Latin America and the Caribbean: Domestic and Transnational Insecurity

Coping with Crisis
Working Paper Series

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Foreword

Terje Rød-Larsen
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The International Peace Academy (IPA) is pleased to introduce a new series of Working Papers within the program *Coping with Crisis, Conflict, and Change: The United Nations and Evolving Capacities for Managing Global Crises*, a four-year research and policy-facilitation program designed to generate fresh thinking about global crises and capacities for effective prevention and response.

In this series of Working Papers, IPA has asked leading experts to undertake a mapping exercise, presenting an assessment of critical challenges to human and international security. A first group of papers provides a horizontal perspective, examining the intersection of multiple challenges in specific regions of the world. A second group takes a vertical approach, providing in-depth analysis of global challenges relating to organized violence, poverty, population trends, public health, and climate change, among other topics. The Working Papers have three main objectives: to advance the understanding of these critical challenges and their interlinkages; to assess capacities to cope with these challenges and to draw scenarios for plausible future developments; and to offer a baseline for longer-term research and policy development.

Out of these initial Working Papers, a grave picture already emerges. The Papers make clear that common challenges take different forms in different regions of the world. At the same time, they show that complexity and interconnectedness will be a crucial attribute of crises in the foreseeable future.

First, new challenges are emerging, such as climate change and demographic trends. At least two billion additional inhabitants, and perhaps closer to three billion, will be added to the world over the next five decades, virtually all in the less developed regions, especially among the poorest countries in Africa and Asia. As a result of climate change, the magnitude and frequency of floods may increase in many regions; floods in coastal Bangladesh and India, for example, are expected to affect several million people. The demand for natural resources – notably water – will increase as a result of population growth and economic development; but some areas may have diminished access to clean water.

Second, some challenges are evolving in more dangerous global configurations such as transnational organized crime and terrorism. Illicit and violent organizations are gaining increasing control over territory, markets, and populations around the world. Non-state armed groups complicate peacemaking efforts due to their continued access to global commodity and arms markets. Many countries, even if they are not directly affected, can suffer from the economic impact of a major terrorist attack. States with ineffective and corrupted institutions may prove to be weak links in global arrangements to deal with threats ranging from the avian flu to transnational terrorism.

Finally, as these complex challenges emerge and evolve, 'old' problems still persist. While the number of violent conflicts waged around the world has recently declined, inequality – particularly between groups within the same country – is on the rise. When this intergroup inequality aligns with religious, ethnic, racial and language divides, the prospect of tension rises. Meanwhile, at the state level, the number of actual and aspirant nuclear-armed countries is growing, as is their ability to acquire weapons through illicit global trade.

As the international institutions created in the aftermath of World War II enter their seventh decade, their capacity to cope with this complex, rapidly evolving and interconnected security landscape is being sharply tested. The United Nations has made important progress in some of its core functions – 'keeping the peace,' providing humanitarian relief, and helping advance human development and security. However, there are

reasons to question whether the broad UN crisis management system for prevention and response is up to the test.

Not only the UN, but also regional and state mechanisms are challenged by this complex landscape and the nature and scale of crises. In the Middle East, for example, interlinked conflicts are complicated by demographic and socioeconomic trends and regional institutions capable of coping with crisis are lacking. In both Latin America and Africa, 'old' problems of domestic insecurity arising from weak institutions and incomplete democratization intersect with 'new' transnational challenges such as organized crime. Overall, there is reason for concern about net global capacities to cope with these challenges, generating a growing sense of global crisis.

Reading these Working Papers, the first step in a four-year research program, one is left with a sense of urgency about the need for action and change: action where policies and mechanisms have already been identified; change where institutions are deemed inadequate and require innovation. The diversity of challenges suggests that solutions cannot rest in one actor or mechanism alone. For example, greater multilateral engagement can produce a regulatory framework to combat small arms proliferation and misuse, while private actors, including both industry and local communities, will need to play indispensable roles in forging global solutions to public health provision and food security. At the same time, the complexity and intertwined nature of the challenges require solutions at multiple levels. For example, governments will need to confront the realities that demographic change will impose on them in coming years, while international organizations such as the UN have a key role to play in technical assistance and norm-setting in areas as diverse as education, urban planning and environmental control.

That the world is changing is hardly news. What is new is a faster rate of change than ever before and an unprecedented interconnectedness between different domains of human activity – and the crises they can precipitate. This series of Working Papers aims to contribute to understanding these complexities and the responses that are needed from institutions and decision-makers to cope with these crises, challenges and change.

Terje Rød-Larsen

Introduction

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the end of the Cold War coincided with transitions to democracy in Brazil and the Southern Cone, and the peaceful resolution of armed conflict in Central America. These developments, along with the intensification of globalization processes worldwide, inaugurated a hopeful era of "democratic peace" or "no war" suggesting a decreasing importance for traditional security matters. Although a series of bilateral border disputes continue to simmer in the region, the most intransient ones have been resolved. Indeed, since the 1995 war between Peru and Ecuador, interstate conflict has been all but erased, and military competition has been reduced dramatically. With the exception of Colombia's entrenched civil war and Haiti's faltering state, internal conflicts characterized by significant episodes of political violence have also become a distant memory.

And yet, the countries of the region confront new types of security challenges that they have been hard-pressed to tackle effectively. Ungovernability and institutional weakness plague the entire continent, albeit to differing degrees. High levels of political and economic instability and social unrest have led to a number of coups, presidential resignations and cyclical institutional crises since the 1990s. Furthermore, violence and citizen insecurity have reached epidemic proportions in many latitudes, making Latin America one of the most violent regions in the world today. Compounding this situation even further, transnational criminal organizations make increasing use of the area in order to stage their illegal activities.

One of the most urgent tasks confronted by Latin America and the Caribbean is the enhancement of national capacities and intra-regional mechanisms to address its security predicament, which is rooted in domestic and transnational problems that are highly interrelated. Despite considerable attempts to develop a common security agenda and to strengthen multilateral cooperative mechanisms during the last fifteen years, the existing regional architecture continues to be ill-equipped to manage many of the non-traditional security challenges present in the region today. Although small strides have been made at the bilateral and subregional levels towards this goal, marked asymmetries and diversity within the region, combined with distinct political and military priorities and perceptions of risk on the part of different countries, pose serious obstacles to greater region-wide cooperation. United States security policy following 9/11 has also not been conducive to strengthening multilateral security arrangements, given its preference for unilateral action and its fixation on terrorism. At the same time, growing ideological rifts within the hemisphere itself, between the leftist, anti-globalization, anti-American governments of Venezuela, Cuba, Ecuador, and Bolivia, pro-American governments in Mexico, Colombia, Central America and the Caribbean, and a moderate progressive block led by Brazil, Chile and Argentina, constitute yet another challenge to dealing with regional insecurity more successfully in the future.

This paper will examine the two key axes of Latin American security dynamics: on the one hand, weak governance and citizen insecurity; and on the other, transnational organized crime and illicit flows. It will also explore their interlinkages, and the ways in which secondary security challenges in the region feed off of and/or reproduce them. Based upon this discussion the paper will then evaluate distinct mechanisms for coping with these problems, identify the most likely future security scenarios in the region and suggest a number of ways in which regional insecurity might be addressed more effectively.

The Domestic Axis: Weak Governance and Citizen Insecurity

The focal domestic level security issues that challenge Latin America and the Caribbean are the byproducts of a wide range of democratic governance issues. Increasing perceptions of insecurity on the part of the region's states and societies are fueled by a series of shared endemic problems, including low institutional capacity to articulate popular demands, deterioration in democratic institutions, corruption, fragmentation of political parties, poor performance of national governments, poverty and inequality, and high levels of violence and urban crime.[1]

Since the early 1990s, many countries have undergone varying degrees of weakening of state structures. The growing illegitimacy of political institutions, the fragmentation of traditional political parties and poor performances of national governments have resulted in a marked deterioration in the

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[1] Hugo Frühling and Joseph S. Tulchin, eds., *Crimen y Violencia en América Latina: Seguridad Ciudadana, Democracia y Estado* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2005).

quality of democracy. Many states in the region, most notably in the Andes, Central America, and some areas of the Caribbean, are unable to carry out many of their core functions, including the exercise of authority over the national territory and population and the provision of basic public goods. Diminished state capacity to enforce the rule of law has gone hand in hand with growing unresponsiveness to the urgent socioeconomic needs of the region's inhabitants.

A significant number of Latin American and Caribbean states also suffer from high levels of corruption, which is closely correlated with the deficient operation of public institutions, low levels of competition, social inequality, and the illegitimacy of governmental authority.[2] In addition to widespread bureaucratic fraud, the persistence of distinct forms of patronage, the lack of governmental accountability, and the prevalence of transnational criminal organizations largely account for this situation. According to the 2005 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, Chile (21) and Uruguay (32) were the only two countries in the region that ranked among the 50 most transparent countries in the world (among a total of 159 countries analyzed), while Paraguay (144) and Haiti (155) were two of the most corrupt. On a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 10 (highly clean), nearly all Latin American and Caribbean nations weighed in at 4 or less. Among the hemisphere's subregions, the Andean region is the most corrupt, with a corruption index average of 2.96.[3]

Development indicators such as the United Nations Human Development Index suggest that the hemisphere scores relatively high within the developing world. However, poverty and inequality continue to be pervasive problems. In fact, of those areas of the globe in which democracy is firmly established, it is the most poor and unequal. According to the World Bank World Development Indicators database, today, approximately 20 percent of the region's population lives in extreme poverty. In many countries, including Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Peru, 50 percent or more of the population lives below the poverty line. The Gini index for distinct countries is also indicative of high levels of income and consumption disparities; Bolivia, Haiti, Colombia, Brazil and Paraguay exhibit particularly acute levels.[4]

Low state capacity and high levels of poverty and inequality largely account for growing levels of crime and violence in Latin America and the Caribbean. An unusually large percentage of inhabitants of the region's largest cities, nearly 75 percent, have been victims of some type of urban crime.[5] The region also boasts comparatively high homicide rates (surpassed only by Sub-Saharan Africa), considerable levels of race and gender-based violence,[6] and extraordinary levels of kidnapping.[7] During the 1990s, the average homicide rate in the region was estimated at 22.9 per 100,000 inhabitants, more than twice the global average,[8] while Colombia, El Salvador, Brazil, Venezuela, Puerto Rico, Ecuador, Mexico, and Panama registered eight of the highest homicide rates in the world.[9]

According to the Pan American Health Organization, homicide rates in recent years have remained steady or have increased in most parts of the region, with the exception of Colombia.[10] Between 1999 and 2003, those countries experiencing the highest per capita homicide rates included Colombia, Honduras, El Salvador, Brazil, and Guatemala. Homicides in Colombia have decreased steadily since 2000, reaching a twenty year low of 38 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2005. In contrast, during this same period, they have reached an all-time high of 40 per 100,000 inhabitants in Brazil and have attained explosive levels in crime-

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[2] Johan Graf Lambsdorff, "Corruption in Empirical Research – A Review," Transparency International Working Paper, November 1999.

[3] Ann C. Mason and Arlene B. Tickner, "A Transregional Security Cartography of the Andes," in Paul W. Drake and Eric Hershberg, eds., *State and Society in Conflict: Comparative Perspectives on Andean Crises* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006), pp. 74-98.

[4] World Bank, "World Development Indicators Database," available at www.worldbank.org/data/ countrydata/countrydata.html. For an analysis of the relationship between disparate income distribution and conflict, see also Ravi Kanbur, "Poverty and Conflict: The Inequality Link," *Coping with Crisis* Working Paper Series, International Peace Academy, New York, March 2007.

[5] Luis Esteban Manrique, "Un Poder Paralelo: El Crimen Organizado en América Latina," Real Instituto Elcano, ARI No. 84, July 2006, available at www.realinstitutoelcano.org/analisis/1017.asp.

[6] Between 30 and 50 percent of all women in the region have suffered from psychological abuse while between 10 and 35 perecent have been victims of domestic violence. See World Vision International, "*Faces of Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean*," 2002, available at www.wvi.org/imagine/. The chain of unresolved murders of young women in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico – amounting to 370 homicides between 1993 and 2003, equivalent to one death every two weeks – constitutes a particularly disturbing case of gender-based violence.

[7] Kidnapping statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean are considerably higher than in the rest of the world. Although this problem has been most acute in Colombia, it is also widespread in Brazil and Mexico, the latter of which registered the world's highest per capita abduction rate in 2005.

[8] A. Morrison, M. Buvonic and M. Shifter, "La Violencia en América Latina y el Caribe," in Frühling and Tulchin, *Crimen y Violencia*, pp. 117-153.

[9] World Health Organization (WHO), World Health Report on Violence and Health, 2002, available at www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/.

[10] Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Health Statistics from the Americas, 2006, available at www.paho.org/English/dd/ais/hsa2006.htm.

ridden Central America. Homicide rates throughout the region are highly correlated with male youth violence.

The region's governance and institutional crises, and its incapacity to provide effective law enforcement, have had significant repercussions in the security domain. A wide range of non-state actors with variable degrees of popular acceptance – including the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) in Mexico, guerrilla and paramilitary groups in Colombia, drug-trafficking organizations in Mexico, Colombia and Guatemala, youth gangs and criminal organizations in the urban slums of Brazil, Argentina, and Peru – have filled the void left by the state through the exercise of political, judicial and security functions in distinct national territories. Such para-state actors, along with numerous private security companies, neighborhood patrols and individual armed citizens, have privatized the provision of security by taking justice into their own hands, often through the use of terror.

Acute citizen insecurity – at times generating ungovernability – has also become manifest in high-profile conflicts in several Central American and Caribbean countries including Haiti, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. It is also apparent in the growing levels of social protest in the nations of the Southern Cone such as Argentina and Paraguay; multiple interruptions of constitutional rule in Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela; and the election of divisive political leaders in Bolivia and Venezuela along with considerable levels of social and political polarization. The Haitian crisis, the clearest instance of state failure in the region, epitomizes this (in)security predicament. Over the past fifteen years, political instability, dysfunctional institutions, state collapse, corruption, violence and rising crime rates have battered the poorest country in the hemisphere. The seeds of this acute state of violence and unrest are largely rooted in social and economic inequalities that have nurtured various forms of state terror and racial, social, and economic polarization. Since 1991, the United Nations has participated in six missions to maintain civil order and to organize a democratic transition, with limited success.

Second-Tier Domestic Challenges

Many of these shared domestic level problems make certain subregions of Latin America and the Caribbean more vulnerable when confronted by other security challenges, including natural disasters and HIV-AIDS. In the 1990s, distinct episodes of hurricanes, cyclones, tropical storms, mudslides, avalanches, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and drought took the lives of over 65,000 people and generated extensive region-wide economic losses. On average, natural disasters account for 7,500 deaths per year in the region. Temporary disruptions of local economic activity caused by natural occurrences also have serious longer term consequences, including increased foreign debt, slower growth and worsening inequality. Predicted future increases in hurricanes and tropical storms will most likely lead to greater casualties and economic hardship in the absence of corrective policy measures.

The Caribbean and Central America are particularly vulnerable to hurricanes and tropical storms, given that a large percentage of their inhabitants live in coastal areas characterized by environmental degradation, high population density, poor quality housing, and poverty.[11] State response capacity in most of the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico, with the notable exception of Cuba, is extremely deficient, while most countries lack adequate early warning systems to counteract such disasters.

Weak institutions and inadequate state intervention are also largely to blame for the region's public health problems, which revolve primarily around HIV-AIDS but also include illnesses such as tuberculosis, malaria, and polio. According to the UNAIDS/WHO *Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic* (2006), in 2005 HIV-AIDS claimed an estimated 27,000 lives in the Caribbean (16,000 in Haiti alone) and 59,000 in Latin America. Regionally, a total of 1.9 million people are currently infected and new infections of women exceed those of men. In the Caribbean, where HIV-AIDS prevalence is the highest, it is the leading cause of death among 15 to 44 year olds. The countries of the Caribbean confront significant obstacles in attempting to combat HIV-AIDS due to their economic and institutional frailty and their vulnerability to natural disasters. In addition to effective national level policies, high levels of intra-Caribbean population mobility suggest the need for a sustained subregional approach to the epidemic. As in the case of natural disasters, however, Cuba stands out as one of the only regional success stories, given the effectiveness of its health system in combating

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[11] Céline Charveriat, "Natural Disasters in LA and the Caribbean; An Overview of Risk," RES Working Paper Series 434, Inter-American Development Bank, October 2000, available at www.iadb.org/res/publications/pubfiles/pubWP-434.pdf.

infectious disease.

With few exceptions, national governments in Latin America and Caribbean have had limited success in managing these key security challenges. Particularly vexing is the fact that institutional weakness and poor governance breed insecurity and obstruct effective coping mechanisms at the national level. These same conditions frequently lend themselves to the adoption of military "solutions" to confront matters of public security. The militarization of the public security domain is misguided and counterproductive, not only because it has been visibly ineffective in reducing insecurity, but also because it endangers democracy in the region.[12] Experience suggests that strengthening the rule of law, the administration of justice and law enforcement, and combating corruption are all indispensable to improving local response capacities. In the absence of such institution-building efforts nationally, cooperation at the subregional level has also been difficult to obtain, as will be discussed subsequently.

The Transnational Axis: Organized Crime and Illicit Flows[13]

Distinct types of illicit transnational flows engulf Latin America and the Caribbean. A major portion of global cultivation, processing and trafficking of illicit drugs is concentrated in the Andean sub-region and Mexico, while illegal arms traverse the hemisphere. Several countries are also active participants in human trafficking. The connections between these black markets and corruption, the privatization of security, violence and the undermining of governmental authority are significant. Not surprisingly, the region is home to a complex web of transnational criminal activity. In addition to locally-based organizations, a considerable number of global criminal actors hailing from countries such as Russia, the former Soviet Republics, Poland, Croatia, Serbia, Hungary, Albania and Romania are also present in the region, and maintain direct or indirect relations with regional

illegal groups.[14]

Transnational criminal organizations customarily participate in myriad forms of illicit trafficking simultaneously, allowing them to amass tremendous economic clout. The global narcotics business alone generates income of approximately $320 billion per year, a figure higher than the GDP of 88 percent of the world's nations.[15] Transnational crime targets third world states in particular due to the fact that weaker, smaller and poorer countries are more vulnerable to corruption and are less capable of combating criminal activities effectively.

Drug Trafficking

The Andean region – specifically Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia – is responsible for approximately 90 percent of the total global production of coca leaf and cocaine.[16] (Although Colombia and Mexico are both important producers of heroin and feed the US market, this drug is rarely identified as a security threat by regional governments or the United States.) In the 1990s, largely as an unexpected by-product of the American-led "war on drugs," the cocaine industry became more fragmented, leading to the involvement of a growing number of illegal regional players. The mid-decade dismantling of Colombia's largest criminal organizations – the Medellin and Cali cartels – left power vacuums in several stages of the drug production and trafficking chain that were filled by micro cartels, Colombian paramilitary and guerrilla groups, and non-Colombian criminal actors, in particular, Mexican drug trafficking cartels. United States counternarcotics policy has also elicited a division of labor in the drug business whereby cultivation and processing is largely concentrated in source countries (Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia); transshipment is handled by neighboring countries (Brazil, Panama, Ecuador, Chile, Venezuela, and Central America); distribution is controlled by Mexico and to a lesser degree, Colombia; and street sales in the US continue largely in the hands of Colombians, Jamaicans, and Puerto Ricans. In countries such as Brazil where domestic drug consumption has skyrocketed, criminal

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[12] Gaston Chillier and Laurie Freeman, "Potential Threat: The New OAS Concept of Hemispheric Security," Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), July 2005, available at www.wola.org/publications/security_lowres.pdf.

[13] See also James Cockayne, "Transnational Organized Crime: Multilateral Responses to a Rising Threat," *Coping with Crisis* Working Paper Series, International Peace Academy, New York, March 2007.

[14] Anthony Maingot, "El Crimen Internacional y la Vulnerabilidad de los Estados Pequeños del Caribe," Frühling and Tulchin, *Crimen y Violencia*, pp. 277–306. See also Bruce Bagley, "Globalization and Transnational Organized Crime," in Menno Vellinga, ed., *The Political Economy of the Drug Industry*. Latin America and the International System (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004).

[15] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), World Drug Report 2005, available at www.unodc.org/unodc/world_drug_report.html.

[16] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Andean Coca Cultivation Survey 2005, June 2006, available at www.unodc.org/pdf/andean/Part1_excutive_summary.pdf.

organizations also partake in local distribution and sales activities. Brazil's role in the cocaine commodity chain has led to the emergence of drug gangs that control the *favelas* in cities such as Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. In addition to aggravating existing levels of violence, drug-related corruption in Brazil has also increased, while parallel power and security patterns have emerged in areas controlled by criminal organizations.[17]

The fact that approximately 70 percent of the cocaine entering the United States passes through Mexico, and Mexican criminal organizations now control most of these drug shipments directly, has enabled distinct drug cartels to accrue alarming levels of power and influence. At present, four major drug-trafficking organizations, the Gulf, Tijuana, Juarez, and Sinaloa cartels, and several smaller ones, participate in this business and engage in frequent turf battles in order to control the most valuable smuggling routes located in northern Mexico. Former members of the special forces of the Mexican and Guatemalan military are on the cartels' payrolls, mainly to conduct high level executions of rival group members. Although the majority of their leaders have been killed or imprisoned, cartel heads continue to run much of the drug business from jail. Record-breaking levels of drug-related violence, widespread corruption and ineffective law enforcement are three of the primary consequences of such criminal activities.

In neighboring Guatemala, drug trafficking organizations have also acquired colossal weight, given this country's role as the key Central American transit point for cocaine shipped to the United States. State authorities are hard-pressed to control rising drug-related violence, which threatens to undermine the 1996 peace accords that ended the country's internal conflict. In addition to establishing alliances with the police and military, and illegal armed groups operative in the country, organized criminal actors themselves have taken over strategic areas of the country, most notably in Guatemala City, where they exercise parastate functions, including the provision of order through vigilantism.

Transnational youth gangs constitute another

player in regional criminal operations, among which Central American *maras* active throughout Central America, Mexico and the United States are particularly visible. Key gangs include the *Mara Salvatrucha* and the *Mara 18*, whose cadres may be as many as 70,000 or even 100,000. The *maras* explosion in Central America, the high visibility of their violent acts, and the growing perception of insecurity experienced by the subregion's inhabitants has converted this problem into the central security challenge confronted by Central America today.[18] In addition to local practices of theft and extortion, the *maras* share partial control of illegal immigration routes to the United States and act as hired killers for Mexican drug trafficking organizations. Although it is also alleged that they participate in organized criminal activities, their role seems secondary at best.

Despite temporary successes in the past few years, reducing coca cultivation in source countries through aerial and manual eradication has been next to impossible in the medium term, mainly because the "balloon effect" results in coca's displacement between regional sites in response to such efforts. In addition, interdiction activities and increased military pressure have made only marginal dents in the total global production of cocaine, which has remained stable during recent years.[19] Drug consumption in the United States, the largest market for cocaine, heroin, and marijuana produced in the region, continues relatively unabated while demand for cocaine has risen in Europe and Latin America itself, in particular in Brazil, and to a lesser degree, in Argentina and Chile.

SALW Proliferation

The illicit traffic of small and light weapons among Latin American states is another key source of regional instability.[20] The principal weapons purchasers in the hemisphere are Colombian armed actors and distinct criminal organizations, often related to the drug trade.[21] This illicit flow encompasses the entire hemisphere in that transnational networks of arms traffickers operate in virtually all of Latin America and

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[17] In May 2006 prison inmates declared "war" on the city of Sao Paulo following a governmental decision to adopt stricter jail measures. The revolt paralyzed the city and surrounding areas, while rioting, bus burnings and shoot-outs with the police resulted in the death of 272 people.

[18] Gema Santamaría, "Las Maras Centroamericanas, una Identidad que Ha Dejado de Tatuarse: Posibles Lecciones para las Pandillas Mexicanas," Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM), Paper No. 9, Cepi Working Paper Series, 2006.

[19] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *World Drug Report 2005*, available at www.unodc.org/unodc/world_drug_report.html.

[20] Rachel Stohl, "The Tangled Web of Illicit Arms Trafficking," in Gayle Smith and Peter Ogden, eds., *Terror in the Shadows: Trafficking in Money, Weapons, and People* (Washington, D.C.: Center for American Progress, 2004).

[21] Matthew Schroeder, "Small Arms, Terrorism and the OAS Firearms Convention," Federation of American Scientists (FAS) Occasional Paper No. 1, March, 2004, p. 22.

the Caribbean, spreading violence, corruption, and instability throughout the region. The arms trade is closely correlated with the cocaine (and heroin) industry, due to the fact that both make use of the same transit routes and increasingly form part of an integrated black market operated by criminal groups that traffic in both commodities. Interdependence has been deepened as arms for drugs swaps have also become commonplace in recent years.

Central America is a particularly important regional player in the illicit arms trade. Since the 1990s stockpiles of weapons left over from its internal conflicts have been transported regularly to Colombia and elsewhere.[22] Other key sources include the United States, which provides large quantities of both legal and illegal weapons to the region, and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Hungary and the ex-Soviet republics, in particular).

The infamous Peruvian–Jordanian arms scandal of 2000 illustrated both the scope of arms trafficking networks and the complex linkages bringing distinct actors together via illicit flows. This case involved Jordanian government officials, European arms traffickers, the Russian mafia and military officers, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Brazilian drug lord Luis Fernando da Costa (alias Fernandinho), and Peru's National Intelligence Director Vladimiro Montesinos. In mid-2000, it was discovered that since 1999 approximately 10,000 AK-47 rifles had been delivered to the FARC in Colombia in various shipments. These weapons were collected in Russia and the Ukraine and shipped by air from several geographic sites. Government officials were bribed with cocaine in Jordan, a refueling stop on both routes. The weapons entered the Western Hemisphere via Trinidad & Tobago and Suriname, and were air-dropped into Southern Colombia. Following the delivery of the weapons, the planes landed near Iquitos, Peru, to refuel and load up with cocaine provided by the FARC in exchange for the arms. Ammunition required for the weapons was also shipped into Colombia by air from Paraguay's Triple Border area, and by land and river from Brazil.[23]

Interlinkages between the arms and drug trades should not overshadow the fact that the hemisphere in general has experienced a boom in the availability and use of both legal and illegal small weapons. Although no strict correlation exists between weapons availability and violence, in urban areas throughout Latin America and the Caribbean where criminal groups and youth gangs are prevalent, the accessibility of small arms has clearly aggravated existing violence.[24]

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a third illicit flow that is often correlated to the presence of drugs and arms trafficking networks. Although from a human security perspective human trafficking constitutes a serious challenge, at the policy level it tends to be eclipsed by the other two problems. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the world's principal sources and transit points for human trafficking.[25] Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic have particularly high participation rates. Primary destination countries include the United States (the largest importer of illegal labor), Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Thailand. Men, and more numerously, women and children, are trafficked mainly for purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labor. In recent years, sex tourism has also grown exponentially, in particular in Central America, which has become a prime destination along with Mexico, Brazil, and Colombia. Strong interlinkages exist between human trafficking and sex tourism, and widespread poverty, limited access to education and reduced employment opportunities in such countries.

Terrorism: A Lesser Transnational Threat?

There is no credible evidence that Latin America and the Caribbean is a base for international terrorist organizations or state-sponsored terrorism, although several local actors do engage in terrorist activities. With the exception of Colombia, whose current government has intentionally framed the country's armed conflict as a "war against terrorism," most of the region's countries do not consider terrorism a major

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[22] Kim Cragin and Bruce Hoffman, *Arms Trafficking and Colombia* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, National Defense Research Institute, 2001), available at www.rand.org.

[23] Bagley, "Globalization and Transnational Organized Crime," p. 275; Schroeder, *Small Arms*, p. 22.

[24] For a more detailed analysis of this issue see Keith Krause, "Small Arms and Light Weapons: Towards Global Policy," *Coping with Crisis* Working Paper Series, International Peace Academy, New York, March 2007.

[25] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Human Trafficking: Sources and Patterns, available at www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_persons_report_2006-04.html.

security threat.

In Colombia, the guerrilla groups FARC and National Liberation Army (ELN), and the paramilitary United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) - which is currently in the process of demobilization - conduct violent acts against state institutions and the country's infrastructure, as well as state representatives and the civilian population, including massacres, murders, kidnappings, forced displacement, forced recruitment of minors and bombings. In 2005, the country experienced the highest number of deaths in the world produced by antipersonnel mines – even more than Afghanistan or Cambodia. In Peru, remaining members of the Shining Path also carry out sporadic, infrequent attacks on the country's military and police forces.

Since 1999 the Triple Border area, a duty free zone where Paraguay, Brazil, and Argentina meet, and home to the largest Arab population in Latin America, has been identified by the United States as a terrorist "hotspot" where Islamic groups such as Hizbullah, Hamas and al-Qaeda conduct money laundering and fundraising activities, and strategic planning.[26] More than a terrorist enclave per se, and given the lack of strict border controls, inadequate state supervision of airstrips and waterways and the collusion of government officials, the Triple Border is a haven for numerous types of illicit activities including drug and arms trafficking, smuggling, counterfeiting and illegal migration. Along with Arab organizations, numerous regional and extra-regional mafias, hailing from countries as diverse as Chile, China, Colombia, Ghana, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Korea, Lebanon, Libya, Nigeria, Russia and Taiwan, also make use of this area.

Unresolved Armed Conflict: Colombia

After more than 40 years of internal armed conflict, Colombia constitutes the sole remaining case of internal armed conflict in the hemisphere, recently generating significant transnational effects. In addition to one of the world's highest homicide and kidnapping rates, Colombia has the second largest number of displaced people, approximately three million during the past fifteen years. Although Colombia's war is largely rooted in the domestic issues previously discussed, political exclusion and violence, and the

entanglement of armed actors with the drug industry have offered fertile soil for its reproduction.

The Colombian government's most recent peace effort with the FARC (1998-2002) was highly disappointing and was followed by an all-out war against the guerrillas. Since taking office in August 2002, President Álvaro Uribe's "defense and democratic security policy" has focused on combating the FARC and the drug trade, and establishing state control over the national territory. In mid-2003 the Uribe government initiated a negotiation process with the paramilitary AUC, which agreed to demobilize its forces and lay down its weapons by the end of 2005, with an Organization of American States (OAS) mission acting as verifier. However, since its inception, the process has been marred by several obstacles. Members of the paramilitary are responsible for the majority of Colombia's human rights violations, making the search for an acceptable mix of justice, compensation to the victims and forgiveness extremely hard. A second hurdle derives from the AUC's active involvement in drug trafficking and the reluctance of its leadership to abandon the business.

In recent years the war has spilled over into neighboring countries, mainly in the form of displaced persons and the movement of illegal armed actors across all of Colombia's international borders. Plan Colombia, a US supported counternarcotics strategy that began in 2000 and has grown into a counterterrorist operation, has generated additional transnational consequences. Predictably, all of Colombia's neighbors have stepped up the militarization of their borders in order to counteract what they perceive to be a threat to their national security.[27]

Mechanisms for Coping with Latin American and Caribbean Insecurity

During the past fifteen years, the provision of security in Latin America and the Caribbean has undergone a certain degree of institutionalization. Inter-state cooperation has intensified, confidence-building measures have prospered and many countries have made their defense and security policies explicit via the publication of "white papers," increasing transparency and public access to information. Bilateral agreements are on the rise, as is the develop-

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[26] Rex Hudson, *Terrorist and Organized Crime Groups in the Tri-Border Area* (TBA) of South America (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, July 2003).

[27] Arlene B. Tickner, "La Securitización de la Crisis Colombiana: Bases Conceptuales y Tendencias Generales," Colombia Internacional 60 (2005): 12–35.

ment of subregional security arrangements designed to address the varying regional security challenges. At the regional level too, headway has been made in sketching out a common security agenda, mainly as a result of the OAS Special Conference on Security, held in Mexico in 2003.

Notwithstanding these positive developments, the hemisphere's current security architecture, consisting of multilevel agreements and ad hoc arrangements to confront emerging problems, suffers from institutional fragmentation and a low response capacity. The Inter-American system itself faces a series of obstacles that also limit its ability to confront growing regional insecurity effectively. Not only is it poorly equipped to handle many of the non-traditional security problems faced by Latin America and the Caribbean today, but also, the political will of OAS member states to strengthen the institution is rather tepid.

Regional and subregional arrangements have been marginally more successful in dealing with problems located on the transnational axis, given growing recognition that transborder phenomena such as organized crime and the drug and arms traffic call for joint coping mechanisms. However, countries vary in the weight assigned to security issues, making the prioritization of policies and resources difficult. The fact that many of the region's key challenges are rooted in the domestic axis creates additional barriers to collective action. Strong state adherence to the sovereignty principle restrains regional involvement in what are largely considered internal problems and the responsibility of national governments. The region's lethargy regarding the Colombian conflict is particularly poignant in this regard.

Many regional actors suspect the hand of Washington behind any major initiative the OAS takes, fearing that the organization is only an instrument of direct or indirect US domination. The post-9/11 American security paradigm, which focuses almost exclusively on the "war on terror" and views numerous other topics through this lens, is increasingly at odds with the security diagnoses and policies of the majority of countries in the region. High levels of distrust towards the United States thus constitute another chief obstacle to the strengthening of Inter-American organisms. Open hostility between the Chávez and Bush administrations and attempts to force the region's governments to align behind their respective leadership has further aggravated the situation.

United States: Source or Cure for Insecurity?

United States security policies directly influence region-wide dynamics in Latin America and the Caribbean. During the past decade, its security doctrine has become increasingly at odds with the region's own security agenda. Washington's unilateralist policies have fueled anti-American sentiments and widespread mistrust, while its preference for bilateral diplomatic channels instead of multilateral ones has been a stumbling block for greater regional cooperation.

Since the mid-1980s, US security policy in the region has focused primarily upon the "war on drugs" and the use of military strategies to confront this problem. However, while exercising a negligible effect upon the production and sale of narcotics and inducing military involvement in law enforcement activities in the region, this policy has displaced other urgent objectives, including the strengthening of democratic institutions, the reduction of poverty and inequality, the control of violence, and preservation of the environment. Similarly, the American-led "war on terror" threatens to securitize the hemispheric agenda even further by subsuming many of the region's most salient problems under the lens of terrorism, including organized crime, drug trafficking, state weakness, public health crises, human trafficking and youth gangs, and by identifying leftist regimes as security threats. The US tendency to conflate insecurity with terrorism contrasts with Latin America and the Caribbean's turn towards a multidimensional security agenda whose principal topics are social, economic, and institutional in nature. Washington's new security paradigm encourages an expanded role for the armed forces by viewing non-traditional issues as military targets. This policy has proven to be ineffective, as revealed by the "drug war," and counterintuitive, in that it endangers democracy and obstructs urgently needed political and economic development, ultimately refueling regional insecurity.

Increasingly the US role, combined with Venezuelan Hugo Chávez's attempts to build an anti-American hemispheric and global alliance, act as a divisive force among Latin American countries. Although the majority of leftist and center-leftist governments, with the exception of Cuba, Ecuador, and Bolivia, do not share Chávez's hostile anti-US stance, they reject American unilateralism and are drawn to Venezuela's efforts to carve out an autonomous role for the region. The United States

could be a more constructive regional partner by supporting diverse forms of security cooperation and by abandoning attempts to align friendly governments behind its antiterrorist agenda, thus reducing intra-regional polarization.

Regional Security Arrangements

Despite the considerable array of shared security problems faced by Latin America and the Caribbean, and the fact that the region's countries have sought out mechanisms for coordinating a multilateral security policy since the 1990s, the development of a common security agenda remains an elusive goal. Although the Organization of American States' agenda has expanded in recent years, few member countries consider strengthening it a priority, while reaching consensus on security priorities and the appropriate methods and strategies to confront them has been difficult.[28] Moreover, the Organization is financially strapped, limiting its ability comprehensively to discharge its mandate.[29]

Hemispheric cooperation in security and defense matters has an institutional base and an extended history, but traditional Cold War notions that underwrote the creation of the Inter-American security architecture have yet to be replaced at the institutional level. The main pillars of this structure, which include the Inter-American Defense Board (JID) and the Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty (TIAR), are outdated and have not been sufficiently redesigned since their creation in the 1940s.[30] Consequently, during the past fifteen years the mismatch between the primary security challenges of the region and existing institutions has expanded.

In the 1990s, the OAS undertook a series of measures in order to correct this problem. In the realm of democratic governance, the institution adopted the Santiago Commitment of 1991 (OAS Resolution 1080), through which it reaffirmed and enhanced its mandate for defending democracy.[31] Resolution 1080 provided a formal mechanism for reestablishing democratic rule that has been used in Haiti, Guatemala, Paraguay, and Peru. The Inter-American Democratic Charter (also known as the Lima Charter), signed on September 11, 2001, expanded the region's commitment to collective action by including all instances of unconstitutional interruption or alteration of democracy and not just military coups. However, this device confronts a series of implementation-related obstacles, including the very definition of democracy and its potential threats, and adequate responses to such threats. The region's democratic deficit suggests that the Charter has been relatively unsuccessful, largely because it lacks adequate enforcement mechanisms and cannot be used without the consent of the errant member state, whose leadership is often responsible for placing democracy in jeopardy in the first place.

On the issue of security, the OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security, created in 1995, has sought to channel regional debates on diverse security matters and to promote consensus on strategies for combating them. This Committee has been influential in the creation of a series of conventions addressing regional security challenges, including the Inter-American Conventions on Terrorism; on Drug Abuse; on Illicit Manufacture of Firearms, Ammunition and Explosives; on Transparency in the Acquisition of Conventional Weapons; and the Inter-American Convention for the Reduction of Natural Disasters.

Beginning in 1994, summit diplomacy began to replace the largely inoperative TIAR and JID in treating regional security issues.[32] Although consisting mainly of formal statements of intent among the region's presidents, Summit of the Americas meetings have allowed a series of non-traditional security problems and approaches, including drug trafficking, confidence building, terrorism, organized crime, judicial cooperation, civil-military relations, peacekeeping and the prevention of violence, among others, to gain visibility and to receive more appropriate public debate. Moreover, the action plans agreed upon at the presidential level constitute hemispheric mandates that have been taken up at subregional summits between heads of state, and at intermediary level meetings of the region's Ministers

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[28] Inter-American Dialogue, "Responding to the Hemispheric Political Challenges," Report of the IA Dialogue Task Force on the OAS, June 2006.

[29] In crucial issue-areas such as drug trafficking and organized crime, the role of the OAS is restricted primarily to monitoring, while its preventive action capacities are severely constrained. Partnership between the OAS and UNODC on such transnational challenges is more formal than substantive.

[30] Until very recently, the JID, created to standardize military structures and training in the region, was not an agency of the OAS nor was it subordinate to the institution's political decisions. Today, it is part of the OAS and its representatives are member country ambassadors. The TIAR, a collective security regime created within the framework of the OAS, has been inactive in resolving regional conflicts since 1969.

[31] Participation in institution-building and election monitoring was also boosted with the creation of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy.

[32] Summit of the Americas meetings have been held in 1994 (Miami), 1996 (Santa Cruz), 1998 (Santiago de Chile), 2001 (Quebec), 2004 (Monterey) and 2005 (Mar del Plata).

of Defense and heads of the Armed Forces, leading to more specific cooperative agreements.

The OAS Special Conference on Security (Mexico, October 2003), marked a watershed in the development of a hemispheric security agenda. The multidimensional notion of security ultimately adopted in the Declaration on Security in the Americas is driven by recognition that the domestic security axis, including ungovernability, institutional instability and their offshoots – poverty, inequality, violence and social conflict – are the root causes of regional insecurity. They provide permissive conditions for the emergence of other security challenges, including drug, arms and human trafficking, organized crime, terrorism, natural disasters, and public health problems such as AIDS. Beyond articulating a wide security concept with enough flexibility to accommodate different state interests, the conference achieved very little in the way of prioritizing risks and specifying the institutional frameworks and cooperative mechanisms through which to address them. Furthermore, in an attempt to reconcile the distinct security agendas of member countries, including the United States, the declaration treats nearly all of the economic, social, environmental and political problems faced by Latin America and the Caribbean as security issues. Identifying such a broad array of issues as potential security threats risks their subsequent treatment with military strategies, and it reinforces recent region-wide trends to militarize the provision of public security.[33] The risk of militarization is augmented by the American post-9/11 security strategy, which views myriad factors, including "lawless areas," "radical populist" governments, and youth gangs as potential terrorist threats.

Subregional and Bilateral Coping Schemes

Subregional and bilateral security and defense schemes have fared somewhat better. Such arrangements have been seen as more effective, basically because state interests at the subregional and bilateral level are less diverse, making agreement on specific issues easier. Nonetheless, with the exception of Mercosur, which has taken important steps toward building a security community, subregional security cooperation is precarious. The existence of numerous bilateral and subregional committees and working groups through-out Latin America and the Caribbean rarely translates

into the increased institutionalization of security and defense cooperation. In this vein, the articulation of individual national strategies with subregional approaches to insecurity continues to be a major hurdle. Rearmament efforts during the past five years, led by Chile, Peru, Brazil, Colombia, and Venezuela, have also sparked new tensions and aggravated mistrust between certain countries. Additionally, existing cooperative mechanisms are concentrated in the defense arena, contributing little to coping capacity in the issue-areas that most contribute to regional insecurity.

Security and defense cooperation within Mercosur, which is less dynamic than collaboration in other issue areas such as trade, gravitates around bilateral agreements between Argentina and Chile and Argentina and Brazil. Since 1995, security and defense cooperation between the first two has evolved within the framework of a permanent security committee that has made significant headway in confidence building and transparency measures and conflict resolution. Cooperation between Argentina and Brazil has also increased in the past five years.[34] Policy coordination involving migration, customs, police and judicial officials in the Triple Border area has been especially successful. Tellingly, the members of Mercosur, in particular Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, no longer perceive each other as a threat and increasingly seek collective protection against what are seen to be common problems. This three-way partnership has also begun to transcend the subregional level. A case in point is the Brazilian, Argentine, and Chilean presence in Haiti, which largely reflects their interest in a more active global role and in buttressing multilateralism. Nevertheless, growing cooperation and policy coordi-nation have yet to translate into total transparency and the complete elimination of potential conflict. To wit, the Chilean arms race, begun in 2003, has created uneasiness in neighboring Peru and Bolivia, due to outstanding border issues, and in Argentina, given its implications for the subregional balance of power.

A thornier security environment is observable in the Andean region. Although the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) adopted the Andean Charter for Peace and Security in 2000, a regional security scheme based on a shared commitment to negotiated solutions to the region's conflicts and prohibitions on the use of force, meaningful levels of cooperation have

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[33] Chillier and Freeman, "Political Threat."
[34] Since 1999, Brazil has also created bilateral defense working groups with other South American partners, including Peru and Venezuela.

not been reached. Indeed, Venezuela's recent withdrawal could actually signal the organization's future demise. At the bilateral level, border commissions, created in the mid-1990s, have sought to improve military cooperation between different pairs of countries, and *ad hoc* diplomatic commissions have addressed remaining border disputes. Although such arrangements have been successful in preventing open conflict, subregional relations are, in general, tense. Intensification of the Colombian conflict has spurred the militarization of Andean and Brazilian borders, while the increased American military presence following the approval of Plan Colombia in 2000 has become a primary cause for alarm in Brazil, Venezuela, and Ecuador, given their fear of growing US intervention in the region. Within this generalized climate of worsening Andean relations, Colombian-Venezuelan interaction is especially worrisome. Not only are the Uribe and Chávez governments separated by a huge ideological chasm that largely obstructs security cooperation, but also, Colombia's US-supported military build-up has led to massive arms purchases by Venezuela. Current Venezuelan security doctrine, which highlights US military intervention as a major threat, has also led it to provide military aid to the ideologically akin Morales government in Bolivia.

Similar difficulties exist in Central America and the Caribbean. The Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America, signed in 1995, sought to establish a new security doctrine based upon democratic principles, the subordination of the military to civilian authorities, the strengthening of the judiciary, and the creation of collective institutional responses to shared sources of insecurity. However, efforts to combat crime and violence, two of Central America's most pressing challenges, have been ineffective. Most countries have strengthened their armed forces in reaction to these problems, threatening to further erode civilian institutions and democratic stability. Mexico's role in this dynamic is largely limited to efforts to maintain a "sanitary belt" around Central America, in particular Guatemala, and to avoid "contamination" from pervasive crime, violence, and illegal migration. The Caribbean Community, Caricom, has met a comparable fate. A regional task force on crime created in recent years has made some headway in combating money laundering, but member countries have been unsuccessful in devising effective collective strategies for dealing with alarming levels of violence related mostly to the growing presence of drug-related transnational crime.

Regional Middle Powers

Brazil has attempted to strengthen its role as a provider of regional security and stability and as a global actor. To a large degree, it has made use of regional and subregional settings and alliances in order to pursue its international goals, which include winning a seat as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, should this body be reformed. The UN multilateral peacekeeping force in Haiti that Brazil has led since mid-2004 serves this purpose by demonstrating the country's interest in becoming a global security player. Brazil, Argentina and Chile's active roles in Haiti also suggest a new kind of division of labor between the region's middle powers and the United States in the provision of security. This position differs from that of Mexico, another important regional actor that has consistently opposed participation in regional peace operations and any other action that could be interpreted as violating the principle of non-intervention.

To what extent this emerging subregional alliance can or will be put to use successfully in other conflicts in the region remains to be seen. Brazil's activism in Haiti contrasts starkly with its lethargy towards its Colombian neighbor, whose armed conflict is a prime candidate for regional teamwork. The region's inaction in Colombia remains a major puzzle that may be related to the strong American military presence there and to the Colombian government's strict alignment with Washington.

The United Nations: Significant or Secondary?

The United Nations has the capacity to influence Latin American and Caribbean security perceptions and policies, although much less so than the United States, whose regional role is pervasive. Since 1989 the UN has carried out ten peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions that have been crucial to ending or mitigating conflict in El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Haiti. Such operations have allowed the United Nations to exercise several types of peace roles, including mediation, verification of agreements, and support for different institutional initiatives in the post-conflict period. The only ongoing regional peace operation in Haiti, approved by the Security Council in 2004, reaffirms the importance of the security-development nexus for the UN. As mentioned previously, the deployment of this mission has also offered a novel opportunity for coordination among regional actors themselves, who

have taken a leading role in resolving the Haitian crisis.[35]

UN involvement in regional conflicts has met with mixed results. In El Salvador, where a peacekeeping force was operative between 1991 and 1996, the organization was active in overseeing the disarmament process, the demobilization of armed actors, the holding of democratic elections, and the inauguration of a new government. However, the reintegration of rebel groups was only partially successful, given the absence of the funding needed to assist former combatants. Additionally, although free and fair elections and civil peace have endured well beyond the UN's departure from the country, alarming levels of crime, violence, and institutional instability could derail these achievements. In addition, rising violence in Guatemala, as well as the reemergence of clandestine structures and illegal groups involved in counterinsurgency during the civil war threatens to undermine the 1996 peace accords notwithstanding the UN's decade-long presence in this country.

In addition to these cases, the fact that five different missions in Haiti carried out over the course of over ten years have been only partially effective raises questions of how ambitious UN mandates should be and what can reasonably be achieved with the means currently available to the organization.[36] The UN's first four interventions were able to reinstate formal constitutional rule but they were ineffective in establishing domestic order and in state-building. The experience accrued over this period led to a more pragmatic response in early 2004 that helped avoid higher levels of confrontation that might have led to a civil war or to a humanitarian catastrophe. Latin American participation in this process has been an added bonus, primarily because it suggests a nascent regional commitment to resolving regional problems. Although this current mission has been unable to completely disarm urban militia groups and to combat endemic crime, it has allowed for a certain degree of stability that facilitated recent presidential elections, which will be crucial to future stabilization efforts.

Whether or not the UN will be able to strengthen its role in peacebuilding in Latin America and the Caribbean will largely be a function of its available resources and the political will of its member states. The reintegration of armed actors into post-conflict societies, a crucial factor in assuring lasting peace, has been hampered by UN reliance upon the voluntary contributions of its members and inadequate funding for such processes in host countries. Additionally, state-building and the development efforts sorely needed to institutionalize peace are long-term processes that require years to consolidate and cannot be provided through peace operations alone, at least in their current form. The creation of the UN Peacebuilding Commission in 2006 constitutes a welcome attempt to mitigate this problem. However, since neither armed conflict nor peacebuilding constitutes a major challenge in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the important exceptions of Colombia, Haiti, and Central America, greater attention should be given to strengthening the role of UN agencies more directly involved in treating the non-conflict related domestic and transnational problems detailed in this paper, and in building stronger institutionalized partnerships with relevant regional and national actors.

Future Scenarios and Recommendations

What is perhaps most striking about the current security milieu in Latin America and the Caribbean is the coexistence of peace, or "no war," with myriad non-traditional security challenges, both domestic and transnational in nature, with which states are having difficulties in coping, to varying degrees. In the absence of significant corrective measures at the national level, most importantly institution-building, and the modification of subregional accords – where meaningful cooperation is most likely to succeed – to better fit the region's insecurity crises, the most probable security scenario over the next five to ten years will be "muddling through". Distinct sub-regions and countries will continue to experience fits and starts between progress and setbacks. How much progress and how severe the setbacks will be depend upon a series of factors both internal and external to the region.

Internally, the policies adopted to confront

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[35] Prior to this, in 1993, the UN and OAS joined forces in Haiti in a joint peace mission. Given that the OAS has no mandate for the use of force and that member states are sensitive to this issue, the mission constituted and interesting partnership that sought to establish complementarity between the two organizations.

[36] James Dobbins, et al., *The UN's Role in Nation-Building. From the Congo to Iraq* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2005).

ungovernability, deinstitutionalization, democratic deconsolidation, crime and violence and popular perceptions of insecurity will largely determine whether a catastrophic scenario is avoidable or not. Further strengthening of the armed forces to confront these problems will continue to erode democracy and to hamper the region's social and development needs. Moreover, militarized strategies will be ineffective for resolving this type of insecurity. In contrast, democratic institution-building, enhanced law enforcement and the effective administration of justice may well steer Latin America and the Caribbean towards a better case scenario.

Notwithstanding the importance of individual state action, at present, a considerable number of states in the region (in particular in Central America, the Caribbean and the Andes) experience different degrees of weakening that severely curtail their ability to manage both domestic and transnational challenges alone and threaten to deteriorate into full-blown state collapse in several cases. Regional and extra-regional actions must be tailored to address this situation and to buttress national-level coping capacities.

The record of the OAS as a field operator in defending democracy and human rights and monitoring elections has improved substantially, but additional steps must be taken to bolster its effectiveness in other issue-areas related to institution-building, crime and violence, and drug and arms trafficking, where the Organization has a clear political mandate. In this vein, the multidimensional security concept inaugurated by the OAS in 2003 should be viewed as a relative success story, given that it highlights many non-traditional problems confronted by the region today. Figuring out how to operationalize this new security agenda and to integrate national strategies into coherent subregional and regional coping mechanisms will be a major

challenge for the region. The need to do so within the limits created by US influence and interests constitutes an additional hurdle.

United States security policy in Latin America and the Caribbean, related mainly to counter-narcotics and counterterrorism, and the evolution of current ideological polarization, will also be factors that determine which of many future security scenarios materialize. Arguably, shifts in the American-led "war on drugs," including demilitarization, de-penalization and the promotion of long-term alternative development policies, would have a significant positive impact upon drug trafficking and organized crime. Progress in combating these key transnational challenges more productively would also lead to headway on the domestic axis, where weak governance and citizen insecurity are fueled by these illicit activities.

On the other hand, growing divergence between US security policies and those of regional actors could well ignite tensions and further hinder cooperation. The sustainability of Venezuela's active anti-American diplomacy will largely depend upon the country's oil revenues and the degree to which President Chávez can strengthen alliances with like-minded partners both regionally and globally. Whether or not a more moderate trend, led by Brazil, Chile and/or Argentina will prevail, hinges largely on the second-term strategies of the Lula government in Brazil and a potential shift in US security discourse, which seems more likely following the Democratic victory in the November 2006 legislative elections. Although it is improbable that full rapprochement will occur between the United States and leftist or center-leftist governments in the region, if Washington were to become a more conciliatory, less aggressive and more pragmatic regional partner significant strides would be made towards reducing potential sources of conflict.

Further Reading

Goucha, Moufida and Francisco Rojas Aravena, eds. *Human Security, Conflict Prevention and Peace*. Santiago de Chile: UNESCO–Flacso, 2003.

This book provides an exhaustive analysis of the diverse human security problems confronting the distinct subregions of the hemisphere. It also offers a particularly useful examination of potential regional and international responses to such challenges.

Grabendorff, Wolf, ed. *Seguridad Regional en las Américas. Enfoques Críticos y Conceptos Alternativos*. Bogotá: Fescol–Cerec, 2003.

This book offers a thorough examination of security issues confronting the Americas today. Its overall objective is to evaluate the potential benefits and costs of the new hemispheric security agenda.

Tulchin, Joseph S., Raul Benitez Manaut and Rut Diamint, eds. *El Rompecabezas: Conformando la Seguridad Hemisférica en el Siglo XXI*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros, Bonaniae Libros, Fundaungo, 2006.

The chapters in this edited volume provide an excellent discussion of the myriad security dynamics that are operational within the Americas and the effectiveness of national, subregional and hemispheric actors and mechanisms for confronting them effectively.

Tulchin, Joseph S., H. Hugo Frühling and Heather Golding, eds. *Crime and Violence in Latin America: Citizen Security, Democracy, and the State*. Washington: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.

This volume focuses on regional citizen security issues with the goal of comparing distinct countries and subregions, and formulating policy recommendations. Distinct chapter authors analyze issues ranging from reforms to the criminal justice systems to police-military relations, public policy and violence.

Vellinga, Menno, ed. *The Political Economy of the Drug Industry. Latin America and the International System*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004.

This edited volume offers a comprehensive assessment of the most salient aspects of the drug industry within the region, while exploring possible policy initiatives for addressing this problem.

Youngers, Coletta and Eileen Rosin, eds. *Drugs and Democracy in Latin America: The Impact of US Policy*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005.

This book offers a comprehensive review and assessment of US drug-control policies and their repercussions for Latin American democracies, and includes detailed country and regional case studies.

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