



## Dossier

### Conference “NEW CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES OF SECURITY IN LATIN AMERICA”

Centro de Investigación para la Paz/ Tribuna Americana  
Madrid, 28th February 2005  
Casa de América

On 28th February 2005 the Centro de Investigación para la Paz (CIP- FUHEM) and Tribuna Americana organized a Conference under the theme “New Challenges and perspectives of Security in Latin America”. This conference was part of an initiative promoted by the Latin American Program of the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars.

After the conference, a public debate was held titled “Latin America and the International Security”, including presentations by Joseph S. Tulchin, director of the Latin American Program of the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars; Cristina Eguizábal, program officer of the Hemispheric Security and Cooperation Program of Ford Foundation; and Gaby Oré, researcher of the Centro de Investigación para la Paz (CIP-FUHEM). Manuela Mesa, director of the Centro de Investigación para la Paz, moderated the debate.

#### Program:

#### “New Challenges and Perspectives of Security in Latin America”

##### 9:00. Presentation.

Diego Molero. Director, Tribuna Americana. Casa de América.

Manuela Mesa. Director, Centro de Investigación para la Paz.

##### 9:30. Latin America in the Internacional System After 11-S

Introduction: Robert Matthews. Presentation.

Speakers: Joseph S. Tulchin. *Creating a Security Community in the Hemisphere.*  
Raúl Benítez. *Nacional, Regional and Global Security.*  
Hernando Valencia. *Human Rights, International Justice and Security.*

11:00. Break-Coffee.

11:30-13:30. Challenges and Perspectives of Security in Latin America. Latin American Answers to Global Terrorism.

Introduce: Mabel González. *The European Union as a Peace Actor in Colombia*.

Intervienen: Rut Diamint. *Civil Control of the Armed Forces in Democracy*.

Lilian Bobea. *The Tension Between Security and Freedom: Police and Militar Forces*.

Cristina Eguizábal. *Civil Society and Internacional Security*.

Dirk Kruijt. *Armed Forces and Security in Latin America*.

15:00-17:00. Cases of Study: Proposals and Answers.

Introduce: Manuela Mesa

Intervienen: Luis Bitencourt. *Security in the New World: Brazil and the Dilemma of World Leadership*.

Ricardo Córdova. Central America: *Citizen Security, Violence and Criminality*.

Antonio Sanz. *Democratic Security Policy: The Case of Colombia*.

[\*Política de Seguridad democrática: el caso de Colombia\*](#).

17:00-17:30. Final remarks.

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## Summary of the Presentations

**Robert Matthews**

*Presentation: General Lines for a Framework*

Security is a theme that worries all countries. Many aspects must be taken into account when discussing or analyzing security, including the understanding of human rights, the environment, and development, as well as their influence on peace and the capacity to create and maintain public security. The statistics illustrate a sad reality. For example, in Nicaragua, there are more people dead from robberies than from the counter-revolutionary war in the 1980's.

The United States has a large influence due to its hegemonic position in the hemisphere and emphasizes the role of military intervention in Latin American countries. In existing conflicts, such as those in Colombia, the Bush administration is giving priority to the military solution. From the 700 million dollars that the US annually gives to Colombia, 80% is utilized with military ends. In addition, the USA resorts to armed forces in order to carry out policial functions.

An important challenge to the security in the region is immigration, which presents a subject of debate between the United States and Latin America. Distinct visions coexist. In this case, as in that of Colombia, various groups work for the defense of human rights, while others give security a higher importance. Another question relating to security is proliferation and nuclear development, especially in Brazil.

It has already become impossible to regard national security as solely a policial or military matter. Within the idea of national security, there exists a need to not only approach military themes, but rather to take into account the other multiple aspects as well.

Joseph S. Tulchin

*Creating a Community of Security in the Hemisphere*

The changes in the world since the end of the Cold War create gaps in the international community - that previously did not exist - for hemispheric nations. It is vital for Latin American countries to understand the nature of the new space available and to define a Latin American perspective regarding the theme of security. The security focus that the United States grants the hemispheric nations an autonomy to develop their own approximations; a space that has to see the convergence of human and democratic values with the more traditional means of national power.

The novelty regarding the new threats to security is the importance that non-state actors have acquired, and the international-domestic a nature of them. That is to say, they simultaneously affect domestic and international security. The terrorist attacks of 2001 made it imperative to arrive at a consensus regarding hemispheric security. The Latin American countries should assume a protagonistic posture in response to the terrorist threat, operating through multilateral agencies and international cooperation.

To think that security in Latin America should be in opposition to the United States - as in a sum-zero calculation - is an error. Whatever the issue, the only avenue to maximize the security of any nation is the collaboration with other nations in the region. Latin American countries should understand the changes in the international system, comprehend the many levels inherent in the idea of security, and identify the subjects and values in those that are able to express themselves as creators of rules - and not only as those who follow them. The commercial strategy offers the hemispheric nations a grand opportunity to exercise relative autonomy: the commercial strategy can be a form of *soft power*.

Raúl Benítez

*Defense and Hemispheric Security in the Twenty-First Century. The Levels of Security: Regional, Hemispheric, and Global.*

International and regional security structures are being revised all over the world. The Cold War reconfigured a group of international security structures, whose epicenter is located in the Security Council of the United Nations. On the American continent, since World War II, necessary military alliances have been made for cooperation by means of the creation of the Inter-American Defense Assembly in 1942. IN 1947, the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance was signed, and in 1948 the Organization of American States was created. This architecture of security is complemented by an important quantity of bi-national and sub-regional agreements; the most important of which is the Treaty of Tlatelolco, to control the utilization of nuclear energy and to avoid the proliferation of nuclear arms in the hemisphere. Many bi-national agreements signed in the Cold War have been carried out. Others have discontinued being valid, and yet others have been built for security crises *Ad Hoc*.

Without a doubt, the most notorious regional conflict that involved forces from all hemispheric countries and international organizations was that of Central-America between 1979 and 1996. In order to overcome the Central-American crisis,

multinational and internal compromises were made in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala.

The 1990's were very important for the reconstruction of the security architecture of the continent. The Organization of American States revived as an institution and their membership expanded. At the same time, "Summit Diplomacy" was revived. On the matter of security and defense, the Presidential Summits were complimented by the Secretaries of Defense and Army Commanders, as well as frequent meetings with the heads of the Air Force and Army, in addition to military maneuvers, some with the participation of the majority of the countries in the hemisphere (as in the UNITAS naval maneuvers). Equally important was the fulfillment of the Special Security Summit (Mexico, October of 2003), headed by the Ministers of Exterior/Foreign Relations.

The analysis of the advances and obstacles to construct a new security design is vital. The hemispheric countries each have their own national security doctrines; there are different levels of internal institutional evolution in national and defense security material; and there are different perspectives pertaining to bi-national, sub-regional, and hemispheric cooperation.

To the previously mentioned, a new catalogue of new threats was added, security problems have been studied in depth following the terrorist attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. That, opens various questions: Is there an old, traditional agenda or a new security one? Are the new threats state or non-state actors? And what mechanisms should be used to confront these new threats - national resources, or cooperation?

**Hernando Valencia Villa**

*Human Rights, International Justice, and Security*

Human rights currently constitute the principal source of international obligations of contemporary national states. With the establishment of global criminal jurisdiction at the head of the new International Penal Court as a permanent measure, it has many obligations to be increasingly vigilant, as it is now not only responsible for the United States, but for individuals as well. Moreover, for the first time since the creation of the United Nations in 1945, one is able to say that, in addition to the Security Council, there is another world authority with strategic functions in international public order security material: the International Penal Court. It deals with security, as much for the states as for the citizens, and has become increasingly determinant for the effective observation of human rights.

**Rut Diamint**

*Military Missions: Responding to the Tensions of the International System.*

Outline:

- International context
- Regional context
- Military missions and terrorism
- Operations for the maintenance of peace, transparency, and democracy
- Military missions and national challenges

In this article, armed forces missions in Latin America, in the context of an international redefinition of the paradigms of security, are analyzed. Military roles have been doubly influenced by tendencies of multilateral cooperation and by a worsening of unilateral and realist visions. At the same time, security threats have varied, depending upon the definitions of the functions of military instruments. The armed forces currently collaborate in a more intense form in missions of peace, whose effects establish major civil controls on armed institutions. At the same time, the hemispheric agenda has contributed to the magnification of the superposition between defense function and public order missions, especially in the fight against terrorism.

On a national level, in even in those that predominate the concepts of the balance of power, a series of challenges has been added that is more closely related to the problems of governability than to those of traditional military conflicts. In conclusion, it emphasizes the necessity to strengthen security provision mechanisms based in high social and political legitimacy.

**Cristina Eguizábal**  
*Civil Society and International Security*

This article examines, in one part, the recent manifestations of the international civil society in favor of peace. In the second part, referencing different meanings of security that have been used since the end of the Cold War, threats that confront Latin American societies are analyzed, especially in the most vulnerable sectors. Finally, it intends to link the role of civil society in questions of security with democratic governability.

Outline:

- A. Civil society in war and in peace:
  - \* The movement against the war in Iraq
  - \* The anti-mine treaty
  - \* The coalition against the proliferation of small arms
  - \* Crimes against humanity and international jurisdiction
  - \* The defense of multilateralism
- B. From traditional security to human security (and the return to traditional security)
  - \* Pros and cons of utilized definitions
  - \* Different threats in distinct societies
  - \* Is it possible to talk about the aforementioned global threats?
- C. Civil society and governability
  - \* The construction of peace in post-conflict situations
  - \* Weak and failed states
  - \* Citizen participation in the definition of politics
    1. Defense: proposed analysis, new military roles, military service, legislative control, ministers of defense
    2. Intelligence: human rights and individual liberties
    3. Police: repression vs. collaboration

**Lilian Bobea**

*The Tension between Security and Liberty: Who wins and who loses?*

This article looks at the obvious dichotomy between liberty and security and the evil analogy that currently surrounds it, in light of the zigzagging processes of change that are present in the relationship between security forces and societal structures, especially in the Caribbean. As various observable occurrences have indicated, under the terms in which they are currently reproduced, the obvious result is a series of tensions between both aspirations. The following are approached: 1<sup>st</sup>, an analysis of the relationship between liberty and security under the terms of antagonism, subordination or assimilation; 2<sup>nd</sup>, some security questions in the small countries of the Caribbean and the state responses that are generated from their security forces, police, military, and societal social structures; 3<sup>rd</sup>, in what manner the search for security affects individual and collective liberties and 4<sup>th</sup>, What will be the most pertinent and beneficial state and societal reforms to a functional relationship between liberty and security?

**Luis Bitencourt**

*Security in the New World: Brazil and the Dilemma of World Leadership*

After the Cold War and particularly during the government of Lula da Silva, Brazil continues to demonstrate a growing interest in participation in the decisions that affect the regional security in Latin America as much as in global security. In the regional field, Brazil has increasingly participated in the resolution of regional conflicts, such as in its acceptance of the command of the peace forces of the United Nations in Haiti, and contributed 1,200 soldiers for that operation. Brazil also offered its mediation during the crisis between Colombia and Venezuela. In the global field, Brazil emphatically fights for the amplification of the Security Council of the UN, where it looks to have a position. However, Brazil still does not have the military power needed to be compatible with the powers that traditionally have looked to amplify their participation in world leadership, in search of a new system of security whose modification seems to be realizing. In addition, there is no indication that Brazilian society will be participation in this profound change of strategic position. The healing of an authoritarian past, the military presence on the political scene, and the promiscuity of intelligence on civil rights continue to be evident in daily Brazilian life. What domestic impact can these changes have on external Brazilian policy? What are the implications of a new equation of power reflected in this Brazilian activism? Is it possible to participate with a larger influence in global decisions related to security through only adornment and charm, and not through military power?

**Ricardo Córdova**

*Central America: Citizen Security, Violence, and Delinquency.*

Outline:

- Introduction: The armed conflict in Central America
- The processes of peace and the reform of defense and security sectors
- An approximation of the violence, delinquency, and insecurity in the post-conflict situation
- The phenomenon of violence, delinquency, and citizen's insecurity as challenges to democratic governability

**Antonio Sanz Trillo**  
*The Policy of Democratic Security in Colombia*

More than two years have passed since the announcement of the policy of Democratic Security by President Álvaro Uribe, the results presented by the government and by diverse national and international organizations will be to think that two completely opposite realities exist. The international meeting of donors, which took place in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia), has reduced the tone of the requirements of Colombia's government in relation to the fulfillment of the commitments established in the London Declaration (2003) and the recommendations of the United Nations, which entails consequences in the application of the policy of Democratic Security. The international community nevertheless maintains the requirement of an adequate legal framework to avoid impunity in the process of demobilization of the paramilitaries.

**Mabel González**  
*The European Union as an Actor for Peace in Colombia*

Colombia is a case in which the European Union is able to demonstrate both its capacity and its will to provide for a political exterior of cooperation that promotes development, peace, and democracy. The crisis in the foreign policy and the global leadership of the United States motivated by the situation in Iraq is opening spaces of international negotiation. In front of this, the European Union is in a key moment for the amplification of the east, the new constitution, and common currency. The current context opens possibilities of action. Until now, there has not been a clear strategy concerning Colombia and its performance has depended on the local political circumstances, or subordinate on the existence, or lack of existence, of negotiations between the Colombian governments and the armed groups. Europe should, however, adopt a more broad focus, aimed at approaching the in-depth causes of the conflict and to lay the foundations for a sustainable peace. At the same time, it should condemn any and all backwards steps of democracy and the state of rights in Colombia. It has at its disposal instruments which should be activated and can mutually strengthen regional organizations and intermediate potencies, such as Brazil and Mexico.

**Dirk Kruiji**  
*Armed Forces and Security in Latin America*

Since the second half of the eighteenth century, Latin America has had a large military influence and religious power. This examines three questions:

1. The arrival of the military in politics
  - Local border conflicts
  - Conflicts provoked by the insurgency
  - Conflicts proved by juvenile gangs
2. Democratic governments without coups

Although a democratic regimen has been established in the large part of the continent, the military coup intents have continued. The change of governments has not produced, however, coups, but rather popular pronouncements, especially since

1998. They have produced movements of protest, with a transformation in political movements that are not political parties.

### 3. The civil-military relationship

These relationships have undergone important transformations in recent years. In Argentina, after the war of the Malvinas, the members of the military junta were put under house arrest, a situation previously unthinkable situation. In Brazil, the presence of the militia was reduced with respect to the budget. In Central America the political presence of military governments was reduced, the same as in Chile's case.

There are, however, two failures of the democratic governments that have been detected:

- Informalization of the economy, structural debility and poverty. An important fact: 57% of the population prefers a more authoritarian government if it ends poverty (UN report).
- Impossibility of controlling the use of violence by the government: it causes the proliferation of delinquency, drug-trafficking, and urban gangs that coexist with the absence of authority in remote zones.

#### Other CIP resources

[Bibliography: Security issues in the Latin American context](#)

#### More information

- Other analysis by Rut Diamint: [Reformas en Defensa en América Latina](#).
- Woodrow Wilson Center. Latin America Program  
[http://wwics.si.edu/index.cfm?fuseaction=topics.home&topic\\_id=1425](http://wwics.si.edu/index.cfm?fuseaction=topics.home&topic_id=1425)
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<http://www.utdt.edu/departamentos/politica/workshop/seminarios.htm>
- FLACSO Chile, Programa de Seguridad y Ciudadanía  
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- Políticas de Seguridad de varios países de América Latina  
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