

CHAPTER 3

THE INTER-AMERICAN SECURITY SYSTEM REVISED: NEW TRENDS AND APPROACHES

In the Western Hemisphere, the United States has held predominant power, economic and military, since the XIX century. Such condition of superiority has enabled this country to shape somehow the inter –and sometimes even the intra– state relations of the continent, but has also required it to become a sort of big brother or policeman for the rest of the American states. Therefore, this country has constantly sketched, directly or indirectly, the general outline under which the American Hemispheric Security System has worked since it was first set up. Bearing this point in mind and based on the information and arguments presented in the past two chapters, this last section will examine the evolution and consolidation of the security relations that conform this U.S. influenced American Hemispheric Security System. It will also examine the current conditions under which such system develops and the new antagonisms that jeopardize the peoples in the hemisphere, particularly in Latin America. This chapter will seek to provide evidence to support the main argument that the present traditional security approach does no longer satisfy the human and security needs of all countries in the Western Hemisphere and that new definitions and mechanisms, based on the concept of human security, should hence be designed in order to address this problem. Finally, this chapter aims to support the claim that the diverse and sometimes divergent security interests of the American sub-regions or states could become a factor that produces tensions among countries, especially between the U.S. and Latin America. Therefore, as it will be argued, it is crucial that a minimum common stand be defined in order to avoid any rupture within the Inter-American Security

System. It is not to be forgotten that the whole hemisphere relies on a mutual vulnerability security relation, where the weakness of one state becomes the flaw of the others.

3.1. The Origins

The beginning of what can be described as a first security policy for the continent (though it was unilaterally declared) can be traced back to December 2, 1823, when the United States announced to the world the famous 'Monroe Doctrine'. This doctrine, which tacitly placed the U.S.' defense limits on the boundaries of the hemisphere and indirectly declared the continent its own sphere of influence, had the intention of preventing any foreign power from seeking a territorial or political presence in America.¹ What derived from this doctrine, however, was that the protection and influence that the U.S. started exercising over the recently independent countries of Latin America became so important that, in the end, such defense policy became multilateral. In 1936, at the Buenos Aires Conference, it was finally decided that all American states, and not merely the United States, had the same interest of keeping away any territorial or political influence from any country outside the Americas.² Additionally, it was also decided at this time that any state which became a colony of an extra-continental power or entered its political system in form or in fact, automatically became unfriendly.³ This all was just the beginning of a series of episodes, declarations and interests that would eventually encourage the foundation of common security institutions within the continent.

¹ For more information on this consult Alexander de Conde, *A History of American Foreign Policy* (Charles Scribner's Sons: New York).

² Adolf Berle, *Latin America – Diplomacy and Reality* (Connecticut: Council on Foreign Relations, 1981), 77.

³ This is important in order to understand why Cuba has been habitually excluded from the Inter-American System.

3.2. The Construction of a Collective Security System During The Cold War

In December, 1941, just after the Pearl Harbor attack, the United States physically entered the Second World War. This gave security a new dimension in America. The possibilities of a Japanese attack on the Panama Canal or German submarine warfare represented a signal of concern among countries in the hemisphere. “At that time, the United States recognized the need for a multilateral military organization which would enhance hemispheric cooperation to engage in special bilateral relations.”⁴ As a result of this necessity, the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) was established in 1942. The importance of this organism relied on the fact that it was the first American body composed of military strategists appointed by distinct governments of the continent, to study and recommend measures for the defense of the hemisphere. It was also important because it gave rise to the ‘Declaration of Reciprocal Assistance and Cooperation for the Defense of the Americas’, which “reaffirmed the procedure of consultation among states and the concept that any attempt on the part of a non-American state against the integrity or inviolability of the territory, the sovereignty, or the political independence of an American state should be considered as an act of aggression against all.”⁵ This Treaty would eventually become the most important mechanism promoting cooperative security in the hemisphere. At that moment, it laid the bases for constructing what would later become the Inter-American Security System.

In the meantime, 1948 was the year that officially gave birth to what is known today as the Organization of American States (OAS). That year, Bogota held the Ninth

⁴ Dennis F. Caffrey, “The Inter-American military system: rhetoric vs reality” in *Security in the Americas*, ed. Georges Fauriol (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1989), 42.

⁵ Inter-American Defense Board, “History” ([Cited 26 Nov. 2004]): available from <http://www.jid.org/sp/about/history.html>

International Conference of American States (just after the IADB prepared the ‘Project of the Organic Pact of the Inter-American System’, which laid the foundations for the Organization), where 21 nations⁶ of the hemisphere signed the OAS Charter, affirming their commitment to common goals and their respect for each nation’s sovereignty.⁷ This event was crucial as it started a process of bringing together the countries of the Western Hemisphere to strengthen cooperation and advance in common interests. As a matter of fact, the agreements that materialized from this common security cooperation and that actually became the two effective documents constituting the Inter-American System are: The Charter of the OAS (also called “The Charter of Bogota”) and the 1947 Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (a.k.a. “The Treaty of Rio”). This Rio Treaty was intended to be (and to some extent it still is) the principal document creating a system of collective security –and defense– for all American states. Essentially, it was designed

- (a) to affirm the right of each state to defend itself against attack;
- (b) to establish the principle that an attack on any nation was an attack on all American states enabling them to act as once;
- (c) to set up an obligation for all American states to defend any American state attacked, though no country could be required to use armed force without consent.⁸

The Treaty of Rio was in fact intended to support the containment of communism, which signified the main concern for hemispheric security throughout the Cold War, especially for

⁶ Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela were the first to sign the OAS Chart. Canada and the Caribbean states remained out of the Organization until the 60s and the 90s.

⁷ During this Conference there was opposition to transform the Inter-American Defense Board into a permanent organ of the Organization. Since then, the Board has worked parallel to the OAS and there is still controversy on the juridical relation between both institutions.

⁸ Berle, “Latin America – Diplomacy and Reality,” 91.

the United States. This country, as the continent's superpower and one of the two main actors of the East-West struggle, was very interested in maintaining Latin America, its closest sphere of influence, out of the reach of its opponent's ideological persuasion. This reason led it to play once more a very important role in the design and exercise of the Hemispheric Security System at that time. By supporting friendly Latin-American governments against domestic political movements that could represent a threat to their interests,⁹ the United States expanded its presence and influence all over Latin America and the Caribbean. "For almost four decades, the United States provided military assistance to these 'friendly' governments, supported their counterinsurgency campaigns, and made use of multilateral instruments such as the OAS in order to confront the communist menace."¹⁰ During this time, there was no question about the role that collective security mechanisms (such as the OEA itself) played in the attainment of the U.S.' vital interests. Opposition did not arise possibly because of two reasons. On the one hand, most of the governments of the continent were financially and politically supported by the United States. On the other hand, these Latin American 'friendly governments' based their security interests on those of the United States. What remains a fact is that the Hemispheric Security System perceived communism as a common enemy and had single standing point against it at that time. This harmony of interests would eventually change with the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

⁹ These interests led the US to lend its support to military governments in several countries of Latin America. As foresaid, during this period of time, authoritarian regimes tended to consolidate by repressing their own people on behalf of national security.

¹⁰ These policies helped to produce the Guatemalan Revolution of 1954, the hemispheric exclusion of revolutionary Cuba (especially between 1961 and 1964), the Dominican incursion of 1965, the 1973 military Coup in Chile and the Grenada invasion of 1983 among others. Luis Herrera- Lasso, "Mexico and Hemispheric Security," in *Strategy and Security in U.S.- Mexican Relations Beyond the Cold War*, eds. John Bailey and Sergio Aguayo (San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California, 1996), 43.

3.3. Inter-American Security in the Aftermath of The Cold War

The late years of the 1980s brought impressive changes at the global and hemispheric level. Among the main transformations in America, the return of democracy as the political tendency was clearly highlighted. Luis Herrera-Lasso, a former Mexican consul and expert in the U.S-Mexican relation, assures that “[the triumph of democracy] was total in the Western Hemisphere, the ‘backyard’ of the United States and a region in which the very idea of security had traditionally been fused to U.S. national security doctrine.”¹¹ This claim on the undisputable triumph of democracy in a region deeply influenced by the US becomes essential as it assumes a change of conditions in the continent and the rising of some consequences as a result. Perhaps the most important fact that resulted from the victory of democracy in America is that communism could no longer be used by the United States, or any other state, as a justification for intervening in the internal affairs of other countries or as a means of manipulating security interests in the region. However this did not mean that the U.S. would not be able to keep its large influence over the rest of the continent. Actually, the end of the bipolar system just meant that, for the first time in various decades, the U.S. could act freely in the Western Hemisphere without regard to reactions from the Soviet Union or its allies. Additionally, the disintegration of the U.S.S.R fomented the general sense that the U.S. was the undisputed winner of the Cold War, a condition that did nothing else but to grant more power to the United States.

The changes in the international scenario naturally brought adjustments to the Western Hemisphere and the way in which American countries handled their security relations. Latin American governments, which were democratically elected, now had to

¹¹ Luis Herrera- Lasso, *Mexico and Hemispheric Security*, 44.

respond to their people's necessities and could no longer be easily influenced by U.S. interests. This was demonstrated when the continent's superpower failed to win OAS support for intervening in Panama in 1989. Yet, the United States decided to conduct such intervention unilaterally. In order to do this, the U.S. had to devise a new political justification, different from the containing of communism, an old fashioned excuse. Drug trafficking became that reason: on the one hand it posed a genuine threat to the U.S. and on the other it was a target of global condemnation. What remains the most important fact though is that, by using drug trafficking as the main reason, the U.S. opened the security spectrum to include non-traditional threats and actors. In this way, hemispheric security began shifting toward the fight not only against the existing traditional threats but against nontraditional too. "Territorial and border claims, arms control and geopolitics gradually became the principal traditional concerns, while instability, migration and refugee issues, environmental matters, and above all drugs and terrorism started representing the main nontraditional problems."¹² The acknowledgement of non-traditional threats eventually implied that non-traditional instruments had to be designed too in order to face these perils.

The Summits of the Americas became an effective mechanism for inter-state cooperation, security and confidence building within the continent. They not only provided a common standpoint against specific menaces, but they also made action plans available for countering these non-traditional threats. The first of these summits was, of course, held in the United States in Miami (1994).¹³ Its main outcome was the Declaration of

¹² Ivelaw L. Griffith, "Security collaboration and confidence building," in *International Security & Democracy: Latin American and the Caribbean in the Post Cold War Era*, ed. Jorge Dominguez (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1998), 171.

¹³ Organization of American States, "Miami: Florida, First Summit of the Americas," (Dec. 1994 [cited 20 Nov. 2005]): available from <http://www.summit-americas.org/eng/miamisummit.htm>

Principles¹⁴ which centered mainly on the importance of preserving and strengthening the democratic community in the Americas and recognized the harmful effects that organized crime and illicit drugs caused for the economies, moral values and public health of the countries. It also condemned terrorism in all of its expressions and assured a stiff combat against it. The Plan of Action resulting from this summit included a call for a special conference on terrorism and the support for any action promoting mutual confidence and regional peace. The second Summit of the Americas took place in Santiago, Chile (1998).¹⁵ For the first time a series of new challenges such as the fight against corruption, money laundering, arms trafficking and the eradication of personal landmines were incorporated in a hemispheric declaration. This summit's action plan stimulated regional dialogue; suggested the conduction of an analysis regarding the meaning, projections and limits of the concepts of international and hemispheric security; and promoted the recognition of new ways to refresh and reinforce the Inter-American System institutions related to the distinct aspects of the hemispheric security. Quebec, Canada hosted the Third Summit of the Americas in 2001.¹⁶ This time the principles included a commitment to reduce military expenditures as much as possible and restate the combat against 'the new multidimensional threats to the security of our societies'. These threats included drug trafficking and related conflicts, criminal use of weapons, social violence and corruption. The Quebec Declaration also recognized the important role of non-state actors and the existence of economic, social and natural components in the achievement of national and hemispheric security. At this

¹⁴ Organization of American States, "Declaration of Principles signed by the Heads of State and Government participating in the First Summit of the Americas," (Dec. 1994 [cited 20 Nov. 2005]): available from <http://www.oas.org/main/main.asp?sLang=E&sLink=../documents/eng/aboutoas.asp>

¹⁵ Organization of American States, "Santiago, Chile: Second Summit of the Americas," (April 1998 [cited 21 Nov. 2005]): available from <http://www.summit-americas.org/eng/chilesummit.htm>

¹⁶ Organization of American States, "Quebec City, Canada: Third Summit of the Americas," (April 2001 [cited 21 Nov. 2005]): available from <http://www.summit-americas.org/eng/quebec-summit1.htm>

summit, it was also agreed that the interruption of the democratic process in one country represented a risk for the Inter-American system. This relational element between democracy and security meant a big input to the concept of hemispheric security since, as Dr. Raul Benitez Manaut notes,

[w]ith the notion of defense of democracy now explicitly included, threats to security and political stability were no longer interpreted solely from a military viewpoint, and issues that were at the same time domestic and international began to appear on the security agenda... With this the range of actors responsible for threats to security expanded to include non-state actors as well as economic and social causes.¹⁷

A Special Summit of the Americas was held in Monterrey, México (2003)¹⁸ to consider the strong need of getting ahead in the instrumentation of measures against poverty and inequity in Latin America. This Special Summit addressed issues concerning the struggle against poverty, corruption, terrorism and encouraged economic growth within the region. Its final declaration also included discussions regarding the establishment of a Free Trade Area of the Americas. During this summit, democratic governance was highlighted by reaffirming the clauses included in the Inter-American Democratic Charter (adopted in Lima, Peru on September 2001) and by declaring it a basic element to foster stability and security in the continent. Finally, The Fourth Summit of the Americas will take place in Mar del Plata, Argentina (2005).¹⁹ The suggested topic to discuss will center

¹⁷ Raul Benitez Manaut, *Mexico and the new challenges of Hemispheric Security* (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2004), 13.

¹⁸ Organization of American States, "Special Summit of the Americas in Mexico," (April 2001 [cited 22 Nov. 2005]): available from <http://www.summit-americas.org/SpecialSummit/mainpage-eng.htm>

¹⁹ Organization of American States, "Fourth Summit of the Americas," ([cited 22 Nov. 2004]): available from http://www.oas.org/main/main.asp?sLang=E&sLink=http://www.summit-americas.org/NextSummit_eng.htm

on issues related to creating jobs, strengthening democratic governance and combating poverty.

It is worth noting the importance that the Summits of the Americas have given to issues corresponding to a multidimensional agenda and not only to traditional military threats. This tells a lot about the antagonisms that American countries, especially those in Latin America and the Caribbean, have selected as a priority and the importance of establishing new mechanisms in order to face them adequately. With this intention another initiative, parallel to the foresaid hemispheric summits, was launched and began to take hold during the 1990s. In 1991, the OAS established a Special Committee on Hemispheric Security (CHS), which became permanent in 1995. This organ, responsible for gathering and designing security proposals and measures for enhancing security in the Americas, has become perhaps the highest specialized authority in the process of decision making with regard to hemispheric security and confidence building measures.

In general terms, the period of time after the end of bipolarity brought important changes and consequences for political, economic and social relations in the Americas. Hemispheric security was not left behind. The new international reality, no longer characterized by the struggle of two opposing doctrines, but by unipolarity and the promotion of democracy, provided a better environment for states to use the OAS as a motion towards confidence building and security maintenance. The previous common sensation of distrust aimed towards OAS initiatives and the U.S. controlling the Organization's pursuits was no longer considered an apparent obstacle. As a result of this, security and confidence measures were promoted, making the Latin American and Caribbean regions become less volatile than they were a couple of decades before, at least

in traditional conflict terms. Another substantial result was the fact that, unlike earlier times, nontraditional security concerns were addressed for the first time in wide regional terms and started having an important place on the Inter-American Security Agenda.

3.4. Hemispheric Security Architecture Post 9/11

After the terrorist attacks against the United States occurred, it became clear that the Western Hemisphere's security scenario had been altered and a new shift in the way of thinking and acting would necessarily take place.²⁰ The 9/11 events opened the eyes of the world to the danger that international terrorism represents and the importance that must be given to the so called 'new risks' or 'new threats'. As it has been mentioned, in our hemisphere this debate had already been adopted in the early 1990s, when the convenience of developing new schemes for confronting these menaces started to be considered. It is exactly these threats which have characterized Latin America in the last few years.

When compared to other regions of the world (the Middle East and the Magreb for example), it can be observed that Latin America has historically shown a lower proportion of traditional inter-state conflicts. Analysts such as Mares and Bernstein defend this argument by pointing out that Latin America "has been a relatively peaceful region

²⁰ On September 19, only seven days after the airplanes crashed against the twin towers, the OAS unanimously agreed that the attacks against the U.S. were an attack directed against the whole continent. The Rio Treaty was called upon after a couple of decades without being invoked -Argentina invoked it in 1982 against Great Britain during the conflict of the Falkland Islands although the United States blocked the initiative. By September 21, the Permanent Council of the Organization had restated the hemisphere's solidarity with the people and government of the U.S. and called to use all the necessary and available means to bring to justice those responsible for the attacks and to prevent other similar attacks. An Inter-American Convention against Terrorism was adopted in June, 2002. Organization of American States, Inter-American Community united against Terrorism (Sep. 21, 2001 [cited 27 Nov. 2004]) : available from http://www.oas.org/OASpage/crisis/crisis_en.htm

according to international experience”²¹ Other authors, exemplified by Friederich Stiftung, go further by saying that Latin America is “one of the most stable regions in the world.”²² Considering that traditional security is based on territorial and military protection by the state, these claims fully support the argument that inter-state war does no longer represent a threat to the safety of the state and their citizens. One reason, perhaps, is the fact that integration in the Americas has become too important as to allow any inter-state tension to become unresolvable by diplomatic means. Additionally, there is no such thing as a foreign power intending to gain territorial or political influence over any part of the American country. However, when it comes to the analysis of domestic conditions, it turns out that the region suffers a series of insecurities and vulnerabilities, generated by a mixture of political, social and economic causes. Hugo Palma explains it clearly when saying that “Latin America is a highly violent region due to factors such as subversion and terrorism, drug trafficking, domestic and trans-national delinquency, illegal small arms and its political volatility due to its democracies’ fragility.”²³ This last point is tremendously important, since the lack of governance and the more intense presence of domestic insecurity are two factors that can be easily related one with the other.

At the present time, many of the conflicts threatening states and individuals in Latin America result from internal political instability situations and repeated problems of

²¹ David Mares y Steven Bernstein, “El uso de la fuerza en las relaciones interestatales de América Latina,” [The use of force in Latin American interstate relations] en *Seguridad internacional, paz y democracia en el Cono Sur*, ed. Jorge Domínguez (FLACSO/Interamerican Dialogue/Woodrow Wilson Center: Santiago de Chile, 1998), 51, [my translation].

²² Coordinadora Regional de Investigaciones Económicas y Sociales, *Paz, Seguridad y Prevención de Conflictos en América Latina y el Caribe: Una Introducción* [Peace, Security and Conflict Prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean: An Introduction], (CRIES: Buenos Aires, 2004), 6, [my translation].

²³ Hugo Palma, “Paz, Seguridad Humana y Prevención de Conflictos en América Latina” [Peace, Human Security and Conflict Prevention in Latin America] en *Seguridad Humana, Prevención de Conflictos y Paz en América Latina y el Caribe*, eds. Francisco Rojas y Moufida Goucha (UNESCO/FLACSO: Santiago de Chile, 2001), 117, [my translation].

governance and human needs dissatisfaction. As Francisco Rojas suggests “In the Latin-American case, the main vulnerabilities arise from governance crises that affect the region, which makes it difficult to promote human security and establishes opportunities for high insecurity that could be translated into fear, violence and human necessities dissatisfaction.”²⁴ Hence, a conclusion that can be extracted from this claim is that the consolidation of democratic institutions has become a vital need in order for Latin American states and their people to avoid conditions under which domestic conflicts could be easily developed. A hemispheric security based on a concept such as the one of human security, which could help to achieve this task would therefore be more suitable for the Latin American region than conserving the current traditional approach. It is important to bear in mind that 32 out of the 34 members of the Inter-American Security System correspond to Latin America and the Caribbean. Rojas Aravena makes another important claim in this regard by saying that “[i]f we analyze the situation of security and defense in Latin America in the year 2004, we conclude that the main threats come from domestic conflicts. The main risks in Latin American and the Caribbean are linked to lack of governance, instability and weak democratic institutions [...] The levels of dissatisfaction with democracy are very high in the region. In the year 2003 they reached 66%.”²⁵ The following table provides a clearer idea of how governance crises have become a common denominator affecting many countries in the Latin American region.

²⁴ Francisco Rojas Aravena, “Seguridad en las Américas, los desafíos Post Conferencia: Operacionalizar los consensos y articular los conceptos,” [Security in the Americas, the challenges after the Conference: operationalize the consensus and articulate the concepts], *Friederich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Briefing Paper*, (May 2004), 8, [my translation].

²⁵ Rojas Aravena, “Seguridad en las Américas, los desafíos Post Conferencia,” 6, [my translation].

TABLE IV: Political-Institutional Crises in Latin America (1990-2003)

País / año	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03
Argentina	x											-		
Belize														
Bolivia														x
Brasil	x		-											
Chile	x			x		x								
Colombia														
Costa Rica														
Cuba														
Ecuador								-			*			
El Salvador														
Guatemala				x				x						
Haití		*				x				x		x		
Honduras		x												
México														
Nicaragua						X								
Panamá						X								
Paraguay					x	x	x		x	x	x			
Perú			*				x				X -			
Surinam	x													
Uruguay														
Venezuela			x		x								X	

x Uprising or military tension

- Destitution / renuncia del presidente

* Coup d'etat

Source: FLACSO – Chile, 'Amenazas a la gobernabilidad en América Latina' [Threats to governance in Latin America], in *La seguridad en América Latina pos 11 de Septiembre*, ed. Francisco Rojas Aravena, (Nueva Sociedad: Santiago, 2003), 36.

It is possible to infer from this table that instability has become a persistent feature in Latin America and the Caribbean. Until 2003, distinct political, economic and social crises have caused 8 Presidents to resign, 19 military tensions or crises and 5 coups d'etat. This and last year's events in Haiti, Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador explicitly show that this tendency remains the same. Just for giving a general cipher, more than 20 situations of institutional crises occurred during the 90s. In accordance with this new reality, where states and individuals feel threatened by non-traditional threats surging from governance crises, and as a follow up to the 2002 'Bridgetown Declaration on the Multidimensional Approach to Hemispheric Security', agreement was reached in Barbados at the XXXII

General Assembly of the OAS to hold a Special Conference on Security in Mexico City in year 2002. As a starting point of reference, the General Assembly also made a huge step by agreeing that “security threats, concerns and other challenges in the hemispheric context are of a diverse nature and multidimensional scope, and that the traditional concepts and approaches must be expanded to encompass new and nontraditional threats, which include political, economic, social, health and environmental aspects.”²⁶ (consult Appendix B for seeing graphics showing how the region is affected by some of these non-traditional threats).

The Special Conference on Security resulted in the adoption of the ‘Declaration on Security in the Americas’,²⁷ a document that was drafted and negotiated throughout eleven months at the OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security. As a result, a new concept of security for the hemisphere was defined. Such definition includes traditional and new threats, concerns, and other challenges to the security of states, incorporates the priorities of each country, contributes to the consolidation of peace, integral development, and social justice, and is based on democratic values, respect for and promotion and defense of human rights, solidarity, cooperation and respect for national sovereignty. A remarkable feature of the Declaration is the introduction of a human-centered approach to security in the Western Hemisphere. “[W]e reaffirm that the basis and purpose of security is the protection of human beings and we assert that the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and good governance are essential for the stability, peace, and political, economic and

²⁶ Andean Community General Secretariat, “Declaration on Security in the Americas,” *International Declarations* (Oct. 28, 2003 [cited 27 Nov. 2004]): available from <http://www.comunidadandina.org/ingles/document/OASsecurity.htm>

²⁷ Organization of American States, “Declaration on Security in the Americas,” *OAS Documents* (Oct. 2003 [cited 29 Nov. 2005]): available from http://www.oas.org/documents/eng/DeclaracionSecurity_102803.asp

social development of the states of the hemisphere.”²⁸ However, it is important to mention that the Declaration is balanced by the agreement on diverse issues related to traditional threats to security. Among them: principles concerning the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, limits to military spending, elimination of anti-personal land mines and fostering confidence and security building measures.

With regards to the Treaty of Rio and the American Treaty on Pacific Settlement²⁹ (Pact of Bogota), a consensus was reached in terms of continuing the process of study and assessment of both instruments.³⁰ This is quite important as it reinforces the argument that some security mechanisms that were somewhat useful in the past do not necessarily meet the security requirements we have today and must be updated according to the new conceptions of security. Concerned about the new menaces, the Special Conference on Security identified the following as the main non-traditional threats: “1) hard threats: terrorism, trans-national crime, and related conflicts; 2) threats with a social origin: extreme poverty and exclusion; 3) threats arising from environmental and health conflicts: natural disasters, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, environmental degradation; 4) threats against the integrity of the people: human smuggling; 5) ‘on line’ threats: attacks against cybernetic security; 6) threats resulting from managing dangerous products: maritime transportation of potentially dangerous materials; 7) threats coming from the possession of large scale

²⁸ Miguel Ruiz Cabañas, “A review of the OAS Special Conference on Security,” *Remarks at the Institute for National Strategic Studies* (National Defense University) (November 21, 2003 [cited 29 Nov. 2004]): available from www.resdal.org.ar/art-ruiz-cabanias.html

²⁹ Another important document constituting the Inter-American Security System that provides the general obligations to settle disputes by pacific means. For more information visit <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/intdip/interam/intam09.htm>

³⁰ Andean Community General Secretariat, *Declaration on Security in the Americas*.

weapons: weapons of mass destruction.”³¹ It is noteworthy that the Declaration on Security in the Americas establishes 52 action lines. Of these, 36 commitments out of which at least 50% are directed towards solving the concerns and challenges of the previous list.³² This emphasis on non-traditional menaces leads to another important point. The fact that a general list of non-traditional threats was provided by the Conference does not mean that Latin American subregions give the same importance to all of them. Actually, when these menaces are analyzed at a subregion level, it can be observed how priorities start changing after the first two which remain the same for all the countries. A chart elaborated by Dr. Francisco Rojas Aravena is definitely helpful in trying to organize such subregional security priorities.

TABLE V: Perceptions of threats prioritized by subregion in Latin America

MERCOSUR	ANDEAN COUNTRIES	CENTRAL AMERICA	CARIBBEAN
Drug Trafficking	Drug Trafficking	Drug Trafficking	Drug Trafficking
Terrorism	Terrorism	Terrorism	Terrorism
Arm Trafficking	Poverty and social lack	Environment and natural disasters	Poverty and social lack
Organized crime	Guerrillas and subversive groups	Organized crime	Environment and natural disasters
Environment and natural disasters	Arm Trafficking	Poverty and social lack	Arm trafficking
Poverty and social lack	Organized Crime	Arm trafficking	Organized crime
Guerrillas and subversive groups	Environment and natural disasters	Guerrillas and subversive groups	-----

Source: Francisco Rojas Aravena, Seguridad en las Américas, los desafíos Post Conferencia: Operacionalizar los consensos y articular los conceptos [Security in the Americas, the challenges after the Conference: operationalize the consensus and articulate the concepts], *Friederich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Briefing Paper*, (May 2004), 10, [my translation].

³¹ Raúl Benítez Manaut, “La nueva seguridad hemisférica. Después de México ¿hacia donde?,” [The new hemispheric security. After Mexico, where to?], *Boletín Red de Seguridad y Defensa de América Latina* 2, no. 13 (Noviembre/Diciembre 2003): 4-6.

³² Benítez Manaut, *La nueva seguridad hemisférica. Después de México ¿hacia donde?*, 5.

When this table is contrasted with Table I: Direct and Indirect Threats to Human Security, it can be observed that all threats perceived by Latin American subregions are included in such general score, which implies that addressing human security schemes would eventually help avoiding these threats in America. Out of the seven main threats considered by Latin American countries, five are considered to come from direct violence and two from indirect violence (poverty and natural disasters). A large diversity of interests, perspectives and priorities has made it difficult to design and execute a specific plan of action for the whole hemisphere; a region where the world's super power and some of the poorest countries try to cohabit. It is actually this lack of agreement what has prevented the American continent from seeking a new hemispheric security model, such as human security, which could include many different interests and necessities. It is important to remember that human security implies defining, establishing and prioritizing threats by subregions. In this sense, it provides a flexible architecture where each subregion can work efficiently on solving some of the main conflicts threatening their own security, and not necessarily those of the whole continent. Once again, human security proves to be a more suitable concept for addressing the current individual and state insecurity in the Western Hemisphere. In other words, human security provides a flexible framework through which all different and divergent interests could actually be addressed without placing American countries in tension or dispute.

As to the outcomes of the Special Conference of Security concern, much has been said against and in favor. Some scholars, such as Mexican researcher and Professor Dr. Raul Benitez Manaut, recognize the important step made in this Conference to close a long

cycle of negotiations between the 34 Member States of the OAS.³³ Others like Gabriel Marcella, Professor of strategy at the U.S. Army War College, rate the outcome document as slender for its wide scope and lack of military assessment.³⁴ Even others, such as Prof. Elsa Bruzzone, Horacio Ballester and Augusto Rattenbach from the CEMIDA, evaluate as ‘absurd’ the acknowledgment that the currency and utility the Conference gave to the IART and the Bogota Pact (although these instruments are attached to revision).³⁵ In spite of all the different opinions, what most of the academic, intellectual and specialist circles do agree on is that this conference has been important as a measure to identify how hemispheric security has become more complex and demanding since the end of the Cold War and the importance of creating new institutions that, together with the traditional ones, could be able to satisfy the crescent needs on the matter. In the words of Soledad Alvea, Foreign Affairs Minister of Chile,

[H]emispheric security is a concept in evolution. The Member States of the OAS have been able to pick up creatively the elements that have worked as norms for living together. Satisfactorily, we can now prove that we have and share a multidimensional vision about security in the Americas. It is our duty now to deepen the Inter-American System in order to guarantee the accomplished stability so that our peoples can enjoy progressively of better conditions of life.³⁶

³³ Benítez Manaut, *La nueva seguridad hemisférica. Después de México ¿hacia donde?*, 6.

³⁴ Gabriel Marcela, “Comentario sobre la Conferencia Especial sobre Seguridad,” [Remarks on the Special Conference on Security], *Boletín RESDAL* 2, no. 13 (Nov./Dic. 2003): 9.

³⁵ Elsa M. Bruzzone, José Luis García, Horacio P Ballester y Augusto Rattenbach, “Conferencia especial sobre Seguridad,” [Special Conference on Security], *Centro de Militares para la Democracia en Argentina* [cited 2 Dec. 2004]: available from http://www.geocities.com/cemida_arg/CONFERENCIAESPECIALSOBRESEGURIDAD.doc [my translation].

³⁶ María Soledad Alvear, “Presentación de la Canciller Chilena en la conferencia especial sobre seguridad,” [Lectura from Chilean Foreign Affairs Minister at the Special Conference on Security], Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores de México (2 Oct. 2003 [cited 4 Dec. 2004]) : available from www.sre.gob.mx/comunicados/discursos/disc_2003/octu/d-11-10.htm [my translation].

Adapting such a multidimensional vision into a practical approach could undoubtedly warrant American people better opportunities for achieving integral security and development. As it has been widely discussed, human security remains to be a significant alternative, especially after assessing the enormous possibility of measuring and operationalizing it. However, the possibility that a human security agenda could eventually be established in the Western Hemisphere requires thorough analysis and discussion among the different parts at stake, including non-state actors. But above all, it requires political will and collective cooperation. In this sense, major leading countries in the continent need to start taking this concept more seriously if a structural shift is to be taken for the sake of all American states and individuals. Considering this idea, it thus becomes important to make a review of the specific –and sometimes divergent– positions that four of the largest and most powerful countries in America stand as regards the present and future of hemispheric security.

a) Brazil

The most important change that can be detected in this country since 9/11 is perhaps in its view of the Rio Treaty. Previously, Brazil considered to a certain extent that this treaty was no longer relevant to the hemispheric security agenda and that it was not representative of all of the countries. Since September 11 though, “Brazil has come to see a new relevancy for the Treaty of Rio as a juridical framework to facilitate new discussions for the definition of common actions and for the expression of solidarity against aggressions, and that as such

it should be preserved.”³⁷ Let’s remember that it was Brazil who invoked the Treaty in reaction to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. One other element that draws attention is Brazil’s intention to consolidate as a regional power and to improve its armament industry. It is logical to think that this country therefore believes that military expression of security is still of great importance. However, Brazil also recognizes that American states must face new threats. Before September 11, this country tended to highlight issues related to organized crime and drug trafficking. Since then however, the Brazilian government has added corruption, money-laundering, climatic change and natural disasters to the list of vulnerabilities.³⁸

In the perspective of the Brazilian government, the common approaches used by member states to deal with challenges to security must take account of the differences among the ‘three Americas’ in terms of their strategic context. Accordingly, “the common approaches of member states must encourage diplomatic negotiation and cooperation through the use of diplomacy as a primordial instrument for hemispheric integration and solidarity initiatives.”³⁹

b) Canada

Even though the Canadian proposals and contributions to hemispheric security were analyzed in the second chapter, it is worthwhile noting that for this country there has been an important evolution from defense problems to those of a wider security agenda. This

³⁷ Juan Pablo Soriano and Donald R. Mackay, “*Redefining Hemispheric Security After September 11*,” *Canadian Foundation for the Americas Policy Paper* (Ontario: Canadian Foundation for the Americas, 2003), 5.

³⁸ Soriano and Mackay, *Redefining Hemispheric Security After September 11*, 6.

³⁹ OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security, *Compendium of replies of the Member States to the questionnaire on new approaches to Hemispheric Security*, (Washington D.C.: Organization of American States, 2002), 20.

evolution does not imply a decline of the importance of legitimacy of the armed forces of the region in their society. Quite the opposite, for Canada, “armed forces must play a substantive and constructive role in the design, evolution and implementation of security policy. But one of the challenges we face is that the nature of ‘security’ problems are changing so that many of the issues involved are not the sole jurisdiction of the military.”⁴⁰

The Canadian government keeps on making a big effort to incorporate many of the new security issues (especially the concept of human security) to hemispheric security relations. For Canada the underlying principles of hemispheric security are:

- ✓ “A multidimensional approach, wherein new and nontraditional security concepts and threats are included.
- ✓ Respect for democracy and human rights.
- ✓ The positioning of the individual at the center of security policy.
- ✓ Security policy must be built on the peaceful resolution of disputes such as preventative diplomacy, dialogue and negotiated settlements.
- ✓ Recognition of regional diversity.
- ✓ Security is enhanced through the tools of transparency and confidence-building measures.
- ✓ Collective security recognizes that threats directed at a particular state can and do have implications for others.”⁴¹

The Canadian government has declared that “there are many principles and institutions currently guiding hemispheric security, some of which are ‘contradictory, outmoded, and inadequate’ for addressing the common threats that the countries of the

⁴⁰ OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security, “Compendium of replies of the Member States,” 27.

⁴¹ Soriano and Mackay, *Redefining Hemispheric Security After September 11*, 7.

Americas now face.⁴² Canada – and the CARICOM countries – are not members of the IATRA.

Canadian authorities have declared on several occasions that, of the hemispheric treaties in existence, only the Treaty of Tlatelolco⁴³ “is a modern document with remaining pertinence... The Treaty of Tlatelolco makes an important contribution towards a de-nuclearized world.”⁴⁴ Canada also recognizes that sub-regional and bilateral cooperation can be an effective complement to hemispheric cooperation. However, the government says “it would be useful to have information flows from sub-regional and bilateral mechanisms into the CHS as appropriate.”⁴⁵

c) Mexico

The main issue concerning Mexico’s role within the Inter-American Security System is closely related to the Rio Treaty. Prior to September 11, Mexico began to publicly manifest its view that the treaty was no longer representative or responsive to the security challenges of the hemisphere, that the institutions were outdated and that their basic conceptualization was grounded on a global situation that no longer existed. Mexico announced its abandonment from the Treaty in September 2002.

Mexico has been a keen supporter for widening the hemispheric security agenda to include the new threats and to link the concept of security with the one of development. Even though this country neighbors with the U.S., its main concerns are based on the

⁴² OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security, “Compendium of replies of the Member States,” 28.

⁴³ The Treaty of Tlatelolco represents the first effort by a group of states to establish a nuclear weapon-free zone in a heavily populated region. The Treaty for the prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America was opened for signature in 1967 and now has 27 Latin American and Caribbean Contracting Parties. For more information visit <http://www.state.gov/t/np/rls/fs/2001/4595.htm>

⁴⁴ OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security, “Compendium of replies of the Member States,” 4.

⁴⁵ OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security, “Compendium of replies of the Member States,” 20.

struggle against poverty and, even more so, the human protection of migrants. This country is actually developing the concept of “integrated security” with emphasis on social and economic elements, and is also attempting to limit military cooperation mainly to educational aspects.⁴⁶ In spite of this, a national debate on this matter has not been fulfilled widely within the country. On December 14th 2004 a new National Security Law was approved by the Mexican Congress; however “although it is presented as a National Security Law, what the Congress really did was to regulate the activities of the National Security and Research Center (CISEN), the ones of espionage among others.”⁴⁷ Besides this, the subject of security, and more specifically hemispheric security, has been displaced by other topics of national interest. The fact that Mexico didn’t submit any answer to the ‘Questionnaire on new approaches to hemispheric security’ released by the OAS’ Committee on Hemispheric Security in 2002 was a clear expression of this.

d) United States

For the United States, post 9-11 security has been largely defined in terms of homeland security. “On definitions, the United States now argues for ‘focused’ and ‘meaningful’ definitions upon which policies and programs can be built.”⁴⁸ These narrow and focused definitions seek to favor, of course, an approach where security institutions might support its main interests as a country and exclude social, economic or environmental issues from any security instruments. Its response to the OAS questionnaire on security made it very clear:

⁴⁶ Benitez Manaut, *Mexico and the new challenges of Hemispheric Security*, 15.

⁴⁷ Jorge Carrasco Araizaga, “CISEN: más poder menos control” [CISEN: more power less control], *Proceso* no. 1469 (26 Dic. 2004), 15 [my translation].

⁴⁸ Soriano and Mackay, *Redefining Hemispheric Security After September 11*, 8.

We must be careful in how we define our common security threats. Too narrow a definition of security will leave us unprepared to deal with the unique concerns of smaller states. Too broad a definition, however, runs the risk of assigning false priorities and inappropriate resources to fundamentally different types of problems. Likewise, we must guard against defining every challenge as a security issue, lest the concept become meaningless. As a region, we must be careful about labeling problems that are primarily economic or social as security issues or else we may find ourselves using the wrong tools to fix real problems.⁴⁹

But this was not necessarily the same position the U.S. held before the terrorist attacks took place. According to Hal Klepak,

[i]n the months prior to 9-11, the tendency [in the United States to accept human security] incremented. Even though a large part remained firm on the issues related to the difficulties inherent to an approach that seemed to suggest, at least, an attempt to assume the annoying problems of poverty and inequity, the rest began to start believing that it was worth it to think about it and not dismissing it completely.⁵⁰

This stand can be clearly appreciated in the statement of Kenneth Mackay, special envoy of the U.S. President to the Americas and Head Delegation to the XXX OAS

⁴⁹ OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security, "Compendium of replies of the Member States," 15.

⁵⁰ Hal Klepak, "Paz, Seguridad Humana y Prevención de Conflictos: Una visión desde América del Norte," [Peace, Human Security and Conflict Prevention: A perspective from North America] en *Seguridad Humana, Prevención de Conflictos y Paz en América Latina y el Caribe*, eds. Francisco Rojas Aravena and Moufida Goucha, (UNESCO&FLACSO-Chile: Santiago de Chile, 2001),85, [my translation].

General Assembly. During his remarks at the ‘Dialogue on Human Security in the Americas’ he manifested that “the concept of human security was absolutely compatible with the interests and political values of the United States (individual dignity, democracy, human rights and institutional responsibility before their citizens –Roosevelt’s speech of the four liberties) and correspondent to U.S.’ interests on the issue of hemispheric security.”⁵¹ However, just as happened with many other issues, the human security debate was put aside after the Pentagon and the Twin Towers were hit. Terrorism and counter-terrorism became the most important, if not the only, preoccupation for U.S. foreign policy. Yet, this change of priorities was not the only consequence affecting the discussions and establishment of the Western Hemisphere’s security agenda. U.S. foreign policy’s shift towards the conformation of a ‘selected multilateralism’⁵² and a process of unilateral intervention started a new alliance that fragmented the region. “Latin America was divided on the Iraq War issue: seven countries rejected the invasion, seven supported it and four of them sent a symbolic number of troops (El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Dominican Republic).”⁵³ Latin America lost again his opportunity to act as a one-voiced region.

What becomes somehow ironic is that terrorism has been described as a non-traditional threat affecting individuals primarily. This menace could definitely be addressed through a human security policy strategy intended to cut from the base the social and political reasons that make terrorism an option. Hal Klepak helps supporting this argument when saying that

⁵¹ Myriam Villanueva, ‘La seguridad humana: algunas repercusiones recientes en la agenda internacional’ [Human security: some recent repercussions in the international agenda] citing Kenneth Mackay, Dialogue on Human Security in the Americas,” June 4-6 2000, Windsor, Canada.

⁵² The correct term in Spanish would be ‘multilateralismo a la carta’.

⁵³ Rojas Aravena, ‘Seguridad en las Américas, los desafíos Post Conferencia,’ 10, [my translation].

[t]he human necessities of hope, economic and social progress [...] could easily be linked to the desperate feelings of terrorists who believe that their demands of justice and change have permanently been ignored by an international community where only the security and needs of the powerful are addressed, while the weak are abandoned to their luck.⁵⁴

It is here where the preventive character of human security is important. Any actor intending to maintain security in the long run should perhaps consider addressing the causes of conflicts, and not only the consequences, in a joint manner. Trying to capture and destroy terrorist networks is fine, but it is not enough as to avoid the formation of new cells. Contrastingly, adopting a complementary preventive policy consisting of directly attacking the sociopolitical reasons of those who justify terrorism by saying it is the only means through which change can be achieved could make a big difference. However, it seems like no debate on this issue has been going on inside the United States considering that this country has not given any hint of its willingness to take the human security stance more seriously. In opposition to this, the United States' idea of prevention has focused only on promoting the establishment of warning military mechanisms where potential threats can be identified, evaluated and acted upon.⁵⁵ Military preventive strategy and intervention has thus become one of the main tools in the current foreign policy of the U.S.

With regards to the role of the OAS, the U.S. government believes that “even though the OAS has demonstrated its utility in conflict prevention and resolution and in the

⁵⁴ Klepak, *Paz, Seguridad Humana y Prevención de Conflictos*, 85, [my translation].

⁵⁵ Soriano and Mackay, *Redefining Hemispheric Security After September 11*, 9.

peaceful settlement of disputes, it still needs some other instruments and resources to achieve better results in this area.”⁵⁶ More specifically, the U.S. believes that

OAS conflict prevention and resolution should include the following activities: (1) peaceful resolution of remaining border and territorial disputes between states; (2) prevention of destabilizing accumulations of conventional weapons and the proliferation of WMD; (3) prevention of the spread of illicit firearms; (4) deepening of the Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs) outlined in the Summit Plans of Action and the Declarations of Santiago and San Salvador on CSBMs, including transparency in military acquisitions and budgets.⁵⁷

These suggested activities give an idea of how the U.S. continues to think and act in traditional manners. The United States also seeks to bring together the Inter-American Defense Board and the Organization of American States as “security should be the highest component in the hierarchy of the OAS concerns.”⁵⁸ In this same line, the United States believes that the OAS needs to reaffirm and complement the current hemispheric security architecture by developing a political declaration, an ‘Inter-American Declaration on Hemispheric Security’, as a guide for the 21st century.

The concept of ‘security’ has traveled a very long and windy road to achieve the current notion, although still a little bit ambiguous, that the American countries have of it. This chapter has argued that a significant advance has been achieved with regards to the basic limitations of the concept, its multidimensional approaches, and the main values over

⁵⁶ OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security, “Compendium of replies of the Member States,” 38.

⁵⁷ OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security, “Compendium of replies of the Member States,” 38.

⁵⁸ Soriano and Mackay, *Redefining Hemispheric Security After September 11*, 8.

which it must be built upon, such as democracy and sovereignty. The search for a continental consensus has also forced the Western Hemisphere to go deeply in the construction and adaptation of common institutions to confront the diverse circumstances that have been constantly arising in national and international scenarios. The OAS, and more specifically the Committee on Hemispheric Security, has proved to be the major and most efficient common institution guiding the subject in the Americas.

Another significant feature of the current Inter-American Security System has been the presence of different actors participating in security policies. It is important to remember that during the Cold War, only the apparatus of the state and the executive power were the participants. Today the decision-making process has become more complex, involving NGOs, academia, the press, business, and political parties, among others. In this sense, the state has been losing the central role that it had a couple of decades ago as source and object of national and international security. Contrastingly, the person has gradually become more important in the development of security concepts and policies since the scope of security itself has also entered a process of re-dimensioning.

As it has been seen throughout the chapter, one of the elements to consider in the area of hemispheric security is the leading role of the United States, which has been, since the beginning, the strongest country designing security concepts and policies for the continent. Its role as global hegemony has granted it the capacity to influence medium and small countries, and negotiate with other big countries such as Brazil, Canada and Mexico. As it has been explained, the U.S. possesses a different vision of security, particularly hemispheric security, than the rest of the countries. In this sense, hemispheric security has gradually become a matter of weighs and counterweighs, of the influence that each nation exerts –or at least seeks to exert– over the others, and the weight in which each country

agrees its own national concepts. Subregions have become fundamental units in the strategic design of the continent and in the formulation of guidelines towards cooperation and stability. The acknowledged asymmetries in the continent have allowed the recognition of varied goals and means to achieve them. A common feature can be observed though. An overwhelming majority of American countries face insecurity threats coming from within the states, while all recognize the changing nature of threats coming from non-state actors. This is definitely what can be called the first step toward a change of paradigms. However, it is important that discussions on this issue be continued so that divergent opinions, especially between the U.S. and the Latin American region, are smoothed and tensions between parts are avoided or resolved by diplomatic means.

After examining the current conditions under which the Inter-American System develops and the new perils that threaten the individuals and states in the Americas, it is my thought that a joint effort to start working on the road towards a security policy agenda based on the human security approach would most probably bring substantive benefits to the region than remaining with the traditional one. This is exactly what the final segment of this project will reflect and conclude on.
