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The return of geopolitics to Latin America: border problems between Colombia and Venezuela and other issues

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## **The return of geopolitics to Latin America: border problems between Colombia and Venezuela and other issues**

### **Abstract:**

The president of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro announced that he will start a constitutional state of emergency rule in the border municipalities: Bolívar, Ureña, Junín, Capacho Libertad and Capacho Independencia. The following expatriation of more than a thousand Colombians has caused another crisis between Colombia and Venezuela. Regional inability to combat this crisis, and the support by some of the leaders from regional security organizations to a side in the conflict, cast doubts on the integration in Latin America and show the weakness of the regional organisations.

Factors to be taken into consideration are: the rise of populist nationalisms, the blaming of domestic problems to the conspiratorial activities of neighbouring countries, transnational and cross-border dynamics, anti-Americanism and the role of the US following the recent initiatives of President Obama in relation to Cuba, and the lack of an effective definition of the armed forces of these countries and their political use.

### **Keywords:**

Latin America, Venezuela, Colombia, Cuba, USA, OAS, UNASUR, Unity Summit, Border Crisis, civilian control of the armed forces, Western Hemisphere.

## Introduction

On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> August, President of Venezuela Nicolás Maduro, announced that during that same evening he would declare a constitutional state of emergency rule in the border municipalities of Bolívar, Ureña, Junín, Capacho Libertad and Capacho Independencia. The forced deportation of more than 1000 Colombians and the demolition of their houses have put the Colombian government, who will try to solve the problems by the traditional diplomatic means, on guard.

President Maduro rules out the idea of reopening the border “on a border section operated by smugglers and paramilitaries,” and justified his decision with the “ambush that wounded three soldiers and a civilian, and a continuing leak of food, medication and fuels, 40% of which are smuggled into Colombia leaving Venezuela looted.” He also defended his measures by describing them as a way of fighting “the Colombian criminals and paramilitaries.”

After declaring he loves and respects Colombia and its people, since 5.6 million out of a total of 30 million residents in Venezuela have a Colombian origin, Maduro stressed that 144,000 Colombians entered Venezuela in 2014, and 121,000 have done so in 2015, which he describes as a mass exodus to Venezuela. For the time being, diplomatic solution attempts at a bilateral degree, with meetings of the foreign affairs ministers of both countries, or the possible mediation of multilateral organizations such as the OAS or UNASUR, have not succeeded.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of September, Maduro fuelled tensions even more by commanding the shutting of the border at Paraguachón, maintaining the state of emergency rule in the Guajira, Mara and Almirante Padilla areas. The President mobilised a contingent of 3,000 uniformed personnel to monitor the border crossing point, while he accepted the mediation of both Brazil and Argentina. NTN24 echoed Maduro’s words:

*“After an accurate assessment to build the new frontier, I have decided to close the border crossing point of Paraguachán at Zulia State, to keep on making progress on the liberation of criminal paramilitary smuggling offenses.”<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://digitaltn24tv.info/noticia/sin-marcha-atras-maduro-descarta-reabrir-frontera-con-colombia-sin-que-se-restablezca-la-paz-65557>

Some analysts believe that the state of emergency rule declared by Venezuela at its border with Colombia has an internal dynamic origin related to the upcoming October presidential elections, and are not so much derived from an attempt to overcome an issue with its neighbour country. They also emphasise the fact that even though paramilitaries are blamed by Maduro, no reference at all is made to the terrorist groups FARC or ELN.

The President of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos, tries to show a more moderate and conciliatory position. Referring to the deportations of Colombians, he stated that: “the deportations cannot be discriminatory for nationality reasons [...] they cannot affect the rights of minors, nor separate families.” The Colombian President complained about the OAS’s refusal to summon a chancellor meeting to fight the escalating crisis: “We went to the OAS to inform about the outrages that Colombians have suffered, but there are many more stages of proceedings to be made. We will continue appealing as long as there are plausible scenarios.”

Santos considers filing a complaint to the International Criminal Court, reasoning human rights violations committed by Venezuelan uniformed personnel; regarding the border’s “inhuman and cruel scene.” He also emphasises that: “Diplomacy does not mean indifference. One must not shout to be heard when he is right (...) Colombians can be certain we will not rest when defending the rights of those being deported.”

Setting aside any kind of judgement, which is not suitable for us, there is a set of aspects considered indeed appropriate to be commented on. The first element we can point out is the ineffectiveness shown by international and regional organisations. Neither the OAS (maybe due to the presence of the USA), nor UNASUR at a South American regional level, have reacted with the promptness and independence that should be expected. UNASUR’s capacity to solve the regional problems, as it did in fact in the diplomatic crisis of 2008 of Colombia with Ecuador and Venezuela, after Operation Phoenix.

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A second element is the incoherence of the populist discourse, which tries to internationalize the domestic problems with its “complex of innocence,” by blaming the neighbour country. Carlos Malamud,<sup>2</sup> recalls Nicolas Maduro’s opinions about both the paramilitary plot of Colombian origin and the large shallow cast of Álvaro Uribe appearing to be behind the attack that took the lives of two soldiers in the border with Colombia. In a populist tone, Maduro declared: “We are victims of capitalism, of the paramilitary capitalist model of the Colombian right wing. It is an ultra-savage model.” The lack of Venezuelan prominence in the negotiations of the Colombian government with the FARC, and the negotiations between Cuba and the USA, seem to have left Venezuela both in an international isolation and a condition of extreme dependence on China. However, it is still true that Venezuela has become a transit route of Colombia’s cocaine traffic.

The regional governments’ silence has been the trend. As Malamud states:

*“No one wants to receive criticism for interfering in other countries’ “national” affairs, even though on this occasion (as it occurs on many others), the most basic fundamental human rights are being violated. Evo Morales, Rafael Correa or Cristina Fernández (always diligent when it comes to criticise the European migration policies), have not made any statements related to the deportations of Colombians. Neither have the governments of Brazil nor Chile. Finally, after a week since the start of the conflict by Colombian demand, Uruguay (who holds the pro tempore Presidency) decided to convene an UNASUR chancellor meeting.”*

The very dynamics of the border areas, the interdependence between neighbour countries, the USA’s influence, and the role of the FAS (armed forces) in Latin America are all additional elements to be considered.

## **The return of geopolitics to Latin America**

When facing the current situation, it is striking to see how the return of populist nationalisms is ruining the hard-won process of regional integration. Furthermore, this

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<sup>2</sup> Malamud, Carlos. Los mitos que se lleva por delante la crisis colombo venezolana. Infolatam. 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2015.

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happens in a region where the main cultural factors are coherent, which would initially favour an integration in the style of the EU.

Latin America seemed to feel in control of its own fate for the first time in its recent history, and it wanted to become independent from its northern “older brothers” (the U.S. and Canada).<sup>3</sup> Nowadays, the United States has decided to change its role in the region for the first time since it placed its sight, interests and excesses, in the continent, on the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Ibero-America must show that it can build its own future in a “sovereign” way, which is not the same as an “isolated” way.<sup>4</sup> What should we renounce? asks Carlos Mesa Gisbert:

*[We should renounce] the swinging logic, the ideological rhetoric of extremes, the old temptation of the Revolution, and especially, messianism. We need less evident fates and a more everyday basis of resources that give us discipline, order, a sense of civic responsibility, and a clear connection between state and society. All of them come under one name and one concept: tax, and reciprocity from the state to the taxpayer.*

In most of the regional countries, social democratic or populist governments (with some exceptions) have assumed power through democratic elections. The perceptions of security of some of these governments differ largely from those fostered by the United States.<sup>5</sup> Amongst these countries we can find Brazil, a rising power that pursues a leading role in South America. The main concern, as Condoleezza Rice expounds “is not that the United States does not have the ability of global leadership, but it lacks willingness. Americans need to take part in foreign affairs because we have to do so, not because we want to do it. That is a beneficial attitude: the attitude of a republic as opposed to an empire.”<sup>6</sup>

It is common to refer to Latin America as a region with a clear common identity and a destiny view which is shared. But Latin America has never been a homogeneous

<sup>3</sup> Forman, Johanna Mendelson, Hemisphere Highlights.. 2010, CSIS Hemisphere Highlights, volume IX, issue 2, February 2010

<sup>4</sup> Gisbert, Carlos Mesa, AMÉRICA LATINA, DENTRO DEL PÉNDULO.. 2010, FP en español

<sup>5</sup> Mathieu, Hans, Paula, Rodríguez Arredondo; Anuario 2009 de la Seguridad regional en América Latina y el Caribe; Friedrich Ebert Stiftung en Colombia -Fescol-

<sup>6</sup>Rice, Condoleezza; Repensar el interés nacional El realismo estadounidense para un nuevo mundo; Foreign Affairs Latinoamérica, volumen 8, número 4, pág. 130-150.

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region, in spite of having enjoyed strong convergence periods in relation to the idea of political openness and economic liberalization.<sup>7</sup> The democratic boost experienced by governments in recent years, added to an acceptable economic development and the creation of certain conciliatory policies, has caused a considerable change in the regional appearance.

The “Unity Summit” of the Rio Group and the Caribbean Community, held in Cancun in 2010, appeared to be a step forward in the evolution of Latin American geopolitics. 33 countries from South America and the Caribbean, with five different languages, got together to found a new regional organisation: The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), which excludes both the United States and Canada.<sup>8</sup> But according to Andrés Malamud, “the main concordance [in Latin America] still is the existence of two mutually intelligible languages. There is not much more to it.”

Inter-state cooperation faces a traditional problem in Latin America: the mistrust of the neighbour countries’ intentions. Thus the disturbance of the existing status quo due to the Venezuelan purchase of Russian weapons, led to a Colombian strengthening of its conventional capabilities plan. Alongwith the deployment in its North American force bases, this creates distrust throughout the subcontinent. Brazil does not trust the intentions of Venezuela; Peru, Bolivia and Chile, keep up their disputes; and in spite of the progress made, Argentina and Chile keep a close watch on each other, and have become wary of Brazil’s “juggling”.<sup>9</sup>

The fragmentation shown by Latin America and the Caribbean entails negative effects for the regional countries. Nevertheless, certain changes that harbour hopes can be seen:

- Economic globalisation, sub-regional agreements and interdependence relations are more effective and link various areas, forcing a better coordination of policies.

<sup>7</sup>Las Américas y el Mundo 2008. *Informe elaborado por el equipo de “Las Américas y el Mundo 2008-México”*. Documento de trabajo Real Instituto Elcano

<sup>8</sup> Forman., Johanna Mendelson. Opus cit.

<sup>9</sup> Malamud, Carlos; Isbell, Paul; Steinberg, Federico; Ibidem

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- A decrease in risk and fostering of confidence and exchange of information. Disappearance of self-referent geopolitics and acceptance of the International Court jurisdiction for the settlement of disputes.
- The “Summit Diplomacy.” Large network of diplomatic conferences and gatherings on a hemispheric, regional, sub-regional and even extra-regional level.

However, as it has become evident with the repeated crises between Colombia and Venezuela, those positive indicators are being surpassed by the prevailing populism. As Carlos Mesa Gilbert states:

“A continent where institutions are invented every five-year period, demolished every decade, and where [they] do not work correctly for the vast majority of time, has a very difficult time attaining its goals. In this story, the breadcrumbs are the biggest existing sorrow. What is built during the day is destroyed during the night, and what is rebuilt takes a different view.”<sup>10</sup>

According to Federico Merke, Latin America is distinguished by certain facts that are emphasised in South America’s case:

- In two hundred years, no state has disappeared from the map and only one state has been born.
- The principle of Utis Possidetis (as you possessed, you may possess) which allowed the state borders to be traced amongst the states in a much more peaceful way than in Europe. The agreement was reached even before the independence from Portugal and Spain.
- Latin America is the region in the world that contains most bilateral and multilateral agreements related to the pacific resolution of conflicts, as well as the “world record on adjudication and arbitration.”<sup>11</sup>

This does not mean that political violence has been eradicated, but rather that “there has been a limited conception of force within a strong diplomatic culture” or it has

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<sup>10</sup>AMÉRICA LATINA DENTRO DEL PÉNDULO. Carlos Mesa Gisbert. FP *Edición española*. Febrero-marzo 2010

<sup>11</sup> Merke, Federico. The Primary Institutions of the Latin American Regional Interstate Society, p.23

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been confined inside the borders, as opposed to going through them. As a result, security has acquired a national connotation rather than an international one.

The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), created in May 2008, represents the framework of an autonomous South American governing structure, with defence and security issues gathered under the supervision of its South American Defence Council (CDS). Its main objectives are to consolidate South America as a peace zone, and to create a common identity and strengthen regional cooperation in the field of defence. It is worth noting that, in spite of its ideological rhetoric, this does not imply a common defence policy, let alone a military alliance.

According to Germán Prieto<sup>12</sup>, UNASUR is not a regional integration process: it is instead a cooperation one, yet it comes from a constructivist perspective. The institutionalisation of a regional construction process produces confidence amongst states, which in turn favours the consolidation of a peace zone. A turn towards regional integration would strengthen the project, but this turn would jeopardise the project itself in the present circumstances.

The fact is that, as María Inés Ruz considers, in South America ideological aspects and very different political views coexist regarding the model of economic development and international alliances, as well as dissimilar perceptions about the security threats and risks. Some analysts question the CDS real prospects, in conditions where a common approach is still not found.<sup>13</sup>

There are three important dynamics which also affect the border problem: interdependence amongst countries and amongst different country regions and border area dynamics, and the different relations with the USA.

### Interdependencies and the border area dynamics

Although seemingly paradoxical, Colombia and Venezuela have a clear interdependence, even energetic, and it is not unilateral. What happens in a country,

<sup>12</sup> Prieto, Germán Camilo. La institucionalización de la Unasur y los avances en seguridad y defensa. Anuario 2012 de la seguridad regional en América Latina y el Caribe, p. 3-4

<sup>13</sup> Ruz, María Inés, El Consejo de Defensa Suramericano a dos años de su instalación.

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affects the rest, despite the fragmentation that characterises Latin America. As Niño Guarnizo sees it:

*[...] Latin American countries continue to be reluctant to make any compromise that implies a handover of sovereignty to a supranational organisation. The integration attempts based on trade seem to have failed in the region. Not only the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) has not even achieved a real common external tariff and much of the regulations established within the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) framework are not fulfilled, but the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) distanced Mexico from the other Latin American countries, at least on business exchange terms, and the Central American and Caribbean countries also seem to have failed on making any progress in the subject matter.<sup>14</sup>*

The governmental change in Colombia implied a shift in its foreign policy. During Álvaro Uribe's administration, there was a rapprochement with the United States and a distancing from the other regional countries. With the arrival of Juan Manuel Santos (2010-) the relations were thoroughly reassessed,<sup>15</sup> (Niño Guarnizo 2011, XX). Another important element is the peace process carried out by the Colombian government with the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia).<sup>16</sup>

However, the event that may have mostly altered the regional agenda was the death of Venezuela's President Hugo Chávez, who had been re-elected for his fourth consecutive term in office as President of his country four months before. The death of the Venezuelan leader raises a number of concerns about the future of Chavism, and what he entitled the socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>17</sup>

The main uncertainty element has been, until this last year, Cuba. After exporting the revolution for decades, it continued suffering an embargo which had now become irrational, and was lifted in 2015 by the Obama administration. Venezuela had taken over from Cuba during the term of Hugo Chávez, and had managed to export its model to a number of countries. Nevertheless, the leadership abilities of his

<sup>14</sup> Niño Guarnizo, Catalina, La seguridad de América Latina: respuestas fragmentadas a desafíos transnacionales.p XVII

<sup>15</sup>Ibid p.20

<sup>16</sup> Niño Guarnizo, Catalina. Anuario 2013 de la seguridad regional en América Latina y el Caribe, p. XVI-XVII

<sup>17</sup>Ibid,p. XV-XVI

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successor, Nicolás Maduro, seem to be considerably lower, which combined with the economic downturn of this oil-producing country and its internal problems, decrease its anti-hegemonic capability in the region.

Energy nationalism allows us to distinguish two large groups: The Venezuelan and the Brazilian groups. Venezuela's case shows the limitations of energy hyper-nationalism. Venezuela, whose income from oil represents 30% of its GDP, remains dependent on the United States, in spite of its extreme anti-imperialism. Periods of both increase in demand and high market prices, allowed Venezuela to finance social policies and to maintain a leadership role among the ALBA countries group, as well as to maintain an international alignment with competing geopolitical countries of the United States. However, when demand is reduced and prices fall, it cannot sell all its crude to China.<sup>18</sup>

These two main Ibero-American oil producing countries, have in turn energetic dependencies: Venezuela depends on Colombia's gas to supply some areas of the country which are far apart from the production facilities, and Brazil depends principally on Bolivian but also Argentinian gas to supply its most industrial areas.<sup>19</sup>

No country in South America has been able to force or bribe its neighbours single-handedly, thus the regional hegemonic capabilities have traditionally lain outside the continent. The correlation of forces between the major powers, mainly Argentina and Brazil, had been equitable until the 1980s, and both mutual distrust and the shortfall of extra-regional threats prevented the creation of a joint security. Nevertheless, the balance of power had already started to shift towards Brazil, and in the year 2000, it was indisputable that bipolarity was no longer the adequate description for the regional issues state, (Malamud y Alcañiz 2014, 1).<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Malamud, Carlos, Isbell, Paul y Steinberg, Federico. La situación energética en América latina: Estados contra mercados.

<sup>19</sup> Malamud, Carlos, Isbell, Paul y Steinberg, Federico. Op. Cit..

<sup>20</sup> Malamud, Andrés y Alcañiz, Isabella. Managing Security in a Zone of Peace: Brazil's Soft Approach to Regional Governance. p.1

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We cannot forget, as Fareed Zakaria reminds us,<sup>21</sup>that we are currently living “the third great power shift of the modern age,” which could be referred to as “the rise of the rest”:

*A feature of this new age is the shift of the power of states to other actors: and amongst ‘the rest’ that are rising, there are many non-state actors [...] Power is abandoning nation-states and shifting upwards, downwards and towards the fringes.*

The boundaries between national and international security are difficult to define, and lead to the concept of “intermestic” threat, which is characterized by “the absence of threats in the borders and the absence of borders for the threats.” This concept adds more difficulties to the conceptualization of security.<sup>22</sup>The contradiction is that the entitled “new threats” have existed for a long time, but only become threats when they are “triggered” by globalization.<sup>23</sup>

If the risks that have become threats, do not have borders, the unsurmountable quality of the frontier itself generates an area with its own economic, cultural and social dynamics, and different to the border countries’ ones. This is especially true in the triple border, but it is also evident in the border between two countries such as: Venezuela, which is an oil producer and a rentier state, and Colombia, a goods producer and drug exporter. These dynamics can be stopped for some time, but cannot be suppressed indefinitely.

### The USA factor

As Niño Guarnizo recalls, “the regional security trends of previous years have endured during the last year: the diminishing of United States’ influence over the region and the extension of organized crime along with the security challenges that it represents, and the democratic governability of some countries.”<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Zakaria, Fareed. El mundo después de USA. Madrid : Espasa, 2009, pp 13-15

<sup>22</sup> HOWARD, Michael. Las causa de los conflictos y otros ensayos. Madrid : Ediciones Ejército, 1987.

<sup>23</sup> . KOURLIANDSKY, Jean-Jacques, Nuevas amenazas un concepto relativo La Vanguardia, Dossier, nº 84, págs. 84-85

<sup>24</sup> Niño Guarnizo, Catalina. Anuario 2013 de la seguridad regional en América Latina y el Caribe, Op cit.

It can be determined that the current North American geopolitics in Ibero-America are focused on:

- A “soft” political control of its hinterland, “America for Americans,” through optimistic attitudes realized through multilateral organizations that lead a certain alignment with United States’ stances.
- The diversification of the origin of resources, mainly energetic, that reduce its strategic dependence on the Eurasian “great crescent”, where 75% of the world’s hydrocarbon reserves are found.<sup>25</sup>
- The control of both the Panama Canal and its access routes.
- The fight against trafficking, mainly the production and trafficking of drugs, and against transnational organized crime as a means to stabilize the Central American and Caribbean democracies, which in some cases are young and fragile.

Headed by Venezuela, the ‘anti-imperialist’ member countries of ALBA explicitly reject the United States’ foreign and security policy, claiming for them: the representation of the peoples, keeping a political and ideological competency with other social democratic governments of the region, and actively seeking the establishment of strategic security alliances with extra-regional powers such as China, Russia or Iran.

Finally, there is the issue of the five joint utilisation bases in Colombia (according to the commander of the U.S. Southern Command, General Gouglas Fraser’s declarations: Malambo, Apiay, Palanquero, Tolemaida and Larandia, and the naval bases of Cartagena and Bahía Malaga),<sup>26</sup> which after the closure of the Manta base in Ecuador, will be dedicated to the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking. These bases are seen by Ecuador, and particularly by Venezuela, as a direct threat to their sovereignty. We must add to them the ones in; Comalapa in El Salvador, Soto Cano in Honduras, or Liberia in Costa Rica. Further to the south, we find both Iquitos and

<sup>25</sup> El desarrollo de tecnologías para la obtención de gases de esquísto ha reducido el valor de este factor, pero solo temporalmente.

<sup>26</sup> Yáñez, Antonia. **Bases militares: el realismo mágico transformado en práctica política.** La Honda digital nº 449, Uruguay, agosto 2009 <http://www.laondadigital.com/laonda/LaOnda/449/A5.htm>

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Nanay in Peru (Peruvian bases with a certain North American presence) and the Paraguayan El Chaco (Mariscal Estigarribia base), next to the triple border and the Guarani Aquifer, and from where Bolivia and Venezuela can also be controlled.

But the history of relationship between the USA and Latin America is long and violent. The concept of national interest related to Latin America was pushed to its limit by President William Howard Taft, who stated in 1912, in relation to the foreign affairs of its country:

“It is not far off, the day when three stars-and-stripes flags distinguish at three equidistant sites the extension of our territory: one at the North Pole, another at the Panama Canal, and the third at the South Pole. The whole hemisphere will be ours, as a matter of fact, by virtue of our racial superiority, it is already morally ours.”<sup>27</sup>

During the same period, President Roosevelt recalled his successful conquest of Colombian territory, while he recounted how he had emancipated Panama.<sup>28</sup>

In the midst of the Cold War, after a travel through Latin America, Kennan presented a controversial report in February and March, 1950, which has been recently declassified by the Secretary of State. It asserted:

“The existence of any other region in the world where nature and human behaviour have combined to produce an unhappier and more desperate basis for human life than in Latin America seems to me unlikely.”

His opinion about the military importance of Ibero-America is in line with the above:

“The military significance of the Latin American countries for us, lains nowadays more in the extent to which we may be dependent upon them for materials essential to the prosecution of a war; and more importantly in the extent to which the attitudes of the Latin American peoples may influence the general political trend in the international community. This general political trend will unquestionably be an important determinant of the final world-wide results of another major military conflict.”

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<sup>27</sup> Galeano, Eduardo. Las Venas Abiertas de América Latina. Mexico, Buenos Aires : Siglo XXI editores , 1970

<sup>28</sup> Selser, Gregorio. Diplomacia, garrote y dolares en America Latina. Buenos Aires : Palestra, 1962

Fiori does not think that the United States will renounce to what it has traditionally considered to be its three justifications to intervene, and what has guided its hemispheric policy during the twentieth century:

- In the event of an external threat,
- In the event of economic disorder,
- In the event of a threat to democracy and good governance.

### The military factor: ¿towards a regional democratic security?

The prerogatives of military power remain important in Latin America, and the possible territorial and frontier conflicts provide a justification for the continuing of its functions. However, the rule of law cannot consolidate if the military prerogatives are maintained and if the elected civil management does not take on all the areas of state management.<sup>29</sup> As a matter of fact:

"Civilian supremacy entails more than simply minimizing military intervention in politics. It requires establishing the primacy of elected civilian authorities (executive and legislative) in all areas of policy, including the formulation and implementation of national defence policy,"<sup>30</sup> (*Diamond y Plattner 1996, xxviii*). Rut Diamint rightly defines civilian control of the Armed Forces,<sup>31</sup> as the continuous process of defence policy creation by the legitimate constituted power, with a clearly defined chain of command, which guarantees that the beginning and end of any armed intervention responds to a civilian authority decision. We must ensure subordination and supervision, which implies:

- a) The establishment of a legal framework that limits the military function,
- b) The creation and operation of an effective structure in the executive branch,
- c) The development of the role of parliamentary control.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Diamint, Rut. *Conducción Democrática de la Defensa*. cedoh.

<sup>30</sup> Diamond, Larry y Plattner, Marc. Introduction. [aut. libro] Larry Diamond y Marc Plattner *Introducción a Civil-Military Relations and Democracy*. *Civil-Military Relations and Democracy* p. xxviii

<sup>31</sup> Diamint, Rut. *Ibid*

<sup>32</sup> Iglesias, B. *Militares y democracia en América Latina de los 90: una revisión de los condicionantes legales e institucionales para la subordinación*.

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If the armed security forces had to carry on external missions (much more preferable instead of internal missions as these last ones can be politicized), it is necessary to examine the possible interstate conflicts. Mercado Jarrín believed that there are three types of interstate conflicts in Latin America: territorial (bordering), political and anti-hegemonic conflicts, (1988, 93).<sup>33</sup> Interstate bordering disputes represent a third of all conflicts, and tend to be more extended and latent than any other type of dispute.<sup>34</sup> Latin America maintains a number of disputes ranging from contested demarcation lines to territorial occupations. Even though most disputes have been historically resolved through some form of arbitration or bilateral negotiation and these conflicts are not usually violent, they have a notable impact on the regional stability due to their duration.<sup>35</sup> The traditional war hypotheses linked to the neighbouring countries' invasion or the emergence of revolutionary movements, are not very likely today. The end of political-military conflicts implied a new era for the armed forces. The intra and interstate conflict hypotheses gave way to other agendas.<sup>36</sup>

We read in the only paragraph dedicated to the "Western Hemisphere", of the Quadrennial Defence Review of 2014:

"In the Western Hemisphere, predominant security challenges no longer stem principally from state-on-state conflict, right-wing paramilitaries, or left-wing insurgents. Today's threats stem from the spread of narcotics and other forms of transnational organized crime, the effects of which can be exacerbated by natural disasters and uneven economic opportunity. These challenges are shared and do not respect sovereign boundaries. It is in the mutual interest of all the nations of the Western Hemisphere to unite to develop regional capacity to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat these threats from non-state actors."<sup>37</sup>

The military have accepted the democratic order in a more or less generalized way, and have also come to terms with the fact that a military coup would lead to

<sup>33</sup> Jarrín, Edgardo Mercado. The Impact of World Crisis on Geopolitical Conflicts.,(1988, pág. 93).

<sup>34</sup> Pfetsch, Frank R. y Rohloff., Christoph. National and International Conflicts, 1945-1995.

<sup>35</sup> Conflictos fronterizos en América Central: Tendencias pasadas y sucesos actuales. Orozco, Manuel. p. 105

<sup>36</sup> PNUD. Desafío de la Multiculturalidad. Segundo Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano en Centroamérica y Panamá. p. 242-3

<sup>37</sup> [http://archive.defense.gov/pubs/2014\\_Quadrennial\\_Defense\\_Review.pdf](http://archive.defense.gov/pubs/2014_Quadrennial_Defense_Review.pdf)

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international isolation. Nevertheless, strategic power areas have been saved, and civilian control over the Armed Forces has been minimized, while the military have kept as much autonomy as possible. Moreover, they have retained a significant amount of public resources, and have taken up new work. All this comes under a behaviour which Felipe Agüero has called “expansive entrenchment.”<sup>38</sup>

The international detente and the democratic consolidation processes have left the appropriate conditions for the redefining of security and for a remodelling of the role and functions of the armed forces in Latin America. However, this redefinition is taking place through specific actions, in most of the countries of the region. The armed forces extend their functions to new territory that would originally belong to civilians and other state institutions, and the pressure and influence of the U.S. is influencing the modelling of these functions. New risks for democracy emerge with this “expansive” process, and the demilitarization and professionalization processes of the Armed Forces become problematic,<sup>39</sup> (Hens y Sanahuja 1995).

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<sup>38</sup> Hens, Marián y Sanahuja, José A., Seguridad, Conflictos y Reconversion Militar en América Latina

<sup>39</sup> Hens, Marián y Sanahuja, José A..Op. Cit

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