

The Case of the Americas (Mapping Report)

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I. Introduction

The *Americas* is a challenging concept with regions having very different security agendas, the presence of the big power in the world (the United States) and one of the most powerful emerging ones (Brazil). Security in the Americas has been then characterized by a complex and not always coherent set of mechanisms, institutions, and agreements.

With a population of almost 900 million inhabitants, the economic, political and cultural differences among countries are intense. The Hemisphere hosts 35 countries and may be divided into four regions: North America (Canada and the US), Central America (Mexico and Central American countries), the Caribbean, and the Southern Cone. But even this subdivision could be discussed: Mexico could be also placed in the North American region regarding its linkage with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) or the US North Command. The Dominican Republic could be placed even as a Latin American country due to its culture and political system or as a Caribbean country due to its geographical positions and its presence in CARICOM; Cuba could be quoted as a Caribbean country if looking into geographical divisions. In the same way, a general subdivision could be done between English speaking countries (North America and Caribbean) and the Spanish speaking ones, usually referred to as “Latin America”.

The economic factor is also a very diverse one. Canada and the US aggregates 73% of the GDP of the Hemisphere, while in Latin Americas countries the GDP internal division is characterized by a deep gap in the economic share inside populations being one of the most unequal regions in the world.

For years, the American continent has been immersed in a process whose ultimate goal is cooperation and coexistence in a same geographic space--an objective leveraged by the Summit of the Americas. Other presidential and ministerial-level summits also seek – through multilateralism – to lead the region towards its insertion into the global society. All these forums claim a common thing: the need to reaffirm democratic processes and to produce significant improvements to the economic well-being of American people, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean.

On the other hand, in recent times, it is a resurgence of cultural and historical factors that impact over the conceptions of democracy that today are not similar in the Hemisphere. Liberal democracy has been replaced in some countries by the conception of multicultural democracy. In Bolivia and Ecuador, the recognition of a population largely neglected and oppressed from the periods up to independence (the indigenist people, the *pueblos originarios*) has impacted on the organization of the State and the establishment of the concept of *plurinacionalidad* (multiple Nationality). This has not spilled over security institutions yet, but it’s certainly one challenge for the future.

The co-existence of very different political agendas has marked the life of hemispheric institutions, and its potential for development. Northern political influences in different historical periods, and the internal dynamics of political systems of the so-called Latin America, on the other hand, have dominated the conduct of civil-military factor and influenced in the historical development. Also, the scarce institutionalization, changes in political regimes and the difficulties of sustaining democracy have generated in most of the Hemisphere a political culture more tied to the State than to the public. On issues such as security (including defense and public security) this, however, is more evident, and the action and perspectives of the state still dominate the scene.

These factors explain and influence the conceptions of security, and most importantly, in the possibilities of development of a conception from below.

This paper looks into the institutional and political framework of security in the Hemisphere and the dynamics of different forces in place: the Hemisphere along with the regions, the institutions along with political agreements, and the State along with civil society.

II. Regional Security Institutions and Mechanisms

II.1. The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American System

The American system is two-dimensional and complex. It is complex in the sense that throughout its creation, it has been transformed and conditioned by internal and external actors and events which denotes the adaptive capacity of the system.

The dimensional aspect is reflected in two points: the first is the institutionalization of the system through the creation of the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1948. The other point is the influence that the great powers generated in the region. This influence in this case study may be appointed to the U.S. throughout the twentieth century and to Brazil since the '90s.

The OAS was the epitome of the American system, but not the only attempt. Historians continue to debate about the origins of this complex system. Many trace the beginning to the Panama Congress convoked by Simon Bolivar in 1826 where representatives of the governments of Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and USA attended with a view to regionalism.

After this first attempt many conferences were held throughout the following years. But not until the First International American Conference¹ held in Washington from October 2, 1889 to April 19, 1890 at the invitation of United States government that the Inter-American system was founded. At that time, eighteen American states participated in the Conference where it was agreed that an International Union of American Republics should be established. At that time and up to the 1930's, Argentina used to dispute the US hegemony in the system. This integration process will continue with subsequent meetings during the first decades of the twentieth century. It was at the Ninth International American Conference (1948), in Bogotá Colombia, where the Charter of the Organization of American States was adopted. This document gave rise to the OAS. The American Treaty on Pacific Settlement (Pact of Bogotá) and the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Manhood were also signed.

The American International Conferences met at various intervals until 1970, where it was replaced by the sessions of the OAS General Assembly after the coming into force of the Protocol of Amendment to the Charter of the Organization of American States adopted in Buenos Aires in 1967.

Thus, the creation of the OAS is to institutionalize the long process of Pan American conferences that were being held throughout the century. This has not only provided a forum for discussion at a regional level but also created a stable organization that would ensure the interests of the continent.

As far as defense rests, the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace and Security in the Hemisphere meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (in 1947) began to take shape

¹ For more information see KRYZANEK, MICHAEL J. *Las estrategias políticas de los Estados Unidos en América Latina*. Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, Buenos Aires, 1987.

when in a Cold War atmosphere, the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance was adopted. The Treaty ensures the collective self-defense against a possible attack by a power from another region and decides joint actions in case of a conflict between two States Parties of the Treaty.

This document recognized the danger that many countries (especially USA) levied on the Cold War issue by transposing the international fight to the regional level.

Neither the OAS, even with their democratic virtues, would reflect a clear power struggle in the region that was brewing since the early twentieth century and intensified in the '60s and '70s. We see how the interaction of regional and international actors began to play a defining role in a separate inter-American system from the actions of the OAS.

There was a conviction in certain areas of the U.S. government that the communist bloc (which arose after the Second World War) was primarily aimed at becoming a world power and reorganize society through the expansion of Soviet communism. On this basis, the fear that pockets of communist resistance might arise in Latin American countries became prevalent.

That's why in the '60s, the National Security Doctrine was developed. This was the ideological support of undemocratic governments in Latin America as a way of exercising a political counterweight in the region in the context of the Cold War.

In that sense, this doctrine preached that the proliferation of communist ideology in Latin American countries was a threat to the national security of these nations. It was believed that a counteroffensive is necessary. By this time, the system worked in a bidirectional way: in a stable democratic organization like the OAS and in parallel through the interference of the great power in the region.

The Inter American system born after the Second World War has three basic components:

- The OAS.
- The Inter-American Defense Board (IADB).
- The Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty)

During the '90s, within the framework of the new characteristics of the international security environment, debates and perspectives arose in the Hemisphere regarding the benefits and the losses of having an Inter-American system. If the OAS remained at that time prestigious (receiving the effects of the faith in international organizations that were part of the 90's environment), some other issues related to the system did not.² The IADB and the Rio Treaty were questioned as useless and impeded of having some kind of action mainly because of

²In the case of the Inter-American Defense Board, the statute was redefined in 2006, but without fundamental changes. The process took a long time, and first it prevail the different views on the role that the Board should meet on the possible use of military force in the system. In the negotiations for the American system it certainly prevail distrust to the United States. In words of Hal Klepak, "Many of our states are deeply worried about the leadership given by the United States and are afraid of '*adonde nos quieren llevar*' when improvements to regional security arrangements are touted." KLEPAK, HAROLD "*If it's broke, don't fix it*": *The Context for Practical Possibilities for Reform of the Inter-American Security Architecture*" Lecture presented at the 2004 Conference of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA). Las Vegas, October 2004. Available in <http://lasainternational.pitt.edu>.

some of their original “sins”: the incontestable presence of the US, the imbalance between that presence and other countries’ power, and – in the case of IADB – the linkage with military dictatorships and the dissemination of national security doctrine that fed every dictator in Latin America from the 50’s onwards.

At the hemispheric level (which predates the so-called American system), the states have tried and/or negotiated multilaterally, in recent years, the reformulation of security relations. The main actors to highlight within the structure of the OAS are:

- The Committee on Hemispheric Security.
- The Secretariat for Multidimensional Security.

In a subordinate level, the IADB’s purpose, according to the new statutory rules, is “to provide the OAS and its member states with technical and educational advice and consultancy services on matters related to military and defense issues in the Hemisphere in order to contribute to the fulfillment of the OAS Charter”.³ The reform of the Statute of the IADB took years, and the positions were different, especially between the U.S. and Canada (which sought to give a role to the body) and other countries such as the ones from the Southern Cone, who resisted to provide the body with an operational character: the mere shadow of a body seen as acting military closer to the OAS political bodies caused and causes chills in the corridors of the ministries of defense and foreign ministries of many countries in Latin America. The reform took years to accept it as an organ of the OAS only for consultation was a compromise solution that, until now, does not completely conform any party and results in passing the issue meeting after meeting. For example, in the last General Assembly of the OAS a resolution on the IADB passed inviting “member states to consider and propose recommendations to the CSH before December 1, 2010, for further strengthening of the IADB and its capability to advise OAS member states and other appropriate OAS organs and entities in accordance with its statutes.”⁴

The intense action of governments in to security and defense has developed most clearly in three spheres: the bilateral, the hemispheric and the one regarding the Ministers of Defense and Ministers of Public Security of the continent. From all of them, different concepts and political formulations have been derived and modified the previous strategic environment, and though briefly, have to be highlighted:

a) The multidimensionality of security:

“Our new concept of security in the Hemisphere is multidimensional in scope, includes traditional and new threats, concerns, and other challenges to the security of the states of the Hemisphere, incorporates the priorities of each state, contributes to the consolidation of peace, integral development, and social justice, and is based on democratic values, respect for and promotion and defense of human rights, solidarity, cooperation, and respect for national sovereignty.”⁵

³ Statutes of the Inter-American Defense Board, Chapter I. Article 2.

⁴ ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS). FORTIETH REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. *Support for the Activities of the Inter-American Defense Board*. AG/doc.5063/10. Lima, June 8, 2010, p. 15.

⁵ OAS. SPECIAL CONFERENCE ON SECURITY. *Declaration on Security in the Americas*. OAS/Ser.K/XXXVIII CES/DEC.1/03 rev. 1, Mexico DF, October 28, 2003, II.2.

The issue of multidimensionality of security is closely related with a historic discussion in the Hemisphere after the end of the Cold War. During the military dictatorships, the so-called National Security Doctrine ruled in Latin America. The doctrine basically proposed that national security was a responsibility of defense institutions, which at that time were imbued with the armed forces and allowed them to even take control of the political system. The effects of that national security doctrine, after the end of dictatorships, were devastating for any work based on the wording of “national security” in the region, as for today. This resulted in a political differentiation still in force, which separates the design of the defense of that from internal security. Southern Cone countries, mainly since the 90s claimed the need to separate one field from the other, in order to prevent internal security issues (such as organized crime and terrorism), fell under the orbit of the task of the Armed Forces. The years of dictatorship, the dead, and human rights violations, maintained this posture. For example, the human security concept was not real rooted in the Hemisphere, mainly due to confusion generated by its amplitude.

Nevertheless, the necessity to provide answers to the new frameworks and the intense labor of the OAS resulted to an agreement to discuss the problems of security between all the countries. It was on the 32nd Regular Session of the General Assembly held in Bridgetown, Barbados that the Heads of Delegations of the member countries recognized the multidimensional approach to hemispheric security by proclaiming that "the threats, concerns and other challenges to hemispheric security are of diverse nature and multidimensional scope, and that the traditional concept and approach must be expanded to encompass new and non-traditional threats, including political, economic, social, and environmental health."⁶

This was the result of a previous process that can be traced since 1992 when the Committee on Hemispheric Security was given a Permanent character within the OAS with a mandate to study and analyze these new threats and what might be the most appropriate mechanisms for cooperation to address them. From there arose "new threats", which are also called "non-traditional threats" or "non-state threats" that sum up to a multidimensional approach to hemispheric security.

In October 2003, the Hemisphere gathered in Mexico City for the celebration of the *Special Conference on Security*. Basically, the multidimensionality of the security means that it is composed of multiple dimensions, as many as the protection of people and the state may need. Part of the assumption is that security is a human necessity of complex features; the previous emphasis on the national security is translated, looking its meeting with the security of the people.⁷

After the Conference, the *Committee on Hemispheric Security* not only took more relevance, but also more challenges. The Committee actively worked for the inclusion of civil society perspectives and voices. From that Conference, a new institutional structure, the *Secretariat*

⁶ OAS. FORTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. *Declaration of Bridgtown. The Multidimensional Approach to Hemispheric Security*. AG/dec.27 XXXII-O/02. Bridgetown, June 4, 2002.

⁷ “The security threats, concerns, and other challenges in the hemispheric context are of diverse nature and multidimensional scope, and the traditional concept and approach must be expanded to encompass new and nontraditional threats, which include political, economic, social, health, and environmental aspects”. “(...) the basis and purpose of security is the protection of human beings. Security is strengthened when we deepen its human dimension.” OAS. SPECIAL CONFERENCE ON SECURITY. *Declaration on Security in the Americas. Op. Cit, i) and 4e*).

for Multidimensional Security, was created. This Secretariat was established in 2005, and is composed of three main branches:

- The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), which preexisted since 1986 working with countries on drugs control.
- The Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE), also preexisting since 1999 but now revitalized, taking special care on showing an Hemisphere that was neither willing nor allowing the development of that kind of threat. The issue was probably the most relevant one for the US, but also for the others countries that didn't want to have another source of discomfort with the US; and
- The Department of Public Security, which is in charge of activities to improve the study, action and coordination to combat issues like criminal gangs, organized crime, and the Meetings of Ministers of Public Security.

b) Confidence Building and Pacific Settlement of Disputes:

The confronted vision between the different countries for border disputes, subject to be resolved by military force, has been extensively analyzed in the Hemisphere.⁸ The democratic convergence, the increment in the commercial exchange and the processes of economic integration prevailed over the traditional hypothesis of confrontation and promoted visions more closely to the cooperation. It has not been a small factor, in this aspect, the influence of the military exchanges, the participation in peacekeeping operations, and the combined exercises, with its corresponding knowledge and modification of the perception over the other. Still when the disputes and precautions are still aware (the most recently are the ones maintained by Chile and its neighbors Peru and Bolivia, and between Equator, Colombia and Venezuela) the tendency for a peaceful resolution of conflicts has increased, and so did the deactivation of the previous preponderance of geopolitical decisions over foreign policy.

In the international and regional framework, the accession of the countries of the region to compliance regimes and binding treaties has removed the possibility of using weapons of mass destruction. The Tlatelolco Treaty, the adherence to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention, among others, have distinguished in America (and particularly in South America) a more striking peace when compared with other regions. The agreements that have promoted governments were taken to reaffirm the confidence building process, and the intention of transparency is observed, for example, in the promoting publication of Defense White Papers. An ongoing activity for the consideration of confidence-building measures (including the conduct of Meetings of Experts), centered on the Committee on Hemispheric Security, has been developed in the OAS.

c) The Constitutional subordination of all the institutions of the State to the legally constituted civil authority and the respect for the rule of law:

The pattern of subordination to civilian authority is more than a descriptive element of the situation in the region. The declaration of democracy as a fundamental value and as a

⁸ See ROJAS ARAVENA, FRANCISCO (ed.). *Balance Estratégico y Medidas de Confianza Mutua*. FLACSO Chile, Santiago, 1996

contribution to peace and stability in the hemisphere is one of the outstanding points of the progress in the Hemisphere.

The adoption of these principles was also part of a gradual process. As part of this process, the generation of specific state institutions was encouraged for the management of defense and civilian leadership, such as the Ministries of Defense. The pressure for the participation of the Conference of Ministers encouraged the creation of ministries in countries where none existed (eg in Brazil). The education and formation of civilians and the incorporation of the academy and civil society also served as important points of the new trends that operated from outside to the interior of the political system.

In the context of processes such as the Summits of the Americas, and the diplomacy exercised within the OAS, the region passed in 2001, the Inter-American Democratic Charter, thereby generating not only a proposition but a prevention system to possible risks of rupture of the democratic order.⁹ Democracy is a right to defend: “The peoples of the Americas have a right to democracy and their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it.”

II.2. The Conference of Ministers of Defence of the Americas (CDMA)

This Hemispheric Conference was born in 1995 as a result of the Miami Summit (then Summit of the Americas) and, as an initiative of the United States, was first held in Williamsburg, USA. At its very beginning and sustained by more than a decade of democratic regimes in the Hemisphere, a series of principles were set, which are known as the “Williamsburg Principles”:

- The strong linkage between democracy and security.
- The role of the armed forces as a fundamental piece in the defense of the State’s interests.
- The subordination of the armed forces to civilian, democratic control.
- The needs for confidence building, including transparency and exchange of information between countries.
- The promotion of further cooperation in peace keeping operations.

The Conference was born as a tool to sustain and promote an active role for the Ministries of Defense in the new democratic arena (and specially, for the Ministers), and the growing process of confidence building that was developing in the Americas.

Most of the countries were just trying to establish the actual role or even the existence of a political Ministry, besides the traditional structure of the three armed forces. It was meant to

⁹ OAS. GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPECIAL SESSION. *Inter-American Democratic Charter*. Lima, September 2001. Article 19: “an unconstitutional interruption of the democratic order or an unconstitutional alteration of the constitutional regime that seriously impairs the democratic order in a member state, constitutes, while it persists, an insurmountable obstacle to its government’s participation in sessions of the General Assembly, the Meeting of Consultation, the Councils of the Organization, the specialized conferences, the commissions, working groups, and other bodies of the Organization.”

provide a forum for the political guidance and management of defense, which could support further cooperation and confidence building between countries.

Its creation was also part of an interesting framework, plagued with different initiatives seeking multilateral approaches in the Americas. The *Summit of the Americas*, the *Grupo de Río*, the *Cumbres Iberoamericanas*, and the meetings of Ministers in several areas (education, justice, health, etc) were part of a major effort: to avoid the paralysis of the hemispheric system, and particularly, of the OAS, which was crushed since its very inception by the strong mistrusts about the role of the United States. Several bilateral agreements (especially between Brazil and Argentina, and Chile and Argentina) were also being part of the new confidence arena. The CMDA fits in the efforts of the OAS to push debates on a new dimension and structures for security (established in the *Santiago Commitment* in 1991, as shown by the establishment of the Hemispheric Security Committee in 1992) and within was perceived as a new US policy towards the Hemisphere.

However, it is not a decision-making forum. It is meant to support institutional building and better conditions for confidence building *inside* and *between* countries. These two dimensions were reflected in the Agenda of the first Conference:

- An external one, which would prevent the armed conflict between States: “Transparency and Confidence Building Measures” and “Defense Cooperation”.
- The internal dimension, devoted to support the concept of a democratic, civilian control of the armed forces: “Democracy and Armed Forces in the XXI Century. Education and civil-military training in democracy”.

With different names, these dimensions remained through the entire process of the CMDA. But another issue was going to appear: the security architecture in the Hemisphere, linked to the discussions on the new concept of security. The CDMA held in Santiago in 2002 declared the concept of “flexible architecture” as a way to get out of an unsolved problem: how to initiate confidence building and new defense institutions with the old structures in the Inter-American system. Since then, the CDMA process has been part of an intense debate on multidimensionality: the distinctions between defense and internal security and the role of the military in the internal security arena. The Southern Cone countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay) have been specially sensitive to this matter.

There is not much difference in the diagnosis of the security and defense problems that the region is dealing with. The debate is more related to how they would be able to deal with them, and has become stagnant. It has influences both in Quito (2004) and Managua (2006). Quito was plagued with discussions and confrontations over the difference between regions and the words to use about the so-called new threats to security. Managua avoided the debate, but at the risk of leaving an anodyne conference whose usefulness and effectiveness can be seriously put into doubt. Moreover, the risks of having players getting out of the forum, or at least underestimating it, could be high. The process is declining as two of the main principles (civilian control and confidence building) have been left almost aside because of the “security concept” differences and, nowadays, because of the political differences between some countries *vis a vis* the US foreign policy in the region.

The need for the participation of civil society was not acknowledged in this forum during its initial steps. It was only at the VI Conference (2004) that some organizations such as FLACSO Ecuador, the International Committee for the Red Cross, WOLA, and RESDAL were given the chance to attend as observers. At the VII Conference held in Managua, a by-law in looking at the possibility of organizations to participating as observers was adopted.

The Canadian Secretariat in charge of the VIII Conference took advantage of the grounds set by Managua and produced a new framework in organizing a formal meeting with experts in the Hemisphere for the first time. Two meetings were organized: a first one with FLACSO and RESDAL was held in Costa Rica at the end of 2007 and a second one, organized by the Canadian government, took place in Barbados in March 2009. During the VIII Conference (Banff, Canada) there were approximately 15 organizations participating as observers.

This active participation served as an incentive for civil society involvement in the CDMA process. The Bolivian government, who will be hosting the IX Conference by the end of 2010, provoked two meetings in preparation of the Thematic Agenda in partnership with a non-governmental organization, RESDAL. The first one gathered representatives of the academia and civil society (May 10-11, 2010), and the second one (May 17-18, 2010) brought together academics along with representatives from twenty ministries of defense in the continent. This second meeting served as a pre-preparatory meeting for governments, and its realization is an indication of the progressive involvement and consideration that defense ministries are having on civil society.

II.3. The Conference of Ministers of Public Security in the Americas (MISPA)

Key values for a democratic society such as the desire to live in peace, the strengthening of institutions and the aspiration that justice, fairness and social solidarity are not always a reality in the political and social life of American nations. When this situation occurs in consolidated democracies, we can think of gradual and even sector reforms to correct the process. But in young, poorly-consolidated and economically-impaired democracies not capable of immediately rendering benefits to the people, governance is often at stake. When the attainment of democratic values seems to be stalled at the point where political liberties are exercised, this may not be too attractive for those who fight every day for their survival. This is where a special vision emerges: that democracy associated with the fact that the market reigns over everything else may be a system that ensures inclusion only to a few -- usually corrupted-- and that violence is the only means available to outcasts in their fight for being heard. This is associated with the fact that the regular crime is economically beneficial to many and bears low costs. The gaps in criminal legislation, the different judicial criteria in approaching crimes and the small penalties lead to situations where criminals are not, in practical terms, punished for their actions. This also happens because it is believed that the State does not seem to be capable of controlling the problem.

At the hemispheric level, the OAS took the lead in creating a forum where public security issues are discussed in order to get further cooperation and coordination. The Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Public Security in the Americas (MISPA) convened for the first time in 2008 in Mexico, and a second time in Santo Domingo in 2009 which proved the

success of MISPA1. It was in Santo Domingo that ministers agreed on the need to institutionalize the process, giving the Conference a two-year basis.

The meeting looks into the problems of public security management; the prevention of crime and violence, police management and citizen; and community participation. The “Commitment to Public Security in the Americas” not only recognizes that “violence and crime negatively affect the social, economic, and political development of our societies” but also the “importance of international cooperation for improving economic and social conditions and thereby strengthening public security”.¹⁰

MISPA is based on an intensive work developed by the Department of Public Security (Secretariat of Multidimensional Security) of the OAS. The participation of civil society is active and has been very intensive under the leadership of organizations like FLACSO Chile. Prior to the First Meeting, a seminar on Criminality and Violence was celebrated in Guatemala convening major experts to discuss recommendations for the ministers. A second meeting for civil society organizations was also organized at the MISPA2, in Lima, Peru, on September 2009. 23 organizations participated and provided recommendations, including the need for limits in the participation of the military in police roles, and the promotion of training for parliamentary representatives on the public security subject.

¹⁰ OAS. FIRST MEETING OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR PUBLIC SECURITY IN THE AMERICAS. *Commitment to Public Security in the Americas*. OEA/Ser.K/XLIX. 1, MISPA/doc.7/08 rev. 4. Mexico City, Mexico, October 8, 2008.

III. The Subregions: Institutions and Agreements

The existence of elements that indicate the progress in the regional security situation does not hide a gradual process, and apparently irreversible, to the divergence of interests (and consequently of agendas), between the different sub-regional spaces or spheres. The sub-regional matter manifests under the difficulties in generating points of hemispheric consensus: the U.S. presence is not the only factor behind the breaking point at which the instruments of regional security seem to have reached, but the differences in agendas as well.

Currently, the American system and, in particular, the inter-American security system are undergoing a bifurcation between regional actors and the powers. A clear epitome of this desire for disengagement is the creation of the *Union de las Naciones de América del Sur* (UNASUR) as a source of dialogue between South American countries. It has seen how the Inter-American system is pierced by a continuous path of change and continuity. Since its inception, the mutation of the OAS has been in response to the expansion of democracy, development and growth of the members. By doing this, the organization leaves aside questions that are political in nature which are taken in advance by different groups to mark its sphere of influence within the region.

This sub-regional differentiation in security matters must certainly be related to other processes, such as alternative integration efforts, and domestic political situations. The sum of all factors that can explain it, the result speaks of South America (with Brazil's prominence role), who holds a defense agenda based on conventional threats, and promotes dialogue and negotiated positions in multilateral agencies, the Andean sub-region in which political instability prevails, that can be added to the list of major threats to drug traffickers and guerrillas. Central America, meanwhile, reveals the geographical proximity to the United States, the threats of drug trafficking, public security tied to the economic infeasibility together with social and environmental disasters. The latter coincides with the concerns of Caribbean insular states, for which a hurricane can mean their practical disappearance. The homogenization of the agendas in the context of scarce economic and political resources seems unfeasible in the region. The formula that seems to be found is the promotion of sub-regional cohesion, which then meets in a regional instance.

III.1. UNASUR and the South American Defense Council

During the last three years, the integration process of the South American countries has led to the creation in 2008 of the *UNASUR*. The Treaty of UNASUR contemplates the integration of 12 South American countries in several areas and policies, including among them security and defense issues.¹¹ UNASUR is more inclusive than other previous experiences. Special attention is set in the integration of themes like the South American identity and citizenship, promotion and strengthening of the democracy, respect for human rights and the natural environment.

In December 2008, and after a strong Brazilian initiative, the South American Defense Council (SDC) was created. The roots can be traced to 2007 and respond to a rupture of the defense policies of the second mandate of Luis Inácio Lula da Silva in comparison with his

¹¹ UNASUR. *Constitutive Treaty*. Brasilia, May 23, 2008.

first mandate, where defense issues didn't stand out too much in the agenda. Minister Nelson Jobim brought the necessity of the President of the Republic to revise the security and defense area and to attempt a new policy to project Brazil and South America in the international system.¹²

Short after Jobim's assumption, Lula and his ministries manifest the intention of elaborating a "Strategic National Plan", that covers three development axes of the Brazilian Defense: 1. Reorganization of the armed forces; 2. Reorganization of the national industry of defense; 3. Future of the compulsory military service and the national mobilization system. The Presidential Decree of September 6th, 2007 conformed a Ministerial Committee to develop a document containing the definitions and the action plans for the Defense of Brazil.¹³ The final document, called "National Strategy of Defense" or "END" in its abbreviation in Portuguese, and was approved by Lula on December 18th, 2008.

After a strong commitment of Brazilian defense diplomacy in the region, the South American Heads of State decided on December 16th 2008 in Bahia, Brazil, the creation of the CSD as an organ "of consultancy, cooperation and coordination in Defense matters".¹⁴

The Council is composed of the Ministries of Defense of the South American countries. The participation of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Relations was also set within the national delegations. It also has an Executive instance composed of the Vice Ministers of Defense. The Presidency of the Council is in charge of the Ministry of Defense of the country that holds, temporally, the Presidency of UNASUR. Up to June 2010, it does not have a Permanent Secretary, but this possibility is being discussed under a working group established during its last meeting, in Guayaquil.¹⁵

The South American Defense Council has the following general objectives:

- Consolidating South America as a zone of peace, a base for democratic stability and the integral development of our peoples and a contribution to world peace.
- Creating a South American identity in defense issues that incorporates the sub-regional and national characteristics that contribute to the strengthening of unity between Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Generating consensus in order to strengthen regional cooperation for defense issues.

Despite that, there was not much confidence in the region about the possibilities of this Council to develop, the Council has had an intense action during 2009-2010, especially under the Presidency of Ecuador. The debates regarding the agreement between the US and Colombia, which allowed that country to use Colombian military installations, seemed to be a factor that could hinder the process of the Defense Council. The action developed by Ecuador was crucial to the success and improvement of initiatives, along with other countries like Argentina, which proposed the constitution of a South American Center for Strategic Studies

¹² RIZZO DE OLIVEIRA, ELIEZER. *A Estratégia Nacional de Defesa e a Reorganização e Transformação das Forças Armadas*. Available at www.esg.br

¹³ MOREIRA, ANGELA. *Consejo Sudamericano de Defensa: Hacia una integración regional en Defensa*. RESDAL, Working Paper, 2008, p.6.

¹⁴ STATUTE OF THE UNASUR SOUTH AMERICAN COUNCIL, December 11th, Santiago, Chile

¹⁵ II Ordinary meeting of the South American Defense Council, Declaration of Guayaquil, May 6th and 7th, 2010.

that will be based in Buenos Aires. During these years, the Council has declared several specific objectives:

- To advance the analysis and discussion of shared components for a joint defense outlook.
- To promote the exchange of information and analysis on regional and international issues in order to identify risk factors and threats.
- To contribute to the articulation of joint positions in the region for multilateral defense forums.
- To strengthen the adoption of confidence building measures.
- To promote interchange and cooperation in the defense industry arena.
- To promote military training and instruction interchange, facilitate training processes between the Armed Forces and promote academic cooperation with defense study centers.
- To share experience and support humanitarian actions such as demining, prevention, mitigation and assistance to the victims of natural disasters.
- To share experiences in United Nations peacekeeping operations.
- To share Ministries of Defense and Armed Forces modernization process experiences.
- To promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the defense arena.

The Council does not suppose a conventional military alliance, but a forum to promote the dialogue between the ministries of defense of the region. The proposal is to create a mechanism of the integration that allows discussing the realities and necessities of the defense of the South American countries, reducing the conflicts and the lack of confidence and settle the bases for the future formulation of a common policy in this area.

The reception of the countries in the Hemisphere has been varied. There still remains some perception that the Council could constitute segregation from Central and North America.

III.2. MERCOSUR and the meeting of Ministers of Internal Affairs

The two terrorist attacks that took place in Argentina in 1992 (Embassy of Israel) and 1994 (AMIA), produced a change in the way security was viewed by the MERCOSUR and the Associated States, marking the beginning of greater cooperation as far as that subject is concerned.

The Meeting of Interior Ministers of MERCOSUR (*RMI*) held its first meeting in the city of Asuncion on May 30th, 1997. This level of cooperation was established as a sub-working group by decision 7/96 of December 17th, 1996 of the Common Market Council. Countries have been holding periodic meetings where they analyze the possible joint operations against drug trafficking, money laundering, terrorism, etc., especially in the *Triple Frontera* zone (tri - border where Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay confluence). Thus, in 1998 a Plan for Cooperation and Reciprocal Assistance in Regional Security was created within the MERCOSUR framework.¹⁶ This Plan mainly intends to coordinate actions and information on drug trafficking, terrorism and other crime-related activities in border zones. The strategic

¹⁶ MERCOSUR, Consejo del Mercado Común. *Plan de Cooperación y Asistencia Recíproca para la Seguridad Regional en el Mercosur*. Mercosur/CMC/DEC. N° 5/98, July 1998.

situation generated after September 2001 has impelled even more the necessity of a joint cooperation in this matter.

Its dynamics intends to bring together the Ministers of the Interior of each country every six months in the country that holds the Pro Tempore Presidency of MERCOSUR. Before each meeting technical encounters are developed where each expert working group works on its corresponding themes. The following are the various specialized working groups:

- The Technical Committee is responsible for overseeing the proper functioning of the specialized working groups to generate the rules of the Meeting of Ministers of Interior of the MERCOSUR and treatment monitoring of the decisions reached in the (MMI) at the internal level of each state.
- The Specialized Forum on Migration deals with cooperation on migration issues with the aim of facilitating the transit of persons belonging to MERCOSUR and its associated states.
- The Police Training and Coordination Center of the MERCOSUR works on training needs and / or offers by the State police forces on specific issues related to transnational crimes and those that affect security in the region, such as the case of child pornography.
- The Panel on Illicit Nuclear Material and / or radiation is aimed at controlling the flow of these materials particularly in the Tri-border area.
- The Delictual Working Group exchanges information on the types of crimes that occurred in a given period and the way they were fought in each state so as to keep an update of information on types of crimes that affect the region.
- The Working Group on Terrorism develops an exchange of information between intelligence agencies.
- The Working Group on Informatics and Communications is responsible for making support for the operation of the *SISME* (Integrated Security system of the MERCOSUR).

The effects of the Meetings of Ministers have been marked by two main factors: the alternatives for coordination between countries and the difficulties of MERCOSUR, including the tendency of some of its members to observe MERCOSUR only as an economic and commercial initiative.

III.3. Andean Community

The Andean Community of Nations (CAN) is a group formed by Bolivia, Colombia Ecuador and Peru that separated from what was the ancient Andean society. Basically, they are looking to achieve faster, more balanced and independent development, by the Andean integration, South American and Latin American.

It has several programs on security and peace: Democracy and Human Rights, Judicial and Police Cooperation, Drug Enforcement and Security and Andean Zone of Peace. In addition, the CAN signed the "Lima Commitment: Andean Charter for Peace and Security, limitation

and control of expenditure for external defense," emanated from the meeting of the Andean Council of Ministers with Foreign Ministers of Defense of the Andean Community, held in Lima (June 2002). It sought to define an Andean Common Foreign Security Policy; characterize a Peace Zone in the Andean Community, limit military spending in order to direct these resources to social investment, and deepen cooperation in the fight against terrorism and trafficking of illicit arms, among others.

At the institutional level, the CAN operate properly but at practice it presents some mistakes by failing to carry out many of the programs provided. As a matter of security and defense it refers, and in some regional integration issues, the CAN member countries have signed the treaty establishing the UNASUR. This juxtaposition of tasks between the CAN and the UNASUR result of the first organization, aiming for maximum integration, delegated several tasks to the second.

III.4. The Conference of Central American Armed Forces (CFAC)

The Conference of Central American Armed Forces (CFAC) was created in 1997 by Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, with the incorporation of the Dominican Republic in 2007. This Conference represents a major forum for security issues in Central America and has been very active since its very inception. Its creation can be framed inside the process of the Peace Accords in the region and the development of the concept of *democratic security*.¹⁷

The intention of promoting peace, freedom and development and the process of democracy that was taking place at that time in Central America were part of its basis, as well as the recognition of subordination of the armed forces to civilian authorities. The initial Agreement was signed by the Presidents themselves.

CFAC is ruled by a Superior Council composed of senior military officials from each member country. The Executive Committee is the body responsible for advising, controlling and monitoring the decisions taken by the Superior Council and is composed of the Heads of the Joint Chiefs or their equivalents from member countries, chaired by the host country. It counts with a General Secretary pro tempore which is the administrative organ of the Conference, with a two-year rotation among members. The country's armed forces headquarters is then responsible for hosting that General Pro-Tempore Secretariat.

CFAC has been working on issues like the consideration of emerging threats to the region, humanitarian support and peacekeeping operations. To that end, it has also promoted a set of confidence-building measures that includes regional military integration, the creation of a peacekeeping unit and the development of combined trainings and exercises. CFAC also developed a plan for prevention and combat of terrorism and organized crime having a strong component of training and coordinated actions.

¹⁷ For the grounds of this concept see XII CUMBRE DE PRESIDENTES. *Tratado Marco de Seguridad Democrática en Centroamérica*. San Pedro Sula, December 15, 1995.

III.5. SICA and the Commission of Police Chiefs of Central America, Mexico and Caribbean

The Central American Integration System (SICA) was born on December 13, 1991, in the framework of the XI Summit of Central American Presidents, held in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, where the Protocol of Tegucigalpa was signed which gave a new legal-political framework. This framework applies to all levels and areas of Central American integration, such as economic, social, cultural, political and ecological which allow a full view of development for Region.¹⁸

Tegucigalpa's Protocol provides that: "Central is a new model of regional security, for protection, protection and promotion of Human Rights to ensure legal certainty and to assure peaceful relations among States in the region." To achieve these goals, a legal instrument was adopted that allows the development of comprehensive aspects in the model of Democratic Security. This instrument known as the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America, signed on December 15, 1995, gave rise to the model Democratic Security and instituted at the same time the Central American Security Commission as a subsidiary body subordinate to the Presidents' Meeting and the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, with the aim of coordinating assess, monitor and develop proposals for regional security.

The Commission and the Presidents' Meetings are part of the structure of the system of defense and security of SICA. To perform a deeper analysis of the problems the commission is organized into three subcommittees:

- The Public Security Subcommittee: Responsible for the study of all these regional initiatives and projects in public safety. It is integrated by the Committee of Heads / Police of Central America and the Caribbean among others.
- The Defense Subcommittee: It deals mainly with the theme of "Regional Security", being among his follow-up: the de-mined, Reasonable Balance of Forces, the Permanent Central American Program of Action for the Promotion of Confidence-and Security; Models Military Arms Inventory, crisis management and peacekeeping, among others. It is integrated by the technical teams of the Ministries of Defense of the member countries.
- The Legal Subcommittee: Responsible for developing all the projects of the regional legal instruments of the Security Commission.

The Commission seeks to cover all the security and defense concerns of the member countries.

On the other hand, in 1991, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama created the Association of Police Chiefs of Central America, which ended in a wider Commission years later included inside the arrangements of SICA. This forum has worked extensively for cooperation, communication and exchange between police authorities.

III.6. Regional Security System (RSS)

¹⁸ For more information about this IO see <http://www.sica.int>.

The Regional Security System was created in 1982. Initiatives for further integration in the Caribbean were in place since at least the 60's. But as Dion Phillips states, "Two factors served as catalysts to revive the need for defense and regional security cooperation, namely, the coming to power of the socialist People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) of Grenada in March 1979 as well as the perception of the US of this development and its adhesions. (...) The special arrangement was the second time since World War II that the Anglophone Caribbean had adopted a coordinated and centralized approach to defense policy".¹⁹

The RSS is not a collective alliance, but a defense system seeking for coordination and cooperation. The Secretariat is located in Barbados, and other members are Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis and Grenada. The System is usually referred to as a "hybrid" organization because security forces comprise both military and police personnel, which is a characteristic of the Caribbean security structure, as not every country in the region has armed forces.

The declared function of the RSS is "to ensure the stability and well-being of Member States through mutual cooperation, in order to maximize regional security in preserving the social and economic development (...)"²⁰

The purposes and functions of the System are to promote cooperation amongst the Member States in:

- Prevention and interdiction of traffic in illegal narcotic drugs
- National emergencies
- Search and rescue
- Immigration control
- Fisheries protection
- Customs control
- Maritime policing
- Natural disasters
- Pollution control
- The prevention of smuggling
- The protection of off-shore installations and exclusive economic zones

Among the responsibilities of RSS that can be highlighted is the common approach and response to threats to security. Regarding its functioning, the system is activated if one of the members requests it. Barbados provides 40% of the budget and the rest is divided among the six other States. The most relevant interventions up to these days have been related to natural disasters. The cooperation with the US is intense, as well in all the Caribbean, especially regarding training exercises and coordination over issues like smuggling or narcotics.

III.7. The Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS - CARICOM)

¹⁹ PHILLIPS, DION. *Defense in the Anglophone Caribbean*. July 2009, Available at www.resdal.org

²⁰ Mission Statement of Regional Security System available at: www.rss.org.bb

The Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) is an institution of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) composed of 15 member States (Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad & Tobago). It started in September 2006, through the Inter-governmental Agreement created on the Twenty Seventh Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM held on July, 2006.

Indeed, its creation can be traced to the recommendations of the Task Force to approve the establishment of the management structure for the Crime and Security agenda on the conference of the Heads of government at its 26th meeting in Saint Lucia, July the previous year.

With its headquarters centered in Port of Spain at Trinidad and Tobago, IMPACS acts as the nerve centre for CARICOM Crime and Security Management Framework. It is primarily responsible for the implementation of regional anti-crime and security agenda. More precisely, IMPACS is responsible for the timely and routine administrative and technical functioning of its mandate. The Agency is headed by an Executive Director and reports to the CARICOM Council of Ministers responsible for National Security and Law Enforcement.

IMPACS is different from other organizations such as CDERA and ACCP, as it is a CARICOM agency that is directly involved in national policies. Another interesting matter is that IMPACS has non-traditional partners, such as Brazil, Colombia, France, among others.

There is now an integrated program of intelligence in the CARICOM which allows the exchange of information on criminal search and arrest, as well as, crime statistics for the Caribbean.

III.8. The Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police

This organization is composed of Commissioners of Police from 24 countries. The Association was created in 1972 and is intended to be the clearinghouse for the promotion of common policies regarding public security problems. To date, it has held 25 General Meetings, which gather the Commissioners of Police. Civil society has not had an active participation, but its presence is allowed. Cooperation from other countries like the UK or the US is also received.

The objectives are clearly targeted to the Caribbean environment in public security:

- Regional cooperation in the suppression of criminal activities in such areas as narcotics, terrorism and organized crime.
- Exchange of information in criminal investigations.
- Sharing of common services which may include training, forensic analysis and research.
- Effective management of law enforcement agencies”.

In 2009, the Association revised the mission as stated that “ACCP shall be the principal regional organization for promoting and facilitating”:

- Collaboration and cooperation in the development and implementation of policing strategies, systems and procedures;
- The professional and technical skills development of police officers.
- Proactive measures to prevent crime and improve police community relations.

III.9. The Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP)

On March 23, 2005 President Vicente Fox Quesada from Mexico together with their counterparts in the U.S. and Canada - President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Paul Martin - announced the launch of the Alliance for Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America. This new alliance is formed as a concrete commitment of the three Trustees with a regional focus on North America.²¹

Through this alliance, Mexico, United States and Canada share 2 main objectives:

- Regarding the Prosperity Agenda, to promote economic growth, competitiveness and quality of life in North America to Secure North America from external threats.
- Regarding the Security Agenda, to develop a common approach to security to protect North America, highlighting the following actions.

As for security, the Partnership looks for develop and implement a North American traveler security strategy, as well as a cargo security strategy, in order to prevent and respond to threats within North America. This includes the issues of maritime and aviation security and the development of a North American strategy for combating transnational threats such as terrorism, organized crime, illegal drugs, migrant and contraband smuggling and trafficking. It also seeks to enhance partnerships on intelligence and develop a common approach to critical infrastructure protection and response to cross-border terrorist incidents and natural disasters.

²¹ Joint Statement by President Bush, President Fox and Prime Minister Martin, March 23rd, 2005. Waco, Texas.

IV. Civil Society interacting with Regional Institutions

There are two perspectives in looking at security and defense. The first is from above, covering the decisions of governments and international organizations in response to this problem. The second is from below, taking into account the views of academia and civil society.

Within the civilian community it can be seen that many of the aforementioned organizations place great emphasis on creating a dialogue between state and society itself. It can be summarized that from Cold War's end, the concern for security and defense experienced an expansion from the State orbit to the regional and civil one.

IV. 1. Participation in OAS activities

In the formal structure of the OAS, as it is stated, the Department of International Affairs (DIA) of the Secretariat for External Relations (SER) is responsible for advising the Secretary General on all matters relating to civil society activities and strategies designed to promote broader participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) in activities related to the OAS.

Article 26 of the Charter establishes that the Organization of American States (OAS) will consult and cooperate on an ongoing basis with Member States to take into account the contributions of civil society organizations (CSOs) working in those fields. As such, the participation of Civil Society has been clearly encouraged over the last years to increase the role of CSOs in its activities. The Permanent Council approved resolution CP/RES. 759 (1217/99) "Guidelines for the participation of the Civil Society Organization in OAS activities" which defined the process of CSO involvement. In addition, it defines the activities that CSOs can take part in, creates a register of the organization within the OAS and defines the responsibilities of organizations once they are included in the OAS register system.

A clear example of the application of this resolution could be seen in Santiago de Chile, where on March 2003 a consultation meeting with representatives of CSOs and academy of Latin America and the Caribbean was held for the Special Conference on Security. That very same year on March, the permanent council of the OAS approved resolution CP/RES. 840 (1363/03) "Strategies for Increasing and Strengthening Participation by Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities" in order to promote a more active participation of CSOs and its registration process.

But it was not until the creation of the Nuevo Leon Declaration and the Special Summit of the Americas, that met in Monterrey Mexico on January 2004, that the Heads of State and government of the Hemisphere emphasized that civil society organizations should contribute to the design, implementation, and evaluation of public policies adopted by the different orders and levels of government.

Once registered, civil society organizations may participate in the activities of the OAS. Among these activities are the meetings organized for CSOs couple of days before a General

Assembly is held. The fact that meetings take place only one or two days before the main event allows the representatives of the different countries to share the debate and encounter with the official representatives. Now, on the other hand, time is a factor. The proximity of civil society encounter with the official one prevents an actual involvement in the agenda due to lack of time in distributing recommendations from CSOs since the official representatives arrive with a fixed agenda generating a kind of parallel process between CSOs and official representatives. This is the reason why many organizations decide to not participate in these forums since they do not feel an actual involvement on the matter.

Financial constraints are among the reasons preventing CSO participation. The cost of participating in this type of events, such as accommodation and transportation, may prevent many organizations from sending their representatives and as such, creates a gap between CSOs and the OAS and limits the debate. In order to prevent this and to foster the debate and participation of CSOs members, the permanent Council of the OAS approved another specific resolution to encourage the participation of Civil Society: "Specific Fund to Support the Participation of Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities and in the Summits of the American Process" (CP/RES. 864, 1413/04)). Although limited and generally with more applications than resources, this fund was instrumented as a clear sign that the OAS wanted to promote some participation.

Nevertheless, the participation of CSOs is also determined by local or internal factors. Some governments are not willing to see greater participation so they may oppose initiatives that would provide a broader framework for the participation of civil society organization in OAS by alleging that many opposition groups are masked as NGOs.

The participation of civil society in the region is going through a stage of what could be called of "high incidence" regarding possibilities the region had since the democratic transition, to a regional scenario, where the new strategic factors are taking part of the game, as the flow of the energetic and financial crisis, and it will be necessary intensified the efforts associated with diverse social organizations of the region and out of it, through the defense of principles and shared democratic values: democracy, peace and the security in the region.

It is also possible to draw some civil society recommendations submitted to the Organization of American States and the Summits of the Americas on the themes of inter-American agenda. From 2002 to 2009, civil society had a lot of recommendations on various areas.²² The main points of concern are:

- *Democracy:*

- Deepen into concepts such as decentralization and local government.
- Electoral processes and procedures: to strengthen the effective exercise of representative democracy from the commitment to the Inter-American Democratic Charter.
- The fight against corruption: continue the efforts made so far in the fight against corruption and the fight to ensure public safety, thus ensuring the stability of democracy and the possibility of employment generation.
- Promote transparency and good governance.

²² OAS. DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. *Compilation of Civil Society Recommendations 2002-2009*. Washington, 2009.

- *Hemispheric Security:*

- Creation of a mechanism for monitoring the quality of institutions in all countries of America and allow civil society to make recommendations on matters of hemispheric security.
- Promote mechanisms to follow up on the mandates of the Summits of the Americas and the OAS General Assembly.
- Increase participation and involvement of civil society in policy formulation and presentation of issues related to hemispheric security as a crucial component of conflict prevention and peace building, and as a key mechanism for preventing the securitization of the political, economic, social and environmental issues, particularly in a context of prioritization of terrorism as a major threat to the region.
- Promote the strengthening of civil management of security for the consolidation of democratic institutions and democratic governance in the region.
- Encourage the modernization of the security forces and the national policy of defense and security systems in search of greater transparency and accountability.
- Contribute to building an American record of defense expenditures.
- Promote disarmament measures to prevent violence which in turn undermines the democratic stability.

- *Strengthening democracy and multidimensional security:*

- Promote the States' prevention systems and conflict resolution with simple and effective means to strengthen the independence of the judiciary system and the effective access to it.
- Strengthen the democratic State and the rule of law by respecting the independence of the judicial system.
- Recognize the complexity of motivations and contexts of political, social, economic and cultural ways that lead to violence.
- Establish mechanisms for monitoring, auditing and accountability, as well as ensuring transparency.

Likewise, it urges the promotion of a more intense relationship between civil society organizations and the academic sector that promotes the intellectual cooperation for the incidence, in a sustainable manner. Particular energy is required to design communication strategies innovated capable of summon and generate interest of the security and defense interests among the citizens, from the impacts from the most vulnerable and excluded from our region.

IV.2. Groups working regional on security and defense

The *Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO)* headquarter in Chile has a Security and Citizenship program which addresses the problems of insecurity and crime in Latin America and the Caribbean. FLACSO has completed numerous projects that gave rise

to a large number of reports and documents on matters of violence, small and light weapons, penal institution, among others.

The program currently has three ongoing projects:

Global Consortium on Security Sector Transformation which aims to promote and strengthen the current debate and reflection on security policies.

Security Sector Reform in Latin America and the Caribbean which aims to analyze the changes in the security sector in the region.

Studies of implementation and removal of baseline data for Plans of Public Safety which tries to generate a methodology for monitoring and evaluation of community plans for public security.

Another group in the region is the *Security and Defense Network in Latin America* (RESDAL), which seeks through its programs to address issues of regional concern in security and defense, especially the strengthening of democratic institutions. Core programs are:

The Comparative Atlas on Defense which conducts a study of the capabilities of states, civil-military relations in each of the countries studied among other topics.

Gender and Armed and Security Forces which intends to promote UN resolutions in the region and foster women participation in peace operation as well as preventing violence against women during conflicts.

Parliaments and Defense which promotes training and analysis on the role of Congress.

Transparency on Budgets which works on the analysis of defense and security budgets.

At the same time,, it performs research on issues like military justice, education, and the missions of the armed forces in public security in Central America.

The *Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública* is another organization that brings together academics based on safety issues. It has two magazines on the subject and an annual publication. It is also conducting three projects steadily. The first is the annual meeting which not only brings together specialists from the academe but also people belonging to the institutional hierarchy. It has a program on training and dissemination of Brazilian police. One of its projects that stands out is the democratic governance practice and governance of the Brazilian police. It also has an updated information system on youth and violence in each of the municipalities in Brazil.

In the US, there are two centers that dedicate special programs in Latin America:

- The *Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars* which conducts studies and publications in different areas throughout the world. It has a special program on International Security Studies.
- The *Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)* which produces accurate and recognized reports on the US security policy towards the region and participates in civil society debates and meetings with southern organizations.

Another actor of civil society that stands for Central America is the *Central American Observatory on Violence (OCAVI)* whose overall objective is to contribute to human security and democratic governance in Central America, through the dissemination of knowledge to define and implement national and regional policies.

At the sub-regional level, it also can be found the Southern Cone Centre for Defence and Armed Forces that is being distributed by the team of Brazil Report "*Grupo de Estudos da Defesa e Segurança Internacional*" (GEDES). The Centre prepares and distributes weekly reports, summaries of press releases on the subject in the five member countries.

IV. 3. External Actors

The European Union (EU) had influence on the participation of civil society in Central America and the Andean Region. By being one of the main actors that has worked more with the region in the development of civil society programs. These may appoint the Association Agreement between the EU and Central America that institutionalizes what had been signed by the countries of the EU in the Florence Declaration of 1996, which seeks to consolidate the priorities of EU cooperation in the region in emphasizing the strengthening of the law, modernization of public administration, social policy, trade development and regional integration.

The EU also has a cooperation agreement with the Andean Community, which is the "Action with Civil Society for the Andean Integration (SOCICAN)," to encourage civic initiatives and good practices that contribute to regional public policy development, deepening the comprehensive integration from citizen participation.

UNDP is also involved in promoting civil society participation in defense and security. It has promoted programs for discussion of White Papers in Argentina, Honduras and Nicaragua, and programs for analysis of public security where the last Report on the situation of Central America stands.

IV.4. The Academia

The analysis of security and defense perspective from below includes not only civil society but also to the academy.

The interest in defense and security issues is also making a comeback in the regional academy. Examples of this phenomenon abound. The first and most recent is the first thematic meeting of the Ninth Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas, which brought together specialists from academia to identify issues of regional interest in this matter. Another clear example of this advance on the study and social concern in the security and defense issues is the opening of post-graduate studies that specialize in these subjects.

In the field of academic research, there are several issues that are positioned as regional discussions. We find mainly current debates on the Inter-American System, the challenges of public security, and the issue of the need for institutionalization of civilian control. Based on these issues, many authors have written and published articles showing various points of view.

As far as the Inter-American System is concerned, there are broad and deep divisions in the region: some argue that it could hardly be said that the hemispheric security system reflect a genuine one while it remains irrelevant or even silent for most of the defense and security

issues that have weight in the region like the relationship between Cuba and the United States.²³ Nevertheless, it is recognized that progress has been made on security matters, especially on the resolution of rivalry between countries.

Regarding the challenges of public security, the current analysis proposes that insecurity is one of the priorities of Latin American political debate.²⁴ Its increase is linked to the loss of public spaces, a more individualistic social behavior and a growing sense of anxiety and fear. Moreover, the institutional framework is not the best. The crisis in the criminal justice systems in the region is evidenced by low levels of legitimacy and citizens' trust, as well as the perception of corruption and inefficiency of the justice and police which accentuates the problem.

On institutionalization and civilian control, the spectrum divides into those who think that it is an issue of the past, and those that argue that there is still a long way to go (and the situation in Honduras is an example of that). According to experts like Rut Diamint, the rearrangement occurred in times of democratic transition, which made the armed forces reset their own strategies as the new democratic governments did. This implies the existence of a real military policy, i.e. the government decides on the size, shape, organization, armament and procedures of the military, according to democratic values and basic beliefs of society which is to accept the ground rules prescribed by it.²⁵ This discussion of institutional design and legal status of military force is maintained throughout the Latin American region since the transition of different governments towards democracy.

It can be seen that the academy is in a constant production work on the issues that affect the region. The topics and authors mentioned above are just some of them.

²³ KLEPAK, HAL. "A Silent Security 'system' for a Discordant Hemisphere", in *Atlas Comparativo de la Defensa en América Latina*. Buenos Aires, Ser en el 2000, 2008.

²⁴ DAMMERT, LUCIA. *Seguridad Pública en América Latina: ¿Qué pueden hacer los gobiernos locales?* Nueva Sociedad, Caracas, 2007.

²⁵ DIAMINT, RUT. *La historia sin fin: el control civil de los militares en Argentina*. Nueva Sociedad, Caracas, 2008.

V. Trans-border Interactions and Impacts: Some Examples

There is a common approach and understanding in the Hemisphere related to the existence of transnational problems and the need for coordination, dialogue, and interaction. Four specific cases can be quoted in this sense:

- The question of the TBA. Argentina-Brazil-Paraguay.
- The Mexico-USA border.
- The Central American situation on public security.
- The Colombian case with respect to Ecuador and Venezuela.

It can be seen that in each case there is a particular problem that tends to differ from the rest. But as an axial problem which crosses all cases of analysis, we can mention the drug trade and the organizations that are born in the shadow of it and the worries on the appearance of extra-legal activities such as the smuggling of people or merchandise; the presence of an informal market that it is not regulated, which allows the expansion of criminal activity and the loss of legitimacy of the state authority.

Tri-border

The central feature of the area is that it is a tri-national enclave where there exist three major urban centres, one for each state in the region.

The most important city, Foz do Iguazu (Brazil), has more than 300,000 inhabitants and is an important commercial and financial area. In the Argentina side, the city that frames the region is Puerto Iguazu, which traditionally has the lowest economic and financial movements in the area. In the Paraguayan side is the flagship city of Ciudad del Este, where at least 200,000 people live and is the focus of smuggling and organized crime in the region.

The main problem afflicting this region is smuggling where cross-border trafficking in the countries causing losses in terms of tariff revenue and trade. The border control allows a large flow of trade in weapons, illegal drugs from country to country. At the same time, the vast border and crosses increase the infinite possibility of smuggling of objects, goods and people. There had been allegations on the presence of terrorist elements in the area, but a strong cooperation on intelligence between these three countries and the US are undermining that debate.

Mexico-USA

The problematic relationship between Mexico and USA on cross-border interaction is complex and goes back to mid-twentieth century. However, with the signing of NAFTA in 1994, the problem grows. In this situation, we must add the increase in drug cartels that use the porous border between the two countries to transport their goods to USA.

Two problems are afflicting both states and their communities. The first is the issue of immigration. After 9/11. the level of control of the U.S. on Mexico has increased, leading to the construction of a wall that prevents the illegal crossing of individuals from one sector to another. Action that harms the neighboring populations at both sides of the boundaries which

live from the border activity. The second problem is drug trafficking. It not only uses the permeability and invisible border but also seizes control upon entire border towns.

Colombia-Ecuador-Venezuela.

Two highly interrelated problems appear in this region. The first is the presence of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), a guerrilla group. The second is the establishment of groups and coca plantations on the border of all countries that serve as global supplier and also feed the actions of these groups as they are often owned by those groups.

The FARC is only recognized by Colombia as a guerrilla group which has a policy against it and against drug (Plan Colombia). Meanwhile, the countries of Ecuador and Venezuela have declared no settlement of such groups in their region. The problem arises often in the permeability of the borders that allow the creation of cocaine settlements on both sides of it.

On March 2008, the Government of Colombia attacked a FARC group in the territory of Ecuador. This resulted in a diplomatic conflict that up to these days is ruling the relationships between these two countries, and also Venezuela as the country that sees the US presence behind the Colombian actions. The conflict has been managed in Presidential Summits, and nowadays, inside UNASUR.

Central America and Mexico

The case of Central America and Mexico is characterized by two related issues that reinforced themselves. The first is drug trafficking and the existence of cartels in almost all the countries in the region. The second is the emergence in the early '80s group called *Maras*, most of them in Central America. The regional community is the most affected by the emergence of these groups, and governments have resorted to the intervention of the armed forces, producing an intense debate with civil society groups and human rights defenders.

As indicated at the beginning of the paragraph, drug trafficking is a central axis that runs through each case. Each and every one of them participates in the drug process in a greater or lesser extent. In the region of Colombia-Ecuador-Venezuela and parts of southern Central America, largest quantities of cocaine are produced and are transported by the *maras* in Central America to the U.S. via the Mexican cartels. In turn, the tri-border allows the passage of the drug not only to South America but also Europe.

In 2008, and after a political agreement between Mexico and the US, the US Congress approved the so called *Merida Initiative*, a program to provide equipment and training for Mexico and –soon after- Central American countries. The objective of the Initiative is the support to law enforcement institutions but, in practice, one of the critics has been the lack of appropriate understanding on the needs of reforming institutions rather than only providing equipment. The program is a multi-year one and, in 2010, has approved over one and a half billion dollar of funds which mostly go to Mexico.