

Regional Security in the Americas: Past, Present and Future:

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Introduction:

Regional security in the Americas at the outset of the Twenty First century has evolved into a complex, multilayered issue. From 1824 onward throughout the Nineteenth century, the newly independent Latin American states continuously tried to advance common security projects while simultaneously fending off European and U.S. efforts to reassert their hegemonic power in the continent. Since the beginning of the Twentieth century, the U.S., the uncontested regional leader, has generally opted for a strategy of limited security cooperation with a foreign policy stance that has oscillated, often dramatically, between multilateralism, interventionism or disengagement.

To grasp to what extent regional security in the Americas has become a common, collective policy among the states of the hemisphere, this paper undertakes to analyze the circumstances that have either encouraged or obstructed the progress of common security policies in the Americas and of the different instruments (such as international law, treaties or multilateral institutions) that have been developed to shape and channel regional security arrangements. The principal sources used in this paper are the primary historical documents themselves and the academic literature on the topic of hemispheric security.

To analyze security issues at either the regional or international levels, Realist thinkers posit that states are the principal actors, and assume that the primary role of international cooperation policies, arrangements and institutions is to facilitate the pursuit of their individual state interests: the safeguarding of either their strategic advantage and increase their relative power. Liberals and Constructivists recognize the possibility that adversaries could achieve security by coordinating policies, as long as they are sanctioned and enforced by the dominant power (Waltz 1986:46-69; Gilpin 1991:43; Glaser 1994: 50-94).

Neoliberal-institutionalism, specifically, complements the Realists' basic assumption about the utility of collective security arrangements by emphasizing the advantages of

predictability, communication, trust, cooperation, and coalition building that such collective arrangements can foster. Accordingly, regimes, multilateral institutions and treaties, emerge as the rational choice tools utilized by state actors under certain limited circumstances in pursuing the common goal of a long term partnership in security issues (Keohane 1984:135-181; Keohane 1986: 158-254; Keohane and Martin 1995; Keohane and Martin 2003). Constructivism complements the realist-neo-liberal rational-choice approaches by underscoring the fact that the international system is shaped by both material and social structures generated both inside and outside the state (Finnemore 1996: 22-23; Wendt 1999: 266-278; Barnett and Finnemore 2004: 24-29); hence, to fully understand the security policy priorities of both the U.S. and the Latin American states, as well as the behavior of their decision-making actors, Constructivists contend that consideration must be given to other important elements such as national identities and the conceptualization of national interests and to the role of ideas in shaping state policies (Finnemore 1996:128-149). To better understand the difficulties in developing collective hemispheric responses to regional security threats, it is important to probe the reasons behind the stances adopted by Latin American political elites, perceived by their constituencies to be defending their national interests' vis-à-vis the interests of their neighbors and of Washington.

This paper adopts the position that to understand adequately the complex and multilayered regional security system in the Americas and its limitations, it is essential to recognize the fundamentally asymmetrical relationship among states in the hemisphere (realism) and the basic differences in perceptions between the U.S., the Caribbean and Latin American states regarding what constituted a security threat in the past and what constitutes a threat today (constructivism). States not only follow the Realist and Neoliberal-institutionalist logic of "rationality", but also the Constructivist "logic of appropriateness" (Finnemore 1996:28-31; Buzan and de Wilde 1998: 146-147; Wendt 1999:246-312).

A survey of Latin American's past shows that the development of a national defense policy has never been a high priority for its political elites, even when the region endured a long history of armed conflict and troubled civil military relations. The result of this lack of attention in developing a concerted and long-term defense policy was the failure

to consolidate professional military establishments or civilian interest in national defense throughout the hemisphere (Pion-Berlin and Trinkunas 2007:78-80). Latin American civilian elites have consistently turned away from developing an interest in national defense as an important field of public policy¹.

Presently the Western Hemisphere security arrangements and debates are at a major crossroads. The Cold War paradigm and intelligence that have guided the U.S. foreign policy since the end of World War II are no longer relevant (Steele 2002:v and 5-16). Since then, the American continent has changed and is now the region with the lowest level of inter-state conflict in the world (Hirst 2003:26-27). Latin America and the Caribbean still need to deal with enormous security challenges such as an exponential growth of drug-trafficking and organized crime (Tulchin 2003: 45-47). These threats highlight the need for a new security paradigm and national defense policies based on shared responsibility capable of confronting interconnected threats to the Latin American social fabric, democracy and good governance. But today, security has increasingly become a phrase that refers to everything from threats to democratic consolidation, terrorism, narco-trafficking, poverty, economic development, to environmental degradation or health issues like HIV. Although all of these issues are important and require the immediate attention, U.S. and Latin American authorities have failed to prioritize which issues require immediate concerted attention. They have failed to prioritize their national security issues as well as their common security threats (Pion-Berlin and Trinkunas 2007:78; OAS 2003). In addition, the events of September 11, 2001 and the overextension of U.S. defense resources underscore the need for the U.S. to seek the cooperation of its neighbors. But whether or not the U.S. and Latin America will be willing to fully play their parts and cooperate on matters of security remains to be seen.

¹ David Pion-Berlin and Harold Trinkunas point out that the boundaries of Latin American states were settled relatively early while ambitions to build large regional states like *Gran Colombia* were dashed by separatist movements. These post-independence development paths consistently deemphasized the role of the military in inter-state conflict, rendering small national armies with low capabilities that were a threat only when used in internal conflicts between *caudillos*, political party bosses and other power brokers to seize power illegally. Furthermore, diplomatic and legal Inter-American institutional innovations, the most important of which is *utipossidetis juri*, which established that a modern state's boundaries should match those of its colonial predecessor and favors the territorial integrity of states, promoted the development of a region characterized by the absence of significant existential, international and inter-state military threats (Pion Berlin and Trinkunas 2007:76-100).

Regional Security in the Americas:

The contemporary Inter-American security system is the outcome of the often contradictory security policies undertaken by the hegemonic United States and the subordinate governments of Latin America and the Caribbean to guarantee their individual national security while simultaneously bolstering the collective security of the Western Hemisphere. Washington's pursuit of regional preponderance throughout the 20th Century, but especially in the aftermath of WWII and its rise to superpower status, has time and again conflicted with the Latin American and Caribbean states' perennial aspirations to preserve their own national sovereignty and rights of self-determination. By virtue of its hegemonic position, the U.S. has in the post WWII period consistently been able to define, virtually unilaterally, what comprised an existential threat to the hemisphere. Nonetheless, differences between the U.S. and Latin American states, and among the Latin American states themselves, regarding the precise nature of the "threats" to hemispheric security and how to respond to them have often occurred in the past and continue to do so today².

Such fundamental differences in security priorities, perceptions of threats and preferred responses to threats explain why most Latin American and Caribbean states tend to distrust and resist U.S. unilateral leadership on issues pertaining national security. Historically, when the U.S. has perceived that its strategic advantage was threatened, it has tended to assert unilaterally its economic and military leadership. More often than not, these policies have run against the grain of the Latin American states' goals of consolidating secure, sovereign and democratic states. They have also often stymied Latin American efforts to forge an "inter-state society" of "family of nations" in the Western

² Buzan, Waeber and de Wilde identify the process of securitization as an extreme version of politicization that allows for a powerful actor like the U.S. to define what constitutes a threat to the hemisphere meriting a concerted response (Buzan, Waeber and de Wilde 1998:27-42). But even if in today's world the U.S. and Latin American security concerns have become increasingly interlinked, U.S. efforts to achieve and maintain regional preponderance tend to time and again conflict with the Latin American and Caribbean states' aspirations to secure their national sovereignty and self-determination. This fundamental difference in objectives helps explain why, even today, Latin American states tend to distrust and resist U.S. leadership as well as the full authority of a supra-national entity over national security issues.

Hemisphere able to address common security concerns and foster deeper regional integration and cooperation in the collective interest³.

The Origins of the Threats to Hemispheric Security; 1821-1889:

The roots of contemporary discrepancies in perception between the U.S. and most, if not all, Latin American states regarding what constitutes a common security threat and who should make that determination lie in the process of Latin America's independence from Europe between 1810 and 1821⁴. Since the early nineteenth century, the Latin American ideals of independence, modernization, democratic consolidation and regional integration have been contested not only from within by the domestic authoritarian and populist tendencies but also from without by external powers, initially by European imperialism and subsequently by the increasingly powerful United States intent upon consolidating and institutionalizing its claim to regional hegemony. In contrast to the U.S., which was concerned mainly with regional hegemony, from the start of their independent existence the Latin American states had to deal with a dual threat: territorial rivalries from their neighbors and domination by the increasingly powerful United States from the north⁵.

³ The writings of the English School propose a distinctive approach to cooperation in the international system (Bull 1984; Buzan 2004; Hurrell 2005; Linklater and Suganami 2006). They argue that to reduce all statecraft to strategic actions aimed at the narrow goals of achieving self-help and relative gains (Waltz 1979; Morgenthau 1993) or the reduction of uncertainty in political decisions through institutional means (Keohane 1984), neglects the extent to which overtime states have learned to create and preserve order and hierarchy in anarchical societies. For the most part to stay in power, political authorities aim to achieve national and international legitimacy. To do so, they generally tend to avoid violent confrontation by acquiescing to some constraints of the use of force, adopting a moderate behavior in foreign policy, and recognizing at least to some degree the importance of reciprocity and adherence to diplomacy, international institutions and norms. So without diminishing the importance of power politics or rational choice, this approach pays special attention to the existence and relevance of an increasing number of rules, norms, common understandings and mutual expectations in international politics (Linklater and Suganami 2006:82-116). Coercion and calculation still matter a great deal, but the contemporary English School stresses the increased importance of the historical development of agreed arrangements concerning expected behavior among states, and the importance of the historical evolution of the institutions of international society and international law that help constitute the contemporary international arena (Bull 1984; Herz 2003; Buzan 2004; Hurrell 2005; Linklater and Suganami 2006)

⁴ For more information on the history of Latin American integration efforts during the nineteenth century please see Betty Horwitz, (2007) *The Role of the Organization of American States in the Promotion of a Multilateral Framework for Regional Governance*. Ph D Dissertation, University of Miami. Chapter 2.

⁵ After achieving independence from Portugal and Spain, Latin American countries developed links to the world economies through the Industrial Revolution and colonial expansion taking place mainly in Europe.

Territorial integrity threatened by inter-state conflict was a major security concern for most Latin American states throughout the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, by and large, the conflicts that the emerging Latin American states had to face were characterized by a series of low intensity wars that never lasted long enough for the new nations to be set firmly on the path toward strong state formation⁶. Consequently, by the end of the nineteenth century, most of Latin America had developed only weak state apparatuses that permitted ongoing European meddling in their domestic affairs and, ultimately, enabled the United States to fill the power vacuum and consolidate a U. S.-sphere of influence in the hemisphere (Fenwick 1963; Smith 1996; Holden and Zolov 2000).

By the outset of the Twentieth Century, the definitive rout of European colonialism in the Western Hemisphere and the rise of the United States to the status of regional hegemon allowed for a revival in the Western Hemisphere – under U.S. leadership⁷ - of the ideals of cooperation and integration that had first emerged at the time of the emancipation of the Latin American states (Scheman 1987).⁸ As early as 1889, the First International Conference of American States took place in Washington under the

During the second half of the twentieth century, the European strong demand for foodstuffs and raw materials gave incentives to Latin American governments to develop economies that would rely strongly on exports of primary goods accompanied by imports of manufactured goods, which lead to a path of a dependent economic growth and vulnerability to constant external intervention (Skidmore and Smith 2005:42-62). During this time, the U.S. also started to establish regional hegemony beginning with the Monroe Doctrine in 1823 and leading to the war with Mexico in 1847 where Mexico seeded half of its territory with the treaty of *Guadalupe Hidalgo* the following year. In the late nineteenth century, the U.S. felt confident enough to make stronger claims to regional hegemony in the Caribbean Basin. Hence President Theodore Roosevelt replaced Spanish rule in Cuba and the Philippines in 1898 as a result of the Spanish-American War. In addition, the U.S. also assumed outright control of Puerto Rico and Guam and in 1903 took control of, and started to build the canal in Panama. By the first decade of the twentieth century, the U.S. had succeeded in prevailing over Europe effectively establishing its sphere of influence in the Western Hemisphere. These regional conflicts never achieved the destruction magnitude that would force states –the U.S. in particular- to develop and accept an institutional framework capable of superseding national institutions (Smith 1996:63-86; Schoultz 1998:123-175).

⁶ For a detailed account of the sequence and development of the Latin American weak path to state formation see Fernando López-Alvez. (2000). State Formation and Democracy in Latin America 1810-1900. Durham and London. Duke University Press.

⁷ Contemporary international relation theorists occasionally refer to the U.S. role in Latin America as a classic example of hegemonic management. In some cases such as in Central America during the 1980, the U.S. role has been more of hegemonic “mismanagement” which prompted independent efforts such as the one launched by the Contadora group (Pion-Berlin and Trinkunas 2007: 82).

⁸ These normative principles emerged simultaneously with the newly independent Latin American states in 1824 and had been kept alive through the American Congresses of 1826 in Panama, 1847 in Lima, 1856 in Santiago and Washington, and 1864 in Lima, but were deemed ineffectual for the lack of U.S. support (Fenwick 1956; Smith 1996).

sponsorship of the U.S. Department of State led by former Secretary of State James G. Blaine. This pioneering hemisphere-wide conference was intended to establish the basis for an Inter-American institutional framework to foster economic integration, democracy and a common security policy (Diamint 2000).

The U.S. and Latin America Security Relations: Multilateralism, Unilateralism,
and Conflict; 1889-1936:

The 1889 conference resulted in only very limited accomplishments. While it did manage to establish a political forum in 1890, initially called the Commercial Bureau of American Republics and later renamed the Pan-American Union in 1910, it failed to gain general support for the establishment of a Customs Union or an Inter-American Monetary Union. It produced reciprocity treaties of experimental character, as, for example, the recommendation to adopt the metric decimal system and the adoption of treaties in favor of protection of trademarks and copyrights, but these agreements remained partial and incomplete. The Latin American's fears of U.S. domination eclipsed the embryonic progress achieved toward establishing a common, U.S.-sponsored hemispheric institutional framework initiative of 1889, particularly in the areas of economic integration or security. This U.S. failure to win the confidence and cooperation of the states in the region, combined with renewed European efforts to take advantage of the unstable situation in Latin America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries led the U.S. to shift further away from cooperation toward unilateral assertion of its hegemony throughout the Western Hemisphere (Smith 1996 29-30; Burrell and Shifter 2000: 27-31; Holden and Zolov 2000: 47-82). The U.S. intervention in Cuba in the Spanish-American war of 1898 and subsequent U.S. "dollar diplomacy" or "protective imperialism" in the Caribbean and Central America in the first decades of the 20th Century, underscored expanding U.S. domination and deepening Latin American subordination to American hegemony. The aggressive role played by the U.S. in securing independence from Spain for the Philippines and Puerto Rico as well as Cuba made it crystal clear to all of Latin America that the U.S. was willing and able to resort to unilateral actions to assert its

hemispheric hegemony under the umbrella of the Monroe Doctrine whenever it believed it opportune to do so⁹.

Consequently, between the first Washington Conference in 1889 and the second International Conference of American States held in Mexico City in 1902, tensions and controversy among the states in the hemisphere, and between them and various European powers, steadily increased. These security-related tensions became especially salient in 1899, when, in a boundary dispute between Venezuela and-British Guiana, the U.S. forced Great Britain to end the conflict and accept international arbitration (Scheman 1987: 1-31). The U.S. further asserted its regional primacy in Central America in 1903 by supporting and recognizing the separation from Colombia of Panama and by blocking the participation of Britain and France in the construction and administration of the Panama Canal. Roosevelt's corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, called "The Doctrine of the Big Stick." embodied U.S. unilateralism at the outset of the 20th Century and effectively derailed nascent efforts to develop a hemisphere-wide common security policy for decades after (Smith 1996 39-62; Schoultz 1998: 59-90 and 125-151; Holden and Zolov 2000:70-94).

Following the Spanish-American War U.S. military preponderance over other states in the Western Hemisphere was no longer in doubt. Nonetheless, new challenges to U.S. hegemonic control in the Americas did arise. This time around, however, instead of seeking territorial gains at Europe's expense, the U.S. and several European powers jointly sought to enforce the collection of public and private debts from delinquent Latin America and Caribbean debtor states (Holden and Zolov 200: 89-90). To forestall renewed European interventions in the hemisphere, Washington took the lead in collecting such debts, especially among Caribbean Basin countries, via a policy labeled "protective imperialism." Constant U.S. interference in Latin American and Caribbean

⁹ Since 1824 Latin American newly independent states have advocated the establishment of a Pan-American confederation able to support some kind of a mutual security pact and a framework for resolving inter-states' disputes. But the constant U.S. interference raised fears and pervasive distrust of U.S. intentions, obstructing its progress. This is why only limited headway was achieved towards a Pan-American society during the subsequent conferences in Mexico 1902, 1906, Rio de Janeiro 1906, in Buenos Aires 1910, Santiago de Chile 1923, La Habana 1928, Lima 1938, La Habana 1940, and even in Chapultepec in 1945. Latin-American preoccupation with the preservation of self-determination and sovereignty prevailed over efforts toward the development of strong regional institutional framework. Nevertheless the idea of a hemispheric society of states rallied around a common purpose prevailed and resurfaced during periods of stability (Diamint, 2000:1-25; Holden and Zolov 2000:15-149).

countries' internal affairs further frustrated common efforts toward regional integration in the Americas, reinforced domestic authoritarian and populist tendencies throughout the region, and increased the level of distrust between the U.S. and its hemispheric neighbors. As a result, during the Third Conference of the American States held in Rio de Janeiro in 1906, virtually all pretenses involving cooperative and integrative efforts among the participating states were abandoned. Instead, collective efforts concentrated first on the defense of the principles of Latin American self-determination and national sovereignty, and, second, on the adoption of a resolution recommending the examination and condemnation of the increased conflict between governments that had resulted from the compulsory collection of public debts (Schoultz 1998: 176-204). The U.S. responded by reiterating its respect for the principle of limiting the use of force to recover contracted debts, contingent upon the acceptance by the parties involved of arbitration to resolve outstanding disputes. By adopting this stance, Washington was able to thwart the potential renewal of direct European intervention in the internal affairs of the states of the region while retaining the "big stick" option for itself, if arbitration was not accepted. In effect, the combination of U.S. military dominance and Washington's "protective imperialism" in the region allowed successive U.S. governments to consolidate an unchallenged American sphere of influence in the hemisphere once and for all. Simultaneously, U.S.'s hegemonic actions and attitudes toward the Latin American and Caribbean countries led regional political elites to distrust U.S. leadership and to resist American efforts to impose a common set of security policies and obligations on the states of the hemisphere. The widespread mistrust of U.S. intentions that emerged among most states in the Western Hemisphere in the early 20th Century as the U.S. rose to the status of regional hegemon remained a major constraint on the construction of effective collective security arrangements in the hemisphere throughout the remainder of the 20th Century and into the early 21st Century.

Once the threat of European military and economic intervention was eliminated in the first decade of the 20th Century, however, President Woodrow Wilson did resume U.S. efforts to promote greater hemispheric cooperation, democratization, regional integration and U.S. economic investment (Fenwick 1963; Smith 1996). Notwithstanding President Wilson's initial goals for U.S. hemispheric policies, his

subsequent actions often openly contradicted his stated intentions (Carr 1981; Scheman 1987). Indeed, repeated U.S. meddling in the domestic affairs of various Latin American nations, Washington's consistent unwillingness to sponsor an international body to confront collective security concerns, and the absence of American support for a regional mechanism for the peaceful settlement of disputes consistently served to undermine U.S. leadership. U.S. interventions in Latin American countries' domestic affairs, for example during the Mexican Revolution against Pancho Villa, and in Nicaragua against the guerrillas of Augusto César Sandino, only deepened the prevailing mistrust.

Considering Latin America's uncertainty about, and distrust of, U.S. intentions, it is not surprising that neither the Fifth Santiago International Conference in 1923 nor the 1928 Havana Conference succeeded in gaining support for any form of continental security cooperation. Suspicions persisted even after the proclamation of President Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy during the Montevideo Convention in 1933, despite the evidence that a shift in Washington's hemispheric policy was underway as the result of the election of a Democratic president and the deepening economic difficulties brought on by the Great Depression of the 1930s. By 1936 Roosevelt's moves away from the Monroe Doctrine, his disavowal of the Platt Amendment vis a vis Cuba, and his adoption of the "Good Neighbor Policy", along with the growing turmoil in Europe that presaged the advent of WWII in the late 1930s, made it possible for the first time in decades to generate a degree of regional consensus on common security concerns (Holden and Zolov 2000: 159-161; Hurrell 2005: 33-58).

WWII and the Institutionalization of a Hemispheric Security Framework: 1936-1945:

The 1936 Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace in Buenos Aires offered the first real opportunity for a joint effort by the U.S. and Latin American states to cooperate on security issues since the late 1800s. At this meeting there was generalized agreement in favor of the preservation of continental peace and for the creation of an interstate institutional framework to prevent war (Burrell and Shifter 2000:

27-31; Diamint 2000: 3-8). In 1938, against a backdrop the imminent outbreak war in Europe with its potentially disruptive consequences for peace and security in the Western Hemisphere, the U.S. led a successful effort to strengthen institutional ties on collective security issues among states in the Western Hemisphere through the Declaration of Lima at the Eighth Lima Conference. This declaration, later reaffirmed and reinforced in Panama in 1939, called for a collective action to prepare for the common defense of the Western Hemisphere in the event that war broke out in Europe Holden and Zolov 2000:162-167). A policy of a common defense against war responded to the immediate security issues in the region generated by growing global instability, while at the same time it echoed Latin-America's constant preoccupation with national sovereignty and self-determination (Fenwick 1963; Buzan and de Wilde 1998).

In 1940, during second meeting of Foreign Ministers in Havana the bases for a hemispheric security arrangement were finally established with the approval of the Collective Security Resolution XV (Fenwick 1963; Glaser 1994; Burrell and Shifter 2000; Pedersen 2002). Resolution XV set out a common security framework for the hemisphere through the Declaration of Reciprocal Assistance (*Tratado Interamericano de Asistencia Recíproca* - TIAR). This new collective security framework was first put to the test - with less than optimal results - during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. In practice, no effective common response materialized from the TIAR member-states in the wake of Pearl Harbor. To salvage the still embryonic hemispheric security cooperation agreement Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela presented an initiative designed to bolster the TIAR to the 1942 Third Meeting of Foreign Ministers held in Rio de Janeiro. This measure proposed to sever diplomatic relations with Japan, Germany and Italy as a collective Latin American response to the Axis powers, but allowed each individual TIAR member-state to opt out of the initiative, if it so desired. This "escape" clause reflected the region's still tenuous endorsement of the collective defense aspects of Resolution XV. Indeed, in practice it constituted a clear reaffirmation of Latin America's continuing adherence to the principles of self-determination over those of collective defense. The initiative did, however, include a call for the reorganization and strengthening of the TIAR mechanisms for collective security in the hemisphere to make them more effective.

Hence, despite the initially lukewarm hemispheric support for the U.S. in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor, the Colombian, Mexican and Venezuela initiative served to drive home the point that a judicious combination of (and balance among) the principles of respect for national sovereignty, democracy, and collective security and defense against war would provide Washington with the regional base of support it sought. Early in 1942, the creation of the Inter-American Defense Board (*Junta Interamericana de Defensa* - JID), an institution lead by the United States and designed to coordinate military-to-military cooperation in the hemisphere, gave practical shape to the emerging consensus around collective security measures in the Western Hemisphere (Fenwick 1963; Glaser 1994; Diamint 2000; Gilpin, 2001; Pedersen, 2002).

At the end of World War II, during the 1945 Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace held in Mexico City, delegates representing Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, The United States, Uruguay and Venezuela; agreed to establish an International Organization of the American Republics for the purpose of promoting mutual security cooperation and reciprocal assistance in the Americas (Diamint, 2000:9-12; Holden and Zolov 2000: 175). This new arrangement, known as the Act of Chapultepec, was based upon the principles of mutual respect, cooperation and security first advanced at the Washington Conference in 1889. It encompassed both the *Junta Interamericana de Defensa* (JID) and the *Tratado Interamericano de Asistencia Recíproca* (TIAR)¹⁰ and formally established the Inter-American Defense System (Diamint 2000:3-8; Ramos Martino 123-151). Signatory countries agreed, first, on a resolution reorganizing, consolidating and strengthening the Inter-American System. Second, they agreed on the immediate need to delineate specific collective security agreements that built on the 1940 Havana resolution by including provisions for a common retaliatory response in case of an act of aggression against any American state. These new agreements provided not only for the establishment of a

¹⁰ The JID, the Inter-American Defense Conference, was established in order to foster an inter-military regional cooperation, whose objectives comprised the standardization of equipment, military organization and training. The TIAR, the Inter-American treaty for Reciprocal Assistance, declared that an attack on any state of the Western Hemisphere will be considered an attack on all (Diamint 2000:3-8 and Ramon Martino 2000: 123-151).

comprehensive regional security agreement but also for the creation of an international security organization for the Western Hemisphere (Scheman 1987; Ruíz Blanco 2003).

Cooperation and Consensus: 1945-1950.

The Act of Chapultepec committed the states of the Western Hemisphere to negotiate a mutual security treaty that would include regional security institutions for the first time in the history of the Western Hemisphere (Act of Chapultepec 1945; Diamint, 2000; Ruiz Blanco, 2003; Shaw, 2004). This emergent Latin American “security community”¹¹ - involving both the JID inter-military cooperation mechanism and the TIAR mutual security treaty - was possible because both U.S. and most Latin American states’ definitions of what constituted “threats” to hemispheric security began to converge in the wake of WWII, against the backdrop of America’s rise to superpower status and the outbreak of the Cold War. In effect, Washington emerged from WWII in a position to exercise hegemonic leadership throughout the Americas. Since then, the explicit U.S. policy was to assume the mantle of defending the Americas against extra-continental conventional military threats and supporting and training of Latin American armed forces to counter domestic subversion. As a result, Latin American armies never developed the capabilities to engage in sustained offensive operations. Furthermore, Latin American politicians were never really motivated to achieve a comprehensive national security policy nor establish a strong institutional framework to foster positive and constructive civil-military relationships capable of developing comprehensive national security policies (Pion-Berlin and Trinkunas 2007; 82-96). With the active support (or at least passive acquiescence) of most Latin American states, the United States essentially

¹¹ Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett define a pluralistic security community as a transnational region comprised of sovereign states whose people maintain dependable expectations of peaceful change. Security communities have shared identities, values and meanings about the social reality, and a common understanding of certain norms and values, sharing many-sided and direct relationship among its members. These members exhibit a reciprocity that expresses some degree of long-term interest, obligation and responsibility. Members of a loosely coupled security community expect no bellicose activities from other members and, therefore, consistently practice self restraint. Tightly security communities tend to comprise a “mutual aid” society in which they construct collective system arrangements. Loosely or tightly comprised, security communities possess a system of rule that lies somewhere between a sovereign state and a regional, centralized government with an institutional framework that provides a collective security system (Adler and Barnett 1998:30-31).

dictated the new security framework for the region (Fenwick 1963; Waltz 1986; Glaser 1994; Diamint 2000; Holden 2000; Gilpin 2001).

The realities of power in the post-World War II ushered in a new era of U.S. primacy in the Americas. From 1945 onward, the U.S. sought to construct a Western Hemisphere-wide, regional security community grounded, at least rhetorically, in the principles of respect for national sovereignty, self-determination and democratic governance. These pre-WWII principles, fervently advocated by Washington's Latin American allies, reemerged as part and parcel of the post-WWII process of regional security integration because the Latin Americans remained preoccupied with insulating themselves from unilateral U.S. intervention in their nations' domestic affairs. The U.S. embrace of these widely-held principles strengthened and legitimized American leadership in the region by enhancing Washington's soft power and facilitating Latin American elites' acceptance of U.S. hegemony (Scheman 1987; Covarrubias Velasco 2000; Diamint 2000; Tilly 2007). In 1948, in a regional environment of relative peace and security, the Conference of American States held in Bogota, Colombia, reaffirmed and consolidated previous security-related agreements and treaties and formally adopted the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS). The OAS was designed an inter-governmental institution to promote the principles of self-determination, national sovereignty, economic development, democratic consolidation, and (in conjunction with the JID and TIAR) collective security throughout the hemisphere (Klepak 2003: 239-263).

From 1948 through the early 1950s, an institutional framework for the management of hemispheric affairs began to coalesce under the OAS umbrella. In effect, a two-tier arrangement was created. One tier was focused on security issues and involved primarily the JID and TIAR. A second tier concentrated on democratic governance and economic development issues through the OAS itself and the newly-created Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). Washington's simultaneous advocacy of democratic consolidation, economic development, and collective hemispheric security was positively received by the key states of Latin America and the Caribbean. As a result, in the early 1950s significant progress toward the development of an inter-state institutional structure capable of managing important aspects of regional governance

under the OAS framework did seem to be gaining headway (Scheman 1987; Burrell 2000; Covarrubias Velasco 2000; Holden and Zolov 2000). But the rapid intensification of the East-West conflict between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union and the repeated global crises that ensued soon drew U.S. foreign policy attention away from Latin America and refocused it elsewhere, especially on Europe and Asia. Indeed, intensifying security threats (emanating from Soviet and Chinese activities in the Third World particularly) came to dominate U.S. foreign and security policy attention as the Cold War heated up over the late 1940s and the early 1950s (Smith 1996; Holden 2000; Klepak 2003; Shaw 2004).

The Cold War: 1950-1991.

During the 1950s, the Cold War arrived in Latin-America. Perceiving the spread of Communism in the region as an imminent danger to America's national interests in the Western Hemisphere, Washington progressively abandoned in practice its rhetorical embrace of the principles of self-determination, democratic consolidation and sustained economic development as U.S. priorities in Latin America and the Caribbean and concentrated, instead, almost exclusively on the anti-Communist fight, often at the expense of democracy and economic development in the region (Smith 1996:190-216; Klepak 2003: 239-263). As the Cold War intensified, the U.S. treated the new hemispheric institutions such as TIAR and the OAS primarily as mechanisms for the consolidation and maintenance of an anti-Communist, U.S.-dominated sphere of influence in the Americas within the bipolar international system (Waltz 1986; Mearsheimer 1990; Glaser 1994; Mearsheimer 1994). In 1950 President Truman approved a National Security Council memorandum on Inter-American Military Collaboration that asserted that the Cold War was a "real" war in which the survival of the free world was at stake (Smith 1996:126). It also asserted that, through the OAS and TIAR, the American continent needed to adopt a unified position against the threat of Communist aggression in the hemisphere (Shaw 2004: 9-22). Once the Soviet threat was defined by U.S. policy makers as an imminent existential threat to hemispheric security, Washington arrogated to itself the right to intervene in the domestic affairs of any Latin

American state that faced Communist political or military aggression (or even what Washington deemed to be undue Communist influence). To assure regional security outcomes in keeping with American priorities in Latin America, the U.S. consistently opted to support strong, dependable, pro-American dictatorial regimes in power rather than to accept liberal or progressive regimes that might be more tolerant of (and potentially susceptible to) Communist penetration. This U.S. security policy preference was clearly illustrated, for example, in the 1954 U.S.-back overthrow of the leftist leader Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala and by the 1961 U.S.-supported Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba by Florida-based Cuban exiles (Smith 1996: 119-135; Burrell and Shifter 2000: 31-39; Diamint 2000: 1-25; Shaw 2004:59-93).

Repeated U.S. interventions in Latin American states' domestic affairs during the 1950s and 1960s and beyond truncated democratic development and facilitated the rise of authoritarian regimes throughout the region¹². U.S. policies toward authoritarian governments in the hemisphere oscillated between passive acceptance and outright endorsement, especially when these regimes touted their anti-Communist credentials. U.S. military assistance, economic aid, and bilateral loans to repressive regimes, such as that of François “Papa Doc” Duvalier in Haiti, of Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua, and of Alfredo Stroessner in Paraguay, continued well into the 1970s. If authoritarian rule failed or democratically-elected governments leaned too far leftward for U.S. policy makers, Washington consistently proved willing to intervene directly (e.g., the Dominican Republic in 1965, Grenada in 1979, and Panama in 1989) or indirectly (e.g., Guatemala in 1954, Bolivia in 1956, Chile in 1973, and Nicaragua in the 1980s) to guarantee that pro-American and anti-Communist governments would remain in power.(Drier 1963; Domínguez 1983; Domínguez 1990; Smith 1996; Desch 1998; Burrell 2000; Pastor 2001; Shaw 2004).

During the decades of Cold War from the 1950s through the 1980s the U.S. systematically swept aside or ignored altogether the principles of self-determination and democratic governance in the name of anti-Communism and U.S. security. However, the pro-U.S dictatorial regimes that Washington did support in the Americas failed

¹² The Truman Doctrine was based mainly on the principle of Containment which proclaimed that the U.S. would assume the role of global policeman in charge of stopping the Soviet Union's ambitions of world domination. This often led to the acquiescence of military coups and dictatorships (Smith 1996: 119-135).

systematically to develop legitimate and stable political systems capable of effectively governing their national territories and incorporating new social and political forces into the economic and political life of their countries. As a result, these U.S.-backed authoritarian and repressive regimes repeatedly failed to establish stable and effective governing structures, to forestall the rise of new security threats such as drug trafficking and organized crime, or to prevent the emergence of radical populist and anti-American regimes in many countries in the region, especially during the turbulent 1980s.¹³

Western Hemisphere Security and the End of the Cold War: 1989-1991.

The Reagan administration's invasion of Granada in 1981 to oust the radical New Jewel movement (or its remnants) from power and its covert support for the "Contra" war against Nicaragua's leftist Sandinista regime during the 1980s, along with the George H. W. Bush administration's invasion of Panama in 1989 to remove Manuel Noriega from office and bring him to trial on drug trafficking charges in the United States, marked the end of the modern era of U.S. intervention in Latin America and the Caribbean that had spanned some four decades following WWII. In Central America, U.S. interventionist policies over the early 1980s had prompted four Latin American governments – Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, and Panama - to seek to broker a peace agreement (without U.S. approval or participation) outside the auspices of the OAS through the Contadora group. Upon the collapse of the Contadora initiative in 1985-86, the subsequent Esquipulas Accords, a Central American initiative led by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias in 1986 and beyond (also outside the OAS framework), set in motion a peace process that ultimately succeeded in restoring relative peace and stability in the region, initially over U.S. objections and without Washington direct backing. To monitor compliance with the Esquipulas accords, the OAS was once again sidelined in favor of United Nations involvement. The ultimate success of these initiatives in 1989-1990 clearly indicated that the threat of Soviet/Cuban intervention was no longer perceived by many Latin American countries as sufficient justification for unquestioning

¹³ For a complete history of U.S.-Latin American relations see (Smith 1996: 190-261 and Skidmore and Smith 1986: 396-434).

support for both U.S. unilateral security policies or for backing undemocratic Latin American regimes (Pastor 2001:153-175 and 221-240).

Far-reaching transformations in the international arena during the 1980s, such as the arrival in Latin America of the “third wave” of democratization, the crumbling of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the reunification of Germany and the liberation of much of Eastern Europe from Soviet domination in 1990 were major signs of that the Cold War was winding down. The end of this era of East-West conflict in global politics had profound implications for Western Hemisphere affairs. With the final the collapse of the former Soviet Union in December 1991 the world witnessed the demise of the bipolar international system that had pitted the United States and the Soviet Union against each other and that had constrained and limited democratic development in Latin America and the Caribbean for decades (Domínguez 1998: 3-28).

The new international environment and the emergence of the U.S. as the sole superpower dissipated the uncertainties previously generated by the Soviet threat and allowed Washington to shift its foreign policy priorities in the hemisphere away from security issues and to emphasize economic development and democratic governance in the region instead. Consequently, many states in the Western Hemisphere began to perceive new opportunities for expanded cooperation in their relations with the United States (Perry and Primorac 1994:111). For the first time in several decades, U.S. authorities – especially President George H. W. Bush and then Bill Clinton - felt secure and confident enough to promote regional economic integration, democratic consolidation and common defense and security policies (Domínguez 1990; Lowenthal 1991; Buchanan 1998; Desch 1998; Thorp 1998; Pastor 2001; Corrales 2003; Klepak 2003).

This new convergence of interests at the outset of the post-Cold War period was reflected in the increased willingness by the U.S. and many Latin American states to rely upon regional initiatives and regimes, such as the 1994 Summit of the Americas held in Miami, Florida, and the 1994 inauguration of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The United States, along with many of its regional allies, also sought to utilize the already established two-tier regional institutional arrangements to greater effect. The IADB and the OAS were called upon to promote economic development and democratic

governance in the hemisphere more than at any time since their creation in the late 1940s. The JID and the TIAR were activated for the purpose of forging a more cooperative security agenda (Lowenthal 1991; Smith 1996; Agüero 1998; O'Donnell 1999; Burrell and Shifter 2000; Pastor 2001; Shaw 2004).

The Emergence of a New Security Community: The Hemispheric Security Committee (CHS): (1991- 2001):

With international Communism no longer considered to be an imminent threat to hemispheric security, the U.S. and Latin America began to reassess and redefine their views of regional security. The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) adopted a new, expanded security agenda for the region that included the following issues: 1) Cold War residuals, particularly in Central America and Cuba; 2) Insurgency and terrorism, which at the time were represented by disruptive anti-democratic elements primarily in Peru, Colombia and México; 4) Drug-trafficking and organized crime activities; 5) Illegal or undocumented immigration and refugee issues; 6) Arms control and non-proliferation issues, mainly regarding conventional arms; 7) Traditional Inter-American security cooperation such as protecting the Panama Canal; 8) Conflict resolution and peacekeeping in places such as Haiti; 9) Social issues and the environmental problems, including assistance in poverty alleviation, nation-building and democratic consolidation; 10) Energy security; and 11) Civil-military relations and the role of the armed forces in democratic societies (Perry and Primorac 1994: 111-117; Bermudez Torres 2003:85-86).

This broad security agenda, which included issues such as nation-building, democracy and the environment that previously had not been defined as security threats, required the construction of a more effective, multilateral institutional mechanism at the hemispheric level than was currently available. To this end in 1991 and under the auspices of the OAS, the Hemispheric Commission of Security, renamed in 1994 as the Hemispheric Security Committee (CHS) was created. The main goal of the CHS was to broaden the already existing common security issues and the JID's concept of inter-state military cooperation to include not only evident security issues such as drug trafficking or inter-state conflict, but also issues such as confidence building, economic

interdependence, social development, the defense of democracy and environmental protection (Smith 1996:318-352; Pastor 2001 331-352; Herz 2003 133-168). The main goal of the CHS was to forge a new hemispheric consensus that would reflect the recognition that all of these expanded security concerns reflected common regional, as well as national, security threats and so required a common, region-wide security strategy (Domínguez 1998: 25-27; Cardona 2003: 199-223; Fontana 2003: 169-198)¹⁴.

The new CHS security doctrine called for: 1) Increased U.S. government collaboration with other Latin American states on security matters, including sharing resources and sensitive information with other military institutions in the region; 2) U.S. military subordination to and support for collaborative, regional decision making structures; and 3) Inclusion of a wider range of security concerns, such as poverty, democracy, and the environment, on the collective regional security agenda. The willingness of the Latin American states to engage the U.S. within the framework of the CHS and the OAS's umbrella, thus, depended heavily on whether or not Washington would be willing to adopt an expanded security agenda and a more cooperative approach to hemispheric security problems (Horwitz 2007: 155-168).

Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD)

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in late 1991, already a major issue in hemispheric affairs drug-trafficking took center stage in U.S.-Latin American security relations. To combat drug trafficking in the Americas, the George H. W. Bush administration increasingly sought to enlist the Latin American and Caribbean states in the construction of a hemispheric anti-drug "regime" characterized by a common set of norms, rules and procedures regarding illicit drugs that would be enforceable by an effective, regionally-based institution. To frame the drug problem as a

¹⁴ President Clinton backed these efforts toward multilateralism by the OAS General Assembly. The Assembly charged the Permanent Commission with the creation of a work group that would study and formulate recommendations for a common security hemispheric agenda. (Bermudez Torres 2003:83). Under the OAS umbrella, this working group began to revise the role of both the *Junta Interamericana de Defensa* (JID) and the *Colegio Interamericano de Defensa* (CID), to achieve the demilitarization of border conflicts, especially in Central America (Martino Ramos 2000:143-44), and with the final goal of modifying the hemispheric security doctrine to include all the abovementioned issues (Perry and Primorac 1994; Martino Ramos 2000; Bermudez Torres 2003).

shared concern, to defuse the widespread condemnations of the 1989 unilateral U.S. military intervention in Panama (launched to arrest General Manuel Noriega for drug trafficking crimes), and to dissipate growing regional antipathy toward Washington's heavy-handed and unilateral drug decertification process, in 1990 President G. H. W. Bush opted to attend personally the first Cartagena Drug Summit in Cartagena, Colombia (along with the presidents of Colombia, Peru and Bolivia) and in the subsequent 1992 San Antonio Drug Summit held in San Antonio, Texas. At both these summit meetings, President Bush openly acknowledged U.S. "co-responsibility" as a consuming country for the hemisphere's burgeoning drug trade, pledged greater U.S. commitment to multilateral cooperation on drug control issues in the hemisphere, and underscored the need to institutionalize a more consensus-based and effective anti-drug regime in the region (Bagley 1991; Bagley 1996; Cepeda Ulloa 1996; Smith 1996; Walker 1996; Bagley 1999; Galen Carpenter 2003; Youngers and Rosin 2005).

In fulfillment of these ambitious goals, in 1991 the OAS General Assembly voted to establish the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) as a semi-autonomous agency within the umbrella of the OAS and adopted the Declaration and Program of Action of Ixtapa¹⁵. CICAD was created to promote region-wide drug control programs and to facilitate the sharing of information about illicit drug abuse and drug trafficking in the hemisphere. In 1992, the OAS's General Assembly approved new legislation for the common prevention of money laundering and the flow of illegal funds. As a result in 1993, CICAD undertook a new project designed to increase the flow of information, and to strengthen local governments so that they might better combat drug trafficking and illegal arms sales across borders. Under President Bill Clinton, Washington's active support for CICAD's efforts in 1993 and beyond led to the first

¹⁵ In an effort to frame the drug problem as a shared concern and to defuse the widespread condemnations of the 1989 Panama military intervention by most Latin American governments; the first Bush administration decided to participate in the Cartagena I, San Antonio, and Cartagena II Summits. Through this participation, the U.S. government acknowledged the need for its hemispheric commitment to a greater multilateral cooperation on drug control issues as well as the need to create the conditions for an anti-drugs consensual regime in the Americas by developing cooperative, multilateral decision-making mechanisms to find a way to deal with the "drug problem" in a comprehensive way. The OAS spearheaded a multilateral process that started with the Inter-American Program of Action in Rio de Janeiro in 1987, followed by the establishment by the OAS General Assembly of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), and the adoption of the Declaration and Program of Action of Ixtapa in 1991. So far, the U.S. has been willing to acquiesce some of its authority and cooperate with neighboring states to confront the drug problem (Horwitz 2007: 120-130).

regional Anti-Drugs Strategy Forum in 1996 and, ultimately, to CICAD's implementation of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) in 1999 (Herz 2003). By supporting CICAD and the MEM, the Clinton administration effectively downplayed the aggressive rhetoric of the "War on Drugs" and the widely condemned U.S.

certification/decertification process and accorded much greater role to multilateral drug control efforts in the hemisphere. Under the umbrella of the OAS, through CICAD and MEM, the U.S. and Latin American states are yielding some of their authority, however modest, to the OAS and slowly developing an anti-illegal drug regime. OAS member states have increasingly established common expectations for the behavior of states in the hemisphere through a slow developing drug regime where the drug problem is confronted as a shared security threat (Buzan and de Wilde 1998)¹⁶.

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks brought the construction of this new, more comprehensive regional security agenda to an abrupt halt. Forced to recognize heightened U.S. vulnerability to the clear and present danger of global terrorism, the administration of President George W. Bush reacted by moving away from the multilateralism inherent in the CHS's expanded regional security agenda and the CICAD example and resorted, instead, to a policy of unilateral remilitarization and military intervention. As during the Cold War, the imperative of maintaining U.S. global military supremacy took precedence over the construction of a broader, multilateral hemispheric security agenda (Bermudez Torres 2003: 85-88). In the aftermath of 9/11, the Bush administration has consistently focused American policy attention and military resources on Afghanistan and Iraq under the assumption that Washington could, at least temporarily, disengage from Latin America without jeopardizing its hegemonic position in the region. As Buzan has asserted: No other great power is likely challenge U.S. primacy in the Western Hemisphere; thus, Latin America is destined to fall under a new Monroe Doctrine (Buzan b 2004: 144).

¹⁶ For more information on CICAD, MEM, and multilateral efforts from U.S. and Latin American states through the OAS please see Betty Horwitz, (2007) *The Role of the Organization of American States in the Promotion of a Multilateral Framework for Regional Governance*. Ph D Dissertation, University of Miami. Chapter 4.

The 1995 Williamsburg Process, 9/11 and Beyond

In the immediate post-9/11 period, the Bush administration insisted that the hemispheric security agenda should focus narrowly on the immediate threat of global terrorism and closely related security issues rather than on the broader gamut of regional security concerns that had emerged as part of the collective security agenda over the 1990s. Washington also quickly arrived at the policy decision that regional security, especially as it impinged on U.S. national security, simply could not be safely entrusted to a multilateral organism like the OAS. Hence, the JID and the TIAR were invoked only marginally.

To rally regional solidarity for America's new anti-terrorism security priorities in the hemisphere without the encumbrances inherent in reliance on the slow-moving and highly political OAS umbrella, the Bush administration instead sought to activate the 1995 Williamsburg Process, a parallel security arrangement fully controlled by the US Department of Defense (DOD). The Williamsburg process had from the outset concentrated on military-to-military cooperation directed and funded almost entirely by the DOD. The Williamsburg agreement had focused on six main points: 1) The recognition that mutual security requires the preservation of democracy; 2) The acknowledgement that military security forces play a critical role in support and defense of the legitimate interests of sovereign and democratic states; 3) The reaffirmation of the armed forces as subordinate to a democratically controlled authorities, situated within the bounds of national constitutions, and always respectful of human rights; 4) The promotion of open discussion on defense matters; 5) The resolution of the outstanding border and other disputes through negotiated settlements; and 6) The promotion of greater military-to-military cooperation in support of emerging security needs, including narco-terrorism (Perry 1995).

From the standpoint of U.S. authorities after the September 11 attacks, the Williamsburg agreement, which had been forged years before 9/11, was an ideal mechanism for DOD to employ in pursuit of general U.S. anti-terrorist security objectives in the hemisphere. Among the key aspects of the 1995 Williamsburg accords viewed by Washington as adaptable to the changed post 9/11 environment were provisions for: 1)

Support for a hemispheric security agenda that would strengthen democracy by building strong state institutions (including police and military institutions); 2) Direct U.S. resource allocations to improve civil/military relations and to strengthen civilian expertise in defense matters in the hemisphere; 3) Support for the peaceful resolution of disputes, transparency in defense budgeting, and security-building measures; 4) Combat of drug-trafficking and international terrorism jointly by the U.S. government and allied Latin American states; 5) Improvement of capabilities for joint military action in peacekeeping; 7) Prevention or alleviation of catastrophic humanitarian crises; and 8) Control of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Craddock 2006:1-27).

While the 1995 Williamsburg process undoubtedly constituted a step toward greater multilateralism in regional security matters, decision-making and resource allocation processes under the Williamsburg agreement clearly remained in U.S. military hands¹⁷. Hence, the Bush administration saw the Williamsburg agreement, rather than the OAS, as the most appropriate mechanism for mobilizing regional cooperation for its hemispheric anti-terrorist security agenda after 9/11 (Castro 2006; Romero 2006).

In September 2002 the newly released “National Security Strategy of the United States of America made official the doctrine that the country was engaged in a war of global reach against terrorism and, when necessary, against nations that harbored them. As part of the “War on Terror” the U.S. announced a strategy of preemptive war and “proactive counter-proliferation” against rogue states, terrorist clients and terrorist groups. The White House authorities were adapting a centuries-old precept of international law, and updating the concept of “imminent threat” as a rationale for self-defense increasing the offensive capabilities and objectives of the U.S. defense forces to confront today’s adversaries. The implication of this rational constituted a doctrinal formulation that abandoned a defensive stance to pursue a perpetual war wherever U.S. enemies might be and to achieve an asymmetric advantage to face nontraditional threats (Bush 2002: 1-31; Steele 2002: 35-40; Loveman 2004:xxi-xxii). Consequently, in October 2003 in Mexico City during the Defense Ministerial of the Americas (DMA)

¹⁷ Since 1995, DMA conferences have taken place in Williamsburg, 1995; Buenos Aires, 1996; Cartagena, 1998; Manaus, 2000; and Santiago de Chile, 2002. Since then, Washington has increasingly subordinated free trade initiatives to U.S. security concerns. The need to tie economic cooperation became more explicit in the content of the Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) Act approved by the U.S. Congress in 2002 (Hirst 2003::38).

Conference, a declaration was emitted setting out the multidimensional concept of security which stated that: 1) The threats of terrorism, narco-trafficking, illicit arms trafficking and organized crimes were linked and as a group and constituted the hemisphere's highest security priorities; 2) It was necessary to prioritize the reinforcement of sub-regional alliances such as CARICOM in tandem with CICTE, CIFTA and CICAD to combat terrorism. As a result, basic security issues to Latin American governments such as the maintenance of territorial integrity or strengthening of state institutions were not included in the final text. In addition, the JID, now part of the OAS, was clearly relegated to a secondary role in hemispheric defense matters (WOLA 2005: 1-5).

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld arrived in Managua, Nicaragua, the same day that President Bush in Washington waived his administration's restrictions on U.S. military aid to countries previously ineligible for such aid in exchange for their agreement to exempt U.S. personnel from the provisions of the International Criminal Court (ICC)¹⁸. As a result, in October 2006, in the final DMA Declaration of Managua, the cooperative security agenda that emerged in 1991 was definitively subordinated to the terrorism-related issues prioritized by Washington in its bilateral agreements on security throughout the hemisphere¹⁹. In practice, this emphasis on terrorism to the exclusion of other security issues in the region was carried out via bilateral and sub-regional agreements rather than through hemisphere-wide accords (DMA 2006; Rhem 2006:1-2).

The New Security Community: Unilateralism or Cooperation: 2001-2005

The lack of an imminent threat to the U.S. and the benign regional environment of the 1990s had fostered the development of a very broad and inclusive regional security agenda. The end of the Cold War and the changes in global and regional political-military dynamics encouraged the Clinton Administration and OAS member states during the

¹⁸ This exemption became possible because Article 98 of the American Service members Protection Act of 2002 prohibited any form of military aid to countries that did not agree to submit U.S. military members to the International Criminal Court (ICC) (Rhem 2006:1).

¹⁹ At the November 2004 defense ministerial in Quito, U.S. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld had already linked terrorism and drug trafficking, hostage takers and criminal gangs as "an anti-social combination" aimed at destabilizing civil societies (Green 2006:1)

1994 Summit of the Americas in Miami, Florida to launch new, multilateral confidence-building process in the security arena.²⁰ In this new, more positive environment, many Latin American and Caribbean states proved willing to engage the U.S. within the framework of the CHS and CICAD under the OAS's umbrella. But the September 11 attacks dramatically altered the security scenario in the Western Hemisphere and threats such as terrorism and the proliferation of guerrilla and organized crime groups effectively derailed the CHS security agenda. Washington shifted its attention to the Middle East and largely disengaged from the Western Hemisphere. The Bush administration priorities and policies since 9/11 have caused widespread resentment and growing anti-Americanism among both Latin American governing elites and Latin American publics throughout the hemisphere. Immediately after the September 11 attacks, most Latin American and Caribbean governments willingly cooperated with Washington to address the new U.S. anti-terrorist security priorities. Many now feel that their solidarity with the United States has not been fully recognized, much less adequately reciprocated, by Washington and the Bush administration in the six years following 9/11. The perception among Latin American leaders that, although the CHS scheme has not been formally altered, it certainly has been ignored is increasingly held throughout the Americas. In short, much of Latin America has come to the realization that since 9/11 security issues of crucial importance to Washington, such as terrorism and drug trafficking have dominated the regional security agenda at the expense (and neglect) of issues of equal importance to Latin American states, such as sustainable development, democracy and poverty (CHS 2004; Isacson 2005; CHS 2006). Consequently, in the wake of 9/11 U.S. and Latin American perception so their respective security priorities have progressively diverged

²⁰ The current inter-American security infrastructure is comprised of several institutions. It can be traced back to 1942 with the creation of the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) or *Junta Interamericana de Defensa* JID in an advisory capacity in response to the hemispheric threat of the then Axis powers. The IADB/JID oversees the American Defense College designed to train and prepare military personnel from all countries of the Americas except Cuba. Moreover, within the Americas there are also a number of sub-regional agreements and arrangements that deal with defense and security issues. For instance Canada and the United States are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and share responsibilities for continental air defense in the form of North American Aero Defense Command (NORAD) and NORTHCOM. In addition, the sub-regional components with security components are: the Rio Group, the Central American Democratic Security Treaty, the Eastern Caribbean Regional Security System (RSS), the South American Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the Andean Charter for Peace and Security (Soriano and Macay 2005:2-5).

and a growing schism between the Washington and many, if not all, Latin American states regarding the common security agenda is increasingly in evidence.

During the XXXII OAS General Assembly celebrated in Barbados in 2002 the Bridgetown Declaration stated that common security challenges such as terrorism, drug-trafficking, organized crime, illegal traffic of arms, disaster preparations, and environmental degradation were priorities. During the subsequent 2002 meeting in Monterrey, Mexico, held later in the same year however, instead of disaster preparation, democracy, good governance or the environment – security priorities emphasized by many Latin American leaders -, the issues that occupied center stage were the ratification of the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA)²¹ and the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE)²² along with reform of TIAR to better deal with terrorism and related issues (Bermudez Torres 2003: 91-102; Hayes 2007:76-77; Mares 2007: 107).

In October 2003 the OAS adopted a revised concept of hemispheric security via approval of the Declaration of Security in the Americas at a meeting held in Mexico City, México²³. According to this declaration, the list of hemispheric security threats and concerns need to be expanded to encompass new and nontraditional threats, which included political, social, health, and environmental aspects (Chillier and Freeman 2005:7-9; Soriano and Macay 2005:1-11). In this new document, which harkened back to the expanded concept of security favored by most Latin American and Caribbean states

²¹ The 1995 OAS Declaration of Santiago on Confidence-and Security- Building Measures adopted a list of goals strongly influenced by the Central American peace process in Esquipulas focused primarily on disarmament issues and on engagement among civilian and military forces. In 1998, the San Salvador Meeting on Confidence-and Security-Building measures included various issues related to disarmament. Hence the *Convención Interamericana Contra elTráfico Ilícito de Armas de Fuego, Municiones, Explosivos y Otros Materiales Relacionados*, known only through its English acronym CIFTA, was signed in 1997 and ratified by most countries by the end of the decade (Hayes 2007: 76-77).

²² In 1996, the OAS convened an Inter-American Specialized Conference on Terrorism in Lima. At the time, it did not appear likely that terrorism would become a major issue in the hemisphere. At the meeting the Declaration of Lima to Prevent, Combat, and Eliminate Terrorism was adopted without stirring much regional opposition. In 1998 the OAS established the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism or *Comité Interamericano Contra el Terrorismo* (CICTE). Known only by its acronym in Spanish, CICTE was signed by thirty three of thirty four members of the OAS on June 3, 2002, but only twelve –including the U.S. - had ratified the treaty as of 2007 (Mares 2007: 107).

²³ The thirty four OAS member states had planned to hold a Special Conference on Security in 2004, but due to the events of September 11, an agreement was reached in Barbados at the XXXII General Assembly of the OAS to hold such a conference in May 2003 in Mexico City (Soriano and Macay 2005:2-3).

in the post-Cold War decade of the 1990s, post-9/11 U.S. priorities, including terrorism, transnational organized crime, the global drug problem, corruption, asset laundering, illicit trafficking in weapons, and the connections among them, figured prominently. In addition, however, the Mexico City Declaration also identified extreme poverty and social exclusion of broad sectors of the population, because of their potential for eroding social cohesion, political stability and democratic institutions, as imminent threats to hemispheric security as well. Moreover, the expanded conceptualization of security advanced in the October 2003 declaration also incorporated natural and man made disasters, HIV/AIDS and other pandemic diseases, environmental degradation, human trafficking, attacks on cyber security, accidents involving maritime transport of hazardous materials (e.g., petroleum, radioactive materials, or toxic waste), and weapons of mass destruction as critical security threats in the hemisphere (OAS 2003; Chillier 2005).

Many critics have pointed out that such a laundry-list approach to defining security threats made the notion of hemispheric security so vague and amorphous that it became little more than a residual or catch-all category basically incapable of providing any practical guidance to policy makers regarding the security priorities that should be pursued in practice. In effect, when conceptual consensus is elusive or non-existent, then effective cooperation and decisive collective action are unattainable. A well thought out defense policy needs to consider the development of a comprehensive national security agenda able of setting long term policies to confront the civil control of the military apparatus and the structure of long term civil-military relations. Furthermore, Latin American elites need to develop national institutional frameworks of civil-military cooperation capable of an effective defense of their territorial integrity and sovereignty (Pion-Berlin and Trinkunas 2007).

On the one hand, this broad approach to security left the Bush administration essentially free to prioritize U.S. concerns over all others, no matter what the Latin American states' priorities, individually or collectively, might be. On the other hand, it also raised the troubling prospect that Latin American militaries, rather than civilian institutions, might expand their "security" missions to include traditionally civilian responsibilities, ranging across the board from public health through organized crime and drug trafficking to democratic stability, thereby tipping the historically delicate civil-

military in many Latin American countries away from civilian authorities to military leaders. In the context of the conceptual confusion and muddled security priorities that emerged from the Mexico City Declaration, the possibility that the Williamsburg agreement, given its emphasis on strengthened regional and national military institutions, military-to-military relations, and U.S. funding, could be used by Washington to pursue U.S. security priorities over those favored by Latin American and Caribbean civilian political elites was quite real. This problem is exacerbated due to the traditional lack of interest in defense issues among Latin American politicians. By ignoring the development of national defense policies capable of confronting internal security threats, Latin American civilian leaders risk either ceding their authorities to their militaries or eroding the capacity of their armed forces to become professional armies (Pio-Berlin and Trukunas (2007). Latin American militaries cannot be put in charge of all aspects of security. They need to assume a supporting, not a protagonist role when tackling internecine security issues such as narco-trafficking, unemployment, poverty, social insecurity and gang related issues. Moreover, Latin American political authorities need to start taking responsibility for the lack in direction insofar long term goals for their own national security policies is concerned. They need to start taking a proactive stance in building and strengthening a comprehensive security apparatus with well defined institutional organisms with well defined roles.

Adding further to the confused security panorama in the Americas in the post-9/11 period, the U.S. invasion of Iraq in March 2003 and the negative reactions to it throughout the hemisphere highlighted the emergence of basic disagreements between the U.S. and most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean regarding which are the most pressing hemispheric security threats and how such threats should be handled. In the post-Iraq environment, like it or not, governing elites throughout the Americas have been and remain constrained in their national and regional security strategies by their need to build relations, programs and institutions (including international institutions) that do not diverge unacceptably from their U.S.-imposed obligations in the Washington-led Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) or risk running afoul of the hegemonic United States. In pursuit of American security priorities, since 9/11 the Bush administration has systematically linked U.S. security policies in the Americas (especially in the areas of

military assistance, foreign aid and trade) to cooperation and compliance with Washington's global and regional security strategies (Soriano and Mackay 2005:5-7). As during the Cold War, in the aftermath of 9/11 once again unilateralism has become the preferred option for U.S., and especially DOD, authorities to achieve Washington immediate objectives in Latin America and the Caribbean (Higgott 2004: 147-75).

Most Latin American and Caribbean governments would like Washington to evince great interest in and sensitivity to the security issues that they face – especial their problems of poverty, common criminality, organized crime and public or citizen security. In practice, however, at least five sets of interrelated issues have obstructed the consolidation of a consensual, multilateral security agenda in the Americas in recent years: 1) The unilateral nature of U.S leadership in the inter-American system; 2) The declining relevance and effectiveness of the JID in hemispheric security affairs; 3) The failure of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)²⁴; 4) The DMA unilateral approach imposed by Washington set to address security cooperation primarily in terms of terrorism and sub-regional or bilateral agreements; 5) The increasing obsolescence of the Rio Treaty or TIAR.

The Bush administration's post-9/11 unilateral foreign and defense policies, its focus on Afghanistan and Iraq at the expense of Latin America and the Caribbean, and its insistence that the governments of the region give first priority to the threat of global terrorism over their own national and sub-regional concern combined to severely limit progress on collective security issues through 2007. The October 2003 Mexico City declaration on hemispheric security put forward such a broad security agenda that it provided no blueprint for action and effectively left each country, especially the United States, to pursue its own security agenda without coordinating in practice with other states. Furthermore, the 2006 DMA Declaration of Managua emphasized bilateral and sub-regional agreements and ignored the CHS comprehensive hemispheric agenda. In grouping together terrorism with all forms of transnational crime, drug-trafficking, corruption, trafficking in persons and money laundering, the Defense Ministerial of the

²⁴ During the Mar del Plata Summit on November 2005, the U.S. arrived with no new alternatives. Once more, the U.S. proposed the same policies of free trade, open markets, privatization and fiscal authority that had increased social and economic inequality in Latin America. It became obvious that the U.S. had lost interests, credibility and support for the FTAA project first launched during the Summit of the Americas in Miami in 1995 (Horwitz 2007: 220-224).

Americas was used by the U.S. to disengage from any inconvenient commitment to security cooperative efforts in the hemisphere. Moreover, Washington adopted an aggressive or hostile attitude towards at least 12 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean that refused to exempt U.S. personnel from potential prosecution under the provisions of the newly created International Criminal Court (ICC). In fact, the U.S. government actually suspended military and other forms of American aid to several states in the hemisphere in an effort to “coerce” them into agreeing to such exemptions. Under such circumstance, Washington’s ability to employ military-to-military leverage via the Williamsburg process was undercut as well.

The JID is seen as little more than a tool of U.S. policy, making its legal disposition vis-à-vis the role and authority of the Committee in Hemispheric Security problematic. It was not until March 2006 that a resolution of the OAS General Assembly incorporated the IADB into the OAS as an “entity” with technical autonomy, but its relationship with the CHS and its tasking continues to remain unclear and its effectiveness very much in question..

In the past, the U.S. has invoked TIAR to justify unilateral actions already underway, such as the intervention in Guatemala in 1954 and in the Dominican Republic in 1965. Washington has also opted when convenient to simply ignore the TIAR, as it did when it supported Great Britain against Argentina in the Falklands/Malvinas crisis in 1982 and during its unilateral actions in Grenada in 1983, Panama in 1989, and in the Central American conflicts during the 1980s. Many Latin American leaders have expressed opinions to the effect that their good will toward, and cooperation with, Washington has routinely been taken for granted, particularly in the post-9/11 period, despite repeated demonstrations of their full support for the U.S. anti-terrorist agenda. The TIAR treaty was invoked, for example, by Brazil in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks but Brasilia found no reciprocity in Washington after doing so (Hayes 2007: 79-83).

Conclusions

Since 9/11/01 attacks, the perception in Washington is that even though the traditional threats to our military have not diminished, new and even more dangerous threats have emerged. The perception is that these new threats -which need to take priority-, caught the Bush administration by surprise, unprepared and very much alone. Consequently the U.S. national security policy needs to concentrate in achieving an asymmetric advantage over every threat (Steele 2002:1-3). Hence in the face of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks and the subsequent U.S. invasions of Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003), in all but rhetoric the Bush administration effectively abandoned multilateralism in its approach to Latin America generally and Western Hemisphere security specifically. Gradually since the heyday of the Cold War, the U.S. has been reducing bilateral assistance to Latin America, and although U.S. aid was nominally about the same in 2005 as it has been in 1985, in constant dollars it has fallen by a third. Moreover, almost half of U.S. aid in 2005 went to just five countries on the front lanes of the drug war: Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador and Mexico. The only other countries receiving aid were Haiti and Central American states. Military assistance was similarly concentrated in the drug war states, which received 85 per cent of the total. (LeoGrande 2007:357). American backing for multilateral polices in the region was largely replaced with unilateral policies made in Washington. While perhaps more “efficient” for Washington in the short run, the history of U.S.-Latin American relations indicates unequivocally that in the long run multilateral cooperation provides the only reliable formula for institutionalizing effective collective security arrangements in the Western Hemisphere. The current “security gap” dividing the U.S. and Latin America may well represent the region’s most serious security challenge of all. Latin America can no longer be considered as one single region that is unequivocally veering towards integration and acquiescence to U.S. hegemonic management. To the contrary, due to Washington’s lack of attention to the region, the American continent seems to be set on a path of sub-regional fragmentation. While Canada, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean are clearly set in a path towards more economic integration with the U.S., the Southern Cone

is increasingly resisting Washington's authority²⁵. More importantly, the Andean region is openly rejecting U.S. supremacy and [may be](#) regressing to the authoritarianism of yesteryear²⁶. Consequently despite the U.S. unrivaled U.S. status, in Mar del Plata in 2005, the Bush administration discovered that Latin America has become surprisingly resistant to the assertion to U.S. hegemony.

The protracted history of Inter-American cooperation and integration has developed a wide range of regional institutions with diverging interests, unrelated development institutions, inarticulate development priorities and a chronic lack of funding. More than a unified polity like the EU, the current inter-American system is a complex network of institutions, organizations, commissions, councils, treaties, conventions and agreements. This lack of a clear, integrated design and dichotomy between robustness and effectiveness, further exacerbate the level of hemispheric economic and military asymmetry thus complicating any effort put forth toward cooperation (Abbott 2007:260-265). Since 2005 the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) initiative has languished and shows no signs of advancing toward completion during the remainder of the second Bush administration. The Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) was the last sub-regional agreement ratified by U.S. Congress (by the narrow margin of two votes) in July of 2005. Since then, the Democratic Party-dominated U.S. Congress has been reluctant to ratify any additional sub-regional or bilateral trade agreements with Latin American allies such as Colombia, Peru or even Panama (LeoGrande 2007:37).

²⁵ Three year ago, set up by Cuba's leader Fidel Castro and Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) was supposed to represent a "solidarity" pact that rejects the free-trade model of integration espoused by Washington. Now, Mr. Chávez wants to turn it into a mutual defense pact that would protect its members from attack by the United States and its ally, Colombia. But the other three ALBA members: Bolivia, Nicaragua and Dominica; have met this proposal with derision. Populist leaders in the Andean region such as Nicaragua's Daniel Ortega, or Mr. Chávez are merely looking to boost their flagging support at home by manufacturing external threats (The Economist 2008:46).

²⁶ This fragmentation and distancing from Washington is exemplified by the establishment of the *Banco del Sur*. The conditionality imposed by Washington or international organisms such as the IMF or the IDB is prompting Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Uruguay and probably Colombia, to find alternative ways to promote investment in infrastructure and to help stimulate greater regional trade and integration. On November 3, 2007, these countries formed the *Banco del Sur*. To date, it remains to be seen if this institution with up to \$7 billion in initial capital, can successfully become an alternative to the current institutional framework favored by Washington (Barrionuevo 2007). To be sure, it will be interesting to watch whether or not Venezuela's Hugo Chávez or Bolivia's Evo Morales can assert their influence over its neighbors, and whether Brazil will actually allow it. So far, Brazil has increasingly shown its willingness to assert its leadership in the region by, together with Paraguay, not yet ratifying Venezuela's adhesion to MERCOSUR (Marirrodiga 2007:8A).

On issues related to hemispheric drug trafficking, the recent progress achieved by the OAS' CICAD reveals important, however narrowly focused, ability of the U.S. and many Latin American and Caribbean governments to cooperate with each other on security problems. Indeed, via CICAD the U.S. and Latin American and Caribbean states have proved willing to standardize information data and legislation and to abide by CICAD's Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism's (MEM) Hemispheric Reports (Horwitz 2007: 236-249). Nevertheless, the CHS comprehensive security agenda shows no signs of progress. Other than a minimally cooperative stance on illicit drug issues, for the foreseeable future terrorism appears certain to dominate the U.S. global and regional security agendas, allowing little if any room for Latin American priorities such as economic prosperity or the defense of democracy.

At present, there is an increasing bifurcation between the perceived security priorities of the United States and most Latin American and Caribbean governments. The end of the Cold War and the Washington Consensus economic policies affected Latin American states by uncovering a great number of pre-existing internal conflicts and organized crime activities where the governments have little reach and where the military has little capacity to confront them (Schulz 1998: 157-160). Since the September 11, 2001 attacks, the Bush administration has emphasized international terrorism as the principal security threat faced by the United States world-wide. In contrast, Latin American and Caribbean leaders have increasingly highlighted issues such as poverty, inequality, public security, and organized crime as the principal security threats to their nations' stability and prosperity. Such threats are seen to be more real and immediate than the possibility of a terrorist attacks in their countries. Moreover, most believe that they have responded to U.S. concerns about terrorist threat against the U.S. while Washington has failed to reciprocate appropriately regarding their most important security concerns. The U.S. continues to tie American military and economic support to compliance with its Global War Against Terrorism (GWOT) while systematically subordinating other important security-related issues in the hemisphere (such as drug trafficking, social instability, and the proliferation of organized crime groups and criminal gangs) to the U.S.-GWOT. This unilateral approach to defining what constitutes an existential threat to the hemisphere has resulted in the progressive alienation of most

South American states and a tighter relationship with Central American and Caribbean governments that have no other realistic alternative to acceptance of, and subordination to U.S. conditionality²⁷. In addition, Latin American political elites need to be held accountable for not really considering the development of their own long term comprehensive national security agendas and institutional frameworks of civil-military cooperation capable of an effective defense of their territorial integrity and sovereignty (Pion-Berlin and Trinkunas 2007).

The Bush administration has been consumed by an almost messianic vision of the need to promote and even impose democracy worldwide. Preventing terrorism in the Western Hemisphere has clearly been the priority U.S. security goal, but de-democratization in the region looms as a growing threat that Washington has largely ignored despite the rising outcry from governments throughout the hemisphere. If Washington expects to rally and sustain support among its regional neighbors against terrorism, there can be little doubt that it will also need to take a leading role in the development of a long term common security agenda that addresses Latin American security concerns along side its own. The Bush administration has failed to recognize the new trend of leftist politics in Latin America representing an attractive alternative for disenfranchised segments of the population confronting on a daily basis the deep-seated problems in the region. These populist leaders offer hope to dissatisfied and excluded majorities in countries where democratic institutions have not functioned well. Leaders like Hugo Chávez or Evo Morales have gained momentum while Washington's leverage has continued to diminish (LeoGrande 2007:374-376). Security threats such as gang activity, kidnapping, counterfeiting, human trafficking, drug-trafficking and organized crime undermine the already fragile democracies in much of Latin America and the Caribbean. The growing threat of democratic authoritarianism to Latin American

²⁷ South American countries disagree with the U.S. regarding which are the threats that need to be confronted cooperatively. Brazil and Argentina, for example, have voiced their concerns to U.S. authorities over the need to link security issues to the strengthening of state institutions, civil society and - most of all - to economic opportunity. Opposition to Washington policies in the region continues to spread. For instance, in April of 2005 Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez suspended military operations and exchanges with the U.S. and ordered American military instructors accused of fomenting unrest out of Venezuela. Ecuador's President Rafael Correa has announced his intention to close the U.S. military base in Manta when the base treaty expires in 2009. Finally, the U.S. has yet to come up with a comprehensive alternative able to address the security and economic concerns of the Southern Cone states.

democracies need for the U.S. to support the strengthening of local institutions (Shulz 2004: 124-128). Weak institutional frameworks have resulted in an epidemic of social insecurity. Nevertheless by clinging to an old fashioned Latin American authoritarian pattern involving centralization of political power and state control economy, leaders like Hugo Chávez or Evo Morales may have very well started to make mistakes. Most Latin Americans have no enthusiasm to revert to dictatorial regimes²⁸.

Latin America has reached a new level of experience and expectations. The results of the 2007 *Latinobarometro* (www.latinobarometro.org) report shows that although only half of the respondents were convinced democrats, less than a fifth of respondents actually favor authoritarianism (The Economist, Nov. 2007). Beyond electoral choice, Latin Americans are demanding greater liberty, exercise of freedom of expression, and economic, political and legal equality. In this context, mounting political demands and increased political conflict are inevitable. Yet these demands may serve to thwart authoritarian attempts by leaders such as Hugo Chávez, proving to be tools for democratic consolidation (Lagos 2008:120-122). The Western Hemisphere presents an opportunity for Washington to “test dive” a new model of hemispheric security that evokes true international cooperation to confront these issues and promote high quality democracies over the long term (Stavridis 2007). The U.S. needs to get involved and develop a more constructive relationship with Latin American governments to strengthen local legal and judicial systems from within (FLASCO 2007).

Security has always been a contested concept in the hemisphere and beyond. But in the Western Hemisphere, security has increasingly become a phrase that refers to everything from threats to national sovereignty, democratic consolidation, to environmental degradation or health issues like HIV. Although all of these issues are important and require immediate attention, U.S. and Latin American authorities have failed to prioritize which issues represent a national security threat that requires the implementation of a long term national security policy or a common security threat that requires the immediate concerted attention by the military or by other pertinent

²⁸ On December 2, 2007, President Hugo Chávez lost the referendum that would have allowed him to amend the Venezuelan Constitution. The opposition plus many *chavista* supporters showed that they are increasingly disillusioned with Chávez’s Bolivarian Revolution and were not willing to put their confidence indefinitely on one *caudillo* leader (The Economist 2007: 12 and 30-32).

institutions. Nonetheless, given the absence of inter-state conflict, nuclear proliferation, and international terrorism across the region, Latin America – at least in theory - presents real opportunities for the U.S. to experiment with new and innovative security arrangements capable of meeting collective threats such as social insecurity and organized crime, the rebirth of reactionary, populist and authoritarian tendencies, weak economic development and so forth. To date, however, there is little tangible evidence indicating that the present Bush administration is willing or able to address the security concerns and priorities of its hemispheric neighbors. That task will, in all likelihood, fall on the next administration. Whether Democrat or Republican, the next U.S. President will inherit stagnation and resentment in its relations with the states of the hemisphere on both the economic and security fronts. The relegation of most regional military and diplomatic relations to a unified command – South Com - based in Miami rather than Washington and the U.S. State Department, along with a sense of detachment and weak leadership on regional issues within the DOD, is widely perceived by Latin American authorities as an indication of Washington's lack of concern and respect for the region. The inertia exhibited by the Bush administration regarding ways to link military activities with counterpart civilian activities to fulfill the CHS security agenda will likely continue to hinder the development of a viable security community in the hemisphere for the foreseeable future (Hayes 2007:82-3).

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