



# Shaping the Regional Security Environment In Latin America

## Special Series

**PERSPECTIVES FROM ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, AND COLOMBIA**

**Pedro Villagra Delgado  
Luis Bitencourt  
Henry Medina Uribe**

Strategic Studies Institute **SSI**



U.S. Army War College

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**Hemispheric Security:  
A Perception from the South**

*Pedro Villagra Delgado*

**Security Issues and Challenges  
to Regional Security Cooperation:  
A Brazilian Perspective**

*Luis Bitencourt*

**Ideas for Constructing a New Framework  
of Hemispheric Security**

*Henry Medina Uribe*

**July 2003**

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## FOREWORD

This is another in the Special Series of monographs derived from the March 2003 conference on "Regional Security Cooperation in the Western Hemisphere" that was cosponsored by the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College, the North-South Center of the University of Miami, and the U.S. Southern Command. This monograph, with a Preface by Ambassador Ambler Moss, includes three short, but interesting and important papers presented at the conference. Ambassador Pedro Villagra Delgado, the Coordinator for Strategic Projects in the Argentine Foreign Ministry; Dr. Luis Bittencourt, Director of the Brazil Project at the Woodrow Wilson Center and Professor at Georgetown University; and Major General Henry Medina Uribe, a former Director of the Colombian War College and an advisor to the Ministry of Defense, present distinctly differing views regarding regional security cooperation for now and into the future.

These perspectives reflect the uncertainty, confusion, and frustration of the conference. Participants generally agreed that Colombia is a paradigm of the failing state that has enormous implications for the stability, democracy, prosperity, and peace of the Western Hemisphere. However, they did not agree that the interdependent regional community should join in a cooperative effort to help a neighbor in need. Moreover, they did not agree regarding the threat, nor on a unified ends-way-means strategy that would contribute directly to achieving desired hemispheric stability objectives. This disarray demonstrates a pressing need to pursue the debate, and to develop a moral position and structural framework from which individual countries can cooperate meaningfully and cooperatively against contemporary nontraditional and nonmilitary threats to basic security and sovereignty.

The Strategic Studies Institute and the North-South Center are pleased to offer these perspectives on regional security as part of our ongoing attempt to recognize and respond to the strategic realities of the current security situation in the Western Hemisphere. This kind

of dialectical engagement is critically important to the vital long-term interests of the United States, Colombia, the region, and the entire global community.



DOUGLAS C. LOVELACE, JR.

Director

Strategic Studies Institute

## PREFACE

This monograph in our series on "Building Regional Security in the Western Hemisphere" includes three presentations that were made at the March 2003 conference in Miami. They include a high ranking Argentine diplomat, a leading Brazilian scholar, and a retired Colombian general officer. As might be expected, these individuals perceive the need for regional security cooperation from somewhat different perspectives.

Yet, despite their differences, these writers express some significant common perceptions. First, none of them offers a panacea or quick fix solution to the regional stability-security issue--or even suggests that any short-term solution is possible. That judgment is important as the United States focuses on the need to develop a realistic ends, ways, and means stability strategy to begin the implementation of a viable Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA) by the year 2005.

Second, implicitly at least, each supports the idea that even though there is no traditional military threat from external enemies, "new" threats are present that must be addressed. As an example, they agreed that the terrorist threat requires close regional coordination, and that it dictates the need to enhance multilateral cooperation. But as Ambassador Delgado points out,

We [must start] thinking of ways of joining efforts and scarce resources for the benefit of our common welfare. . . . We should not forget that the priorities of millions of Latin Americans pass through their struggle to feed themselves and their families . . . and to solve the increase in public insecurity and crime that plagues their daily lives . . . Doing so should not be incompatible to fighting terrorism at the same time.

This is a sensible and pragmatic approach.

In that connection, all three agreed that there is a lack of a common view regarding precisely "What is a threat?" and "What is security?" This is the heart of the stability problem in Latin America. These authors acknowledge that the traditional definition of security and threat is no longer completely valid. They understand that a more realistic concept includes the protection of national sovereignty

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against unconventional internal causes and attackers. They also recognize that a close linkage exists among security, development, and democracy. Nevertheless, with the exception of General Medina, they were reluctant to take a broadened definition of national security to its logical conclusion. That is, to correspondingly broaden and integrate the roles of the national security forces into an internal sovereignty protection mission. Colombians now understand that that role is what makes stability, development, and democracy possible.

Finally, all three are at least implicitly aware of the inability of individual Latin American nations to keep the Colombian crisis contained within Colombia. They acknowledged that significant spillover into Colombia's neighbors is occurring, and that it can only increase. That understanding, plus an acknowledged need to give more attention to political, economic, and social issues that have a bearing on the regional security situation, return us to the first points of this discussion. It takes us to the need for a hemispheric architecture that can deal cooperatively and effectively with the insecurity and instability threats that have meaning for us all.

The security-stability equation in Latin America is extremely volatile and dangerous. In terms of the kind of environment that is essential to the entire North American strategy for the hemisphere, that stability situation is deserving of much more attention than it has had in the recent past. If the reader has not already been thinking about these issues, this monograph is a good place to start. If the reader has been considering these problems, this monograph provides a point from which to recapitulate. The North-South Center is pleased to join with the Strategic Studies Institute in offering this contribution to better regional understanding.

AMBLER H. MOSS, JR.  
Director  
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## HEMISPHERIC SECURITY: A PERCEPTION FROM THE SOUTH

Pedro Villagra Delgado

### Introduction.

Return to democratic rule in the Southern Hemisphere since the early 1980s had many positive effects. Among them, that the principles espoused domestically by all of our societies started to be reflected in our foreign policies, particularly towards the other countries of the region. That produced a positive synergy to promote the values we shared.

Rivalries that had plagued prospects for building better relations in the continent for decades were reduced to their proper context, and our neighbors started thinking as partners. That led to a change of paradigm among the countries of the region in matters of defense and security.

Mechanisms for political coordination and for the peaceful resolution of regional crises were created. An example of such coordination on matters affecting hemispheric security was the Contadora process. In the 1990s many initiatives followed, establishing hemispheric mechanisms that included the United States, Canada, and Caribbean States. These coordinated efforts to create a better environment for all were thus truly continental.

But we live in a crisis world, both in the field of international security as well as on social and economic matters. Latin America has been badly hit by those crises. However, in matters of defense and security, we still have comparative advantages when measured against other regions of the world.

This is evident regarding the countries of the so-called Southern Cone, where the present deep socio-economic crisis can still be contrasted with the excellent relations among all countries and where a climate of peace and cooperation is the rule in matters of security and defense. Therefore, we should persist in the efforts made in the last 2 decades to build a cooperative security system which protects the values we all share.

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If we are to construct a better security climate in the Americas, we need the will and determination to achieve results. That will requires a concerted collective effort to provide for a free, prosperous, and just region. Each of its component countries will benefit immensely from the results of such effort.

If we consider the matters that most endanger security in our region, we would realize that they are not traditional or military. On the contrary, we could reasonably conclude that many of them are rooted in weak institutions. That contributes to the lack of adequate response by those areas of government which should address issues like corruption, drug-trafficking, organized crime, and poverty. Institutions such as the judiciary, police, law enforcement, and social welfare, must be strengthened in our region if we are ever to achieve those goals of economic and social development which are the best antidote to security crisis.

The security we should promote is that which furthers our best values and not only that of traditional territorial conceptions. Democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, welfare based on economic and social development, rule of law both at the national and international level, free trade, and nonproliferation, should benefit from the security environment we intend to create. Our foreign policy should also be based on those values. That is a realistic vision, as the possibility of achieving our goals will increase if the world respects, shares and promotes our own values. It is not ANY world order which will suits us, but only that where those values have their rightful place.

Our priority in matters of security and defense should continue being excellent relations with our neighbors, and we should strive to provide to our people the highest levels of economic, social, and spiritual welfare achievable in freedom.

### **Democracy and Integration.**

The two basic pillars for this paradigm change are democracy and economic and political integration. Representative democracy, by its very nature, requires transparency, debate, accountability of those in public office, rule of law, etc. All those elements contribute

to a practice of building consensus, both in the respective society and abroad in their foreign relations.

One of the dangers to stability, and therefore to security, is representative democracy at risk. In the hemisphere we have created mechanisms to act in cases where democratic institutions falter. We should develop the will and the means to use those mechanisms speedily when situations become critical. The strengthening of democracy in our hemisphere is essential for the construction of the kind of societies our peoples hope for. We should therefore strive to protect it effectively and collectively.

This benefits security and defense as the environment on these matters for any country is bettered if its neighbors are democracies. Democracies do not start wars of aggression against other democracies. It is an old axiom, but also a tested truth.

Economic integration is the other fundamental pillar upon which the climate of peace and cooperation prevailing in South America is based upon. The Southern Cone Common Market Customs Union (MERCOSUR) is made up of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, and associate members. It presupposes adherence to certain values and the Summit held in Ushuaia in 1998 established what we call "the democratic clause." This was later extended to the whole of the Americas through the Democratic Charter adopted in Lima in September 2001.

MERCOSUR changed the perception that each member had of the others to one of partnership in which gains for one benefit all. It brought economic gains in terms of increased trade and better opportunities for investment, but MERCOSUR is not limited to economic advantages. Better and deeper relations among its members in the political, institutional, cultural, and social fields were established. Security and defense also benefited. In an integration process rivalries give way to coincidental interests. Neighbors no longer seen as competitors become partners. The former rival becomes the new ally.

When neighbors are seen as potential security risks, the natural approach to security will be to establish mechanisms to provide defense against possible threats. When neighbors are seen as partners, security approaches tend to be shared concerns

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and, eventually, means. In our part of the world, we have built an environment in which we do not feel threatened by any of our neighbors, and we know we are not a threat or a security concern to any of them, either.

Coinciding interests in most fields among countries involved in an integration process do not have to erase each country's unique history and culture. Integration does not entail the elimination of national diversity which enriches us all, but it strengthens the whole while respecting the individualities of such diversity.

In the field of defense and security, the logic behind MERCOSUR led to a pattern of cooperation and dialogue which also included these matters. The former "national security paradigm" was replaced by a new "cooperative security" approach. Military institutions gradually reasserted themselves in the exercise of their specific functions in accordance with the usual practice of representative government prevailing in the Western world.

Thus, instead of thinking how we could defend ourselves from possible or assumed aggressive intentions from our neighbors, we started thinking of ways in which the future could be faced in partnership, joining efforts and scarce resources for the benefit of our common welfare.

This vision covered the whole spectrum of relations among our countries. Security and defense issues followed economic and political developments in our societies and were also included in this new conception. Democracy and transparency, as well as economic, cultural and infrastructure integration, led to the elimination of mistrust. As we have seen in Europe, integration is not possible with countries which you consider to be security risks or even potential enemies.

In the so-called Southern Cone of South America, these processes were very rapid. Any observer who may compare the situation in which we found ourselves in the 1970s with the one prevailing today, surely would be favorably surprised.

A clear example of that changed environment in the field of security and defense is the Declaration of the MERCOSUR, with Bolivia and Chile as a Zone of Peace. The signatories of this Declaration can and should project the harmony among us which

the text reflects, in actions that may contribute to peace and stability in the world through the United Nations (UN).

As an example, Argentina has established, with Brazil and Chile, a number of political mechanisms for coordination of policy on matters related to defense and security. This has led to initiatives like the Common Methodology for Measuring Defense Expenditures prepared by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on request by and with the cooperation of Argentina and Chile.

Latin America as a whole is also, by the will of all the countries of the region, an area free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). No nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons are found in our territories, and, more importantly, no reasons exist to have them.

### **New Scenarios.**

These basic tenets are not only not in contradiction with the international scene after September 11, 2001, but are today more relevant than ever. Neither the terrorist attacks nor the economic crisis has changed the fundamental values which we must defend, and we should not lose sight of that when designing a new approach on security and defense for the Americas. All countries in our hemisphere share the conviction on the need to combat international terrorism and proliferation of WMD that so much worries the world.

In the wake of September 11 attacks, most political analysis on strategic issues has concentrated on international terrorism as the main threat the world will face for the next decades. The shock and horror that those attacks produced, as well as the political and economic consequences of them, cannot be ignored. They are affecting us all in a number of ways. If this threat is to be dealt with effectively, international cooperation will be essential.

Twice in the 1990s Argentina has been the victim of international terrorism, and we have been pioneers in the promotion of mechanisms to combat both this scourge and the proliferation of WMD. On nonproliferation, we promoted, together with Brazil, initiatives which made of our region a nuclear weapons free zone,

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and it was also an Argentine initiative which led to the Mendoza Declaration on a chemical weapons free zone. The Inter-American Committee to Combat Terrorism (CICTE) was also created within the Organization of American States (OAS) by an Argentine initiative in 1998, 2 years before the terrorist attacks of 2001.

The climate of interstate cooperation prevailing in our continent and the defense of our values can only further the cause against terrorism and the international cooperation needed to successfully fight this scourge.

But this very real threat has tended to blur the existence of other risks for international stability not associated with violence, particularly on our continent, such as poverty, financial crisis, lack of development, and endemic and pandemic illnesses. These represent a daily and present risk for millions of people around the world and may contribute also to international turmoil. Facing these other dangers of a nonmilitary nature will certainly require nonmilitary answers.

Argentina yields to no one on its commitment to fight terrorism, and we are convinced that we should do our best to ensure it does not plague our continent. What we should avoid, though, is believing that terrorism is the only or most imminent threat to our countries. We should not forget those brutal attacks and should do all in our power to avoid their repetition, but we should not build our security with our sight only on international terrorism.

We should not forget that the priorities of millions of Latin Americans pass through their struggle to feed themselves and their families, to get housing, clothing, or health care, and solve the increase in public insecurity and crime that plagues their daily lives. Most of the citizens in our countries perceive these as more real and imminent threats. We must, through the right policies, cooperate to eradicate these fears. Doing so should not be incompatible to fighting terrorism at the same time.

But even if these problems have an impact on security, it is clear that they require to be addressed through social and economic responses.

## **Hemispheric Institutions.**

Political mechanisms have been created in the context of the OAS to deal with hemispheric security matters, in particular for analysing the shape the existing instruments or those which should be created to address new challenges should take.

For instance, the Committee on Hemispheric Security is the appropriate body where this debate should take place because all countries of the region are represented there at the political level, which their legitimate elected governments determine to be adequate. It has the advantage of the infrastructure of OAS, which is a formidable tool that the region should use more fully and more often.

Actions and policies which may be designed through the Committee on Hemispheric Security (CHS) could and should benefit from other OAS bodies with specific expertise and competence on matters which may be important to take into account when focusing on questions which may impact on security. As way of example: the Inter-American Human Rights Committee is ideally suited to address human rights issues; the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) to address those on drug-trafficking and drug-addictions; CICTE on matters of terrorism; the Inter-American Economic and Social Council in questions of its competence.

On hemispheric security issues, the OAS has delivered extremely useful outputs such as the Declarations of Santiago in 1995 and San Salvador in 1998 on confidence-building measures, which represents a road map on the subject. It remains valid today and should be fully implemented by all countries. In the Southern part of the continent, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile have gone way beyond the measures included in those texts, implementing confidence building measures of the third generation.

The CHS has a mandate from the Summit of the Americas and the OAS General Assembly since 1998 to identify the means of revitalise and strengthen institutions of the inter-American system related to hemispheric security. We must seize the opportunity this mandate provides to review and/or confirm the validity of the existing instruments before the new scenarios, as well as to imagine

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what else is needed.

In the committee a consensus exists on the need to recognize the close link among security, development, and democracy. Even if possibilities of interstate conflict have dramatically been reduced in our continent as a result of 2 decades of good efforts towards that goal, it remains important to reinforce mechanisms which may be used to overcome disputes and thus prevent situations from escalating.

In those endeavours, we should keep in mind that countries in our hemisphere have general common interests which can be identified and addressed jointly, but at the same time each country and region confronts different challenges of their own, which require specific recipes to solve.

We all shall have a unique opportunity to start chartering the road to the future of hemispheric security in the Inter-American Conference to be held in Mexico in May 2003. We must ensure that in whatever new designs we venture, the defense of our principles and values remain at the top of the agenda.

### **New Threats.**

In the world at large, and in the Western hemisphere in particular, the last few years have seen an increased concern with the so-called "new threats to security." The positive interstate climate previously described has contributed to the view that the continent does not face traditional threats to security and defense and should therefore focus on new ones.

But within that broad definition, phenomena of such a diverse nature as drug trafficking, organized crime, illicit traffic of small weapons, terrorism, illegal migrations, extreme poverty, environmental hazards, economic crisis, and corruption are included. That may have the effect of significantly expanding the concept of security and, at the same time, making it much fuzzier.

The tendency to broaden the concept of "security" to include problems of socio-economic nature, and at the same time blur the distinction between that concept and that of "defense," make it extremely important to be careful not only when identifying which

are those “new threats,” but also which are the adequate means to respond to them. We should avoid defining every social, economic, and political phenomena primarily as a “security threat,” because a bad diagnosis would hardly lead to a good cure.

Adding to the confusion, some of the approaches to these problems seem to look more to find new roles for the armed forces than to provide the most effective remedies to the phenomena in question. Saddling the armed forces with roles which are not those for which they are conceived just because of a supposed lack of specific tasks at a given historical moment, runs the risk of denaturalizing their specific role of defense. The region’s past bears witness to the dangers of such a logic.

It is up to the democratically elected authorities of each country to determine which roles the armed forces should play. The armed forces may respond to some of these “new threats” and most likely not to others. They could surely provide logistical support in some cases to those agencies more able to implement the required response, depending on the type of threat we are dealing with. The capacity of the most adequate agency to deal with each case should be strengthened.

There is no question that the challenges of the “new threats” (many of them not so “new,” by the way) should be faced through the most appropriate means that each country disposes, according to its circumstances and law. In most cases, those best means would not have a military nature. We should not mix those “new threats” originating in illicit activities (drug trafficking, terrorism, etc.), with those with socio-economic roots (poverty, illegal migrations, etc.), or with those created by nature (hurricanes, floods, etc.), or man-made (environmental disasters).

International cooperation, at the hemispheric, regional and subregional levels, is essential to provide the best and most efficient answers to these threats. Those will go, depending on the phenomenon, from adequate socio-economic policies which address the root causes, to prevention, law enforcement, and repression, if appropriate or needed.

To respond to these new threats, the strengthening of institutional mechanisms, judiciary, and police, as well as combating poverty and

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want through socio-economic development, may represent the best bet for success.

Different circumstances among the various countries of the hemisphere should also be taken into account. General rules which intend to address problems everywhere may prove wrong. For instance, drug trafficking in some countries may represent a defense problem which affects the very existence of the state and the effective control of its territory. In those cases, it may be necessary to use all means available, including the armed forces. In most other countries it may be more efficient to strengthen social and health prevention policies, reduce demand, and improve the judiciary and police.

The legitimate authorities of each of our countries need to identify the phenomena which constitute a "threat" to their security, as well as the best means to address them according to their nature, their circumstances, and their legal framework. It is, in many respects, a political question which requires a political answer. Sometimes the armed or the security forces may have a role to play—and sometimes not.

### **Conclusion.**

Building confidence among the countries of the hemisphere is essential to strengthen defense and security throughout our geography. Progress and deep positive changes on this area have been particularly remarkable in the last 2 decades among countries in the so-called Southern Cone. We should strive to expand and deepen the process to truly reach all countries of the region.

To achieve this result, a radical change in the mutual perceptions among all countries involved is needed. From considering neighbors as rivals today they are considered partners. From considering those neighbors as potential risks, now all countries consider each other's risks as their own.

Representative democracy and integration have played a crucial role to make this change of attitude possible. Their health and strength are essential for the process to continue. What today best guarantees our security is not the acquisition or development of sophisticated or powerful arms systems, but the excellent relations

of friendship and partnership we have with all of our neighbors, the transparency and dependability that democratic regimes provide to each other, the growing links on all fields, and the firm belief that the changes we underwent in the last 2 decades are not circumstantial in nature but based on shared long-term interests, values, and understandings. We do not feel threatened by any of our neighbors, and we know we are not a threat any of them.

The new security we should build is that which protects the values our society shares. We should create and implement mechanisms capable of defending those values such as representative democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, and rule of law, as well as traditional territorial conceptions. Regional security should serve collectively to protect us from whatever threatens the basic values we share and which constitute the essence of good governance: to provide for our peoples the highest degree of social, economic, and spiritual welfare which we are capable of achieving.

At the end of the day, the task the nations of this continent have ahead is to build a consensus on which are the basic values we are ready to defend and on the best means, consistent with those values, that we are ready to agree on to defend them individually and collectively. Those basic notions should be pillars of what should be the new paradigm of hemispheric security.

## SECURITY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES TO REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION: A BRAZILIAN PERSPECTIVE

Luis Bitencourt

### **Brazil and Regional Security.**

Over the last 50 years, Brazil has been a key player in Latin American security arrangements. During the Cold War, Brazil's participation was vital in producing a sophisticated adaptation of U.S. regional security strategy, the "*Doutrina de Segurança Nacional*" (National Security Doctrine), which at that time was quite influential for most Latin American countries. This doctrine and its Hispanic variations paved the way for a relatively unified response to what was at the time perceived to be the universal threat of "communist subversion." These "doctrines" also provided the military regimes installed in most Latin American countries with a rationale and a sense of legitimacy for their permanence in power.<sup>1</sup>

In the aftermath of the Cold War, Brazil has been recast as a key regional player. In this new strategic reality, Brazil has been even more emphatically than in the past functioning as a buffer between the usually bold U.S. interpretation of regional security issues and the distinct security perceptions of the other countries in the region.

Paradoxically, Brazil's strategic aspirations have never included casting itself in these roles. Moreover, if there is any generalization to be made regarding the Brazilian perspective on regional security, it is one of apparent lack of interest on regional security issues. Indeed, when regional security is at stake, Brazilians at least those bestowed with official authority usually adopt a calculated blasé attitude, seeking to downplay the problem by invoking the nonintervention principle and favoring multilateral and negotiated solutions. Overall, this approach has worked to counterbalance the usually muscular U.S. approach to security issues. On occasion, however, it has also hindered efforts to modernize existing regional security arrangements, which have come under increased criticism during the 2 last decades.

## **The Difficult Modernization of the Inter-American System.**

Criticisms of the existing hemispheric security arrangements appeared in the aftermath of the Malvinas/Falkland War and gained substance in the aftermath of the Cold War. Of course, questions regarding the validity or the role of the Inter-American Treaty for Reciprocal Assistance (IATRA)<sup>2</sup> in the conflict between Argentina and Britain are debatable because of the rather difficult characterization of England as the aggressor in that opportunity.

In relation to the Cold War, however, critics sustained that arrangements<sup>3</sup> and organizations,<sup>4</sup> which were generated a half-century ago within the context of a bipolar world, should be adapted to new global security demands. Moreover, during the Cold War, American influence made security the driving force of international relations and affected both the domestic politics and relations among Latin American nations.

Nonetheless, despite these criticisms and even widespread agreement on the obsolescence of the inter-American security system, no initiative to modify it has prospered. Previous efforts to ignite a debate around the modernization of the system in the Organization of the American States (OAS) and the Defense Ministerials have languished, resulting in no important redefinition of policies.

Three reasons explain the difficulty of reforming the system. First, no consensus exists on which concept of security is adequate for the region. Second, the countries of the region do not perceive any common threats. Third, Latin American countries have been ambivalent and guarded in their relations with the United States on matters of international security.

As for the conceptual question, we must realize that much of the difficulty arises from the subjective and multifaceted nature of the term "security." Indeed, security is a highly subjective concept both at the individual and at the state levels. For the individual, security is a psychological, intuitive reaction that may or may not be consistent with reality. For the state the notion of security is an outgrowth of a political structure that attempts to act, successfully or not, as the filter for the society.

The individual level of this multifaceted concept of security<sup>5</sup> may

refer to any threat against citizens' rights and include economic, environmental, or even cultural dimensions. Consequently, many experts have been advocating the adoption of a redefinition of security, which incorporates these new threats for citizens. Whereas some have suggested the broadening of the original concept, others recommend using descriptors to modify the term depending on the nature of the perceived threat such as "citizen security" or "environmental security."<sup>6</sup>

In terms of how it is defined by the state, security is a concept closely associated with the perception of sovereignty. Yet, also the notion of sovereignty is characterized by the same imprecision and subjective interpretations that plague security.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, the lack of a common perception over what may be threatening the region has provoked many interpretations of what defines security. None have motivated any form of collective effort on the issue and multilateral attempts to address the inter-American security system have in turn collided with these multiple interpretations. Such a theoretical barrier has stymied the debate even before the real security problems can be discussed: how to incorporate the distinct security interests of the Caribbean nations, as well as those of major South American countries in one agreement.

While this paper does not intend to dispute the concept of security, we need to understand the rationale behind the argument. For example, environmental expert Jessica Mathews<sup>8</sup> has called for the adoption of a new conceptualization of national security. She argues that since the 1970s the original notion of national security has expanded to include an economic dimension in response to the perception that United States was becoming more vulnerable vis-à-vis other countries' economic policies. Mathews states,

Global developments now suggest the need for another analogous, broadening definition of national security . . . The assumptions and institutions . . . in the postwar era are a poor fit with these new realities. Environmental strains . . . transcend national borders. The once sharp division between foreign and domestic policy is blurred . . .<sup>8</sup>

Mathews' argument is powerful and does a good job summarizing

the reasons to redefine national security, which has correctly been considered as the core concept for international security. In addition, her point regarding the vulnerability of countries' territorial borders is well well-taken. However, there is a serious risk exists in considering that porous borders have made sovereignty less important for nation-states. The opposite is true; the sensation of reduced control over what is happening inside a country's own borders has led governments to be more nervous about limits to exercising their sovereignty domestically.

Finally, many countries in the region still grapple with the various influences and vestiges of national security doctrines cast during periods of authoritarian rule. Indeed, most Latin American and Caribbean countries were governed by authoritarian military regimes during the Cold War—following the U.S. lead and support—that developed sophisticated frameworks for national security.

These national security doctrines provided substance for the region's defense organization and a rationale for the military's engagement in the political realm. By providing all-encompassing prescriptions for the government—including defense, and security, as well as typically civilian matters—these doctrines powerfully affected the bureaucratic organization and decisionmaking models of regional states. Following the transition to democracy, these old policy recommendations would maintain varying degrees of influence, depending on the nature of the country considered. Indeed, the transition to democracy included the resolution of two main and interconnected issues: the construction of democratic and reliable institutions, and the creation of mechanisms to assure that the military would return to its traditional responsibilities. Neither task would be easily or quickly accomplished in most Latin American and Caribbean countries, a region where these remain to be sensitive and carefully negotiated issues. In this sense, the ability to break with old ideas has been easier than to escape from them and generate new ones.

As for the difficulties posed by the varied perceptions of threats to the region, the current situation in Latin America is relatively calm in terms of both real and potential conflicts.<sup>9</sup> Border disputes have been settled and domestic conflicts, which in the recent past

led to insurgencies and even to civil wars, have either been resolved or taken on by the recently installed democracies.<sup>10</sup> Of course, in the absence of reliable mechanisms, even minor issues can explode into serious conflicts, like the 1995 war between Ecuador and Peru<sup>11</sup> or the tension resulting from the dispute between Honduras and Nicaragua.<sup>12</sup> However, even these two examples were solved or at least entrusted to international mediation. However, terrorism, which some had intended to paint as the common threat capable of bonding together all the countries of the region, does not encourage collective military responses. It encourages intelligence sharing, but this is supposed to be a discreet exchange between taciturn individuals and not trumpeted colloquiums among public organizations.

Some of the current initiatives mention major contingencies, such as natural disasters (Hurricane Mitch is the preferred example), as a justification for renewed security regimes. Yet this argument has two serious problems that impair its efficacy as a regime overhauling motivator. First, contingencies are, per definition, unforeseen events, emergency situations that do not underscore the maintenance of permanent security organizations. Second, contingencies have always happened, i.e., they are not a new variable pressuring for the modernization of the security system. Once there is an organization in place, it may be useful to address a contingency affecting a region; but environmental contingencies or unanticipated humanitarian disasters are not enough to justify the creation of permanent organizations.

An additional problem for the modernization of the regional security system paradoxically is posed by the fact that almost all the countries in the region are democracies. As such, they are slower and certainly less aligned and uniform in constructing and expressing their respective post-transition (from the previous authoritarian regimes) perspectives towards regional security. Moreover, these democracies are still fragile, and they have been challenged by many latent or manifested problems. Haiti, Colombia, Venezuela, and Argentina are among the most recent victims of domestic turmoil that could potentially upset regional security. Haiti required the extreme measure of foreign military intervention; although

unresolved, the situation is under control. Colombia remains the most serious security problem in the region, where guerrillas and drug traffickers threaten the country as well as its neighbors. Finally, the Cuba situation is still the most irregularly shaped piece in the regional puzzle.<sup>13</sup> When the United States broke diplomatic relations in 1961, imposing a comprehensive economic embargo against Cuba (1962) was seen as compatible with the political climate of the Cold War. Yet both the logic and the impact of the embargo were always harshly questioned in the region. Currently, from a multilateral standpoint, the integration of Cuba with the hemisphere seems increasingly important.

The third challenge in reforming the inter-American security system is related to influence exerted by the United States as the dominant world power, as well as its location in the same geopolitical system of Latin American countries. The United States has manifested its control over the region, indirectly by serving as a political and ideological model that inspired historical and political changes throughout the previous century, and directly by clearly positioning itself in a way to reduce the influence of extra-hemisphere powers or even by intervening militarily. The recognition of such an inevitable influence by the United States upon the region has made many Latin America countries overly cautious in their discussions on multilateral hemispheric security arrangements.

Consequently, feeling that any redefinition of the hemisphere collective security arrangements could end even more favoring American influence over the region, many Latin American countries are not attracted to initiatives on the theme and prefer to leave the situation as it is. The memory of the long, overwhelming, and quite often suffocating American supremacy in the region, under the justification of the Cold War, is still fresh among Latin American decisionmakers.

The Cold War affected perceptions on both sides and still influences much of the security debate within the Americas. For example, under the pressures of preserving international security in a bipolar world, U.S. foreign policy did not distinguish between the different countries in the region, placing them in the same category vis-à-vis U.S. national interest. In the aftermath of the Cold War,

these blocking perceptions must give way to more sophisticated and nuanced approaches regarding the different capabilities and stakes of the countries in the region. Finally, the end of the Cold War has mutually affected the perceptions of U.S. and Latin American policymakers in ways apart from interregional relations. While the major powers were concerned with building up military forces and stockpiling nuclear warheads in an East versus West competition, Latin American countries were focused on domestic disputes over political power. For the major powers, the end of the Cold War meant a transition towards a less threatening international environment—the reduction of nuclear stockpiles so downsizing of armed forces came as a natural consequence. For most of the Latin American countries, however, the end of the Cold War meant the end of military dictatorships and the beginning of democratic governments.

This also explains why Latin American military forces were so exasperated when the first U.S. security strategy after the end of the Cold War suggested that Latin American countries should downsize their armed forces because of the end of the Cold War. They could only interpret as they effectively did that such a strategy was a provocation and represented American interference in their internal affairs.

The United States always has exercised great autonomy in defining the regional security agenda. More recently, in 1995 the United States launched the Defense Ministerial of the Americas (DMA). Embedded in this initiative was the proposition to redefine hemispheric security in a more cooperative manner. In essence, this brought a new methodology for the establishment of security arrangements based on the identification of common interests and opportunities as opposed to the traditional methodology of perceived threats. The most practical aspect of this new methodology included an invitation for Latin American and Caribbean countries to participate in the definition of a new hemispheric security agenda. With this goal, the DMA was launched and since then has been meeting on a biannual basis. However, from the beginning reactions from the most important Latin American countries have been enthusiastic in form but cautious in substance. After the the Cold

War years, Latin American countries were understandably reluctant to jump into new security associations with the United States.

Nevertheless, when Bush replaced Clinton as U.S. President in 2001, his administration did not share these idealistic and multilateralist perceptions on the region, and subsequently the idea of cooperative security lost its steam as a regional security objective. Instead, unilateralist faith was trumpeted to the world and echoed within Latin America as well, along with U.S. decisions regarding the Kyoto Protocol and the international crime tribunal. The fight against terrorism and the war against Iraq completely magnetized the attention of U.S. decisionmakers to the detriment of the Hemisphere.

As a net result of these circumstances, prejudices, and asymmetries, the countries in the region have demonstrated a markedly different appetite for discussing novel regional defense arrangements. For some countries, such as those of the Caribbean region, response to an American invitation to create a different security arrangement for the entire region would seem attractive and could possibly include a welcome injection of military aid.

Similarly, countries like Colombia, attempting to combat the synergistic effects of a guerrilla conflict and a drug war, were pleased to welcome both a new security arrangement and military aid. Others, like Chile and Argentina, would show enthusiasm although to a lesser extent than their regional neighbors but for different reasons. Both apparently have redefined the missions of their militaries to limit their activities in the political realm. They welcome broader security engagements that could help to legitimize their new domestic arrangements. While their strategies were different, the result was similar: to push the military away from domestic politics.<sup>14</sup> From the Brazilian perspective, engaging in efforts to join into new regional security arrangements was anything but urgent or attractive.

### **A Brazilian Perspective.**

A country's perspective on security is shaped by subjective and objective factors and may be elucidated through the observation of consistency in its organizations, regimes, or decisions. The most

characteristic trait of Brazil's approach to regional security issues and particularly to security cooperation has been its tendency to downplay regional security issues. There are three major reasons for this.

First, Brazilians do not pay much attention to regional security because overall they do not feel threatened. Brazilians are proud because they have lived in peace with their ten neighbors for over a century, and Brazil's borders are well-established and settled. Therefore, Brazilians see Brazil as a *status quo* country, i.e., Brazil is satisfied with its geopolitical circumstances. For example, during the 1970s Golbery do Couto e Silva and Carlos de Meira Mattos inspired many militaries with their ideas of geopolitical determinism, according to which Brazil was destined to be a superpower, thanks to its geopolitical characteristics. From a security perspective, the Amazon region, and what is perceived as international "covetousness" over that region,<sup>15</sup> is the only theme that ignites concern among Brazilians.

The second reason to downplay regional security issues draws from external as well as domestic motivations. The external motivations spring from a double concern with the role of the United States in the region. Brazilians think that an emphasis on regional security issues will exacerbate the effect of the already overwhelming U.S. influence in the region. In this sense, Brazilians believe that American policymakers tend to exaggerate the relevance of security issues in the region to the detriment of more meaningful themes such as trade and economic development. Brazilians also believe with some reason that in dealing with security issues, Americans resort to the use of force far too soon, in an overwhelming and arrogant manner which may be harmful for negotiated solutions within the region.

Domestic motivations derive from the delicate process of power transition from the military to civilians at the end of the dictatorship. When the authoritarian military regime ended in Brazil in 1984 after 20 years of domination, security was purposefully downplayed in the domestic political realm simply as a way to reduce the military relevance within the domestic affairs. This aspect carried such importance that in the new Federal Constitution passed in 1988,

Brazilians exorcised the expression "national security" and replaced it with "national defense." The National Security Council became National Defense Council, and the previously all powerful General Secretariat of the National Security Council (SG/CSN *Secretaria Geral do Conselho de Segurança Nacional*) became the Advising Secretariat of the National Defense Council (SADEN).<sup>16</sup>

Attempts were made to eliminate the possibility that attention to national security matters would give to the military an excuse to maintain its exaggerated influence in the political realm. "National security" meant "national security doctrine," the body of doctrine that lent unity and consistency to the military.<sup>17</sup> As a result of these domestic influences, Brazil was not interested in pushing for a hemispheric debate on security, which could bring relevance to military issues.

Another influential formative contribution to the Brazilian perspective on regional security issues came with the end of the Cold War. At the end of this period, there was pressure for the redefinition of regional security arrangements, as well as some peculiar reactions in Brazil. In the early 1990s, U.S. initiatives to reorganize hemispheric security faced an unenthusiastic Brazil. Brazilian decisionmakers were concerned that the redefinition of hemispheric security arrangements under such tremendous U.S. influence might limit Brazil's strategic options. Since unilaterally breaking its bilateral agreements for military cooperation with the United States in the late 1970s, Brazil has been able to create a more diversified set of alliances. To establish a "wrong" association with the United States could prove to be costly in the future. Moreover, Brazilian decisionmakers were not exactly certain what would constitute a "right" security relationship with the United States.

In addition, the transformation of the long rivalry between Brazil and Argentina into a model of cooperation was also important. For many years Argentina had been the dominant factor in Brazil's military plans as its only potential war hypothesis (and vice-versa). The new model designed by the civilian governments in Argentina and Brazil stopped the nuclear weapons race between the two countries and launched the foundations of the MERCOSUR. Nevertheless, it also produced an identity crisis for the military.

Therefore, coinciding with the end of the Cold War, Brazil's

regional strategic rationale was also changing. Since 1985, the military had been struggling to maintain the last remnants of its political influence but had paid little attention to its professional role; at stake was military involvement in the political realm. Therefore, the relevance of military forces for Brazil's security conception was never at issue. After 1990, however, because military planning had been so focused on Argentina, the military felt that its very existence could be questioned leading to an even more important loss of political space.

Interestingly, the Colombian crisis as well as *the Plan Colombia* would help the Brazilian military to redesign its mission. On the one hand, the apparent incapacity of the Colombian government to curb guerrilla and drug related violence prompted the military to consider the prospects of the conflict spilling over Brazilian borders. On the other hand, strong U.S. participation in *Plan Colombia* fueled the usual Brazilian concern regarding the American involvement in the region. As a result, the Army promoted a rapid relocation of military units from Southern Brazil to the Amazon<sup>18</sup> region while the Air Force responsible for the System for Surveillance of the Amazon (SIVAM) could justify its sophisticated radar system under an entirely distinct strategic rationale. Brazilian authorities even mentioned the prospects of sharing information gathered by SIVAM with neighboring countries; however, effective moves in this direction are yet to be made.

*The Sources of the Brazilian Perspective.* During the last decade Brazil underwent a remarkable transformation in its governmental structures responsible for decisions related to security. Despite these transformations, the Ministry of Foreign Relations (Itamaraty) was able to maintain the most influential position in the government on issues related to security and defense. The military and even Congress are not particularly enthusiastic about dealing with international security matters. Although Congress plays a major role when approving foreign treaties and agreements with the exception in high profile instances, Brazilian congressmen are not greatly interested in foreign policy or international security.<sup>19</sup> From a bureaucratic perspective, it is interesting to observe that the continued predominance of Itamaraty in issues related to

international security has resulted in remarkable consistency in Brazil's positions. However, it also works to slow the possibility of changing positions to keep pace with the challenges presented by increasingly globalized international security problems.

This situation was profoundly shaken during Fernando Henrique Cardoso's two terms as President. Cardoso emphasized Itamaraty's role and assigned several career diplomats to "nondiplomatic" key positions in the administration. Yet, simultaneously he pressured for a modernization in Brazil's foreign policy attempting to secure for Brazil a more prominent role in the international scene.

According to this philosophy, he also promoted extraordinary changes in Brazil's defense perspective. Cardoso launched the first policy of defense in Brazil's history,<sup>20</sup> established a Ministry of Defense, and assigned a civilian to head it. Additionally, during his tenure, Brazil would change its position towards two regimes critically important for international security: Brazil joined the Missile Technology Control Regime and signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Finally, Brazil emphatically has been underscoring multilateral approaches to international security issues while declaring its interest in occupying a seat in an expanded UN Security Council.

Another attempt to show leadership in the region was Brazil's initiative to gather the South American presidents for a summit in Brasilia in August 2001. President Cardoso used the opportunity to motivate the presidents of South American countries to tighten their relations by exploring border opportunities to plan joint infrastructure projects. At the same time, President Cardoso brokered the idea of promoting a stronger association among the South American countries as opposed to Latin American countries because they share a more evident identity.

Nevertheless, Brazil did not advance any idea of promoting subregional security arrangements in association with this opportunity. Even within MERCOSUL, which has been a stronger and perennial association, Brazil has been everything but enthusiastic in promoting initiatives to bring military issues into the realm of the existing trade arrangements. It is true that Brazil and the other MERCOSUL members have reaffirmed their commitment to disarmament and to the nonproliferation of weapons of mass

destruction as well as noted the efforts of the ad hoc Group for the Convention on the Prohibition of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons. They also celebrated the ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons by all South American countries and stressed the relevance of initiatives to achieve transparency in conventional arms transfers. Yet, mainly cautioned by Brazil, MERCOSUL has stopped short of promoting more ambitious military associations in the region.

*The Brazilian Perspective on Terrorism.* Of course, an analysis on Brazil's perspective on regional security issues would be incomplete without the consideration of Brazil's position towards the international terrorism and the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, against the United States. In the aftermath of the attack, many Latin American scholars and journalists stated that the episode had forever changed the regional security landscape.<sup>21</sup> These commentators believed that such an attack would have immediate effects on the regional concepts and organizations associated with international security.

Nevertheless, reality has proved quite different. The September 11 attack was extraordinary for its humanitarian, tactical, and, particularly, its terror dimensions. While it has changed the U.S. mindset about the meaning of its own homeland security and motivated a series of operations, it has not had the same effect for the entire region. To date, regional responses to the September 11 attack have relied very little on the existing inter-American security framework in terms of its accepted definitions, agreements, and organizations.<sup>22</sup>

In this case, Brazil's reaction was surprisingly fast and vigorous, assuming a leading role at the OAS to motivate Latin America and the Caribbean to issue an immediate condemnation to the attack and to international terrorism.<sup>23</sup> Ten days later, on September 21, following a Brazilian proposition, the OAS declared the attack to be directed against all members of the organization based on Article Three of the Rio Pact (IATRA).

Interestingly, this move meant a revival to IATRA, which was considered by many to be an outdated. Only a few days before the terrorist attack, on September 7, 2001, President Vicente Fox had

announced that Mexico would reconsider its association to the Rio Pact because the treaty was more suited to the context of the Cold War than to the current security challenges.

While Fox's decision came as a surprise for policymakers and scholars, it was not because they believed the IATRA was still a functional treaty up to that date, no serious expert would have disagreed that the IATRA and regional security organizations were in need of serious restructuring. The surprise was caused, first, by the fact that the country announcing that decision was Mexico, a nation historically averse to addressing regional security initiatives. Second, scholars and policymakers alike were shocked by the fact that, although commentary on the IATRA's obsolescence was frequent, no formal proposition for revising it had been submitted yet. Therefore, Fox's announcement could have potentially ignited a revision process of the region's multilateral security framework and garnered Mexico a leadership role in the context of subregional security.

Consequently, if by threatening to leave IATRA, Fox was envisioning a relatively better strategic position for Mexico in the Western Hemisphere, Brazil's proposal after the terrorist attack worked to bury his intentions.<sup>25</sup> From the Brazilian perspective, when Fox announced that Mexico was considering leaving the essentially defunct IATRA, he challenged Brazil's presumed regional leadership.<sup>26</sup> When Brazil successfully invoked the IATRA just a few days later, it led to the reinstatement of Brazil's presumed but never officially recognized "low-profile leadership" in subregional affairs.<sup>27</sup>

Shortly after having countered Mexico's strategic gains, Brazil rushed back to its familiar and cautious approach to regional security issues. Consistent with the usual style of its diplomacy, Brazil issued a series of declarations aimed at downplaying the importance of terrorism for the region. For example, a few days after the OAS approved the invoking of the IATRA in response to the terrorist attacks, Brazil's Minister of Foreign Relations, Celso Lafer, emphasized that the region should not over-react to the events of September 11 and that the acts should be "put in the right perspective." In addition, when the Triple Frontier region (Argentina,

Brazil, and Paraguay) was mentioned in the international press as a possible sanctuary for terrorists, Brazilian authorities acted quickly to demonstrate the lack of any evidence linking that region to the attacks. Brazilian officials were obviously interested in avoiding the possibility that U.S. focus on terrorism would hinder other relevant themes on the regional agenda such as trade and economic development.

### **Conclusion.**

Brazil's perspective on regional security cooperation is particularly important because of the present crisis in the inter-American security system. Within the multilateral arena, after its most recent progress regarding nonproliferation regimes, Brazil's usually balanced positions towards international security problems have fostered admiration and respect. Within the regional arena, Brazil's empathy towards the security concerns of the countries in the region has placed it in an important role regarding initiatives to modify the existing system.

As such, there has been a consistent approach based on a peculiar perspective towards regional security matters. The most peculiar aspect of this perspective has been a guarded reception to ventures interested in promoting regional security cooperation. Indeed, Brazilians have not immediately or enthusiastically embraced initiatives to reshape the existing regional security arrangements, which in some sense have contributed to counterbalance the enormous U.S. influence on regional security issues and worked to render legitimacy to resulting arrangements. However, this perspective has worked to undermine initiatives aimed at rapidly modifying the existing collective security arrangements in the hemisphere.

Recently, on three occasions, Brazil reacted in a rather unusual manner to regional security challenges. First, after the September 11 terrorist attacks against the United States, Brazil urged to invoke the IATRA in support to the Americans. Second, during the recent Venezuelan crisis, the Brazilian government worked actively to find a cooperative arrangement that could help solve

the Venezuelan standoff. Finally, in February 2003 Brazil issued a note favoring peaceful solutions for the crisis between the United States and Iraq, aligning with Russia, France, and Germany against the bellicose American attitude towards Iraq. Although it is quite early to speculate conclusively, these few cases certainly indicate a remarkable tendency towards an evolution of Brazil's perspective in favor of a more active role towards international security. This tendency is consistent with Brazil's declared interest in reshaping and securing a seat at the U.N. Security Council but does not necessarily endorse efforts to modify at least at a pace that Brazilians do not think is cautious enough the existing regional security arrangements in the Americas.

## ENDNOTES

1. See Miguel Manrique, *La Seguridad en las Fuerzas Armadas Venezolana*, Caracas: Universidad Central de Venezuela, 1996.

2. In 1947, encouraged by U.S. interest in organizing collective security arrangements, American states (with the exception of Canada and Caribbean countries) signed the Inter-American Treaty on Reciprocal Assistance (IATRA). IATRA's Article Three establishes that an armed attack against one signatory will be interpreted as an attack against all American states; thus each one of the signatories is committed to help the attacked state exercise the right of legitimate defense, as defined by the U.N. Charter (Article 51). Since it was signed, IATRA has been invoked 18 times.

2. For a detailed analysis of the existing security arrangements in the hemisphere, see Luis Bitencourt, "Latin American Security: Emerging Challenges," *The Global Century: Globalization and National Security*, Richard L. Kugler and Ellen L. Frost, eds., Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2001, pp. 895-914.

3. Three organizations are particularly relevant for the definitions of hemispheric security: the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), the Organization of American States (OAS), and the Inter-American Defense College (IADC). The oldest organization related to the defense of the hemisphere is the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB). The Inter-American Defense College (IADC) is designed to prepare civilian and military officers to assume leadership positions at the national level within the hemisphere. Attendance is open to all hemispheric governments (except Cuba) regardless of whether they are IADB members or not. The IADC has served as a useful tool for networking and provides scope for a broad interchange

on issues related to military-civilian relations and democratic culture. In addition, two other initiatives have prospective relevance: the Defense Ministerial of the Americas meetings and the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies. The Defense Ministerial of the Americas process started in 1995, under a U.S. initiative to provide a forum for discussing security issues. It meets on roughly a biennial basis. The Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies, within the U.S. National Defense University, was created in September 1997, and is particularly dedicated to building civilian expertise on security matters throughout the region.

4. It is interesting to note that the concept of national security adopted in the Western world acquired an institutional status only in relatively recent times during World War II. Prior to this conflict, the closest definition was the concept of national interest. During the years following the end of the war, "national security" not only acquired a legal status within the United States with the National Security Act in 1947 but it was transformed into the defense doctrine for the entire Western Hemisphere. According to the Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs,

few Americans used the term before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. By the time the war ended, however, national security was challenging the older concept of national interest for preeminence within the community of experts and policymakers involved in U.S. foreign policy. The circumstances of the Cold War determined the outcome of that competition. By 1950, national security was established as the leitmotif of U.S. foreign policy, with its own lexicon and supporting institutions. During the next four decades, national security completely eclipsed national interest as the standard for understanding, debating, and justifying American actions abroad. Preoccupation with national security transformed the policy-making process and altered the tone and substance of American politics.

As Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan observed in June 1990: "The cold war changed us . . . . We became a national security state." Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs Newsletter, March 1999.

5. Probably the first "new concept" to appear in the current international security environment was the that of environmental security. The 1972 United Nations Conference for Human Environment (Stockholm) led to an intensification of the debate on changes to the environment "threatening the future of humankind." With the emergence of concerns over global climatic change (including ozone depletion), acid rain, forest devastation, and environmental policy have garnered space on the public agendas of many countries.

6. Stephen D. Krasner, for example, mentions four meanings of sovereignty.

Interdependence sovereignty relates to the ability of states to control movements across their borders. Domestic sovereignty refers to the ability of states to control the behavior of their citizens. Westphalian or Vattelien sovereignty is related to the power of states to control what is inside of their own boundaries, without the intervention of others. International or legal sovereignty draws on the mutually shared recognition of states as juridically independent territorial entities. For further details, see "Abiding Sovereignty," paper prepared for the workshop on "El Estado del Debate Contemporáneo en Relaciones Internacionales, Universidad Torcuato Di Tella," Buenos Aires, Argentina, July 27-28, 2000.

7. Jessica Mathews, "The Environment and International Security," *World Security: Challenges for a New Century*, Michael Klare and Daniel Thomas, eds., New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994.

8. Monica Serrano, "Latin America," *The New Security Agenda: A Global Survey*, Paul B. Stares, ed., Tokyo, Japan: Center for International Exchange, 1998, p. 332, selects four major factors influencing the security of Latin America (which are not very different in the Caribbean countries):

the persistence of a relatively predictable regional order; the persistence of fragmented state institutions that undermine the capacity of governments to effectively control their territory and to maintain a firm monopoly over the use of organized violence; a shift in the region's understanding of sovereignty and the principle of intervention; and the emergence of a new security agenda that has come to highlight the interdependence that exists between internal and external dimension's of each state's security.

9. Writing in 1989, Jack Child identified 17 conflicts that originated from different causes in South America. See "Geopolitical Conflict in South America," Georges Fauriol, ed., *Security in the Americas*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press.

10. In this case, the swift action of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and the United States as guarantors of the 1942 Protocol of Rio de Janeiro was essential to stop the hostilities. The Military Observer Mission, Ecuador/Peru (MOMEP) is probably the best regional example of a successful multinational peacekeeping operation.

11. By the end of 1999, tension heightened between Honduras and Nicaragua over the definition of maritime boundaries in the region. The situation was reaching a dangerous level and could have resulted in confrontation. The Organization of American States (OAS) assigned a Special Representative, Ambassador Luigi Einaudi, a retired U.S. diplomat, to help reduce the tensions in the region. In the final days of December, in Miami the Foreign Ministers of

Honduras and Nicaragua began conversations that culminated with an agreement signed in February 2000. The two parties agreed on establishing a military-free zone, pushing the boundaries to where they were in September 1999, and letting the situation to be decided by the International Court of Justice in The Hague. In the end, the contentious situation helped to reinforce the role of the OAS in hemispheric security matters.

12. In 1991, everybody was expecting that Cuba would derail from the Communist track in the wave of the Soviet Union's dismantling that led the Cuban economy to shrink by more than 60 percent. Instead, Fidel Castro pledged Socialism or Death. The results were a worsening in U.S.-Cuban relations. From 1991 to 1996 many incidents related to Cuban attempts to flee the island tarnished these already bad relations. Then, President Clinton in 1996 declared his support for the Helms-Burton Law, which established punitive measures for foreign companies that did business in Cuba. In response, Canada, the European Union, and other countries with companies or subsidiaries in Cuba declared the Helms-Burton Law to be in violation of international norms and law. For more details, see James Rohrbaugh, *Timeline of Important Events in Cuba-United States Relations: 1959-Present*, at <http://www.earlham.edu/www/polsci/ps17971/weissdo/timeline2.html>.

13. The Chilean military turned to traditional missions after having secured its budgetary and salary objectives. The Argentine military found its interest in peacekeeping, and through such engagements assisted in rebuilding its heavily damaged self-esteem that had resulted from its defeat in the Malvinas/Falklands War. Lately, Argentina has voiced its desire to be considered a "U.S. non-NATO ally," which has not translated into any real change but seems symbolically meaningful. For more on this issue, refer to Federico Luis Larrinaga, "Argentina, a New U.S. Non-Nato Ally: Significance and Expectations," *Naval War College Review*, Vol. LIII, No. 2, 2000.

14. For example, the Amazon is the only Brazilian region to be mentioned specifically as a defense objective in Brazil's Policy of Defense. See Luis Bitencourt, "The Importance of the Amazon Basin in Brazil's Evolving Security Agenda," in *Environment and Security in the Amazon Basin*, Joseph S. Tulchin and Heather Golding, eds., Washington, DC, 2002.

15. In 1990, President Fernando Collor de Mello dismantled this body and transferred some of its functions to the Secretariat for Strategic Affairs, which President Fernando Henrique Cardoso extinguished in 1999, at the outset of its second tenure. Interestingly, Cardoso's reorganization made his Cabinet more similar and somewhat more powerful than the one of the military dictatorship. General Alberto Cardoso, his Chief of the Cabinet of Institutional Security, commanded the intelligence agency, and coordinated anti-drug traffic efforts and the anti-violence plan, in addition to being the Secretary of Brazil's Defense Council. In short, he controlled the activities corresponding to those of the SNI

(the national intelligence service of the military) and of the SG/CSN.

16. The "national security doctrine" was a doctrinal body developed by the Escola Superior de Guerra (ESG-War Superior College) and exerted extraordinary influence during the military dictatorship (1964-1984). The "national security doctrine" provided the military with a consistent explanation for their intervention in the political power arena, with an ideological anti-Communist framework, with a decisionmaking model, and with a general organization for the state apparatus. Despite the end of the military regime in 1984 and its subsequent disengagement from the political process, civilian control over national security issues would only begin to take shape over 10 years, with the issuing of the Policy of Defense in 1996 and the creation of the Ministry of Defense in 1998.

17. In addition to the modernization of the existing Border Platoons and the creation of new ones, the Army built headquarters for the 5th Border Special Battalion, in São Gabriel da Cachoeira, Amazonas, and for the 1st Jungle Infantry Brigade, in Boa Vista, Roraima. The 16th Motorized Infantry Brigade was transferred from Santo Angelo, Rio Grande do Sul, to Tefé, Amazonas, to become the 16th Jungle Infantry Brigade. And the 33rd Jungle Campaign Artillery Group was created in Boa Vista, Roraima. From 6,000 troops stationed in the Amazon up until 1990, the Army currently has 23,000 troops distributed in 62 Amazon locations, and this number is planned to grow to 26,000.

18. There have been two important exceptions here, so far insufficient to show a change in the tendency. First, propelled by the Ministry of Defense, the Congress organized in 2002 a seminar to debate Brazilian defense, which had the participation of scholars and policymakers. The seminar was able to shed some light on defense issues and showed that manifestations of strong nationalism, especially among retired military, still produce echoes in Brazilian politics. Second, based on nationalistic arguments somewhat related to defense, the Brazilian Congress did not approve the agreement between Brazil and the United States for the use of Alcântara launching site by American rocket launchers.

19. During the military dictatorship (1964-84), Brazilian "national security" was organized upon a secret document, the "National Strategic Concept," which was the basic document for military planning and was consolidated by the General Secretariat of the National Security Council (SG/CSN).

20. See, for example, Gabriel Aguilera Peralta's "La Seguridad Regional Centroamericana: Entre el Imaginario de La Paz y la Realidad del 11 Septiembre," Latin American Program, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2002, mimeo. See, also, Marcos Robledo's, "Tendencias Globales de la Política Internacional. Una Aproximación a los Atentados contra Estados Unidos," *Fuerzas Armadas y Sociedad*, Santiago, Chile: Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, No. 3 y 4, Julio-Diciembre 2001, pp. 4-11. See also Isabel Jaramillo

Edwards', "Los Atentados Terroristas al WTC y el Pentágono: Punto de Inflexión en las Relaciones Interamericanas," *Fuerzas Armadas y Sociedad.*, Santiago, Chile: Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, No. 3 y 4, Julio-Diciembre 2001, pp. 14-29.

21. Along with this idea, see also Robert Jervis, "An Interim Assessment of September 11: What Has Changed and What Has Not," *Political Science Quarterly*, Spring 2002, The Academy of Political Science, pp. 37-54. Also Rubens Barbosa ("Os Estados Unidos pós 11 de setembro de 2001: Implicações para o Brasil," *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, ano 45, No. 1, 2002) concludes that "the post-September 11 world has not changed, yet the world political agenda was modified by the terrorists' action in itself as well as by the demonstration of will and power of the most powerful nation of our age" (p. 72).

22. Declaración de La Asamblea General de la OEA, Septiembre 11, 2001, Comunicado de Prensa C-005/01/OAS. Coincidentally, the attack was perpetrated at the same moment as the OAS General Assembly was having a meeting in Lima, Peru, with the presence of Secretary Colin Powell. This fact gave immediately a political and diplomatic status within the OAS to the attacks, which propelled their unusually swift and consensual official condemnation.

23. Vigésima tercera Reunión de Consulta de Ministros de Relaciones Exteriores /OEA/ Ser.F/II.23-RC.23/RES.1/01, September 21, 2001.

24. In September 2002, a year after his first announcement, Fox confirmed that Mexico would effectively quit the IATRA. Yet, at this time, not many people paid attention to his announcement.

25. Of course, this undeclared dispute between minor powers for subregional leadership is irrelevant if we consider the real stakes both for Brazil and Mexico, when compared to those for the United States, but it reveals the distinct perspectives within existing regional multilateral arrangements.

26. In addition to these changes, President Fox would have to quietly swallow a considerable reduction in the interest on the part of the Bush administration for a bilateral U.S.-Mexico agenda including, for example, the killing of the prospects for a more friendly U.S. immigration policy towards Mexican illegal immigrants in the United States.

## IDEAS FOR CONSTRUCTING A NEW FRAMEWORK OF HEMISPHERIC SECURITY

**Henry Medina Uribe**

The idea of the North-South Center of the University of Miami, the U.S. Army War College, and the U.S. Southern Command to provide this stage to discuss productively the necessity of a new point of view in the relations between the great power of North America and the countries of Latin America, as well as the environment of security necessary to build said relations, is excellent and compelling. It takes into account that the realities of the world today demand a profound change and the acceptance of the risks that such change implies. Whatever effort that we make is meritorious, if with it we block the process of the accelerating dehumanization of society, within a hegemonic and increasingly unequal world. The challenge must be accepted with decision, intelligent vision, careful planning and proper global strategy.

Within this world of imperfections, the Latin American dream, according to Michael Mendelbaum, is to achieve peace, the full exercise of democracy, and the construction of open markets that will make our development viable. Nevertheless, this seems impossible within the present weakness of our states, the socio-economic polarization, the increasing state of violence that we are experiencing, and the progressive deterioration of our quality of life.

One of the principal concerns of Latin America is to provide solutions for the lamentable state of security in which we live, which limits our opportunities for real development and denies our military institutions the possibility of intensifying their efforts in more beneficial tasks that would be reflected in the construction and consolidation of our nations.

It is not true that our security crisis is a result of geographic, geopolitical, genetic circumstances, or ethnic deformities. The current situation of the region, and in particular of Colombia, is the foreseeable result of long-standing sociopolitical events, which are still susceptible to correction. Of what use to us are properties that

we cannot enjoy, roads that we cannot travel, schools that children cannot attend, centers of art that the fear of a car bomb prevents us from visiting, communication media that generate permanent anguish and show us violence as an increasing factor in human evolution, whole societies asking themselves if living is worth the pain. All this seems to give credence to Hobbes when he affirms that man devours man.

The benefits of peace and development that we all expected as a consequence of the fall of communism have not been seen, and rather, the fear of death with each kilometer or on each corner overtakes us, because the terrorist threat is more inhumane, diffuse, and incoherent, as well as difficult to pinpoint and anticipate.

The present challenge is to build states that fulfill the fundamental function of creating, sustaining, and developing the necessary conditions for a dignified, secure and prosperous life of all citizens. The question that arises is: How to achieve the coordinated actions of the political, economic and social sectors in a way that they integrate the aspirations of society, the functions of the State and the actions that fall within the competence of the police and the military? Or, in other words, how can the fundamental aspects of development, security and defense be integrated synergistically?

In this context, security cannot be seen as a variable, independent and isolated from political, economic, and social sectors. Therefore its treatment in the hemispheric environment should be defined by the following five aspects, which I will try to develop in a summary form. For their efficacy and their execution, they ought to be interactive:

1. Democratic consolidation and institutional strengthening of states;
2. Common interests, reciprocity, and mutual respect;
3. More productive and equitable commercial relations;
4. Restructuring of military institutions; and,
5. Collective security of a democratic nature.

1. *Democratic Consolidation and Institutional Strengthening of States.*  
An environment of security and development cannot exist in a

weak state. For that reason, it is necessary to establish strong public institutions, with wide legitimacy and presence in the totality of the respective territories, in such a way that facilitates the construction of effective states, capable of achieving the objectives that justify them.

In our case, it is necessary to strengthen the states of the region so that they can effectively protect the most precious good, which is the life of their citizens, and at the same time create the proper environment to develop a better quality of life, without damaging the well-being of future generations. It is a fact that secure citizens build a stronger state.

We cannot expect to achieve a just and long-lasting peace built on factors of inequity. Neither can we believe in solutions arising from violence and terrorism. Both restrict democracy, limit liberty, and take space away from politics. Unfortunately, in some areas, we have become accustomed to the fact that in the political arena the most respected and effective means of expression are the voices of rifles.

The full support of the institutions of the state, an individual and collective obligation of society, is a basic prerequisite for the reign of justice and the achievement of peace. In order to achieve it, good government and the mobilization of all minds in concert with the principles, values, and interests that gave birth to the respective nations are indispensable. In the particular situation of our Latin American region, it is necessary to form a critical mass that can force change in political methods, to obtain greater legitimacy and governability.

In order to strengthen our states, it may be necessary to pay high costs, even arriving at the renegotiation of the social contract and the acceptance of a social debt that the states ought to be ready to pay.

2. *Common Interests, Reciprocity, and Mutual Respect.* In spite of the great asymmetries in technological and military economies among the United States and the countries of Latin America, the coordination, the union, and the equitable and joint search for solutions to common problems are indispensable. For the United States, it constitutes a great strategic wager; for Latin America, it is

the most convenient option. The future of the hemisphere depends, in great part, on the capacity to work as a team.

It is commonly accepted that a state is completely secure only when it is in the middle of secure states. Today's reality in Latin America is that we share the quality of insecure states, and that this quality can affect the United States in an increasingly negative way. Faced with the realities of terrorism, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, money laundering, and refugees, it is only logical to strengthen bilateral, regional, and hemispheric cooperation. Additionally, these factors of insecurity transcend the economic, social, and political aspects that stop development of our potential.

The future asks and demands a change in the policy of the United States towards Latin America. For the convenience of both, relations ought to be sustained by the force of reason, reciprocity, and mutual respect, rather than by imposition, intimidation, or threat. We ought to construct a shared long-term vision, based on the great interests that unite us, rather than on the few that can separate us.

An important aspect in the new environment of relations between the countries of the hemisphere is the revision of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance. This treaty, designed to oppose the external military threats to the continental security, ought to be rethought in light of current threats, no longer external, but now rising and operating from within, generally because of factors that we are responsible for.

Inside this general framework fits the possibility of achieving sub-regional agreements, under the umbrella of the United States, within the specific and common characteristics of the signatory countries, as is the case of narco-trafficking in the Andean countries, or of the natural or man-made disasters in the Caribbean countries. It seems to me that a propitious scenario to treat this situation in a thoughtful manner is the Special Conference on Security which will take place in Mexico this year.

A good example to mention is the Inter American Convention against Terrorism, signed by 30 American countries as a response to the acts of September 11, 2001. Within this context of cooperation and shared vision of the future, there are sufficient indications to think that the policy of the United States towards Latin America

ought to be concentrated more on the social and the economic than on the military and the political.

3. *More Productive and Equitable Commercial Relations.* The accelerated, irreversible, and frequently unbalanced process of globalization makes the world each day smaller and more interdependent. In this reality it is impossible for Latin America to achieve the desired levels of development to diminish the socio-economic breaches that characterize us, if beforehand we cannot achieve more equitable commercial relations and bigger incentives for the legal products of the region.

An important mechanism for this purpose is the Area of Free Commerce of the Americas, currently in negotiation among 34 countries. The spirit of the agreement is to incorporate itself as an instrument for correcting imbalance, promoting the productivity of the economies of the hemisphere, and at the same time permitting leverage toward the attainment of more egalitarian societies.

Within this proposal, it is necessary to look for mechanisms to strengthen trade between the societies of Latin American and U.S. markets, in critical areas like agricultural products, which would increase their purchasing capacity and could make the U.S. markets more dynamic.

In global terms, we cannot forget the weight of the amortization of external debt on Latin American countries, and its repercussions on the development of its societies, in the marginalization, in the deterioration of the quality of life and the growth of violence. From the social point of view, it is doubtful that this theme will be part of the hemispheric agenda in the next few years.

4. *Restructuring of Military Institutions.* The struggle for the survival of capitalism and democracy in the face of the communist threat occupied almost 40 years in the lives of the military institutions of the region. The armed forces of our countries were redesigned, organized, and trained for this mission. Having overcome the threat, it is necessary to execute a new process of restructuring to adapt them to the challenges of today.

We need to add effectiveness to efficiency so that the states

have in their military forces more effective instruments to support the implementation of public policies. The foregoing demands the design of a new institutional dialogue in order to configure military institutions that go further than the protection of a territory, government, or political position. In practice they should remain more engaged in what the political charters of our countries command in reference to a just society, the protection of human dignity, peace, the conservation of the environment, and the attainment of a better quality of life for all the human beings that we ought to protect.

Since wars are to win and not to continue forever, we need to discover the causes of our frustrations in the limited success of our intentions. U.S. aid with respect to equipment, training, information, and joint strategic design will always be necessary and important in order to face the common enemy. But its impact could be significantly greater if it were extended to the following areas, with the understanding that the modifications of a material order ought to be anticipated by transformations in spirit and attitude:

- Featuring the construction of a new military culture and education, intimately linked with and corresponding to the national will.
- Emphasizing the study of military strategy, its connection with social, economic, and political aspects, and its immediate impact on operational and tactical fields.
- Generating and administrating resources for defense in the strategic environment.
- Evaluating efforts and results in the light of national objectives and interests.

5. *Collective Security of a Democratic Nature.* Until now, the concept that has reigned in Latin American countries is that of national security, where the principal effect has been directed to the protection of the state from external threats. Nevertheless, the realities of today that worry us and convene us in this seminar move me to attempt a discussion about the necessity to build a new architecture of the concept of security for the American hemisphere,

within some parameters that are not easy to reconcile.

The actions of the threats that intimidate us, like terrorism, narco-trafficking, violence, the increase of corruption and its effects on the growing inequality, and consequential impoverishment of our societies, are general factors that generate a self-destructive downward spiral. Their solution requires a new plan of collective security that could very well be inside the framework of the principles that brought about the creation of the Organization of American States (OAS).

In order that the strategy of collective security be coherent, deterrent, and credible, it must be removed from the purely warlike context, must widen its sphere, and it must understand the situation in the complexity of its causes and the dynamic that they generate. Moreover, it must take into account that the valiant and, upon occasion, heroic efforts the military forces of our countries are making are important and necessary, but never sufficient to clear up such a desolate panorama.

In order to define objectives, select ways, and accommodate means for a strategy of collective security for the region, it is necessary to adopt beforehand a philosophical line that orients our thoughts. My recommendation is to gather together the proposals made in the discussion of the subject in the United Nations since 1994; the "Framework Treaty of Democratic Security," signed in 1995 in Central America; and the position of Canada during the Thirtieth General Assembly of the OAS in Windsor, in June 2000; to discuss with a judicious will such concepts in order to reduce their heterogeneity, to make them more precise, and frame them within the realities of our hemisphere.

One of the aspects to revise within such discussions is the function of military institutions. Their role cannot be relegated to a third order, but rather they should be restructured so as to achieve their potential in fulfilling their coercive and contributory duties towards the goals of democracy and the rule of law.

Some analysts warn that the United States is skeptical about the concept of human security. Nevertheless, as is affirmed in one of the working papers published by the North-South Center of the University of Miami, the U.S. delegation in Windsor declared that

the concept of human security is compatible with the values and interests of the United States and cites the priorities expressed by President Franklin Roosevelt: human dignity, democracy, human rights, and responsibility of institutions toward their citizens.

To the degree that we achieve the integration of forces in the region, that we can make less hateful the differences, that we better understand the value of life over material riches, we will have more secure societies, an environment more favorable for sustainable development, and military institutions more effective in the defense of our mutual interests from the threats that the future may bring. Success depends on our own commitment.

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