Army on September 13. On that occasion Putin declared that these States, together with Mongolia, "fulfill today an important common task: together they guarantee stability in the Eurasian space" (EFE, 2018, September 13; Bushuev, 2018, September 11). Besides, had launched a proposal a day earlier to sign a peace treaty with Japan without preconditions, pending from World War II, under which Russia would return all or part of the four invaded Kurdish islands during that confrontation (RPP Newsroom, 2018, September 12).

However, Trump initiated a clear but also unexpected approach to the Eurasian power at the G7 Summit held in Quebec, Canada, on June 9, 2018. There, he demanded reincorporation of Russia to this group. He specifically noted: "I am Russia's worst nightmare, but having said that, Russia should be in this meeting. Why do we have a meeting without Russia? Like it or not, and it may not be politically correct, we have to manage global issues [with them]." As is known, Russia was expelled from the then-so-called G8 following the illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, a situation that continues to this day, which is why the US proposal was not accepted by the rest of the members (Germany, Canada, France, Great Britain and Japan) with the exception of Italy which, through its Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, declared itself in favor. This and other reasons showed why some analysts prefer to call this group G6 + 1 (El País, 2018, June 9).

The rapprochement attained its coronation when the Trump administration announced jointly with the Russian Foreign Ministry the holding of a presidential summit, which took place in Helsinki (Finland), on July 15, 2018. At the end of it, President Trump was harshly criticized by Republicans and Democrats,



who reproached him for having taken as true President Putin's assertions that Russia had not intervened in the 2016 US presidential election, thereby putting into question the official information delivered by US agencies. He was also accused of not challenging President Putin for maintaining the illegal occupation of the Crimean Peninsula; to which the US president responded in the sense that the two largest nuclear powers in the world should understand each other (AFP, 2018, July 16). This attitude has not only worried American politicians but also European politicians and leaders, who see Russia as a real threat to their security.

But the biggest criticism aimed at President Trump was due to the passivity and lack of proposals shown in the aforementioned summit, which concluded without any statement. On the contrary, Putin raised a set of proposals such as the regulation of international oil and gas shale markets, cooperation among security agencies, collaboration to achieve peace in Syria and, cooperation in the fight against terrorism and in cybersecurity. In this way, Putin was placed in a better condition before the second round of talks to be held in Washington, since it was the one to set the agenda for it (Rooney, 2018).

While you can agree with President Trump on the need - and even on the convenience - of US and Russia reaching of certain agreements on issues of global and regional concern, Europe's uneasiness is legitimate because it is not the superpower who leads these talks and establishes clear conditions to reach agreements. US permissiveness and lack of initiative in the face of Russia, can generate very serious problems for all in the future, even for the American power itself, due to a loss of spaces of influence.

### **2.3. China and East Asia**

#### *China*

As in other issues, as from his candidacy, Trump harshly criticized China accusing it of: manipulating the value of their currency to favor their own companies against competition of foreign companies; competing unfairly in trade achieving a surplus in the trade balance with the US; building a fortress in the South China Sea; among other charges (Abad, 2017, p.321). For all these reasons, he promised that upon reaching the presidency he would review the trade agreement with this great Asian power as well as American support for the One-China policy.

In this regard, as president-elect on December 2 2016, Trump received a telephone call from Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen to congratulate him. This was the first communication of that nature since 1979, the date on which the US broke diplomatic relations with Taiwan to embrace the One-China policy. This

communication received an immediate reaction from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in which the US president was asked to avoid “unnecessary breaks” as well as to “honor the commitment of the One-China policy”. Trump did not take into account this statement and publicly questioned remaining tied to this policy which again generated a Chinese reaction. Subsequently, however, President Trump would acknowledge the validity of this principle, which has led some analysts to consider that the telephone conversation was instead part of a strategy to put pressure on China in his goal of achieving better terms in the bilateral trade field. (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, February 8, pp.1 and 9).

Such acknowledgment did not imply a change in Trump’s will to comply with the rest of the promises made during his election campaign in relation to China. This is because Trump recognizes China as its rival, adding that the Asian country seeks to displace the USA from the Indo-Pacific region and expand towards Africa and Europe, as indicated by the new National Security Strategy in its third pillar of national interests to protect called *Preserve Peace through Force*. (President of the United States of America, 2017, p.25).

In this sense, the Trump government continued to strengthen US military presence in Asia in order to contain China’s control over the South Sea and the East China Sea and the islands that are in those spaces through the construction of militarized artificial islands. On this particular point, the superpower has been clear in its message to the Asian power that it should refrain from continuing to build artificial islands to extend its power over the China Sea. In this way, Trump ratified his old alliances with Japan and with South Korea, directly affected by this expansion.

However, the disagreements between the US and China in the Trump period are not limited to this area. In commercial matters, it is well known that the US is the largest export market for China (16% of its total exports), but it is also the second largest trading partner in services, a key partner in technology and cultural trade, and in the largest contracting market in China (Yang, 2017). However, at the same time, the US Department of Commerce maintains that China is the country with which it has the largest deficit in the balance of trade with a negative balance of -347 billion dollars, followed by Japan with -68.9 billion dollars and Germany with -64.9 billion dollars. According to the Department of Commerce, this is due to the fact that China is a protectionist country that does not practice fair play in commercial matters, for which it must be punished. It is also stated in this report that China does not play on an equal footing, overburdens US companies, forces them to share their secrets to access their market and forces technological transfer, which is why it is justified to take measures against the Asian country (Martínez and Pérez, 2018, March 23). The voices of

some American universities that criticize Chinese subsidies to certain sectors and imposition of restrictions on exports of certain raw materials for the benefit of Chinese producers joined this criticism. All of this strengthened President Trump's position of reacting with measures. Thus, the US president brought several actions against the Asian country to the WTO for steel and aluminum imports as well as for the issue of solar panels. It also refused to grant China market economy status (which should have been automatic after 15 years of China's accession to the WTO), which allows it to apply more stringent trade defense instruments (Steinberg, 2018, January 15).

Subsequently, he began to think about starting a trade war with China in order to press for a renegotiation of their trade agreement in order to guarantee a better positioning of his trade balance (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, February 8, p. 8 and 9).

While all the economists agreed that the so-called "trade war" would not materialize, the truth is that Trump finally decided to take it forward. Indeed, his government adopted a set of measures clearly discriminatory and in violation of the WTO agreements, such as the restrictions imposed on the importation of Chinese washing machines and solar panels, the veto against Broadcom's acquisition of Qualcomm -the largest manufacturer of processors for mobile devices- for 117 billion dollars and, particularly, the imposition of 25% tariffs on steel (equivalent to 60 billion dollars in imports) and 10% on aluminum, both products imported from the Asian giant ( Vásquez, 2018, March 6). Immediately, the measure produced a fall of 3% on Wall Street, which led the White House to point out that it temporarily suspended the same unilateral measure with Europe, Argentina and Brazil (Martínez and Pérez, 2018, March 23).

The measure adopted by Trump did not seem to take into account that China is not even among the 10 countries that export more steel to the US. Besides the steel industry employs 140,000 workers in the superpower that might be affected. Additionally, an increase in costs for American companies and consumers would have derived from the adopted measure. In this regard, it is recalled that when President George W. Bush imposed tariffs on steel, 200,000 jobs were lost in the United States. (Vásquez, 2018, March 6).

Even some experts argue that the measures taken against China were part of a pressure strategy, similar to the one Clinton used with Japan in the 1990s to open the Japanese market. However, China presents a different reality due to the importance of its factories in the US supply chain and the huge holdings of US public debt held by Chinese hands (Martínez and Pérez, 2018, March 23).

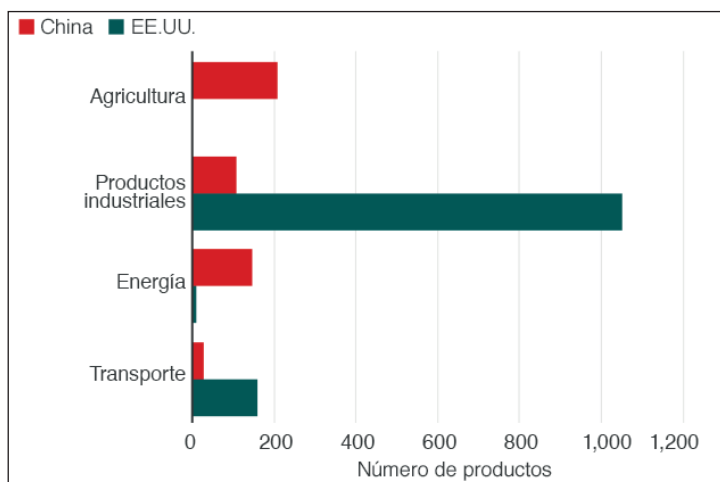
Later, Trump announced the imposition of a 25% tax on Chinese technological imports totaling 60 billion dollars. Faced with this, China announced the imposition of reprisals, starting with the application of a 15% tax on imports of fresh fruits, wines, nuts, denatured alcohol and steel pipes and 25% on imports of pork and aluminum (García, 2018, March 23), reaffirming what was called an international trade war between the two largest economic powers in the world. These measures did not make President Trump hesitate. On the contrary, he declared that “trade wars are good and easy to win” (EFE, 2018, March 2).

In May 2018, a Chinese delegation led by Vice Premier Liu He visited Washington to seek an agreement to suspend the trade war, a purpose that was reached. In effect, in a joint communiqué dated May 19, both countries declared that they had reached an agreement whereby they suspended the trade war and the increase of mutually-imposed tariffs. They also said that measures would be taken “to significantly reduce the US deficit in the exchange of goods with China, “adding that the two countries would strengthen their cooperation in the field of energy, agricultural products, medical care, technology and finance (El Comercio Editorial, 2018, May 19). All this meant a clear rise in Wall Street indexes, such as “the industrial index Dow Jones rose 1.21% up to 25,013.29 points, the Nasdaq, of technological values, gained 0.57% reaching 7,394.04 and the S & P 500 added 0.74% up to 2,733.01 units”(Estrategias & Negocios, 2018, May 21).

Notwithstanding the announcement of May 19, the negotiations finally failed, which led to the July 6 US announcement on the imposition of tariffs (25%) on 818 Chinese products such as automobiles, hard drives, aircraft components, among others, which add up to a total of 34 billion dollars. Likewise, this measure was extended to a second batch of products worth 16 billion dollars. All of this added up to 50 billion dollars in Chinese imports. These measures, according to Trump, seek to compensate for the “theft” of intellectual property and technology by China (RPP Newsroom, 2018, July 6).

Faced with this, China immediately reacted by imposing customs duties on US products, specifically 91% of the 545 agricultural products imported from the US, into the automobile sector (whereby companies such as Chrysler and Tesla will be affected) and medical products (Vaswani, 2018, July 6).

Graph 1  
Industries affected by the China-USA trade war



Source: Vaswani, 2018, July 6

Data from the Peterson Institute for International Economics, to June 15 2018

Later, on September 17, 2018, President Trump imposed a second tariff package on Chinese import products (air conditioning equipment, furniture, mattresses, perfumes, toys, food, etc.) for an approximate value of 200 billion dollars, which would be effective 7 days later at a rate of 10%, and then increased to 25% towards the end of the year. With this, the amount of Chinese products affected would add up to 250 billion dollars (ABC International, 2018, September 18).

Faced with this measure, the Chinese Ministry of Commerce would react by imposing tariffs on 4,000 products imported from the United States for a value of 60 billion dollars, on the same dates established by the superpower (EFE, 2018, September 18).

All this has generated a deep concern in American industrial firms as well as among several leaders of the Republican Party. The US Chamber of Commerce, which has a great influence in commercial matters, has admitted that trade measures against China, Canada, Mexico and the European Union are already affecting US \$ 75 billion of US exports (RPP Editorial, 2018, July 6). In addition, the imposition of tariffs will generate an impact for consumers of these products as they will have to pay more to acquire them. Additionally, several of these affected products are intermediate or capital goods, that is, they are goods that are needed to make other types of products, with which the impact would extend to the latter (Vaswani, 2018, July 6). Among the companies that most

use these products are the defense, automobile and infrastructure industries, whose produced goods will obviously be more expensive, losing competitiveness in the international market (Bown, 2017, June; Steinberg, 2018, March 6). Linked to the latter, the increase in tariffs on steel and aluminum increases the cost of the industries that depend on these products, affecting their workers, calculating a net loss of 400 thousand jobs in the US. (Vásquez, 2018, July 10; Steinberg, 2018, March 6).

One proof that the effects of this trade war started by Trump are being felt in the USA is the decision of his government to launch a plan valued at 12 billion dollars to compensate American farmers harmed by tariffs of other countries, mainly soybean, milk and pork producers, some of the sectors most punished by this measure (RPP Editorial, 2018, July 24).

It can be concluded then that, like Europe, China has not given in to US pressure to negotiate a new (“more flexible”) trade agreement. On the contrary, it has been implementing trade response measures in the face of unilateral action from this superpower.

A third problem announced in the Sino-US relationship is that related to the Asian giant’s presence in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). As it is well known, China has been intensifying its relations with this region since the beginning of the 21st century, becoming increasingly important.<sup>28</sup> This insertion process can be strengthened with some actions developed by President Trump who sees LAC as a region that produces drugs, criminals and rapists. This has caused a recent Latinobarómetro poll to record a historic drop in the approval level regarding the US president. in the region reaching only 2.7 out of 10 (Oppenheimer).

Aware of the negative impact of these actions on US-LAC relations the then US Secretary Rex Tillerson publicly confronted China on February 1 2018 regarding its attempt to progressively influence Latin America. He specifically pointed out that the Asian power intended to “bring the region to its orbit” and then add that “Latin America does not need new imperial powers”. He also brought back the Monroe doctrine (declared obsolete by Barak Obama) and stated that it is “as important today as before”, to conclude that Latin America is “a priority for the United States” (Oppenheimer, 2018, February 5). This is a warning for now and it may reach greater significance in the future, as the Chinese insertion deepens and reaches areas that the US considers of vital interest.

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<sup>28</sup> For more information on China’s insertion in LAC, see Novak and Namihas, 2017.

### *North Korea*

As for this country, the problems with the United States are not limited to the bilateral sphere, but compromise other countries in the region, such as China, South Korea and Japan. In the case of China, although China and the US want a denuclearized Korean peninsula, they do not have the same interests regarding the future of that country. In this sense, China is not interested in an abrupt fall of Kim Jong-Un's regime, which might generate a wave of refugees towards their country, nor in the reunification of the two Koreas as it would generate the emergence of one more power, stronger and possibly more democratic and close to the American axis (Abad, 2017, p.323). South Korea and Japan for their part coincide with both powers in the need to denuclearize the Korean peninsula, as well as in the search for a more like-minded and less destabilizing regime.

Regarding the US-North Korea bilateral relationship, the message launched by the North Korean leader Kim Jong-un when testing an intercontinental ballistic missile in January 2017 negatively affected this relationship, even more so when he pointed out that the ultimate purpose of such a test was "to reach US territory." Faced with this, Trump redoubled the threats against the North Korean regime but also accused and lobbied China for not effectively cooperating in containing North Korea. To the latter, China would respond that it had been making all efforts to achieve this purpose, but that it could not end up by imposing a solution (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, February 8, p.11).

During the Obama period, US policy regarding North Korea was *Strategic Patience*, in which the superpower would not initiate negotiations with Korea until that country demonstrated a serious commitment to denuclearization, a policy that was backed by Japan and South Korea. In parallel, the USA applied a set of economic sanctions against North Korea within the framework of the UN and bilaterally, but also strengthened military cooperation with South Korea. This policy failed and did not stop North Korea from conducting four underground nuclear tests, accumulating plutonium and producing highly enriched uranium; nor did he win China's support to pressure Pyongyang. North Korea did not bow to the pressure, on the contrary, it maintained its position and even amended its constitution declaring itself as a nuclear-armed nation (Kim, 2017).

With Trump, the Asian country continued to carry out its nuclear tests and even launched two intercontinental ballistic missiles. Therefore, the US president decided to adopt what in his opinion would be a new policy against Pyongyang called *Strategic Responsibility*. However, and beyond discourse hardening, there are no greater differences with the Obama policy or with its components. So, the USA has continued to impose sanctions on the communist regime, collab-

orating with the security of South Korea and Japan and negotiating with China so that this country can develop a more active role with North Korea. However, it should be noted that Trump's policy was generally more aggressive in each of these points; in this sense, the sanctions imposed have been broader, the pressure towards China has been more intense (imposing sanctions that affect their interests or those of their companies) and efficient (since it has managed to get the Asian power to implement UN resolutions), and has seriously considered the military option, which is evidenced by the execution of an extensive military deployment in the Korean peninsula (Kim, 2017).

The aforementioned generated a softening in the hard North Korean position that initially agreed to hold a summit between the heads of state of the two Koreas, and then accept a meeting with US President Donald Trump on June 12, 2018, on the island of Sentosa (Singapore). In this historic meeting both presidents committed to establish new relations between the two countries, join forces to build a peace regime for the Korean peninsula, work for the complete denuclearization of the aforementioned peninsula and repatriate or recover the remains of the prisoners of war and / or disappeared in the Korean War. Also, the USA has offered security guarantees to the Democratic Republic of Korea, and both States have been obliged to maintain follow-up negotiations on these agreements, led by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and a senior official of Korea. While it is true that no one expected the solution to all the problems caused by the North Korean regime as a result of this meeting, the generic nature of the commitments made, there was criticism about absence of a procedure and deadlines for carrying out the denuclearization, vagueness of the guarantees offered by the United States, and enormous distance with the purpose indicated by Trump before the meeting, in the sense of achieving a complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling of North Korea's nuclear arsenal (BBC, 2018, June 12). In this regard, Richard Haass, president of Council Foreign Relations, said: "The Singapore declaration simply contains aspirations: there is no definition of denuclearization, there is no timetable or details about verification. The most disturbing is that, in return, the United States abandoned something tangible, its maneuvers with South Korea" (El Comercio Editorial, 2018, June 13).

Weeks after the summit, satellite observations made on July 20, 2018, indicated that North Korea had begun dismantling the test bench for fuel engines (liquid used to develop key technology for space rockets and intercontinental ballistic missiles ICBM) in its base in Sohae, as well as the dismantling of the building used for assembly of projectiles prior to their placement on the launching platform (RPP Newsroom, 2018, July 23). This comes in addition to cessation of nuclear and missile tests, and destruction of three tunnels in an underground site, carried out before the presidential meeting. The Declaration of Pyongyang



at a meeting held on September 19 2018 between the presidents of North Korea and South Korea follows this same line. There, they pledged to eliminate nuclear weapons from the Korean peninsula, and North Korea, in particular, to permanently dismantle the Yongbyon nuclear power plant, the central element of its program, and to close its Tongchang-ri missile test complex, although again without specifying deadlines (Espinosa, 2018, September 19).

However, it should be noted that other satellite observations have been showing that North Korea would be in parallel consolidating other launching sites. In any case, it is recognized that although these agreements have lowered the level of tensions in the peninsula - which has been possible due to pressure from the UN (including China) and Trump himself - they have not solved the central problem, so that the crisis could be unleashed again at any moment, especially when the USA has unilaterally indicated -through Secretary of State Mike Pompeo- that the denuclearization of North Korea must be materialized by January 2021. (El Comercio Editorial, 2018, September 19).

### *South Korea*

After President Trump's visit to Seoul on November 7, 2017, the USA ratified its alliance with that country, expressed its support against the North Korean threat by deploying warships to the area and establishing an anti-missile defense system. Additionally, after the meeting between Trump and Kim-Jong-Un, the USA has continued to carry out military practices with South Korea and maintained its military forces in the area. Similarly, the USA has supported the Korean position on China's illegal practice of building artificial islands in order to expand its sovereignty over the sea (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, February 8, pp.10-11; Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, November 17, p.11).

However, since the beginning of his term, Trump insisted on the need to review the commercial terms of the bilateral relationship with South Korea, which led both States to begin negotiations. These ended in late March 2018. In fact, the two countries reached a pre-agreement to modify their 2012 trade treaty, which establishes a tariff exemption on Korean steel exported to the US, but maintains tariffs of 10% on Korean aluminum exported to the US. Although the experts agree that there are no major variations between the two agreements, the fact is that the 2018 pre-agreement allows us for eliminating an important point of friction between both strategic partners (Infobae Newsroom, 2018, March 28).

### *Japan*

As it happened with South Korea, the USA has ratified its strategic alliance with Japan. This was clearly established with the visit of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to Donald Trump in Washington weeks after taking office and the latter's vis-

it to Japan on November 5 and 6 2017. Thus, the new US administration has reaffirmed the mutual defense treaty, its support regarding the North Korean problem and its support in relation to the disputes that Japan has with China in the South Sea for the Diaoyu Islands (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, February 8, pp. 10- 11, Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, November 17, pp.9-10).

Something that drew attention was that despite insisting on the need to eliminate the trade deficit that it maintains with the Japanese country, the US had not imposed any commercial sanctions on it -as it had done with other countries or blocs- nor had it begun negotiations for a new agreement, which was interpreted as a demonstration that the superpower valued its association with Japan above commercial interest.

However, the USA finally ended up imposing trade restrictions on Japan that entered into force on June 1 of this year, which not only received harsh criticism from the Japanese Government during the last G-7 meeting, but also the Japanese country has informed the WTO its willingness to adopt retaliatory measures, consisting in imposing customs taxes on imports of US goods in the amount of 340 million dollars (EFE, 2018, June 5). This has confirmed that there are no exceptions in Trump's commercial policy.

## **2.4. Middle East**

### *Palestine and Israel*

In this region, particularly in regard to Palestine and Israel, President Trump gave an important turn to former President Obama's foreign policy, which was very critical of the policy of settlements in the West Bank developed by Israel that led to heavy fighting with the Government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Even in the Security Council, the Obama administration ordered -for the first time in its history- that the US abstained and did not vote against the resolution contrary to Israel for executing the aforementioned policy (Palacio de Oteyza, 2017, p.75).

In contrast, Trump not only stressed the strategic importance of his relations with the Jewish State, but also adopted some measures in favor of that country from the beginning.

The first was to order the US withdrawal as a full member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), maintaining an observer status until its definitive departure on December 31, 2018, justifying such a measure in said organization's alleged "anti-Israeli position." Although the Obama administration failed to comply with its obligation to pay its membership to that organization in 2011 as a protest against the admission of

Palestine as full member of UNESCO, Trump's action was even more drastic and definitive. (Pardo and Emergui, 2017, October 12).

It must be remembered that UNESCO has been adopting some resolutions that have been protested by Israel. One of them, for example, was the resolution approved on October 13, 2016, by the World Heritage Committee of that organization, which drew attention to Israel for excavations in what is called the "Temple Mount" (*Har Habayit*) by the Jews or "Esplanade of the Mosques" (*Haram al Sharif* or Noble Sanctuary) by the Muslims (Emergui, 2016, October 26) Also, in another resolution of July 7, 2017, the same Committee declared the Hebron's historic center as a world heritage site of Palestine, which earned the rejection of Israel, which considers this place sacred because of the remains of the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac. Finally, similar measures were adopted with the Church of the Nativity of Bethlehem and Batir (Emergui, 2017, July 7).

The second -even more important- measure decreed by Trump in favor of Israel was the decision made on December 6, 2017 to acknowledge Jerusalem as the capital of that country, ordering the transfer of the US embassy from Tel-Aviv to that city. This measure was widely criticized by the international community and the world's major leaders, because although the negotiations between Israel and Palestine during the Obama period were stalled, this decision meant a new problem for any future negotiations.

Beyond the motifs of religious order that make Jerusalem a reason for confrontation (considered a sacred city by the Catholic, Jewish and Muslim), there are others of a historical and political nature. As is well known, UN resolution 181 of November 29 1947 divided the Palestinian territory in three. Besides, Jerusalem was to remain as an international territory administered by that body for a period of 10 years, after which a plebiscite should be held to decide the fate of such a city. However, the war between Israel and the Arab countries was unleashed in 1948, which caused East Jerusalem to be maintained by the Arabs (Jordan) and West Jerusalem by the Jews. This situation would be modified by the Six-Day War (1967) in which Israel occupied the entire city. Then, in 1980, Israel declared Jerusalem as its "eternal and indivisible" capital, which led to resolution 478 of August 20 1980 on the part of the United Nations Security Council condemning the fact and calling the international community to not admit such situation. Six other resolutions were added to this one. (BBC World, 2017, December 6). Later, on September 13 1993, the so-called Oslo Agreements were established between the State of Israel and the Organization for the Liberation of Palestine in which the US also participated. According to these the situation of Jerusalem would be resolved by mutual agreement later.

So, Trump's decision not only breaks the status quo, it goes against binding United Nations resolutions and even international agreements in which the United States itself acted as agent and guarantor. All this also removes the possibility that the superpower will present itself in the future as a neutral actor with the ability to lead peace negotiations between both parties.

Finally, Trump's third measure in support of Israel was the US withdrawal of the UN Human Rights Council, announced on June 19 2018 by Nikki Haley, US ambassador to the UN. The withdrawal was justified in an alleged "chronic bias and prejudice" of that body against Israel, as well as by the presence of countries such as China, Venezuela and Cuba in the aforementioned body, even though these states do not respect human rights.

All the above shows that Trump has dramatically changed the position of the United States in the area openly opting without limit in favor of its relationship with Israel. Additionally, he has also taken away support from the Palestinians.

In this sense we have the USA decision to suspend funding the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA), an entity that provides services and assistance to more than 5.4 million Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. This program allows, for example, humanitarian work, girls' access to education, high health standards, food assistance, etc. Already in January 2018 Trump had announced a cut of 300 million dollars of the 364 million that the US contributed in 2017. Later, in August, he announced a total cut of funds, with which the agency lost its main contributor (El Comercio Newsroom, 2018, September 1).

### *Syria*

The Trump administration has shown some changes in relation to the policy implemented by President Barak Obama regarding the Syrian crisis.

A first change is related to the lack of permissiveness of the new US Government on the use of chemical weapons by the regime of Bashar al-Ásad against its civilian population. Thus, on April 7, 2017, US President Donald Trump authorized the 59- missile bombing of a Syrian air base in response to a chemical weapons attack perpetrated in Idlib by the Army of that country. Then, on April 13, 2018, it carried out a second attack, but this time jointly with France and the United Kingdom, in response to a new use of chemical weapons against civilians by the Syrian Government, launching at least 105 missiles that reached 2 of the proposed objectives: a scientific research center and a military airport. Both military actions undoubtedly showed a greater determination of the Trump government against the use of prohibited weapons by the Syrian regime, com-

pared to Barak Obama who never went beyond threats (Cooper, Gibbons-Neff and Hubbard, 2018, April 13).

Likewise, the US armed forces have been more effective in their actions in Syria than during the government of President Obama, being decisive in the liberation of two bastions of the Islamic State in that country, such as Mosul and Raqqa (Namihias, 2017, October 23).

Similarly, Trump decided to freeze funds aimed at reconstructing Syria by up to 200 million dollars, thus hardening the US position vis-a-vis said country.

Finally, President Trump has announced his desire to withdraw his troops from Syria and let the countries in the region become charged with the final solution in that country (Ansorena, 2018, March 31), which has opened a series of questions, insofar as this would imply that the final solution is fundamentally favorable to Russia, the current Syrian regime and its allies, with the geopolitical implications that this entails.

### *Turkey*

Months before Trump took office in the US, this country and Turkey faced a tense situation due to Washington's refusal to grant the extradition of Fetullá Gulen requested by Ankara. This Turkish theologian is accused of being the instigator of the coup attempt of July 2016 (Brieger, 2018, August 16).

However, relations would be further strained by the refusal, this time by Turkey, to release US pastor Andrew Brunson arrested in October 2016, accused of espionage and terrorist activities (El Comercio Editorial, 2018, August 17).

As a result of this, the USA imposed sanctions against two Turkish state ministers in August 2018, which was replicated by this country. Later, the tension increased due to Trump's order to raise tariffs on certain Turkish export products, which caused the Turkish lira to collapse and, in turn, that this country also impose sanctions on the United States. (El Comercio Editorial Board, 2018, August 17).

Although this is a crisis focused on judicial issues, subsequent actions adopted by both governments have aggravated the situation of the bilateral relationship, which could become more complex due to Turkey's gas partnership with Russia and the participation of the former in the Syrian war.

### *Iraq, Syria and Yemen: the immigration problem*

With respect to these three countries that have a Muslim majority, the Trump administration promoted three migratory vetoes. The first of these occurred

through a decree signed on January 27, 2017, which suspended the refugee program for 120 days and prohibited the entry of citizens from 7 countries for 3 months, among which were these three - in addition to Iran, Libya, Somalia and Sudan - under the pretext of protecting the country from the arrival of possible terrorists. This decree determined that 60,000 visas were revoked and 700 travelers were retained at the airports. However, US federal courts suspended this measure throughout the territory (Nuruzzaman, 2017; Excelsior, 2017, December 14; ABC International, 2017, September 25; El Nacional, 2017, December 4).

This led to President Trump signing a second decree on March 6, 2017, withdrawing Iraq from the list (due to the commitment assumed by this country to carry out more rigorous investigations of its citizens requesting visas for the United States. and the contribution of many of them with the US troops during the occupation) and modified the prohibition on Syrian refugees. This decree also stated that the restriction would not affect the citizens of these countries who possess the permanent resident card (green card) and any mention of the citizens' religion was suppressed. However, this decree would also be blocked by some US judges such as those in Hawaii and Maryland, on the understanding that it violated the US constitution by discriminating against Muslims (Nuruzzaman, 2017; Excelsior, 2017, December 14; ABC International, 2017, September 25; El Nacional, 2017, December 4).

The last decree was issued on September 24, 2017 against citizens of Chad, North Korea, Iran, Libya, Syria, Somalia and also Venezuelan officials, which scope would then be modified by the Court of Appeals (conservative majority) that established that denying entry to citizens of the 6 Muslim-majority countries that had no family or personal ties to the United States could be ruled. (Nuruzzaman, 2017; Excelsior, 2017, December 14; ABC International, 2017, September 25; El Nacional, 2017, December 4). This last decree took care to look for more reasonable foundations such as "the reliability of passports and identity documents and the fluency in the exchange of information about terrorist suspicions and criminal records". In addition, by including non-Muslim countries the argument that the decree discriminated for religious reasons was eliminated. However, for many civil rights associations the decree was discriminatory and disproportionate (Ahrens, 2017, December 5).

However, on June 26, 2018 the Supreme Court of the USA failed by 5 votes to 4 in favor of Trump's immigration veto, considering that the president had legally exercised his power to suspend the entry of certain foreigners into the country. This meant that the Executive could ask lower courts to revoke the rulings with which they had blocked the previous restriction measures (El Comercio, 2018, June 26).

the internal judicial battle, the resentment caused in the Muslim countries affected by the measures remains intact.

## **2.5. South Asia**

### *Iran*

We must remember that Iran was included by President George W. Bush within the so-called “axis of evil” in 2002 and that it has been the subject of numerous pressures for its nuclear program since 2003.

During Barack Obama’s government and after Hasan Rouhani -a moderate reformer- joined the presidency of Iran in August 2013 (and re-elected on May 19 2017), talks resumed<sup>29</sup> to reach an agreement on the Iranian nuclear program and on the sanctions imposed on that country as a result of that program, and certain lines of action were agreed. However, it would be only on July 14, 2015, in Vienna, that the so-called *Joint and Complete Action Plan* would be reached and that, in addition to Iran, the so-called *5 + 1 Group* participated, that is, the five permanent members of the Security Council (USA, Russia, China, France and United Kingdom) plus Germany. Through this plan, Iran would commit not to produce highly enriched uranium in the next 15 years, get rid of 98% of the nuclear material it possessed at that time, eliminate two thirds of the centrifuges installed, maintain a limited number of tons of heavy water, and allow international inspectors to monitor compliance with these commitments. For its part, the international community -mainly the United States. and the European Union- would eliminate several of the sanctions imposed and Iran would be allowed to access 100 billion dollars that it had in the banks of China, Japan and South Korea, as well as more than 50 billion dollars of frozen assets (Yubero, 2017, pp.4, 5, 23 and 24).

However, since the election campaign and after taking office, Donald Trump was very critical of this agreement, stating at first that it would be terminated, to later point out that this should be reviewed and, finally, argue that he would not certify it and would rather ask the US Congress to re-establish sanctions against Iran. In this line, on October 13, 2017, USA refused to certify Iran regarding compliance with the 2015 agreement<sup>30</sup> and placed in the hands of Congress the decision on the future of this agreement; days later, that is, on October 23, the House of Representatives ended up approving -with 423 votes in favor and only 2 against- the imposition of sanctions against Iran requested by the president (Europapress, 2017, October 26; Galbraith, 2018).

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<sup>29</sup> The first negotiations took place in 2006 to then be abandoned until 2013.

<sup>30</sup> In 2015, the US Congress approved the Law to revise the Iranian nuclear agreement, by which the US president must determine every 90 days whether or not the conditions of the aforementioned agreement are being respected; if the president comes to the

Trump argues that Iran has not been respecting the commitments made in that agreement, despite the fact that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has certified 10 times since 2015 that Iran did not violate the terms of the agreement (Aguirre, 2018, May 10). Perhaps for that reason, Trump varied the argument accusing the Iranian Government of intimidating the verifiers of the IAEA. However, this organization has repeatedly pointed out that Iran has been strictly complying with the 2015 agreement, that the enriched uranium inventory has remained within the agreed limits, that the amount of heavy water has remained below the maximum limits established, that the entrance of inspectors to the Iranian nuclear installations is carried out without problems and that the verification regime imposed on Iran is the “most demanding in the world” (Yubero, 2017, p.28).

Despite this, President Trump continued to lash out at the agreement, pointing out that this time he had not included anything about the Iranian defensive ballistic missile program, which is still being developed. In this regard, the Iranian Government has always been opposed to renouncing its sovereign right to maintain a defensive deterrent system, but the truth is that these missiles -with a capacity greater than 2,000 km and therefore with the possibility of reaching US bases in Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman, as well as Israel, its main strategic partner - justifiably concern the US Government. However, the point raised by Trump is not included in the agreement signed in 2015 and, what is criticized is not to seek a negotiation to include it, but rather to try to invalidate it, taking everything back to zero. Additionally, Trump adds other arguments that have nothing to do with the agreement signed, such as Iran’s support for terrorism, human rights abuses, among others (Yubero, 2017, pp.30-36).

In this regard, during the meetings held with Federica Mogherini -high representative of the European Union- German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron tried to convince Trump that the Iranian ballistics program has no relation with the agreement of 2015 and that negotiations could be opened for this purpose (CNN Newsroom, 2018, April 24); but such a possibility was quickly and sharply denied by Iran itself for the arguments indicated in previous paragraphs.

It was then that on May 9, 2018, President Trump announced that the US abandoned the nuclear agreement with Iran and imposed new sanctions, causing Iran’s protest and the respective pronouncements of the other signatory powers, who regretted the fact and ratified their decision to continue with the agreement (El País, 2018, May 9).

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conclusion that he can not certify compliance with such conditions, Congress is empowered to impose sanctions (Galbraith, 2018).



Given this decision, different international policy analysts draw diverse conclusions. The first is that it is a wrong decision because although the 2015 agreement does not solve all the problems between the United States and Iran, it had indeed allowed to effectively control the Iranian nuclear program up to that date. The second is that the US decision will strengthen hard-line politicians and leaders inside Iran who always opposed the agreement that the then candidate and today President Rouhani encouraged, thus weakening moderate and reformist positions. The third is that, by abandoning this agreement, Trump weakens US credibility in front of its main partners and before the world one more time, because it confirms its great facility to get rid of commitments that were very difficult to attain and long to build and that also implied a difficult consensus (Vásquez, 2018, May 15; Camacho, 2018, May 18). The fourth is that confronting Iran definitely strengthens the alliance between this State and Russia, Syria and Hezbollah but also leads to losing a possible ally to resolve conflicts in that region. Finally, the fifth is that measures against Iran can affect US companies that have or want to have dealings with the Islamic Republic, losing a market in which there is increasing presence of European, Russian or Chinese companies (Oteyza Palace, 2017, pp.75 and 76; Black, 2018, p.23).

Therefore, some argue that President Trump's decision actually has a more substantive motivation, which is to hit hard and corner Iran (politically and economically) to weaken its actions in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Lebanon<sup>31</sup>, as well as its strategic partnership with Russia, Turkey and Qatar (Mansilla, 2017, December 27). This strategy would seek, therefore, the consolidation of its partner Saudi Arabia and its King Mohammed bin Salman in the region, with the consequent protection of US interests (Malley, 2018, January 9). Along the same lines, the Trump administration has made it clear that it shares Saudi Arabia's perspective on the nature of the Yemen conflict as a major symbol of Iranian-inspired subversion of Sunni Arab governments (Feierstein, 2017, March).

Additionally, President Trump has publicly endorsed popular protests in Iran, harshly attacking the Ayatollah regime.

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<sup>31</sup> Iran, in its struggle against Saudi Arabia to become the leader of the region, has carried out a series of actions in different countries of this region. Thus, in Syria, Iran has been supporting Bashar al-Ásad's regime through Shiite militias, special army forces, granting loans and connecting the Assad government with the Lebanese Hezbollah militia; in Yemen, it has been supporting the Houthis by launching missiles against Saudi territory; in Iraq, it has supported the government in its fight against the Islamic State and has granted it important loans, added to the fact that Iraq is Iran's largest client in the sale of natural gas and the Persians' main tourist destination; and, in Lebanon, Iran provides economic and material support to Hezbollah, which partakes in the National Unity government of Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri, against the interests of Saudi Arabia (Malley, 2018, January 9; Yubero, 2017, p. 6-14).

Another issue of friction already discussed in the previous point refers to the two decrees issued by the Trump administration that established migratory vetoes against Iranian citizens, which has caused protests by President Rouhani.

A final issue of tension came at the beginning of October 2018, when the International Court of Justice ruled against the United States and unanimously ordered it to comply with the suspension of sanctions against Iran related to the export of medical, food, agricultural products and essential equipment for the safety of civil flights, in application of the Treaty of Friendship, Economic Relations and Consular Rights held by both countries in 1955. This, in turn, triggered the announcement by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo that his country would denounce the treaty (El Comercio Editorial, 2018, October 3).

### *India*

In 2017, US-India relations remained at a magnificent level after the official visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Washington in June. Both countries then agreed to intensify their cooperation in trade, defense and fight against terrorism. On this occasion both leaders praised each other and, hours before the meeting, President Trump included Mohamed Yusuf Shah, leader of the Kashmiri separatist group Hizbul Mujahideen in the list of terrorists, highlighting his best disposition to ensure the success of this Meeting (DW, 2017, June 26).

Also as a result of this visit, both States scheduled a 2 + 2 Ministerial Dialogue between their Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defense, the first of which was to be held in July 2018. However, this meeting was frustrated as well as two attempts to reschedule a new date, due to the trade war unleashed by the US. in which India was affected (Panda, 2018, August 30). It should be remembered that bilateral trade between these two countries reached 126 billion dollars in 2017.

Indeed, the decree passed by President Trump imposing 25% tariffs on steel imports and 10% on aluminum imports from India, entered into force in March 2018, which generated a reaction from the Indian government, which also imposed tariffs on US imports as from August of the same year. The measure adopted by India affects agricultural food products (apples, almonds, chickpeas, lentils, nuts, crustaceans, among others) as well as metals and steel, imposing a wide range of tariffs ranging from 5 to 60% (Information Macroeconomics, 2018, June 21).

However, the 2 + 2 meeting was finally held on September 6, 2018 in Islamabad, in which they discussed consensus issues such as containing the Chinese expansion, collaborating in the stabilization of Afghanistan, putting pressure on Pakistan in its fight against terrorism and searching for a free and open Asian region (La Vanguardia, 2018, September 6).

Beyond the positive aspects of this high-level meeting, the trade war unleashed by Trump, as well as his threat of imposing -as from November- sanctions on those countries that buy oil from Iran (thus affecting India which is one of its main buyers and who has already announced its refusal to accept such a ban), sow doubt about the good forecast that the US president announced in June 2017, pointing out in relation to India that “the future of our countries has never been more sparkly. India and the United States will always be tied in friendship and respect [...]. The bilateral relationship has never been so solid “(DW, 2017, June 26).

### *Afghanistan and Pakistan*

While Trump was initially opposed to the reconstruction missions and was a supporter of the departure of American troops from Afghanistan, US military presence actually continues in that territory. Moreover, Trump has announced the increase of US troops and more air strikes in Afghanistan as well as the need to relax the rules of engagement that govern combat operations against the Taliban (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

The explanation for this change may be found in the speech delivered by the US president at the Fort Myer military base on August 21, 2017, when in relation to that country he said that “an honorable and lasting result [must be sought] worthy of the tremendous sacrifices that have been made, especially the sacrifices of lives “(Lalkovič, 2017, p.1); that is, Trump understands that the US has invested a lot of time, money, material aid and above all human lives in Afghanistan and, therefore, it cannot withdraw its troops without reaching a satisfactory conclusion of the conflict.

In this sense, in the same month of August of 2017, Trump presented a new action strategy in relation to Afghanistan, which implies the increase of surprise military operations in order to avoid leaks, involve some States such as Pakistan and India, increase the participation of more troops from other countries, etc. He even successfully managed to get a greater European commitment through an increase of the funds of the European Reinsurance Initiative for 2018, which went from 1.4 billion dollars to 4.7 billion dollars (Lalkovič, 2017; Stokes, 2018).

Trump's new strategy, however, will not only have to face the resurgence of terrorist actions in Afghanistan, but also that the Taliban have been divided into several groups which makes their control by the Pakistani government more complex. In addition to this, Pakistan is coming closer to China, weakening its historic partnership with the United States in Central Asia (Armanian, 2018, February 1). Besides, we must add the fact that Trump has announced the freezing of all types of aid linked to the security of Pakistan, which he has accused of

harboring terrorists (Human Rights Watch, 2018). This makes it clear that the United States does not count on Pakistan to control the situation in Afghanistan.

## **2.6. Southeast Asia**

### *Vietnam*

Linked to the US policy of containing China in Asia, it is important to highlight President Trump's decision to consolidate his alliance with Vietnam and the Philippines. Thus, during Donald Trump's visit to Hanoi on November 11, 2017, he sought to continue the strategic military alliance initiated by President Obama. This alliance is considered useful by Vietnam as it strengthens its claims on certain regions and islets in the South Sea against China, but it is also considered important by the global superpower to ensure that it has an ally in that region.

Regarding Vietnam's territorial disputes with the Asian giant, the joint presidential statement signed at the end of the conference emphasized the importance of free and open access to the South China Sea. It also adjusted the territorial demands to the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Regarding military cooperation, they agreed to increase exchange in intelligence, security and defense and to materialize the visit of a US aircraft carrier to the old base in Cam Ranh Bay (Cook and Storey, 2017, November 23, pp.5-6). In addition, Trump obtained from President Tran Dai Quang the commitment to eliminate trade barriers to the importation of US agricultural products, thus clearing the only controversial point in the relationship.

### *Philippines*

As for the Philippines, the challenge of Trump's visit (November 12, 2017) was more complex because it was about reestablishing the historical ties with that country, which had been damaged by the differences between Presidents Barak Obama and Rodrigo Duterte. At the end of the visit, Trump and Duterte ratified the validity of the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1951, as well as the Cooperation Agreement to improve defense, expressed their consensus regarding North Korea as well as the need to negotiate a free trade agreement, and analyzed spaces of cooperation for the Philippine armed forces in their fight against Islamic extremists (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, November 17, pp.16 and 19).

### *Indonesia*

As for this country, President Trump's decision to restrict entry to the United States to 7 Muslim countries have generated great concern among the authorities and the people of this country, as it is the most populous Muslim state in the world.

Although moderate Indonesian Muslims have expressed their discontent that this measure could exacerbate religious tensions between the West and the Muslim world, the most radical members of the Islamic Defenders Front have responded with greater virulence, harshly calling the measure as discriminatory and proof of Trump's religious intolerance (Fitriani, 2017).



# Chapter III

## President Donald Trump's Foreign Policy Vis-a-Vis Latin America and the Caribbean

When analyzing the foreign policy of President Trump, it is usually agreed that, in some way, its impact on Latin America and the Caribbean has been less direct and relevant or, simply, of a lesser degree than that withstood by Europe and Asia. Although there is some truth to this, the Latin American and Caribbean region is not excluded from the effects of this policy, on such important issues as democracy, trade, migration and human rights, cooperation and climate change, although at different levels according to each country, as shown below.

### **3.1. Selective Defense of Democracy**

In the field of democracy, we should highlight a more energetic position of the current US administration compared to that of Barak Obama, with respect to certain clearly authoritarian or dictatorial regimes, such as the cases of Venezuela and Nicaragua, although, at the same time, the absence of a similar position against Honduras is noticed.

In the specific case of Venezuela, it is necessary to remember that the diplomacy of both countries has revolved around what some call the "diplomacy of the microphone" since Hugo Chávez took office, because the speeches of the heads of state have marked the relationship. In addition, both countries have no ambassadors since 2010, and the level of their diplomatic representation has been reduced (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, p.14).

In this context, when Donald Trump assumed the presidency, he adopted a set of measures against the Venezuelan dictatorship. Thus, on February 13, 2017, he imposed sanctions on Vice President Tareck El Aissami and, one month later, placed him on the list of persons and companies accused of drug trafficking (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, p.14). Days later, President Trump received Lilian Tintori, wife of opposition leader Leopoldo López, a political prisoner in Venezuela and exhorted President Nicolás Maduro to immediately release him. In this same month, the USA publicly manifested itself in favor of the application of the OAS Inter-American Democratic Charter to Venezuela, considering that the democratic order in that country had been broken (Gilberto Forests International Studies Center, 2017, October 9, p.14). Five months later, on July 31 of that year, the Treasury Department imposed new sanctions (on authorities of the Executive Branch, of the electoral bodies, magistrates of the Supreme Court of Justice, military and other political

figures linked to the Government) in reaction to the illegal election of a General Constituent Assembly. Moreover, on August 11, in a statement that was quickly answered by the other Latin American presidents and even by the UN Secretary General himself, Trump even raised the possibility of a military intervention to stop the wave of human rights infractions, violations against freedoms and against Venezuelan population's citizen rights, which forced the Pentagon to clarify that there was no instruction in that regard. On October 15, Trump's government ignored the results of the regional elections held in Venezuela that day (Colmenares, 2018, pp.17, 20-23).

The following year, specifically on May 19, the US again imposed sanctions, this time on the first vice president of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela Diosdado Cabello -number two in the Venezuelan power- for being involved in a drug trafficking network together with Nicolás Maduro and vice president Tareck El Aissami, among other officials (Singer and Castro, 2018, May 19). Finally, and after the forged elections in which the re-election of Nicolás Maduro as president of Venezuela (May 20, 2018), took place, he described the electoral process as a "farce" and in the same public act, President Trump issued an executive order prohibiting any US company or citizen from acquiring Venezuela's debt, assets or property, thereby limiting the possibility for that State to obtain liquidity in almost the only way it had left (El Comercio, 2018, May 22).

As for Nicaragua, a number of protests by the population began on April 18 2018 against the social security reforms announced by Daniel Ortega's government, which extended not only to Managua but also to the departments of León, Granada, Boaco, Carazo, Estelí and Rivas. Faced with this, the Government took the Armed Forces to the streets in order to suppress protests, which caused the death of several citizens. Then, the Government decided to cancel the reform and convened a dialogue round table, which was finalized on May 16 between Government representatives and the opposition Civic Alliance (formed by businessmen, student leaders, workers' unions, etc.), with the mediation of the Catholic Church Episcopal Conference. The protests however continued, but this time the claims spread to other areas, such as, independent and credible inquiry to investigate the murders that had occurred during the protests, reforms to the electoral system that guarantee free and transparent elections, changes in government institutions to ensure the reestablishment of the rule of law and solve the problems of sustainability and transparency at the Nicaraguan Social Security Institute. On May 23, the Episcopal Conference suspended the dialogue due to the impossibility of reaching agreements, but it was resumed on June 15. Meanwhile, protests continued demanding the resignation of Ortega -who has governed since 2007 for the third consecutive term- and the democratization of the country. In response, the Government intensified repression by police and paramilitary groups, who executed real massacres that have caused the death



of 295 people and more than 1,800 have been wounded to date, according to figures from the OAS Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, (Infobae newsroom, 2018, July 25; AFP, 2018, July 20).

It was then that the Trump administration raised the need for Nicaragua to return to democracy on July 5, sanctioning three senior members of the Nicaraguan Government for violations of the civilian population's human rights. These were Francisco Javier Díaz Madriz, commissioner general of the National Police and deputy director of that institution; José Francisco López Centeno, treasurer of the ruling Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) and vice president of ALBA in Nicaragua, and Fidel Antonio Moreno Briones, general secretary of the Managua Mayor's Office. They all joined the List of Specially Designated Nationals and Persons Blocked by the US Office of Control of Foreign Assets (OFAC). Also, on July 18, the US and another 17 countries, voted at the OAS for a resolution condemning the Nicaraguan State and requesting advancement of the general elections date. Likewise, it ordered the evacuation of non-essential diplomatic personnel present in Nicaragua and their families, noting that new sanctions were being evaluated in the face of continuing violence in that country. These sanctions consisted in the return of the vehicles donated to the National Police of Nicaragua -which had been used to violently repress peaceful protests- and in stopping the sales and donations of equipment to the security forces of that country (Infobae Newsroom, 2018, July 25; AFP, 2018, July 20).

Finally, on July 31 the White House issued an official statement in which it directly blamed President Daniel Ortega, his wife and vice president Rosa Murillo, as well as the ruling party, for the violence in that country and the consequent death of almost 300 people. It also demanded the holding of free, fair and transparent elections as the only avenue towards the restoration of democracy in Nicaragua (Peru21 Editorial Board, 2018, July 31).

Despite the severe and justified measures adopted against Venezuela and Nicaragua, it is striking that a similar reaction has not occurred with the Honduran regime of President Juan Orlando Hernández, despite irregularities in the November 26 2017 election process and the maneuvers of that president to achieve his reelection against the Honduran constitution, by means of its amendment.

These facts were pointed out by the OAS Electoral Mission in its observation report, which concluded that "the irregularities, errors and systemic problems that have surrounded this election do not allow the Mission to be certain about the results" (OAS, December 4 2017). There have also been no objections to the capture of the majority of powers in Honduras by Hernández or the fact that his associates are in the Supreme Court and in the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (Oppenheimer, 2018, January 1).

The explanation - not just the justification - would be in the fact that the Honduran regime is akin to the Trump government, unlike Nicaragua and El Salvador governed by ex-guerrillas opposed to the US regime in Central America; and it would also be due to the proximity between President Hernández and General John Kelly, Trump's chief of staff (Oppenheimer, 2018, January 1).

However, this ambivalent position -which is not new in US foreign policy, as we have seen in the first chapter of this work in the cases of Truman, Eisenhower, Johnson, Nixon and Reagan-, brings the unfortunate consequence of a loss of authority on the part of the superpower to signal out and fight authoritarian or dictatorial regimes in the region, as long as their position is not consistent, given that this would be guided by the satisfaction of their own interests rather than by the defense of democratic principles.

### **3.2. Hostility for some and political cordiality for others**

President Trump's foreign policy towards Latin America is not uniform but rather it can be discerned in its differences depending on the country of destination. In this sense, countries like Mexico, Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua have been the subject of special concern and even hostility (justified in some cases) by the US administration and have merited making decisions that have caused tensions in the bilateral relationship.

In the case of *Mexico*, there have been different points of friction since the arrival of Trump to power, especially those related to migration and trade (which will be analyzed in sections 3.3 and 3.4 of this work). This has led to a consensus among specialists that relations between the US and Mexico had never reached such a low level before and with such confrontation, except - of course - in the first decades of the twentieth century. In this regard, Chabat's long and lucid reflection (2017) is particularly pertinent:

Since the 1938 oil expropriation, which, in the end, was supported by the Roosevelt government, Mexico's foreign policy has been articulated around a fundamental assumption: the United States supported Mexican governments in exchange for stability. The rest of Mexico's international relations were articulated on this assumption. Given that the US government was willing to support Mexico in its economic right and, at the same time, pardoned the scant democracy that existed in the country, the rest of the world went to a secondary place. The truth is that this policy made sense: The United States was our main market and, at the same time, the first world power that would protect the country from any external aggression. Thus, the bargaining power that Mexico had because of its border - and that no other Latin American country had - allowed Mexican governments to negotiate special treatment in several areas.

Such outlook was not exempt from conflicts with Washington, such as the massive deportation of undocumented immigrants in 1954, in Operation Wetback, or

the surcharge on United States imports imposed by the Nixon Government and of which Mexico was not exempt. There were also serious conflicts around the issue of drug trafficking, such as the one unleashed as a result of the kidnapping and murder of DEA agent Enrique Camarena in 1985. Other points of friction were Mexico's activity in the Contadora Group at the beginning of the eighties and the refusal to support the US war in Iraq in 2003. However, in the end those conflicts were subordinated to common interests and the logic of an interdependent relationship.

Donald Trump's victory in the November 2016 elections poses a clear break with the pattern established in the bilateral relationship of recent decades. Candidate Trump's and President Trump's discourse calls into question the logic of the "bilateral relationship" with Mexico. In this discourse, Mexico is no longer the commercial or strategic ally with which we must cooperate, but a source of threats to the United States. This is a scenario that was not present since the conflicts with Washington in the twenties and thirties of the last century in which there was even speculation about a possible US invasion of Mexico. From this point of view, the Mexican government faces a scenario for which there is no immediate prior experience. (pp.9-11)

However, not only US Government actions, but also its language have been especially hard in connection to Mexico and the Mexicans.

Given this, Mexico reacted with prudence, designing a strategy to face the confrontational stance assumed by the Trump administration, which consisted in keeping the channels of formal dialogue open with counterpart institutions of the United States. (foreign relations, trade, finance, security, defense, etc.), regardless of the pronouncements issued by President Trump through social networks or official speeches, seeking to achieve constructive and win-win propositions, and respecting Mexican sovereignty (Ostos, 2017, p.59).

Additionally, Enrique Peña Nieto's Government sought to diversify its business partners. In this line, the recent trade agreement with the European Union stands out, which not only improves the one reached in the year 2000, but also seeks to significantly increase the levels of trade with the European bloc.

Beyond the efforts of Mexican diplomacy, Trump's mistreatment of the Mexican people has not only aroused a broad anti-American sentiment but also of nationalist reaffirmation that definitely favored the election of populist leftist leader Andrés Manuel López Obrador - a candidate of the coalition Together We Will Make History, formed by the National Regeneration Movement (Morena), the Labor Party (PT) and the Social Encounter Party (PES) - as president of Mexico (Vásquez, 2018, February 20).

In any case, after the meeting between the already elected President López Obrador and an American delegation led by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo

and integrated by the Secretary of National Security Kirstjen Nielsen, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Jared Kushner - who is Trump's principal advisor and son-in-law, it would seem that both governments would be interested in finding common points and reducing friction factors (Malkin, 2018, July 13). The latter, however, will not only depend on strictly bilateral issues but also on the future relations that López Obrador maintains with China and Russia - which in fact have already expressed their sympathy for the president-elect - as of December 1, 2018.

As for *Cuba*, Candidate Trump expressed from the beginning his dissatisfaction with the agreements reached during President Obama's Government. Already in power, on June 16, 2017 - in the so-called "Little Havana of Miami", surrounded by Cuban-American congressmen and in front of the veterans of the 2506 Brigade that invaded Playa Girón, Bay of Pigs, in April of 1961 (Dominguez, 2017) -, Trump announced the end of these agreements and signed the presidential memorandum of national security on the strengthening of US policy towards Cuba which establishes a set of new directives towards the island. Thus, the economic, commercial and financial blockade is reaffirmed, economic activities with companies linked to the Cuban armed forces (especially with the Business Administration Group - GAESA) are curtailed, tourist trips are restricted, obtaining travel permits, or educational trips for non-academic purposes that would have to be in groups, among other measures, become complicated. However, diplomatic relations are not broken nor the embassy in Havana re-established with President Obama is closed, the sending of remittances is not limited, nor the migratory agreements are modified, the policy of "dry feet, wet feet" is not reinstated, nor is Cuba placed back on the list of countries that sponsor terrorism (Morgenfeld, 2018, p.161, Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, pp.13-14). In addition, collaborations would be maintained in the military, police and drug trafficking fields, as well as agreements on civil aviation, the environment, US agricultural exports and international visas. Finally, in his discourse, Trump expressed his willingness to negotiate as Cuba moves forward on democracy and human rights (Dominguez, 2017).

Faced with these measures, analysts say that such measures will generate economic complications for Cuba and private businessmen who trade or invest in it (Alzugaray, 2017, p.217), and that the tone Trump employs towards the island is stronger. By doing this, he clearly, seeks to sympathize with both an important sector of the Republicans as with the influential Cuban exiles in the US, but also get the support of Cuban senator Marco Rubio, who is part of the Senate Intelligence Committee that investigates the Russian meddling in the last US general elections (Morgenfeld, 2018, pp.162-163).

Subsequently, at the end of September 2017, the USA denounced an alleged “sonic” attack against US diplomats in Havana, as a result of which it ordered 22 of his diplomats serving in that country to return to Washington, to which it added the freezing of the granting of visas to Cubans and the recommendation to its citizens not to travel to Cuba. Also, on October 3, it expelled 15 Cuban diplomats who served in Washington. These last measures were celebrated by Senator Rubio, who stated: “The United States Embassy in Havana should be reduced to a section of interests and we must be prepared to consider additional measures against the Castro regime if these attacks continue” (Morgenfeld, 2018, p.164, Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, p.14). All of the above highlights the existing tensions in the Cuban-American relationship since the arrival of President Trump to the White House.

A situation similar to that of Mexico and Cuba, although for different reasons, is what Venezuela and Nicaragua face with the US, which was already developed in point 3.1 of the present work. This is undoubtedly the case of the four Latin American countries that are facing the most difficulties with President Trump’s administration.

The situation of the other Latin American countries is very different, although they may be indirectly affected by some decisions adopted by the current US administration, the truth is that the diplomatic relationship with them is kept at a good level, even maintaining political agreement on specific issues with some of them.

President Trump showed he had more than one point of coincidence with Peru, for example, not only in the way of facing the institutional crisis in Venezuela but also in Nicaragua. However, during the visit of President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski -the first meeting with a Latin American president- on February 24, 2017, the differences in relation to trade agreements and the construction of the wall on the border with Mexico were also clear. Thus, on the first, Peru insisted on the need to deepen trade agreements, which was evidenced in its participation in the so-called TPP-11; whereas on the second, Kuczynski declared that he preferred bridges than walls.

Regarding Colombia, President Juan Manuel Santos visited his US counterpart on May 18, 2017 with the double purpose of maintaining the commercial relationship that is part of the bilateral treaty in force since 2012 as well as the US assistance for Peace in that country. Everything indicates that Trump will maintain a policy of continuity in relation to its predecessors on both points (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, pp.18-19).

Taking advantage of his trip to the Summit of the Americas held in Lima on April 13 and 14, 2018, Trump scheduled a second meeting with the then Peruvian President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski and another with President Juan Manuel Santos in Bogotá. In a press release from the White House, it was pointed out that the US president wanted to meet with partners and allies “who share our values and believe that the promise of a secure and prosperous future is based on strong democracies, reciprocal and fair trade, and secure borders.” In addition, the United States supported Peru’s decision to withdraw the invitation to the summit to the Venezuelan president. While this trip was later canceled - for that very day, the US responded militarily to Syria for the use of chemical weapons against its population (EFE, 2018, March 10) -, the intention to meet with these leaders again reflects his desire to maintain good relations with these countries, which he considers to be partners in the region. Moreover, the White House announced that Trump would visit Colombia to meet with President Iván Duque in November 2018, taking advantage of a trip to Argentina to attend the G20 Summit, an opportunity in which they would discuss a greater collaboration on regional security and fight against drug trafficking issues (RPP Newsroom, September 1, 2018).

As for Argentina, on April 27, 2017, Trump received President Mauricio Macri in the White House, whom he supported for the implementation of a set of political and economic reforms, as well as for his participation and taking responsibility for the presidency of the G-20. On this occasion, Trump announced that it would launch the Global Entry Program for Reliable Passengers in Argentina, which would facilitate the entry of low-risk Argentinean travelers into the United States. (Center for International Studies Gilberto Bosques, 2017, October 9, p.17). In May 2018, following a meeting in Washington of Argentinean Minister of Finance Nicolás Dujovne with the Under Secretary of International Affairs of the US Treasury, David Malpass, the latter reiterated his “firm support for the market-oriented reform program” of the Macri government for “Promoting growth driven by the private sector.” In addition, the under-secretary highlighted the official plan to strengthen fiscal policy and “decisive actions” to try to anchor inflation. A few days later, President Trump wrote on his Twitter account: “[Macri] is doing a good job for Argentina. I support your vision to transform the country’s economy and unleash its potential!” (Mathus, 2018, May 10; El Eco, 2018, May 18).

In June 2017, Trump met with Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela in Washington, to discuss issues of illegal immigration, organized crime and of drug trafficker gangs. The US president praised the relations with this country, affirming that “things are going well” and that “the relationship has been very strong” (BBC Mundo, 2017, July 19).

Finally, in January 2018, Chilean President Sebastián Piñera, on the occasion of his election, held a telephone conversation with President Trump in which they discussed the Andean country's economic situation and the Free Trade Agreement between the two States, the tax reform approved by the US Senate, the protests in Iran and the situation in Venezuela. Trump invited Piñera to the White House and stressed his desire to work together on issues of mutual interest (Catena and Valenzuela, 2018, January 3).

A final point that should be highlighted in the line of everything noted, is that in September 2017, President Donald Trump, invited the rulers of Brazil, Colombia, Panama, Argentina and Peru to a dinner at the Trump Tower in New York, with the intention of fundamentally discussing the Venezuelan crisis, the situation in Cuba and other issues in the region. Finally, Brazil's President Michel Temer, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos, Panama President Juan Carlos Varela, and Argentine Vice President Gabriela Michetti attended. The Peruvian Pedro Pablo Kuczynski could not attend due to serious internal problems (Infobae Redacción, 2017, September 18).

As can be seen in these last cases, the relationship between the US and most Latin American countries does not present confrontational features; on the contrary, through the exercise of a predominantly presidential diplomacy, they have been seeking points of encounter and collaboration with the superpower. This is facilitated by the fact that these are states where democracy and respect for human rights prevail and with which there are no commercial problems.

### **3.3. Hardening against immigration**

Historically, the US has built itself based on thriving immigrants that arrived in that country hoping to find a better future there. As Morgenfeld points out (2016b):

Even before declaring independence, the United States received millions of migrants, who gradually displaced indigenous peoples. Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, the English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish and French (Protestant Huguenots) predominated, in addition to the numerous Africans who were brought by force as slaves. Already at the beginning of the 19th century the southern and eastern Europe contingents increased. The accelerated industrialization process and the Conquest of the West demanded more and more labor. Until the First World War, more than 30 million inhabitants of the Old Continent had crossed the Atlantic to settle in the promised land. In the second half of the 20th century, the main migratory flows to the United States came from Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. (p.16)

Contradicting this historical legacy, since the election campaign and after taking office, President Trump has spoken contemptuously about citizens from differ-

ent parts of the world, including Latin Americans, who have migrated to the United States in search of fulfilling the so-called “American dream”. These expressions have also been accompanied by a set of measures designed to toughen US immigration policy.

Thus, in the external field, Trump announced the withdrawal of the US from the UN Global Compact on Migration, approved by 193 countries attending the Summit on Refugees and Migrants, held in New York, in September 2016. This pact, promoted by Mexico and Switzerland and backed at the time by Barak Obama, aims at making migratory flows more secure, orderly and legal. However, for Trump, it is an instrument that is not compatible with US sovereignty, adding that the country must enjoy complete freedom to control its borders (El Nacional, 2017, December 4).

This decision is particularly regrettable if one takes into account that the US is the country that hosts the largest number of migrants in the world and that no State can individually confront international migration.

On the other hand, in the domestic sphere, beyond the three migratory vetoes decreed by President Trump -essentially against countries with a Muslim majority (although the latter also includes Venezuelan officials)- immigration tightening measures have been mainly aimed at against nationals from Mexico and Central America.

In the specific case of *Mexico*, there has been some variation between Trump’s proposals as a candidate and those he has finally executed so far as president. Indeed, the following stand out among his initial proposals: 1) the construction of a border wall; 2) the reinforcement of security at the border; 3) the criminalization of undocumented immigrants (whom he accuses of being responsible for the increase in crime in the United States);<sup>32</sup> 4) deportation of undocumented immigrants (approximately 11 million people, out of which 5.6 million are Mexican)<sup>33</sup>; 5) refusal of any amnesty to the undocumented to regularize

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<sup>32</sup> At this point, it should be remembered that when launching his candidacy in June 2015, referring to Mexican migration, Donald Trump said: “They are sending people who have many problems, they are sending us their problems, they bring drugs, they are rapists, and I suppose that some must good people, but I speak with border agents and they tell me what there is “ (Morgenfeld, 2016b, p.24).

<sup>33</sup> On November 13, 2016, Trump said: “What we are going to do is to look for people who are criminals and have a criminal record, gang members, drug dealers. We have a lot of them, probably two million, maybe three million. We are going to throw them out of the country or we are going to imprison them. But we’re going to kick them out of the country if they’re here illegally.”



and acquire American citizenship; and, 6) application of a tax on remittances sent by migrants to their country of origin that would be used to finance the construction of the wall (Carrasco, 2017, p.174; Morgenfeld, 2016b, pp.24-25; 2017, p.54).

However, already as president, Donald Trump limited this list, concentrating on two of its components: the construction of the border wall and the strengthening of security on the border.

As for construction or completion of a wall on the border with Mexico, it must be remembered that it is not properly a novel proposal (Dombrowski and Reich, 2017, p.23). In fact, during the Bill Clinton administration, two stretches of wall were built; the first, in 1994, in California under the so-called *Operation Guardian* and the second, in 1997, in Texas, with *Operation Rio Grande*. Also, in that Government, the *Immigrant Responsibility Act* (1996) was approved, which explicitly indicated the removal of physical barriers at the border (fences, barriers or walls) as part of the migration policy (Nájar, July 29 2016). This norm was the one that served as inspiration for the passing of the 2005 *Protection of Borders, Antiterrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act*, during the presidency of George W. Bush, considered the most extreme of the USA in the matter and focused precisely on the construction of a border wall. Although this norm was passed by the House of Representatives, it was not approved by the Senate, so it never came into force but became the flag of the most conservative sectors of the main political parties in the United States. This led to subsequent approval of the 2006 Safe Wall Act, which authorized the construction of a 1,125-km fence on the border with Mexico to strengthen border control (Carrasco, 2017, pp.182, 184-185). By 2016, 1,300 km of wall had already been built by private companies at a cost of 4 million dollars per kilometer (Pozzi, 2016, p.8).

When Trump took office, he confirmed his decision to finish a wall on the border with Mexico. He said: "The first thing we need to do is secure our southern border and we need to do it right now. We have to stop that avalanche, and the best way to do it is to build a wall. [...] Bad people do not just come from Mexico. They come from Central and South America, and probably from the Middle East" (Ostos, 2017, p.58).

In this sense, Trump issued the executive order Improvements in the application of border security and immigration (January 25, 2017), which raises the issue of the construction of a physical wall along the southern border for which he established the need to identify and allocate all sources of federal funds for

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At this point it must be borne in mind that during the Bush and Obama governments, five million undocumented immigrants were expelled (Morgenfeld, 2016b, pp.27 and 30).

its materialization, which cost was estimated at 21 billion dollars and its completion date in 2020 (Peña, 2017, p.198). The order maintains that “foreigners who enter the United States illegally without inspection or admission represent a significant threat to national security and public safety” and that “continued illegal immigration constitutes a clear and present danger to the interests of the States United “(Carrasco, 2017, pp.186).

Regarding the strengthening of border control, Trump has been promoting a significant increase in the US budget. Indeed, Trump increased the border security budget by \$ 314 million for 2018, and the application of the immigration act allowed him to hire more than 500 Border Patrol agents and an additional 1,000 workers for the Immigration and Customs Control Service (Disis, 2017, March 16; La Jornada, 2017, March 17; Washington Post Staff, 2018, February 16). Although Congress did not approve most of the proposals made by the president, the following year Trump insisted on increasing the budget for such purposes. Thus, for 2019, Trump has requested 782 million dollars to hire and support 2,750 officers and agents of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Service, added 2.8 billion dollars to increase the detention of immigrants to 52,000 per day and requested an additional 2.2 billion dollars to hire 450 Secret Service agents (Washington Post Staff, 2018, February 16; Infobae Newsroom, 2018, February 13).

The measures adopted by President Trump to control migration on the border with Mexico are based on conceiving this flow of people as a threat<sup>34</sup>, without taking into account the humanitarian aspect of this phenomenon. But in addition the measures are based on data and facts that are not well-founded and have even been erroneous. Thus, as Peña maintains, if official data from the US Border Patrol and the Survey on Migration in the Northern Border prepared by the College of the Northern Border are taken into account, it can be concluded that there are no grounds that justify Trump’s executive orders, given that:

- a) The number of Mexican migrants with intentions to cross the border with the United States illegally has been gradually decreasing since 2007 and it now has the lowest historical levels since 1972 (US.BP., 2018);
- b) According to the Center for Migration Studies, the majority of undocumented immigrants arrive by plane or car with legal documents and then stay in the United States beyond the time allowed in their student or tourist visas;

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<sup>34</sup> The US National Security Strategy of 2017 incorporates the construction of the wall on the border with Mexico within the first pillar of national interests to protect called *Protecting the American people, the homeland and the American way of life* (President of the United States of America, 2017, pp.9-10).

- c) The population of Mexican origin residing in the USA is mostly documented and the number of illegals has been in decline since 2011 (The Northern Board College, 2016);
- d) The majority of deported Mexicans are due to routine police inspections (24%), third-party complaints to immigration authorities (19%), traffic infractions (16%), driving in a state of intoxication (16%), various reasons (12%), possession of deportation order (7%) and only 6% for minor crimes (Peña, 2017, pp.199-201, 203, 205, 207, Oppenheimer, 2017, May 30).

In addition, these measures deny the political and sociodemographic relationships that exist between the four US and six Mexican states that share the border and that number more than 83 million people. The wall, therefore, is opposed to the coexistence and relationship of these communities in favor of tension and conflict (Castorena, 2016, p.112). Additionally, since its purpose is to prevent or hinder migration through Mexico, the only thing that has been attained is to increase harassment suffered by migrants in the hands of the so-called coyotes (human trafficking mafias) and corrupt officials (Morgerfeld, 2016b, p.17).

That may be contributing to the fact that, so far, the US Congress does not approve sufficient funds in the budget for building said wall, despite the insistence of President Trump, who has requested 1.6 billion dollars in the 2019 budget for building the border wall in South Texas. This is because many of the American political leaders are convinced that the wall is an incorrect way to solve such a complex and diverse problem.

As regards Central America, the United States government resumed the Initiative for Prosperity of the Northern Triangle in 2017. It had been agreed by the Central American presidents of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras with President Obama, although with three important variations. In fact, on June 15 of that year, in the framework of the Prosperity and Security Conference held in Miami, USA, he proposed to add the security component as a first variant in the initiative, stating that it should adopt certain characteristics of Plan Colombia, such as territory control and an end to violence and corruption in involved Central American countries. This has been a matter of concern for the Central American countries insofar as they understand that the initiative would turn towards a more militarized approach, focused on security and where the role of the Southern Command in said region could be increased (Martin, 2017, p. 169). The variation of the initiative insisting on the security element does not point, in addition, to the underlying problem. The solution actually needs to change the economic and social conditions in the involved Central American countries in order to reduce the causes of migration. A proof of the latter is that

the figures of Central Americans who manage to enter the United States have basically been maintained until 2017, and rather the costs for illegal entry have increased (Villafuerte, 2018, pp.111-113).

The second variant of the initiative worth highlighting was that the convening of this conference in Miami was in charge of the United States, but also of Mexico, a country that until then had not participated in such meetings, tacitly implying an active involvement of the Mexican State in the achieving the purposes for which the initiative was created. The Initiative for Prosperity of the Northern Triangle was one of the issues dealt with during the visit of Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Secretary of Security John Kelly to Mexico in February 2017. Therefore, the participation of Mexico at the conference was understood as an attempt by this country to show itself as a collaborator on immigration issues with the United States in order to seek an approach in the face of the renegotiation of NAFTA and the solution of their migration problems with the superpower. However, such sudden Mexican participation has aroused criticism in the Central American countries, since they feel that they will no longer be direct interlocutors of the United States (Martin, 2017, p.169).

A third variant was the reduction of financial support to this initiative, because it reached 750 million dollars in 2016, it was reduced to 655 million dollars in 2017 and to 468 million dollars for 2018 (Martin, 2017, p.169).

However, the modification of the Alliance for Prosperity of the Northern Triangle is not the only measure proposed by President Trump in relation to Central American migration. On August 16, 2017, the Central America Minors (CAM) Program for the processing of refugees and permits for minors, also known as Parole, was suspended. It permitted children and young people under the age of 21 from El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala or to the spouses of the petitioners to arrive in the USA with a temporary permit renewable every two years to stay and work temporarily in the USA without being subject to deportation (Charlotte Immigration Law Firm, 2017, August 15; Jaramillo, 2017, August 24; Martin, 2017, p.169).

In the same sense, in January 2018, the Trump Government announced the end of the Temporary Protection Status Program (TPS), established in 1990 by President George Bush to favor people from countries affected by natural disasters, riots and armed conflicts, who had entered the United States illegally, in order to grant them a provisional legal status that would allow them to live and work in that country. The suspension was decreed with respect to the 200,000 Salvadorans who had benefited from the program, both because of civil war in that country and because of the two earthquakes

in 2001.<sup>35</sup> Weeks before, the program had been suspended for the 45,000 Haitians benefited after the 2010 earthquake, and a year earlier the program had been suspended for Nicaraguans. After having granted them a temporary extension, it has been officially reported that the program will also end for Honduran immigrants (Jordán, 2018, January 8; Villafuerte, 2018, pp.100-101, Gilberto Bosques International Studies Center, 2017, October 9, p.16).

Two other actions that will undoubtedly impact on Mexican and Central American migrants - but also migrants of other nationalities - are the cancellation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals - DACA that will affect approximately 800 thousand people (Martin, 2017, p.169; Cahill, Geffen and Wang, 2008) and the government's failing to approve a budget to aid approximately 690 thousand *dreamers* threatened with deportation. As is known, *dreamers* are minors who entered the US illegally accompanying their parents and who have become integrated to American life. The name comes from the bill known as the *Dream Act*, which was first introduced in 2001, but so far has not been approved at federal level. Only some states, such as Maryland and California, have approved regulations that grant them the facilities to continue university studies, but not migratory benefits. Besides these two measures, Trump has recently added a third one in which immigrants who receive public benefits (housing vouchers, food assistance, etc.) cannot obtain the permanent residence that allows them to live and work legally in the US. It has been estimated that such measure would affect 382 thousand people per year (El Comercio Newsroom, 2018, September 23).

It should be noted that, in general, Trump's immigration proposals have not only been stopped or corrected in many cases by the US judicial system but have also been opposed by some US cities. called Sanctuary Cities (such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, among others)<sup>36</sup>, which have refused to apply the federal immigration act and which protect undocumented people that live in those cities, rejecting or prohibiting official agencies from detaining or deporting them (Castorena, 2016, p.112).

Against these cities, President Trump issued the executive order Improving public security in the interior of the United States (January 25, 2017), for which he withdraws federal funds to support jurisdictions that do not comply with

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<sup>35</sup> These Salvadorans sent remittances to their country that amounted to 4.6 billion dollars, accounting for 17% of El Salvador's economy (Jordán, 2018, January 8).

<sup>36</sup> The term was coined in the 1980s, when the city of Los Angeles ordered its police to abandon the practice of requiring the immigration status of people in their interventions, and the city of San Francisco approved an ordinance to prevent the use of funds in connection to applying federal immigration laws (BBC World, 2017, January 26).

the aforementioned federal law., making special mention of the Sanctuary Cities, adding that “these jurisdictions have caused immeasurable damage to the American people and the very fabric of our republic” (Carrasco, 2017, p.187). However, this led the authorities of these cities to harden their positions (BBC World, January 26, 2017) and, federal judge William Orrick ruled in favor of the lawsuits filed by San Francisco and Santa Clara (both Sanctuary Cities of California) in November of 2017, nullifying the executive order in question (McKirdy, 2017, November 21).

In short, the tightening of President Trump’s immigration policy does not only contradict US history itself. as a country formed by migrants, but stems from a reductionist perspective, erroneous data and information on the migratory problem, all of which has generated a resistance that has not been limited to the affected countries but has spread to political leaders, authorities, judges, civil organizations and part of the US citizens themselves, who understand that this policy will not solve the underlying problem.

### **3.4. Impact on free trade**

Although the most drastic trade measures adopted by President Donald Trump have been aimed at extra-regional countries or blocs, the truth is that several actions executed by the new US administration have implications for Latin America and the Caribbean, while others have a direct impact in a particular country, as is the case of Mexico. Next, let us look at four of the most important measures adopted by the US. with repercussion in the region.

Thus, a *first measure* that is related to what has just been pointed out is the erosion that President Trump would be causing to the World Trade Organization - WTO (which all the countries of the region are part to), particularly against its mechanism of dispute settlement. Indeed, since 2017 the terms of three of the seven members of the appeal body in this organization have expired, while a quarter of them expired in September 2018. Faced with that, the US refuses to facilitate the appointment of replacements, whereby, Trump is actually crippling the operation of the mechanism itself. Some interpret this as a deliberate strategy to nullify the possibility that the WTO may rule against eventual US infractions of free trade, such as unilateral imposition of tariffs on various countries and blocs of countries in the world, as well as solution of any commercial disputes through bilateral negotiation (more convenient for the superpower) (Matsuno, 2018). Besides, the US has rejected any new commercial initiative related to electronic commerce or any that links commerce and the environment at the WTO summit, held in December 2017, in Buenos Aires. As Steinberg states: “With all this, the US has initiated a strategy that could end up wounding the institution to death by making it irrelevant and not very operative [...]” (2018, January 15).

A *second measure* taken by President Trump with effects in the region was his decision on January 20, 2017 to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which three Latin American countries were part to: Chile, Mexico and Peru. This was not only an American initiative but was led by that country as a formula to strengthen its position in the world market, deliberately excluding China. Therefore, as noted by Palacio de Oteyza (2017), withdrawal from the TPP breaks:

[...] with the logic of all previous Administrations since the 90s in the last century, from Clinton, G. Bush and G.W. Bush, until the Obama administration and his Asian Pivot. They all shared the fundamental idea that the best way to treat China is by involving it in the international liberal economic regime and making it respect the rules, and they never contemplated the withdrawal of the United States from those same rules. In that sense, the TPP supposed for Obama not to isolate China, but to put pressure on it to bend to the American liberal pattern on trade, investment, public sector and intellectual property. (p.72)

While initially the US withdrawal generated confusion and discouragement among TPP negotiators, and analysts predicted the end of that agreement, the fact is that in subsequent meetings the other participating countries, under the leadership of Japan, decided to change the original agreement, dismantling the articles that had been explicitly raised by the great power, to arrive at a new text.

Indeed, on March 8, 2018, Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam signed the Trans-Pacific Partnership and Progressive Treaty (CPTPP), best known as TPP-11, which creates a market of 498 million people that represents about 13% of the world economy. It is the most advanced trade agreement of its kind that has not only aroused the interest of other countries (such as South Korea), but also implies a clear response to the policy proposed by President Trump.

A *third measure* that is the most worrying for the region as a whole, is the one referring to the taking of unilateral actions by the United States. against various countries or blocs in the world, clearly infringing free trade rules<sup>37</sup>, giving way to what has been called a *trade war* that can have serious implications for Latin America and the Caribbean.

This is the case, for example, of the tariffs imposed by the US against Canada (25% to steel and 10% to aluminum) for an amount of 12.6 billion dollars and

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<sup>37</sup> For some authors, the eminently pragmatic sense of Trump's foreign policy leads him to leave multilateralism aside to achieve certain foreign policy objectives, because it implies negotiation and time. (Magcamit, 2017, pp.22-28).

that caused the latter country to file actions at the WTO and then respond with similar tariffs in retaliation. Tariffs on steel and aluminum have also affected other countries, such as India, which has responded by raising the tariffs on 30 goods imported from the United States to 50% for a total of 240 million dollars. Or the case of Malaysia and South Korea affected by tariffs of 30% on their exports of solar panels for a value of 4 billion dollars and 20% on washing machines for a total of 1.3 billion dollars (Vásquez, 2018, March 6). Another unilateral measure of the same nature adopted by the US government was President Trump's decision to impose tariffs of 25% on steel and 10% on aluminum to the European Union and Mexico, adopted at the end of May 2018. This has led Europe to impose countermeasures on the United States. Besides, the Ministry of Economy of Mexico has announced equivalent measures on various American products such as flat steel, lamps, pork legs and shoulders, sausages and food preparations, apples, grapes, blueberries, various cheeses, among others (RPP Drafting, 2018, May 31). Finally, we also have more recent unilateral measures imposed against China and its response measures, which we have already referred to.

These measures have generated great concern not only in directly affected countries but also in the rest of the international community, both because of the motivations that have driven their adoption and because of the effects they may have on the world economy.

On the first issue, some analysts argue that Trump's behavior would seem to be based on the belief that trade is a zero-sum activity, that is, what one gains is what the other loses, but also that a trade deficit is necessarily bad. In this regard, Abusada responds (2018, July 10):

Of course both beliefs are false. Commercial exchange occurs precisely because both participants benefit by trading the goods that each can produce at lower cost. Moreover, the British economist David Ricardo showed 200 years ago that even when one of two countries can produce two goods at a lower cost, it is convenient for each country to specialize and export the product in which its cost advantage is comparatively greater than that of the other country. This principle of comparative advantage is what drives trade in the whole world.

On the other hand, trade deficits are not in themselves neither good nor bad, and in their origin there can be factors such as exchange rates, country productivity or monetary policy. More fundamentally, trade deficits are directly linked to insufficient savings. Ironically, all increases in trade deficits in the United States have been associated with periods of greater prosperity, lower unemployment and huge benefits for the American consumer. Trump, on the other hand, talks about the US \$ 800 billion deficit as almost a theft of which his country is a victim. He does not know either that trade deficit includes exports and imports of services in which the United States has a surplus of more than US \$ 255 billion. Heedless of



those who suggest temperance, he has fired skilled collaborators such as his chief economic adviser Gary Cohn or his secretary of state Rex Tillerson, and prefers to listen to the advice of Peter Navarro, a heterodox economist of low prestige in the academic community and a constant critic of China's and Germany's trade surpluses.

Lopez similarly states (2017):

For Trump, a negative trade balance with some nation simply represents not winning. In his Darwinian and gloomy vision of the world, trade consists of a zero-sum game in which if one exports more than what one imports from a given country, then one of them wins and the other loses. He refuses to understand the complexity of the overall global market picture, or the diversity of causes that trigger United States deficits.

As for the second issue, that is, the effects that the trade war unleashed by the United States will bring to international trade affecting all States -including Latin American countries-, it is important to highlight that, to date, the first impacts can already be observed.

In fact, this trade war and the climate that it generates have caused collateral damage in emerging economies such as Peru. Thus, since the failed meeting of the G7, the price of copper and zinc fell by 14%, which may account for an annual loss of 2.5 billion dollars in Peruvian exports and 1.3 billion dollars in tax collection (Abusada, 2018, July 10).

Finally, a *fourth measure* taken by the US Government has been to call into question some bilateral free trade agreements. In the case of Latin America, questioning has been addressed to the North American Free Trade Agreement - NAFTA, with Mexico and Canada.

On NAFTA, we should begin by taking into account that commercial relations between Mexico and the United States derived from this treaty are intense and of great importance, while the superpower sends to Mexico 15% of its exports and receives 13% of its imports. However, the real weight of exchanges for both countries is much greater, since Mexico is the second destination of US exports after Canada and the third in imports after China and Canada, all of which represents a commercial exchange of 532 billion dollars per year. In addition, the USA is the first foreign investor in Mexico, reaching 57.7% of total investments in that Latin American country (Ostos, 2017, p.55).

Nevertheless, reproducing the campaign against NAFTA that presidential candidate Ross Perot undertook in the nineties and recalling criticisms to free trade

by President Herbert Hoover in 1930<sup>38</sup> (Vega y Campos, 2017, p.786) President Trump argued that NAFTA was an unfair agreement because it accelerated the loss of industrial jobs in the United States and took entire segments of workers to low-paid jobs. He also pointed out that the agreement generated a trade deficit for the United States that should be corrected. He said: “The United States has a trade deficit of 60 billion dollars with Mexico. It has been a unilateral agreement since the beginning of NAFTA with a massive number of lost companies and jobs” (Ostos, 2017, p.58).

In this regard, although at first Donald Trump announced that he would withdraw from this agreement -using the complaint mechanism provided for in art. 2.205 of NAFTA- he then proposed to establish a 35% tariff on products imported from Mexico, but in the end he moderated his position by proposing the renegotiation of this treaty (Matari, 2017, pp.6-7). There were many coincidences between the negotiators of the Parties in this negotiation, since they are professional who are not contaminated by political discourse. However, there have also been some difficulties, such as the US approach to eliminating the compulsory settlement system foreseen in the agreement (arbitration) and the revision of the text every five years (Vásquez, 2018, February 20). Finally, on August 27, 2018, after thirteen months of negotiations, both governments reached an agreement, in which both parties had to give in to their maximum proposals. In this regard, the following have been established (Pozzi and Fariza, 2018, August 28; Mars and La Fuente, 2018, August 28):

- a) That the agreement will be valid for 16 years and not as proposed by the US that it should include an automatic termination clause every five years, which did not give stability to the agreement or to the economic agents;
- b) In the agriculture chapter, a tariff-free zone is preserved and the US has managed to establish a series of measures to avoid distortions, and to prevent the use of subsidies for exports or special safeguards contemplated by the WTO, but at the same time, Mexico has achieved to not include seasonality requirements as had been proposed by the United States;
- c) As for the automotive industry, Mexico has accepted that the new rules of origin establish that between 40 and 45% of the content of automobiles must be manufactured by employees who earn at least 16 dollars per hour worked, limiting the auto parts present in Mexico. With this, the USA It aims to prevent manufacturing companies from relocating production to Mexico because of the low cost of labor. In addition, only cars that contain 75% (currently 62.5%) of North American components can be considered as local products;

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<sup>38</sup> Hoover stated that it was impossible for some industries in his country to “successfully compete with foreign producers due to their low salaries and production costs” (Message of June 16 1930).

- d) In the field of intellectual property, stricter measures are contemplated to prevent the circulation of counterfeit or pirated products, as well as to combat the trade of industrial secrets;
- e) Finally, with regard to aluminum and steel, there are no agreements, which will maintain the current *statu quo*;

In short, according to experts, this is the best possible agreement for Mexico, given the current circumstances (Pozzi and Fariza, 2018, August 28).

This agreement was also possible due to several factors, among which the election of Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who hastened the negotiators to close the agreement; the pressure of American companies hit hard by the trade war with China and Europe; and the November legislative elections in the US. that led Trump to search for a result to show to the voters (Mars and La Fuente, 2018, August 28).

After this, the question that arose was whether this agreement would be extended to Canada or whether there would be two autonomous bilateral treaties. The US strategy of negotiating separately, added to the threat of not being interested in keeping NAFTA in force, incorporated an element of pressure on Canada that was reflected in the negotiations between these countries. However, both finally reached an agreement on September 30, 2018 with Canada's concession that US dairy producers have greater access to that country's market and the US concession to keep the NAFTA dispute settlement chapter intact. In this way, Canada preserves its main export destination (that is, the USA with 76%) and the trilateral trade association of the three North American States goes on (Pozzi and Fariza, 2018, October 1).

All that has been discussed in this section allows us to conclude that President Trump does not understand -or does not wish to understand- the functioning of international trade, assuming a simple but mistaken reasoning that if there is no surplus in the exchange, it is a loss and also that the other party is responsible for it. Given this, he opts for bilateral negotiation scenarios combined with verbal threats and the imposition of unilateral trade sanctions as a formula to obtain new more advantageous agreements that may, in some way, guarantee a permanent surplus. Likewise, he rejects mandatory formulas to solve controversies and multilateral scenarios that entail a collective negotiation, since he prefers direct negotiation in which he can impose his conditions.

### **3.5. Decrease of cooperation**

Traditionally, the USA has been an important source of cooperation for Latin American governments, which has been particularly useful in facing situations

of economic and social crisis, but also to strengthen the rule of law, democracy, human rights, the fight against drugs, among other purposes. .

When Donald Trump assumed the US presidency, he pointed out from the beginning his intention to reduce American cooperation to the world, which obviously included Latin America.

Abiding by what he promised, Trump proposed a drastic cut of 36% in foreign aid to Latin America in the 2018 budget administered by the State Department and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which indistinctly affected several countries in the region, cutting funds from almost all types of assistance and proposing the elimination of the Inter-American Foundation, a small independent agency of US assistance that promotes grassroots development in the region (Meyer, 2018, September May).

In effect, the Trump government proposed to reduce the USAID budget, with presence in 19 Latin American countries, to go from 1.11 billion dollars in 2016 to 756 million in 2018, leaving Cuba in zero (in 2016 it received 20 million dollars for programs promoting democracy and respect for human rights) and Venezuela (which received \$ 6.5 million in 2016 to support the independent media, as well as to protect and promote human rights and strengthen civil society) (Bermúdez, 2017, May 29; Oppenheimer, 2017, May 30).

Similar cuts were made for Mexico (from 160 million to 87 million dollars), Nicaragua (from 10 million dollars to 200 thousand dollars), Guatemala (from 131 million to 80 million dollars), Honduras (from 98 million to 68 million) dollars), El Salvador (from 68 million dollars to 46 million dollars), Colombia (from 391 million to 251 million dollars), Peru (from 75 million dollars to 50 million dollars), Brazil (from 13 million to 815 thousand dollars), among others (EFE, 2017, May 24). For Haiti, which in recent years had deserved special US attention, a 15% cut was proposed (Meyer, 2018, May 9).

However, finally the US Congress did not carry out the cuts proposed by Trump; for example, in the case of Cuba, 20 million dollars were approved to promote democracy, in the case of Venezuela, 15 million dollars were approved for the same purpose, and so on (Martí, 2018, March 24). The Congress, therefore, exercising its constitutional competence in budgetary matters, prevented President Trump from accomplishing his task and, with this, having a negative impact on various support programs.

Additionally, Donald Trump has arranged cuts in US contributions to various funds of international organizations that will also have an impact in the region, in areas as diverse as human rights, environment, gender, health, etc. This is

the case, for example, of reductions made in financing both the UN Women, Peace and Security Agenda (approved by Security Council resolution 1325 of October 31, 2000) and the 2030 Agenda, which includes the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (approved on September 25 2015 and effective as of January 1 2016).

Similarly, programs focusing exclusively on gender equality have been reduced by 61%<sup>39</sup> and in the empowerment of women, even if the US has shown a setback on this issue in recent years, evidenced in the 2017 Global Report on the Gender Gap (Montilla, 2018, January 17).

Another controversial measure is the restitution and expansion of the *Global Gag Rule*, a law created during Ronald Reagan's government and suppressed by the Obama administration, which prohibits the participation of foreign non-governmental organizations financed by the United States in activities related to abortion, that is, funds are eliminated if part of this aid is used to provide abortion services, information on abortion or promote the liberalization of the laws that regulate it (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Various civil associations in this country have indicated their concern about the impact that this rule will have on the reproductive health of girls and women throughout the world (Montilla, 2018, January 17).

Additionally, we have the US decision to withdraw from the funding of the UN Population Fund, which in the words of Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General, will have devastating effects on the health of thousands of families around the world.

In the same line, President Trump proposed a 31% reduction of his 2018 budget for the financing of food aid programs in the world, that is, from 3.5 billion dollars to 1.5 billion dollars; in more concrete terms, this implies reducing the coverage of 67 million people to 29 million people. Trump also proposed eliminating a program of food aid for famines abroad endowed with about 1.7 billion dollars (Konyndyk, 2017, May 31; EFE, 2017, May 23). With regard to international disaster assistance, which covers the food needs of the victims of conflicts and catastrophes in the world, Trump proposed reducing US participation. from \$ 2.5 trillion to \$ 1 trillion, which would affect the thousands of growing

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<sup>39</sup> The case of LGBTI citizens deserves a special mention. While Trump promised in the campaign that he would do everything within his power to protect them, once he became president on July 26 2017, he declared his decision to prohibit such persons from serving in the army, which materialized, when a short time later he drafted a memorandum addressed to the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of National Security in that regard (Cahill, Geffen y Wang, 2008).

refugees in the world, but also destroy the health, drinking water and nutrition programs that benefit thousands of victims of conflicts in the world (Konyndyk, 2017, May 31; Krieg and Mullery, 2017, May 23).

Finally, Trump proposed to reduce assistance to global health programs by 25% for the 2018 US budget (EFE, 2017, May 23). For example, for HIV prevention and care programs, AIDS proposed a decrease of 1.1 billion dollars, which could affect a universe of more than 1 million people (Cahill, Geffen and Wang, 2008).

It must be kept in mind that the USA It has been the largest global source of funding for global health programs. Thus, under President George W. Bush, the superpower's funding for global health increased significantly, which generated important funding initiatives such as the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), as well as support for the Multilateral Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The same happened in the Obama administration; it is enough to note that, in 2015, the United States provided more than 36% of the global development assistance for health. Contrary to this trend, President Trump sought to significantly reduce this support (Karim and Singh, 2017). Although the US Congress did not approve the level of budget cut proposed by the president in these areas, there has been a decrease as compared to previous years.

Everything stated in this section makes clear that, for Trump, the United States international cooperation lacks sense to a great extent -and only reports economic losses-, whether it is understood as a manifestation of solidarity with the less developed countries or as a soft power instrument to influence globally. This reveals a lack of understanding of the role that corresponds to a superpower in this field. As Meyer points out (2018, May 9), if "foreign aid cuts proposed by the [Trump] administration, combined with other policy changes, materialize, they could contribute to a relative decrease in US influence."

### **3.6. Denying climate change and disregarding environmental commitments**

Since the election campaign, President Donald Trump questioned that climate change was a real problem, claiming that it was rather an issue created by and for the Chinese to make the US industry less competitive (Trump, tweet of November 6, 2012) and then added "I accept that climate change is causing some problems: it makes us spend billions of dollars to develop technologies that we do not need" (Ahrens, 2017, June 2).

Consistent with this position, since he assumed the presidency, Trump has been adopting and promoting a set of measures aimed at getting rid of the climate commitments assumed by the previous administration. In this sense, one mea-

sure was to disregard financial commitments to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Escribano, 2018, January 11).

However, the most controversial of President Trump's decisions was to order (June 1 2017) the denunciation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change<sup>40</sup> -signed on April 22, 2016 by the countries attending the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change -COP 21-<sup>41</sup>, which was finally implemented on August 4 that year.

While it is true that the withdrawal will take effect one day after the next president of the United States has been elected, the Trump government has already adopted a number of measures aimed at "dismantling President Obama's climate initiatives" aimed at complying with the agreement goals (Lázaro, 2018, January 17).

According to Trump, the Paris Agreement "is debilitating, disadvantageous and unfair" (Ahrens, 2017, June 2) as it diminishes the US competitive advantage, and it harms the employment and the traditional energy industries which operate in that country. He also argues that the campaign against fossil fuels sets an agenda against US growth, economy and security. (President of the United States of America, 2017, p.22) and imposes cost overruns for mitigation; that is to say, Trump makes an economic and commercial calculation about the convenience of this agreement exclusively for the USA, which verifies the expression of the America first principle (Zhang et al., 2017, p.221, Ahrens, 2017, June 2).

At first it was thought that the US withdrawal of the Paris Agreement would produce a stampede of countries committed to combating global warming (Aizen, 2017, p.45). However, the reaction inside the United States<sup>42</sup> and the rest of the world has been positive, reaffirming commitment with the objectives set forth in the Paris Agreement on climate change. In other words, the decision to withdraw has reactivated environmental militancy within the US. (Atkinson and Chi, 2017, June 3), but it has also helped the rest of the world ratify their commitment to the goals of the agreement. As Solano points out (2017):

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<sup>40</sup> Denouncing or withdrawing from the treaty is allowed by article 28 of the agreement.

<sup>41</sup> The Paris Agreement was signed by 195 countries. Only two UN members did not sign: Syria and Nicaragua.

<sup>42</sup> Several American companies such as Exxon Mobil, Chevron, General Electric, Apple, Google, Microsoft, Intel, Nike, Gap, Levi's and Starbucks made their voices heard in the face of the decision by President Trump to withdraw from the Paris Agreement (Pozzi, 2017a, June 2). Also, businessmen like the president of Tesla (Elon Musk) and the head of the Walt Disney Corporation (Robert Iger) resigned their positions as advisers to the White House (Atkinson and Chi, 2017, June 3) for such withdrawal.

Regardless legal aspects, it is very interesting to analyze the reactions both inside and outside the US with this announcement. American public institutions, such as the Pentagon itself and NASA, have issued reports through the years where it is clear that they validate the urgency of seriously tackling climate change. The diplomacy of this country has made it very clear that the Paris Agreement represents a global pact with so many adherents and economic and social implications that it is absurd that the US is not an active part - and leader - of it. Important states such as California, or corporations as big as Apple, Google, ExxonMobil and Chevron have ratified their commitment to implement the Paris Agreement and achieve compliance with the NDC submitted by the US, even without the support of the national government. They ensure that their domestic and global competitiveness depends on assuming the context of climate change.

In the specific case of the state of California, which alone represents the sixth largest economy in the world and one of the main emitters of polluting gases in the country, it has committed to lowering emission levels by 40% compared to 1990, for which it must have 50% renewable energy by 2030. It has also established a new carbon market to reduce emissions through the sale of permits. All this has infected various towns and cities in the USA in frank divergence with the position of their Government (Aizen, 2017, pp.51-52).

This support for the Paris Agreement is explained by the fact that it is a treaty based on voluntary commitments in which no State can force another to achieve gas reduction goals, but rather each country establishes its own objectives or goals (national contributions). While this may be a matter of criticism when viewed as a weakness, it is also a strength of the agreement that has also cost a lot to achieve. For China, for example, it has meant the decision to close 4,300 mines and reduce coal production in the order of 700 million tons by 2019, and it has also meant canceling 100 thermal power plants that already had approval for construction. For its part, India, will not sell vehicles that have combustion engines in its territory as from 2030- The same measure has been adopted by Great Britain and France for the year 2040 (Aizen, 2017, pp.46, 50-51).

However, Trump's measures are not limited to disregarding the international commitments assumed in the environmental field, but include a set of internal decisions that imply abandonment of Barak Obama's environmental and energy policies.

Indeed, Trump's energy strategy embodied in the *America First Energy Plan* and the *Executive Order on Promoting Energy Independence and Economic Growth* is based on the use of all energy sources mainly of national origin -without taking into account whether these emit greenhouse effect gases-, with the central objective of guaranteeing US energy security. In this sense, the search for clean en-



ergies, as established in Obama's policy, is left aside; this is clearly established when ordering the revision and subsequent revocation of the *Clean Power Plan* (Lázaro, 2018, January 17)<sup>43</sup>, aimed at reducing emissions in the electricity industry by requiring federal states to reduce CO2 from gas and coal plants by 32% based on 2005 figures by 2030 (Escribano, 2018, January 11).

As if this were not enough, the US Congress is dictating rules in the same sense. Thus, the *Energy Independence Act* was passed, which annulled the legislation that prohibited the dumping of waste from coal mining in waters near mining operations (Solano, 2017). An unsuccessful attempt in this same sector, thanks to the opposition of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in January 2018, was the request of the Department of Energy to establish a compensation model (subsidy) to nuclear and coal plants for their capacity to store fuel and provide resilience to the network, not extending the same measure for other sources of electricity such as wind or solar (Escribano, 2018, January 11). Likewise, the Department of Territorial Management has temporarily suspended the legislation related to leaks and burning of methane, which has a high global warming potential (Lázaro, 2018, January 17). In the same way, the US government has reversed the prohibition decreed by the Obama administration to drill in the Arctic and the Atlantic for the exploration of hydrocarbons, which will undoubtedly affect the environmental balance and the native tribes in the area (Escribano, 2018, January 11).

Additionally, in the 2017 national budget, Trump proposed a significant budget cut for research on climate change and its impacts, the elimination of weatherization assistance programs and the energy program (State Energy Program), a 31% reduction of budget and personnel for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the elimination of a NASA program that launched satellites to measure carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere, a reorientation in the objectives of various public entities linked to the subject; measures that could be in part mitigated by Congress (Lázaro, 2018, January 17; EFE, 2017, May 23).

Also in relation to the EPA, he appointed Scott Pruitt as its Director. Pruitt is one of the main climate change deniers and opponent of the Clean Power Plan who, as attorney general of Oklahoma, had sued the EPA more than a dozen times for the purpose of challenging its environmental regulations (Mieldo, 2017, p.14; Pfiffner, 2017, p.10). He has even gone so far as to prohibit the Department of Agriculture from using the expression "climate change" in its internal documents, as if this determined a different reality of things (Aizen, 2017, p.52).

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<sup>43</sup> Some critics of the *Clean Power Plan* celebrate the decision because they maintain that it would have cost 39 billion dollars a year and would have led to a double-digit increase in the price of electricity in most of the US states (Mieldo, 2017, p.10).

The whole set of measures (external and internal) that are being implemented by the US Government will negatively impact on global warming, causing greater climatic disasters.

In the specific case of the withdrawal from the Paris Agreement, this will cause a set of negative effects of different nature with differentiated impacts in world countries. Thus, in the first place, this retreat clearly jeopardizes achievement of its objectives. As is known, the next 10 years are crucial to reduce fossil fuels consumption and achieve the purpose for earth warming not to exceed 2 ° C. However, US absence makes it almost impossible to reach that goal. And, as Lazaro points out (January 17 2018):

Even if countries such as Germany, China, France and India, among others, supplement the US commitments, and assuming that all current climate commitments are met, only one third of the climate action necessary to meet the objective of limiting the average temperature increase to less than 2 ° C as compared to the pre-industrial era would be provided. Thus, Trump has only accentuated a structural insufficiency in global climate action [...].

A second negative effect is referred to the US economic contributions to the fund created by the Paris Agreement, taking into account that the superpower has been the main donor of the Global Environment Facility and that Obama promised a contribution of 3 billion dollars for the Green Climate Fund in 2014 (40% of the total fund) (Zhang et al., 2017, p.222). In fact, the new US administration has decided to terminate its participation in the latter fund - including its two sub-funds, namely the Clean Technologies Fund and the Strategic Climate Fund (EFE, 2017, May 23; Krieg and Mullery, 2017, May 23) - which is the one that should help developing countries to make the necessary technological transformation to counteract the effects of climate change. Many countries that subscribe to the Paris Agreement made their reduction pledges conditional on this aid, which will be definitively reduced<sup>44</sup> (Aizen, 2017, p.52).

This is particularly complicated for some countries in Latin America and the Caribbean such as Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua or the Dominican Republic, but also for Bolivia, Chile and Peru, since these are among the countries most affected by global warming. Thus, according to the 2018 Global Climate Risk Index, during the 1997-2016 period , the former countries were placed on the list of the 10

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<sup>44</sup> Nonetheless, there are also supporters of this measure, such as Miedo, who maintains that the US does not have to be the first contributor of the Green Fund, because although its purposes can be praiseworthy, they do not respond to specific objectives nor is there a guarantee that the fund will achieve the purposes for which it was created (2017, p. 9). This opinion is, however, inconsistent when the author recognizes, at the

most affected countries in the world by this phenomenon (Ecksten, Künzel and Häfer, 2017, p.4). ), while the latter appeared in the annual listings of this index in certain years.

Peru is a highly vulnerable country, which is demonstrated by the melting of its glaciers, the increase of avalanches and landslides, the dependence of its agriculture and industry on climatic conditions and its limited adaptive capacity. In this sense, between 2003 and 2011, climatic emergencies increased by 45%, compromising Peru's GDP by almost 8%. Moreover, in a study prepared by the Central Reserve Bank, the country is estimated to lose approximately 20% of its GDP to 2050 due to climate change and under scenarios in which the temperature will increase 2° C, while another study estimates that the economic cost in agriculture, fisheries and health might reach 510 million dollars in 2030 and 16 billion dollars in 2100 (Gutiérrez, 2014, p.111, 114-115).

A third (indirect) negative effect is that the quality of the *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* -IPCC- future reports will be compromised due to President Trump's decision to reduce funding for climate research within the United States. This Panel's research has been and is fundamental for the fight against climate change, as witnessed by the fact that the USA produced 58% of the most cited climate documents in the world in 2015, much more than any other country (Zhang et al., 2017, p.223).

A fourth negative effect for the US itself is that its departure from the Paris Agreement will undoubtedly mean a loss of competitiveness as well as leadership in the matter, as it cannot directly influence the negotiations and the direction to follow in this matter (Solano, 2017; Aizen, 2017, p.47).

Consequently, the environmental and energy policy that President Trump has been implementing will have a direct negative impact on the environment of Latin American countries and the entire world, with social and economic repercussions.

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same time, that the United States is the second CO2 emitter in the world and that its per capita emissions are the highest in the world.



## Chapter IV

# General and Distinctive Characteristics of President Trump's Foreign Policy

It is possible to establish certain general and distinctive features of the of the current US administration's foreign policy stemming from points 2 and 3 of this work. Thus:

- a) *Nationalist and partially isolationist*: As we have seen in the first part of this paper, the trend towards an isolationist foreign policy has been recurrent in US history. Therefore, we have from the most extreme isolationism raised by Washington, Jefferson and Monroe to the most moderate proposed by Richard Nixon, who at the time supported the need for US allies to defend themselves, without resorting to US aid. For his part, Jimmy Carter, George W. Bush and Barak Obama initially proposed to reduce the prominence of the United States in the world to instead deal with internal affairs (García, 2018, January 18). Beyond whether such presidents finally ended up fulfilling or not fulfilling their promises, the above reveals that "looking inward" has been a temptation of several US administrations.

This isolationism has arisen in situations of internal crisis, such as the one the US is currently experiencing, which leads a large part of the population to criticize assumption of costs of several military interventions in the world.

In this sense, the promises by the Trump candidate of "America first," "Make America great again" and "Americanism, not globalism" seemed to go in this same line (Aronskind, 2017, p.69).

However, stemming from points 2 and 3 of this work, it is clear that President Trump takes into account what happens in the world when it affects the superpower's interests. Witnesses to this is his intervention in Asia, Eurasia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Latin America itself on issues related to democracy. Besides, it is also true that Trump has disregarded global commitments, multilateral treaties and international organizations with respect to which he considers that he does not obtain benefits but only burdens. Therefore, we dare to affirm that his foreign policy is partially isolationist, since it depends on the interests at stake.

There is evident danger in the superpower's abandoning of space at a time like this in which China is occupying it and other regional powers like Rus-

sia are in the search to recover positions, not only in terms of preserving US hegemony and leadership in the world, but also for the rest of countries that share their values and principles.

Regarding the latter, there are clear signs that the rest of the world has been adapting to the change of direction in the US, not to follow its dictates but rather to continue defending the principles that inform their respective foreign policies. In this regard, we have the TPP-11, the Paris Agreement with 192 member countries, the resolution of the UN General Assembly voted favorably by 128 countries on Jerusalem, the search for Europe of greater security autonomy, direct negotiations between South Korea and North Korea, among many other examples, which only show that “the world goes on” (García, 2018, January 18).

From all of the foregoing, it is also clear that President Trump’s foreign policy is ultra nationalist in that it is willing to abandon spaces and sacrifice principles, commitments, pledges and global interests, if it believes that it favors the United States.

- b) *Prone to Security*: Also, Trump’s management has been characterized by focusing different areas in his foreign policy from the angle of security, as did his predecessor George W. Bush after the September 11 2001 attacks; proof of this is that his National Security Strategy includes issues such as environment, migration, free trade agreements, as a part of it, among others.

This tendency to “secure” everything firstly prevents the issues from being analyzed in an integral way, leading to a dangerous reductionism. Secondly, by linking all issues to US security, the participation of the entities in charge of this is prioritized over those of the State Department, which should be the main actor. Thirdly, the partner States have reduced their margin of action for fear of affecting the superpower’s supposed vital interests and falling into the list of countries that are opposed to it. Fourth, the security trend necessarily leads to strengthening of agencies in charge of defense and security. This is very clearly stated in the National Security Strategy where it is pointed out that the US military strengthening is a key element to guarantee US supremacy and defend its interests.

A sign of the importance that President Trump assigns to security issues over any other issue is the increase in the defense budget for 2018 and 2019. Thus, for 2018, he requested a 10% increase, that is, 54 billion dollars more than the previous year, setting the largest budget since the Reagan administration (La Jornada, 2017, March 17); while he proposed a 13% in-

crease for 2019 as compared to the previous year, that is, a total budget of 686 billion dollars (La Vanguardia Newsroom, 2018, February 12).

Linked to this is the fact that military action decisions are adopted more quickly and with less controls by the White House or the State Department. This has been evidenced, for example, with the launching of the so-called "mother of all bombs" in Afghanistan and with the increase of air strikes in Yemen and Somalia; and even more so in military actions against terrorism (García, 2018, January 18).

Notwithstanding the foregoing, it must be recognized that the checks and balances in the US have been key to contain the new president's discretion and prevent implementation of some extreme promises made in the election campaign. Congress is a case in point, since it has managed to stop the multiple presidential attempts to repeal the public health system called "Obamacare" (Buchieri and Mancha, 2018, p.8).

- c) *Not institutionalist*: US foreign policy, as it happens with the rest of the countries, is directed by the President of the Republic as well as by the Department of State.

However, since the beginning of his term in office, President Trump has practically left aside this fundamental agency of the State, in many cases directing foreign policy with the support of White House officials.<sup>45</sup>

This presidential attitude of a lack of interest in the State Department is evidenced when more than half of the positions in this body that required confirmation from the Senate had no candidate until early 2018. Besides, 21% of the candidates had been confirmed and 24% expected confirmation. Not appointing an ambassador to South Korea or an assistant secretary for East Asia and Pacific Affairs (to date, Susan Thornton is Interim Assistant Secretary of State), as well as new ambassadors in Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey should be noted. The same situation occurs with the Secretary of State for the Control of Arms and International Security and with representatives to the OAS, ASEAN, EU, OECD, OSCE, among others. As if this were not enough, more than a hundred senior officials have left the State Department, and positions for career diplomats have decreased by 60%. All this, despite the difficulties that the United States faces in foreign policy matters throughout the world (García, 2018, January 18).

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<sup>45</sup> In its third pillar of national interests to protect called *Preserve Peace Through Force*, the new US National Security Strategy (NSS) points out the need to improve US diplomacy, arguing in favor of a competitive diplomacy that improves its capabilities and defends US interests abroad (President of the United States of America, 2017, p.33).

Another sign that indicates the little importance that Trump attributes to the State Department was his proposal to cut its budget by 28.7% in 2018, that is, go from 52.8 billion dollars to 37.6 billion dollars, of which 25.3 billion would be aimed at foreign aid programs (Judge, 2017, March 16; EFE, 2017, May 23). While this cut was basically disregarded by Congress when approving the budget, Trump has insisted on his initiative. In effect, in its budget proposal for 2019 the president proposes an even bigger cut than last year, reaching 32%, which has hit the morale of the officials that make up this body (La Vanguardia Newsroom, 2018, February 12; De Luce and Gramer, 2018, February 12; Washington Post Staff, 2018, February 16).

The last presidential act that confirms President Trump's low esteem for the State Department was the dismissal of Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, dedicated largely to serve as a counterweight and to moderate the presidential speech to the effects of exercising damage control, appointing Mike Pompeo, at that time director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), to replace him. In this way it was confirmed that security involves foreign policy, for Trump.

- d) *With a low commitment to multilateralism and cooperation:* The low commitment of the current US foreign policy with international organizations and multilateral agreements of which this power is a part is connected with the previous point. Somehow, Trump considers this system to be decadent, complex and not aligned with the superpower's interests, which is why he prefers to act on his own, that is, to directly negotiate with his counterparts since he knows that he will obtain better results in this way (Zaldívar, 2017, October).

While President Trump has appealed to multilateralism on certain occasions -for example to the United Nations Security Council to put pressure on China to impose sanctions on North Korea, the World Trade Organization to impose certain trade restrictions on the Asian giant or the Organization of American States to pronounce against the Venezuela dictatorship- he has also opted to withdraw from international organizations or from such bodies when he considered that this favored some US interest. The same goes for multilateral treaties such as the TPP or the Paris Agreement. The use of unilateral measures or threats of applying them to settle disputes are signs that he does not agree with institutional dispute settlement schemes. As Steinberg points out (March 6 2018) about the trade war started by Trump:

Until now (and since the Second World War), taking good note of how destructive economic conflicts have been throughout history, the international community had chosen to try to resolve trade confrontations by adopting a set of rules im-



bricated in the WTO, formerly the GATT. At international level, WTO agreements (along with many others) have served to civilize us and bury our low passions, letting the legitimacy of international law to replace the law of the strongest.

Another indicator of the aforementioned is the reduction of its contributions to multilateral organizations. In the same style as Ronald Reagan -who, having barely assumed power, reduced US contributions to international development banks by 25% (Pastor, 1986a, p.37)- President Trump, proposed a cut in the contribution of his country to international organizations from 3.26 billion dollars to 2.19 billion dollars for the 2019 budget. More specifically, Trump has proposed that the US contribution to the United Nations decrease from 593.26 billion dollars to 442.94 billion dollars, a cut that reaches all the agencies in this organization. The amount allocated to peacekeeping operations would be reduced from 1.90 billion dollars to 1.19 billion dollars; the proposal even seeks to close the US Institute for Peace, an independent federal institute created during the Reagan administration to promote peace and stability throughout the world (Konyndyk, 2017, May 31). It must be taken into account that US funds They funded 11 peace operations around the world as well as a UN support office in Somalia (Leon Goldberg, M., 2018, February 13). For its part, the World Health Organization would suffer a reduction of 50% as the contribution would be reduced from 111.40 billion dollars to 58.176 million dollars (La Vanguardia Newsroom, 2018, February 12). In the case of UNICEF, where the US had been annually contributing 330 million dollars for vaccine programs to fight diseases such as polio or measles, President Trump has proposed to eliminate such contribution (Leon Goldberg, 2018, February 13).

The Trump administration even projects measures against international entities to which it does not belong. In this sense, the USA has announced through John Bolton -White House National Security Advisor- that if the International Criminal Court, to which the US is not a part, continues to investigate US soldiers and intelligence personnel about their performance in Afghanistan, the USA will prohibit judges and prosecutors to enter the United States, will prosecute them before the US courts or will impose sanctions on funds they may have in the US financial system, a measure that would be extended to any State or company that collaborates with the court (Guimón, 2018, September 11).

Finally, it should be noted that, for the Trump administration, international cooperation is not a useful tool that contributes to its interests and aims as a superpower, not understanding that cooperation is and will be a soft power instrument to influence globally as well as a mechanism of solidarity. This explains the decision of the White House to reduce US cooperation to Latin

American and Caribbean countries, as well as to the rest of the developing countries.

- e) *Selectively protectionist*: One of the pillars of US foreign policy towards the world has been the defense and promotion of free trade based on a multilateral trade order, where openness and competitiveness were its core characteristics.

However, President Trump has shown a turnaround in this policy, attacking free trade, promoting protectionist and mercantilist measures, not only inside the United States. but also and mainly outside. It is not generalized but rather selective protectionism in that it only projects to those countries that Trump considers have taken advantage of the United States through trade agreements that had been badly negotiated and where US interests had not been protected. His main argument to support this perspective is the existence of a trade deficit in some trade agreements signed by that country, such as the one with China, where there is a 375-billion-dollar deficit, or with the European Union, 153-billion-dollar deficit<sup>46</sup>.

Such argument has no economic support. Thus, several studies show that the US has greatly benefited from the free trade system that it has always promoted and that trade agreements have been favorable for its citizens, especially those with medium and low incomes. On this last point, we have the USITC 2016 Report, as well as research by the Peterson Institute for International Economics that argue that the US economy obtained profits of more than two trillion dollars between 1950 and 2016, thanks to international trade, that is, 11% of the country's GDP (USITC, 2016, pp.17-23, Steinberg, 2018, January 15). Additionally, Trump claims that China has taken factories away from the USA, when in fact the US corporations, depending on their interests, were the ones that freely decided to move their plants abroad to hire cheaper labor and get more profits; that is, they made a rational economic decision, typical of the free market system (Aronskind, 2017, pp.69 and 71).

Trump's policy then implies a questioning of economic theory that the US itself has built since 1945, which includes economic freedom, free trade agreements and the international division of labor, doing so with non-technical but rather political populist arguments.

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<sup>46</sup> The US National Security Strategy incorporates the reduction of trade deficits, the elimination of unfair trade practices and the conclusion of fair bilateral treaties within the second pillar of national interests to protect called *Promoting American Prosperity* (President of the United States of America, 2017, pp.19-20).

- f) *Frontal and informal*: Another change that can also be highlighted in US foreign policy is that it is expressed by the president through frontal and informal communication.

On the first issue, indeed, Donald Trump not only uses a frontal, direct and unconventional language, but in many cases appeals to adjectives, to disparaging and even to insulting, as if he needed that to back up his ideas or approaches. For example, he has called Kim Jong-Unt -he president of North Korea- "fat", "dwarf", "rocket man". Latin American migrants, particularly Mexicans, have been described as "criminals".

But perhaps the most salient is the use of threats to achieve its purposes. Some analysts like Tzili call it business diplomacy (2018, p.424). Thus, he threatened to have North Korea disappear in order to achieve a negotiation aimed at denuclearizing the peninsula; he threatened the European Union with abandoning NATO if its members did not raise their maintenance contributions; he threatened Mexico to leave NAFTA to obtain its renegotiation, among many other cases. Although he is not the first American president to use this type of language, the levels reached by Trump have never been seen before. This was the case, for example, of Ronald Reagan, who "used a virulent language to undermine the legitimacy of his adversaries [communist beasts] and mobilize his supporters" (Pastor, 1986a, p.35).

But that is not all. To confrontational language, Trump adds informal communication mechanisms. Indeed, the US president resorts to what has been called "diplomacy via Twitter," something unprecedented in the management of American public affairs (García, 2018, January 18; Meneses, Martín del Campo and Rueda-Zárata, 2018)<sup>47</sup>.

The use of this informal and unconventional mechanism of communication in foreign policy has generated numerous and acute problems with countries such as North Korea, but also with former allies such as Great Britain, Germany or Mexico. While the vast majority of ideas and approaches pointed out by Trump via Twitter have not had a correlate in reality, they have also caused unrest in various parts of the world, forcing US officials to permanently interpret the president's words in order to reduce tension, as

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<sup>47</sup> The first political use of Twitter in the USA had occurred in Barak Obama's election campaign in 2008, because Twitter has two fundamental characteristics: "the speed of information management and the colossal amount of people who are accessed" (Márquez-Domínguez, López-López and Estévez Arias, 2017, p.1). However, as president, Obama did not use Twitter to formulate his foreign policy, but to express opinions or support initiatives.

they did, for example, with European allies in relation to Trump's statement about the suspension of payment of his contribution to NATO or with South Korea, after he announced the termination of the trade agreement with that country.

As García states (2018, January 18):

US presidents' words have always been a currency of great value to the country. They have been instrumental in reassuring allies, in informing the domestic public and in warning and persuading enemies. Trump has devalued this currency. Even his own chief of staff, John Kelly, has advised the world to ignore his tweets.

An important point to keep in mind is that New York federal judge Naomi Reice Buchwald has rated Donald Trump's Twitter account as a public forum controlled by the government. This is because, although this account was created personally by Trump in 2009, he has continued to use it as president to make a number of official announcements, but it is also managed by Daniel Scavino, his assistant and Social Media Director of the White House. Besides, the Office of National Archives and Document Administration has described Trump's tweets as official public records (Calderón, 2018, May 28).

- g) *Contradictory and unpredictable*: Finally, open contradictions in his management and conduct are also distinctive elements in Trump's foreign policy. Thus, he seeks to contain China but leaves the TPP aside, he seeks to improve his country's international position but weakens the State Department, he proposes to rescue American values but at the same time abandons and attacks them at the international level, among others. This behavior breaks the predictability of his foreign policy and general trust in the entire world, causing instability and bewilderment (García, 2018, January 18). In Tovar's words:

The most opposite example to the model of doctrine as a stable set of ideas that serves as a guide to the statesman would be Trump's "antidoctrines;" not only because it contains ambiguities -which also happened in the Obama presidency-, but because of its continuous variations and contradictions, which make foreign policy unpredictable. This is influenced by the dysfunctional decision-making process, where Trump's own inexperience adds to the conflict between his inner circle and the establishment of Washington officials and experts. All this has led to a clear increase in tensions with other international actors, who must confront a greater degree of uncertainty when it comes to predicting and interpreting US intentions. (Tovar, 2017, pp.196-197).

This lack of predictability and reliability has particularly affected US relations with its traditional and main partners, by projecting the “image of an unreliable ally” (Flores, 2018, January 19).

The characteristics of President Trump's foreign policy mentioned above are undoubtedly complex and difficult for the rest of the world to assimilate. Optimists may even argue that at the end of his term the US will be able to return to its traditional guidelines and formats; however, as it happened at the end of President George W. Bush's term, there will be consequences for the superpower's image and prestige. In Ossorio's words (2018, January 15): “Donald Trump has an expiration date but his particular diplomacy will outlast him and the US brand as guarantor of the world order will suffer after his presidency.”

Meanwhile, what do we think the response should be to what has been described? Well, what has been stated shows that it is not possible to assume a single strategy, given the diversity of policies established by the Trump administration according to each country; that is, differentiated strategies to different realities.

However, we consider, like Lowenthal, that in general terms it is very important to avoid exaggerated or excessive reactions (Lowenthal, 2017). We should not fall into the game of confrontational rhetoric, but rather seek channels of understanding and dialogue.

In this regard, maintaining open channels of permanent dialogue with US institutions. like the Department of State, the White House or Congress seems to be the most advisable, because they have shown some margin of capacity to control and eventually correct presidential excesses. Likewise, it is important to emphasize coincidences with the superpower and matters that are beneficial for both parties. If this is complemented by a diversified foreign policy, not only can effective damage control, but even a constructive link be achieved.



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