

Partners of Choice?

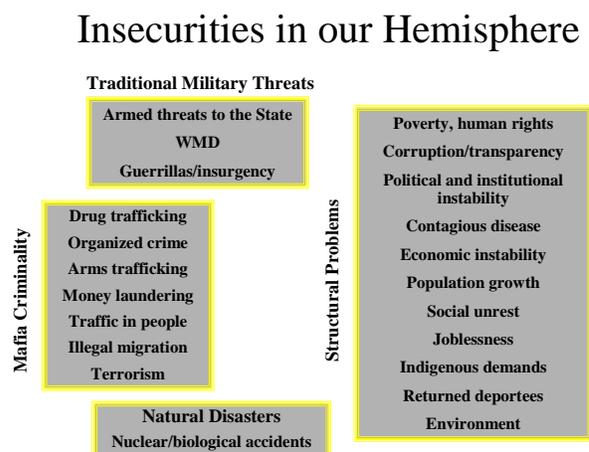
Prospects for Cooperation on the Multidimensional Security Agenda¹

by Margaret Daly Hayes

In Mexico City in October 2003, Latin American and Caribbean leaders declared a new concept of hemisphere security that is “multi-dimensional in scope, includes traditional and new threats, concerns, and other challenges to the security of the states of the hemisphere, incorporates the priorities of each state, 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”.² A year later, at the Special Summit of the Americas in Monterrey, Mexico, they reiterated that “the basis and purpose of security is the protection of human beings”.³

How new and different is this security agenda from that which we have assumed in the past? How do the countries of the hemisphere propose to cooperate in pursuit of such a complicated program? What institutions must be mobilized? What is “security” if it means all of these different things? What are the roles of the OAS and the Inter-American System in the new framework? What needs to be done? These are questions that are being asked and pondered throughout the region, with no firm consensus yet.

It is important to examine the Multidimensional Security Agenda in detail. Figure 1 summarizes issues raised in the Mexico City Declaration and in earlier discussions by presidents, foreign ministers, defense ministers and ambassadors in the years leading up to the Mexico conference. Four clusters of “insecurity” emerged from these debates: traditional threats to the State, including guerilla insurgency; unpredictable natural disasters and potentially catastrophic accidents for which the State can only prepare to the best of its ability; a complex array of transnational illegal and criminal activities that range from drug trafficking, organized crime, arms trafficking, money laundering, human trafficking and smuggling to environmental degradation and terrorism, and finally, a large cluster of political, economic and social structural conditions that contribute importantly to the manifestations of illegality, criminality and violence that undermine security in the region.



¹ This paper draws importantly from my chapter “Building Consensus on Security: Towards a New Framework,” in Gordon Mace, Jean-Philippe Thérien and Paul Haslan, Editors, **Governing the Americas: Regional Institutions at the Crossroads** (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007).

² Declaration on Security in the Americas (OAS Special Conference on Security, Mexico City, 28 October 2003).

³ Final Declaration of the Special Summit of the Americas, Declaration of Nuevo Leon, Monterey, Mexico January 13, 2004.

What is security in this broad, multidimensional context? How do we define a hemispheric security agenda?

This comprehensive and inclusive agenda reflects the evolution in thinking about security over the centuries. It includes the notion of a social contract between citizen and state and Adam Smith's observation that the "obligation of the Sovereign" is to protect citizens from enemy states and from internal violence.⁴ It understands security as humanitarian order – the protection against genocide or displacement that motivated international organization actions in the 20th century, and finally it understands that security entails both social justice and Human security, as introduced in the 1994 United Nations Human Development report.⁵

The Multidimensional Security Declaration was crafted to reflect the concerns of all members of the inter-American community. We must recognize that our U.S.-American and our Latin American and Caribbean neighbors' views of threats have quite different emphases. We all "cherry-pick" from the list of insecurities, but the United States is focused more narrowly on threats *to us* that might come *from* the region and on our post-9-11 concern with terrorism. The Latin American and Caribbean players focus, correctly, on issues of concern *to them*: crime, delinquency, drugs and arms trafficking, the need to create jobs, political and economic instability and their competitiveness in the global economy. Their terrorists are the FARC, Sendero Luminoso, and brutal urban gangs. Their concerns are national and regional, rather than global, though they are increasingly linked in networks of global illicit transactions.⁶ Their concerns are generally not subject to direct military solutions, but rather require emphasis on long term development and institution-building. Appropriate military support can often be useful.

The United States historically has not embraced this socio-economic perspective of security. On the one hand, it has implications for potentially large resource outlays. The most appropriate response to Latin American concerns is enhanced emphasis on development assistance, not military assistance, but that does not address *our* security concerns. We also have been more comfortable with the Westphalian concept of security of States as the organizing framework for global policy than with the focus on internal security and the security of individuals. This is part reflects our position as a super power and our focus on the world, rather than on the neighborhood, as Chilean Ambassador Esteban Tomic noted in his address to the OAS General Assembly meeting to ratify the incorporation of the Inter-American Defense Board to the OAS.⁷ Our preference is reinforced by our comfort with our own internal security, but also by our still stovepiped approach to the 3Ds of Diplomacy, Defense and Development as noted in many recent

⁴ Adam Smith, Book V, Chapter 1 in **The Wealth of Nations** (Mexico City, Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1999 (1776)).

⁵ United Nations, **Human Security Now: the Human Development Report 1994**. Human security focuses on the right to income and remunerative work (economic security), access to food (food security), health security, environmental security, personal security, community security (the safety of groups, especially minority groups) and political security.

⁶ See Moises Naim, **Illicit: How Smugglers, Traffickers, and Copycats are Hijacking the Global Economy** (New York: Doubleday, 2005) for a description of the emergence of global illicit networks.

⁷ Ambassador Esteban Tomic "Palabras del Embajador Esteban Tomic, Representante Permanente de Chile y Presidente de la XXXII Asamblea General Extraordinaria de la OEA para incorporar a la Junta Interamericana de Defensa a la Organización". Washington, 15 March 2006.

studies of stability operations and as the recent Iraq Study Group report⁸ powerfully insisted. As a consequence, there is little coordination between our development assistance efforts and our military assistance programs, though there is increasing recognition that these two efforts should go hand in hand.

The Latin Americans are correct in their emphasis on structural weaknesses and governance deficits and their relationship to insecurity. OAS Secretary General Jose Miguel Insulza argues that while the region is presently experiencing its best economic performance of the past 30 years, with growth consistently strong for an unprecedented four years in a row, this growth has come without generating employment. Instead of creating opportunity, inequality has increased across the region. Countries need to address critical deficits, including institution strengthening, state presence, infrastructure, market opening, employment generation, higher savings rates, improved income distribution and extreme poverty. Most importantly, Insulza argues, “we have to address the performance of our government institutions. They are not working for us. We suffer from a ‘lack of State’.”⁹ This “lack of State” is critical to the region, because the State is the ultimate provider of public order and public services (public goods for the economists) to the citizens.

To illustrate only a few of these deficits, income distribution in the region is among the world’s worst and getting worse. According to data in the 2006 World Development Report, the richest 10% of population enjoys more than 40% (and often close to 50%) of income/consumption in Chile, Mexico, Panama, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Paraguay, while the poorest 10% share less than 5 percent of national income.¹⁰

The distortion in income distribution contributes to socio-economic conditions in Latin America’s teeming cities that present high risks for delinquency, violence and gang formation. These include large scale marginalized and underdeveloped urban environments with high population density and large percentages of minors and youth. When coupled with easy access to drugs and fire arms and a history of use repressive force by the state, these conditions are explosive.¹¹ We see the consequences in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Caracas, Georgetown, and increasingly in Lima, Santiago and other cities of the region, including in the United States.

Given these conditions, it is not surprising that citizens across the region consistently report that crime and violence and job security are their foremost worries. The 2006 Latinbarómetro survey revealed once again that delinquency and unemployment are the two greatest concerns of citizens in the region. In El Salvador, Venezuela, Guatemala,

⁸ Iraq Study Group, **Iraq Study Group Report** (Washington: United States Institute for Peace, 2006).

⁹ These themes are recurrent in the Secretary General’s statements about the state of the region. Remarks here are based on his presentation at Georgetown University, October 17, 2006, and at the Inter-American Dialogue, 2005.

¹⁰ United Nations Development Program, **World Development Report 2006** (New York: United Nations, 2006).

¹¹ See Luke Dowdney, editor, **neither War nor Peace** (Rio de Janeiro, Viva Rio Foundation, nd), Andrew Morrison et al., “The Violent Americas: Risk Factors, Consequences, and Policy Implications of Social and Domestic Violence” in Hugo Fruhling et al, *Crime and Violence in Latin America: Citizen Security, Democracy and the State* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2003).

Honduras and Panama, delinquency is the greatest concern, while 67 percent of respondents across the region (down from 75-76 percent in earlier years) report that they are worried or very worried about losing their job. This ranged as high as 81 percent in Ecuador and Guatemala and only in Uruguay and Argentina did fewer than half of respondents report concerns about employment.¹²

The cost of these high levels of insecurity is onerous to the region, displacing more productive use of resources. In the late 1990s the Inter-American Development Bank conducted a number of studies of the cost of violence in different countries.¹³ The Bank concluded that the costs of violence, including lost days of work, costs of public and private security, lost investment and productivity, lost jobs, and foregone consumption summed to around 14% of GDP in the countries studied. A UNDP study in El Salvador calculated the cost of violence at 11.5 percent of GDP.¹⁴ This was two times the country's budget for education and health combined and three times the cost of providing social security protection for all citizens. Private security costs were calculated to total 5% of GDP and equal one-third of all private sector investment. The city of Bogota recently reported that private security expenditures there are equal to more than one-half of the entire budget of the Federal District.¹⁵ The dilemma is that private security is rich man's security. It is a net cost to the private investor and discourages investment, but does nothing to extend security coverage to high risk urban ghettos that generate gang involvement and support criminal activities or to urban areas where recruitment to Colombia's armed groups occurs.

Can U.S. and Latin American differences be reconciled?

The Multidimensional Security Declaration recognizes that each country must design its own security policy and that emphasis and priorities may vary from country to country and sub-region to sub-region. There is no single strategy to address this complex set of drivers of insecurity. Different countries and regions have different security priorities and they should pursue them.

Reconciling these different priorities requires accommodating differences and focusing on commonalities. If we can agree that the broad agenda is valid across the region, but with variations, then the challenge is to develop appropriate strategies that deal with the priority issues in the different venues. Each country and region needs to deal with the foremost security threats in that region. This requires getting behind the label "security" and understanding the causes and contributors to insecurity.

Often the problem of governance and the capacity of Latin American institutions to deal with specific issues on the agenda are at stake rather more than the failure to recognize the security challenge itself. In keeping with the Security General's observations

¹² Latinobarometro 2006, pages 39-40 and 50.

¹³ Juan Luis Londoño, Alejandro Gaviria, Rodrigo Guerrero, editors, **Asalto al Desarrollo: Violencia en América Latina** (Assault on Development: Violence in Latin America) (Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank, 2000)

¹⁴ Carlos Azevedo and William Pleitez, **¿Cuánto Cuesta la Violencia en El Salvador?** (How much does Violence Cost in El Salvador?) (UNDP-El Salvador, 2005).

¹⁵ Yesid Lancheros, "Bogotanos gastan en seguridad privada el equivalente a la mitad del presupuesto de Distrito," *El Tiempo* (November 18, 2006), reporting on a study by the Federal District Auditor.

regarding the “lack of State,” much more attention needs to be focused on institutional management and capacity and on the resources, financial and human, available to institutions for application to the security agenda.

More attention needs to be focused on developing appropriate strategies, as well. These are likely to require “whole of government” approaches that integrate the efforts of different agencies and ministries and that work across borders. Populations demand firm government actions to address high levels of crime and violence. In Central America this has led to the heavy handed “mano dura” policies that result in round-ups of youth, overcrowding of prisons (where gang recruitment is particularly high) and detention numbers that far surpass the court systems’ ability to process them. However, the same publics that demand action against crime and violence are much less likely to insist on social and economic programs – education, job training, microfinance -- to address the risk factors that contribute to violence. These must go hand in hand with enhanced policing if violence is to be brought under control. The complex security agenda requires a multidimensional approach on the part of both donor and recipient nations.

Can the tendency to militarize the agenda for lack of alternatives be minimized?

There is no lack of alternative ways to address the multidimensional agenda. The debate has suffered a singular lack of imagination and of commitment. In particular, it is unfortunate that the discussion of the multidimensional agenda in this country and in the region has been overly consumed with the question of “militarization” and “securitization” of the security agenda. This focus on securitization and militarization has distracted all of us from addressing the deficits of institutions that play more attention in the broad security construct. These include the police, the justice system, endemic discrimination against minorities, the provision of adequate education, the full set of social risk factors that contribute to gang formation, and finally to the lack of jobs for new entrants to the labor market.

There has been strong criticism of the *Mano Dura* policy against delinquency and crime in El Salvador and Honduras and elsewhere, and especially on the use of the military to reinforce police on the streets. However, we must recognize that the underlying problem is not the military, but that the police are poorly trained, badly paid, and inadequately organized and staffed.¹⁶ At the same time, there has been a failure to address the adequacy of the police numbers, the professionalism of the force, the capacity of the judiciary to handle case loads and avoid corruption, the adequacy of public schools, and even the problem of prisons and their severe overcrowding. Social welfare systems are simply not prepared to deal with the problems that they must confront.

We absolutely must overcome the tendency to blame the military for what are in fact problems of other institutions and the failure of longstanding policy to address them. The multidimensional security agenda is complex. There is no lack of alternative ways to address the complex set of contributing factors and manifestations of insecurity. These alternatives may require a different set of programs from those designed to train military forces, or to promote civil society participation. One area that cries for attention is the

¹⁶ For example, the Capital District Auditor reported that the city of Bogota has only half the number of police per population that is recommended by the United Nations (Lancheros, loc.cit.)

development of ministerial executive capacity.¹⁷ As one Minister of Defense lamented, “there are plenty of training and education opportunities for the military, but hardly any for my ministry.” This applies to other ministries with responsibility for different aspects of the security agenda as well.

What role should the OAS and the Inter-American System play in the cooperative management of the hemispheric security agenda?

When we talk about the Inter-American system, we must understand to what we are referring. There is a fond tendency to think of the “system” as the OAS, the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB -- now recently incorporated into the OAS as an autonomous entity), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). These three would be the policy makers, the guardians and the funders. In fact the “system” is a much more complicated, loosely- (if at all) integrated network of hemisphere-wide organizations, regional organizations and national agencies that don’t necessarily coordinate agendas, and that are not adequately integrated across individual issue areas. One has only to look at the 24 region-wide and sub-regional agencies listed on the OAS web page under the rubric “Inter-American System” to appreciate how distributed the execution of the OAS hemispheric agenda is. This is particularly the case with the security agenda which, as we have seen has its political, social, economic, criminal, as well as justice, police and military component.

The OAS’s strength is in promoting consensus among the State members, but it is not nearly so effective at developing actionable agendas. Its forte is consensus declarations that express the community spirit of the subject at hand. The OAS can also be effective when it promotes standards, model codes, coordination and communication of efforts, and the sharing of lessons learned. The Inter-American Committee on Drug Abuse (CICAD) has been most successful in this effort. The Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) has also demonstrated results. In contrast, only four countries recently complied with commitments¹⁸ to report transactions under the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials (CIFTA), the region’s very important tool for controlling the scourge of small arms traffic that feeds its endemic violence. Where are the priorities?

The commitments made under the various declarations must be addressed by individual countries and sub-regions. The OAS’s most useful contribution may be to help organize, focus and facilitate sub-regional, results-oriented action agendas among countries confronting similar problems. The small states of the Caribbean and CARICOM community, the Central American countries, the Andean states and countries of the southern cone all have different security concerns and priorities, but their concerns are more similar in salience and priority at the sub-regional level than hemisphere wide. The challenge to the hemisphere-wide system is to encourage effective agenda prioritization

¹⁷ Edward Rees argues persuasively that ministerial executive capacity is critical, but overlooked, element of Security Sector Reform programs around the world. See his “Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Peace Operations: Improvisation and Confusion from the Field,” (New York: United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, External Study, March 2006).

¹⁸ 22 countries have signed the CIFTA convention and 24 have ratified it.

and results-focused action by sub-regional and national organizations and agencies, and to promote responsibility and accountability. Sub-regional organizations may need to be assisted with funding to accomplish the priorities on their agenda. There should be a strong assumption that regions will report on progress and lessons learned.

In this construct, the OAS headquarters serves best if it can facilitate the coordination and execution of agendas across its multiple operating agencies and related organizations. The Summit of the Americas Secretariat performs this kind of task for the meetings of Heads of State. The Committee on Hemispheric Security, with appropriate resources and staffing, could perform a similar role with the multidimensional security agenda, seeking information from the many different agencies that are executing plans and reporting on progress. One its first challenges would be to make visible the vast web of plans, organizations, agencies and commitments.

Too often politicians in the region have been reluctant to engage the full security agenda, and as a result have generated a plethora of declarations, conventions, and treaties, but not the organization, resources, nor the effort needed to execute the programs that are declared to be necessary. This can be seen in part in the list of topics of the Committee on Hemispheric Security. Its web page lists twelve topics of concern to the Committee:

- Action against anti-personnel mines
- Arms Trafficking
- Confidence and Security building
- Cooperation for Hemispheric Security
- Fighting trafficking in persons
- Follow-up to the Special Conference on Security
- Military spending and transparency in arms acquisition
- Natural disaster reduction
- Nuclear Weapons
- Other Topics
- Security of Small Island States
- Transnational Organized Crime.

If one clicks on any one of these topics, for the most part one sees nothing but declarations. There is little to be learned about what the region is doing to follow up on the declarations. Perhaps too much of the Committee's effort is focused on confidence building measures, an issue that launched the review of hemispheric security in 1991. But time is spent not necessarily on activities that promote confidence building, but rather on devising of lists of possible activities that might promote confidence among neighbors.

In its defense, the Committee has been consumed in large part with the question of how to relate to the military component of hemispheric security. It took 15 years between 1991 when the OAS first began to consider the new hemispheric security realities and 2006 when the decision was finally made to incorporate the Inter-American Defense

Board into the OAS itself, as an autonomous entity.¹⁹ With that difficult decision behind, it is timely to focus on a more actionable agenda.

What is required to “get on with it”?

The most important ingredient needed to accomplish the advancement and integration of the multidimensional security agenda is *political will*. Nothing will happen in this region unless a sufficient number of political leaders feel sufficiently strongly about the security agenda to put their own names and personal commitments behind concrete, cooperative action. The region cannot be bullied; it must volunteer. There is ample evidence that is in the interest of countries in the region to begin to address both the risk factors and the concrete manifestations of insecurity. The agenda is complex and there are no easy solutions, but a better coordinated, more integrated, “multidimensional” approach is more likely to yield results than continuing to debate whether the agenda only invites “militarization” of public order and social issues

To move forward, these same leaders will need to agree upon the nature and scope of resources that must be committed to the effort. The Canadian delegation to the OAS has argued over the years for the need for adequate funding to the OAS itself to enable it to function more effectively. More efficient and effective funding is also needed at the national level throughout the region.

Finally, we must acknowledge that the insecurities of the region that define the multidimensional security agenda are a collection of complex, mutually reinforcing problems, and NOT just a military problem. No single organization has the whole agenda and organizations representing social, economic, education, health, corrections, criminal justice, intelligence, police, the armed forces, as well as finance and economy ministries, legislative committees and auditors general are involved in different aspects of the complex problem space.

Addressing the multidimensional agenda in a multidimensional way will require an attitude change on the part of many elites. On the one hand, it requires a commitment to a whole nation, human security approach that addresses security, justice, opportunity and service delivery. Security is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for sustainable democratic growth. The rich man’s justice and private security of the past will not help Latin America become competitive in the global marketplace. The state must change, as Jose Miguel Insulza has argued.

Adopting the multidimensional approach to security also requires that many elites and intellectual leaders commit to closing the chapter on past military abuses of power, and begin to write a new chapter based on cooperation and coordination with uniformed citizens. The problem is not longer military abuse of authority, but rather skill and capacity of police. There must be a rededication of efforts to promote civilian leadership of the security agenda, and leaders who can work comfortably with capable military leaders. A civilian commitment to working together requires that the armed forces be open to these changes, as well.

¹⁹ See my chronology of this evolution in Hayes, loc cit.

Governments and their agencies also will have to learn to collaborate across agencies to apply the full elements of national power to intractable problems. The Central American SICA model, advanced in the Central American Peace accords, but never operationalized to the extent necessary among its civilian organization components, warrants serious experimentation and evaluation. The SICA security “community” was envisaged as a joint and combined effort on the part of foreign ministers, defense ministers and interior ministers. The security agenda was thus lead by the civilian political leaders and supported by both police and military. The Central American armies have followed through, with their annual Conference of Central American Armies (CFAC), but the civilian leadership has never had the resources, nor the encouragement to develop a similar venue and agenda.

In the US, where the terrorism agenda continues to dominate, we must recognize that the black holes and dark networks of illicit activities that concern our neighbors also offer channels for potential terrorist activists. The best way to foreclose those routes is to help countries address the underlying contributors to crime, violence and illicit activities before they can evolve to more malicious manifestations.

This leaves us still to address the question, Are we partners of choice? This question can be asked about the US-Latin American partnership as well as about partnerships between neighbors in the region. In each case, the honest answer must be, “not always.” But we do occupy proximate spaces. Our economies are ineluctably integrated. Our institutional network is designed with the premise of cooperation. We may not have a choice. We must work together. And if we can operate as partners, the rewards may be mutually beneficial. If we only operate independently, we may all stumble.

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