



CHDS Regional Conference - South America -

Executive Summary

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CHDS Regional Conference



Theme: Defense and Security Challenges in a Complex Political Environment:
Environment: Prospects for Cooperation and Divergence in South America

- **WHAT:** CHDS academic conference for Distinguished guests, Fellows and partner institutes
- **WHY:** Multi-national Venue for academic discussions on a range of security and defense topics issues.
- **WHEN:** 28 – 31 July 2009
- **WHERE:** Cartagena, Colombia
- **WHO:** 150 participants from 17 regional nations, USA, Spain, and 3 partner institutions
 - 60 papers presented





Three Thematic Areas



Political Change and International Institutions

- New Regional Defense and Political Arrangements
- Extra-regional Actors
- U.S. Policy for Latin America

National Defense and Security Policies

- International Missions for the Armed Forces
- Police/Military Roles in Domestic Missions
- Interagency Coordination

Dynamic Security Drivers

- Venezuelan Arms Buildup
- International Terrorism
- Global Financial Crisis





Major Themes



1. **South American Defense Council**
 - What does it imply?
 - Where is it going?
2. **Erosion of Democratic Institutions**
 - Case of Honduras
 - Impact of ALBA
3. **Extra-regional Actors**
 - Implications for the region?
4. **U.S. Policy toward Latin America under President Obama**
 - What will change?
 - What will remain the same?





South American Defense Council (CDS): Wide Range of Views



1. “Disappearance of ‘Latin America’ and hemispheric-wide security”

❖ Post-Cold War, U.S. reduced involvement in Latin America

❖ Impact of Globalization

❖ Reflects Brazilian leadership and Venezuela’s activist role

❖ CDS:

- Could lead to a “NATO-like” arrangement in South America
- Important geo-political bloc of countries

- North America = Panama--North + Caribbean

- South America > Brazil the major actor

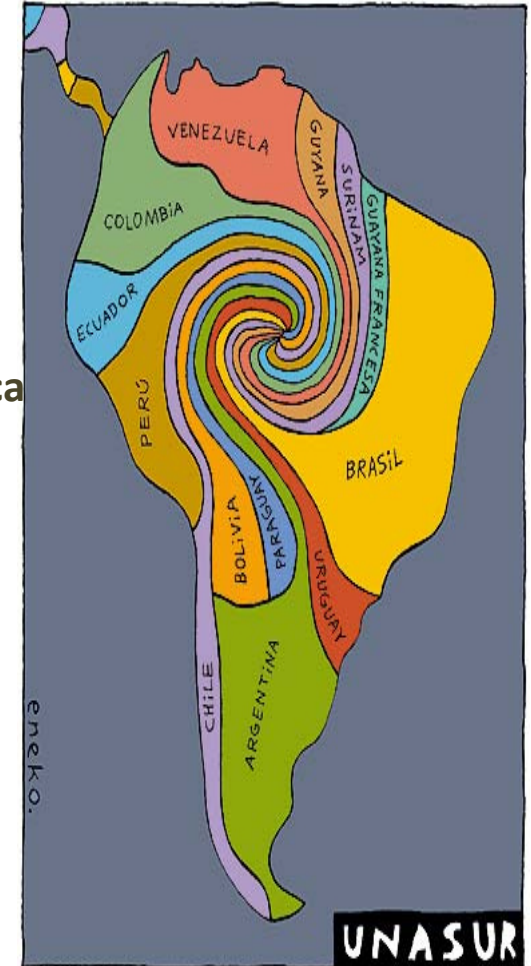
2. “CDS has no future as an effective alliance”

❖ Only focuses on Defense, not Security

❖ Lacks appropriate infrastructure to be effective

❖ Not a collective security alliance—communication/coordination mechanism only

❖ Will likely become just “another” institution





Erosion of Democratic Institutions?



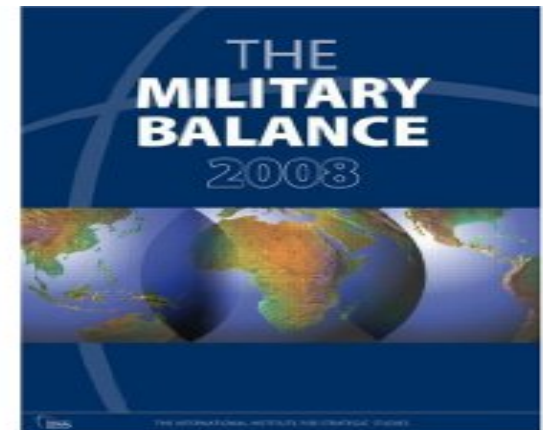
Range of views

1. Case of Honduras: a “golpe de estado?”

- A constitutional removal, poorly executed
 - ✓ Too much military involvement
 - ✓ Lack of due process
- Golpe Militar
 - ✓ Pre-28 June actions not relevant
 - ✓ Military removal of president
- ❖ We are using outdated theoretical constructs—without the appropriate concepts to describe the Honduras case

2. Impact of ALBA—is it a threat?

- ❖ Concern over Venezuelan military buildup
 - Threats of intervention
- ❖ Increasing authoritarianism
- ❖ Main threat of ALBA is actually to ALBA members:
 - Bankrupt ideology will lead to economic and political disaster





Extra-Regional Actors



Russia, Iran, China, Non-state Actors

1. Iran—Russia—Venezuela Triangle

- ❖ Latin America as fertile ground for geopolitical objectives
- ❖ Changes the strategic calculus for the U.S. and other regional actors

➤ Potential for entry of Iranian-supported extremists into the region

- ❖ Russia's actions in Latin America constitute a response to U.S. support for Georgia

2. Role of China

- ❖ General view: no significant regional political or military objectives
- ❖ Long-term commercial and economic interests

3. Involvement of Hezbollah in Tri-border Region



U.S. Policy Toward Latin America



- ❑ Perception that U.S. Involvement in Region has Declined
- ❑ Significant continuity in overall U.S. approach to the region since end of Cold War
- ❑ Elements of change: Tone of U.S. Involvement
 - Focus on relationship among equals
 - End of unilateral approach
 - Changing political calculus on Free Trade Agreements





Questions and Comments?

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