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New Trends in 2 Regional Security Complexes:

Adapting to the New Security Challenges

Introduction

Some people say (as Jorge Volpi, a today Mexican writer) that **Latin America** is an **external invention**; that would mean that L.A. **can not be seen as a whole**. The region would be just a **group** of several **countries** with **nothing** (or almost nothing) in **common**.

However, even if the region **never totally avoided tensions** (and even war between nation-states), the **idea** (and the **willingness**) of **“making something together”** always existed.

“Latin America” expression was **used** for the **first time** on **1856** (eighteen fifty six), immediately after the independence of the most part of the regional future nation-states. It was in **Paris** during a **repudiation act** against a **United States intervention in Nicaragua**.

So: some Latin American (as we say today), the Chilean Francisco Bilbao or the Colombian José María Torres Caicedo among others, **started to talk** about **“Latin”** America as a way to distinguish it from **“Saxon”** America: thus, United States.

I mean: the complicated relationships with USA and the perception about its hegemony were from the start (so: since nation-states were born) a way to **“built”** a Latin American Region and to think about an eventual **“ Latin American identity”**.

On 1823 the **Monroe's Doctrine** in the USA claims **“America for the American”** as a way to keep Europe away from the American continent: this was the start of the **USA hemispheric defense policy**, which became **increasingly interventionist in L.A.** since Roosevelt administration (on 1904).

Since then, Latin America and most **specially South America**, started **searching** at the **same time**:

- how to **balance** the **hemispheric defense system**, built under the protection (and the hegemony) of

the USA. The Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (commonly known as the **Rio Treaty** or the Rio Pact, sign on 1947) **and OAS** (Organization of American States, born on 1948) are the most important **instruments** of this **hemispheric defense system**.

and at the same time:

- the **way to build an other kind of community**, based on a **common defense concept**; in 1826 Simón Bolívar, a military and political leader during the independence process in South America., were the first who tried to built a **collective defense** in the region, to **counterbalance Monroe's Doctrine**.

Since then most of the L.A. States would like to be able to **take a distance from USA matters** and particularly to **preserve nation-states sovereignty**. In this perspective, **multilateralism** is a **key word**.

Thus,

Concerning security matters L.A. were historically **strongly linked** to USA security matters.

And that probably did not completely changed today (even if several States – as UNASUR – go on searching another way).

As a matter of fact, more a State is geographically closer to the USA, more that State will share several issues with the USA, and very specially security concerns, of course.

That's why scholars¹ use to consider that there are **2 Regional Security Complexes in Latin America**.

However, today, as we will see, there are **2 coincident situations**:

=> on one hand, **L. A. has to confront similar threats**: which are shaping (former) **common trends**: like

- a multidimensional conception of security,
- the rethinking of separation between Defense and Public Security
- and then: a new way of thinking the Armed Forces mission.

So we can argue that there is a convergent regional security agenda, in a way.

=> but: on the other hand, **a sub-regional security governance** is emerging in South America:

1 Derrick FRAZIER and Robert STEWART-INGERSOLL, “Regional powers and security: A framework for understanding order within regional security complexes”, *European Journal of International Relations*, XX(X) I-23, 2010.

Luis Leandro SCHENONI. 2015. “Towards a realist understanding of security in Latin America”, Center for European and North Atlantic Affairs (CENAA), in <https://nd.academia.edu/schenoni>

UNASUR (Union of South American Nations) was created on 2008 to counterbalance OAS (Organization of American States) in providing regional defense and security.

First of all: Let's remember **What is a Regional (or sub-regional) complex?**

Then,

After talking about new threats in the whole Latin American region, I will focus on South America as a new willing of **sub-regional security governance**.

Later, I will try to show that: in spite of **South American building and particular conceptions**, there is some **common trends** and probably a converging agenda in Latin America about regional security concerns. That could suggest that go on separating 2 Regional Security Complexes could not be the better way to analyze Latin American security issues.

What is a Regional (or sub-regional) complex?

The concept of Regional Security Complex was advanced on 2003 by Barry BUZAN and Ole WAEVER in their work entitled *Regions and Powers: The Structure on International Security*.

=> Regional and sub-regional Security complexes : **Definition**

"A regional security complex has been defined as

a **group of states** whose **primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely** that their **national securities cannot realistically be considered apart** from one another" (Buzan, 1991: 190).

"The **central idea** in RSCT² is that, since **most threats travel more easily over short distances** than long ones, **security interdependence is normally into regionally based clusters (grupos)**: which are called **security complexes**.

They also affirm that:

The process of **securitization** and thus the **degree of security** interdependence are **more intense** between actors **inside such complexes** than they are between actors inside the complex and outside of

2 Regional Security Complexes Theory

it" (2003: 4³).

By the way,

Regional Security Complexes are a **social construction**, they depend on the security practices of local actors. Complexes are not the cause of the States behavior but (on the contrary) they are a structure which has a strong influence on the definition of Security concerns (matters). See <http://slideplayer.es/slide/143215/>

Today, in L.A. some scholars consider 2 Regional Security Complexes:

- **North America complex:** which includes **Mexico / Central America and The Caribbean**

In this complex, **the regional power is** (without doubt !) **the USA**, even if **Mexico** can be considered as a **middle power**. Security issues in this region are strongly linked with USA concerns (drug trafficking and terrorism; migrants and borders concerns, basically)

- **South America complex:** where **Brazil** emerges as the clear regional power.

Both Regional Security Complexes are **unipolar complexes**, meaning that there is **only one State** having

- **enough material capabilities** (that is mostly **military** and **economic strength** but not only)

and also

- (at least enough) **legitimacy** to fund its regional influence.

New threats in Latin America :

Compared to other regions of the world, L.A. has always been a region with a **low level of inter-state conflicts** (which are usually called "traditional threats"⁴). Of course, we could not avoid **rivalries** and even some **interstate and/or civil wars** during the 19th and 20th centuries.

3 BUZAN Barry, WAEVER Ole. 2003. *Regions and Powers: The Structure on International Security*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

4 Linked to the "traditional security".

But since the end of the Cold War **traditional threats have decrease** and **inter-state armed conflicts** are **out of the main scenario**, they are not a relevant issue nowadays.

However, **“new threats” have increased** in L.A. since 2001.

Most important threats for LA were listed on the **OAS's Declaration on Security** in the Americas, in 2003⁵: among others, we can mention:

- **“terrorism** (even if there is **no consensus to define it**), **transnational organized crime**, the global **drug problem, corruption, asset laundering, illicit trafficking with weapons**, and the connection among all them.

But also:

- extreme **poverty** and **social exclusion**, which affect political stability and democracy. Extreme poverty erodes social cohesion and undermines the security of states.
- natural and man-made disasters, AIDS and other diseases, environmental degradation
- trafficking in persons
- attack to cyber security”

Even if they are all important threats for the region, since OAS's Declaration in 2003,

violence (which is more and more associated with international drug trafficking, arms dealing and money laundering) **became the major concern in Latin America**.

This violence is mostly generated by **Transnational Criminal Organizations**.

Features of new threats:

Probably the most important feature of new threats is their **trans-national aspect**: as a globalization product, they don't respect borders, what definitively challenges States.

This feature leads to **re-think** some issues like **“non-intervention principle”** and **“sovereignty”**

5 Detlef NOLTE and Leslie WEHNER, “UNASUR and the New Geopolitics of South America”, Paper for the XXIII World Congress of Political Science, Madrid, July, 8-12, 2012, German Institute of Global and Area Studies, http://paperroom.ipsa.org/papers/paper_10836.pdf And http://www.oas.org/dsd/FIDA/documents/declaration_security.htm

concerns, which were **historically very important** for every nation-state of the region. That is (among other matters) what UNASUR is trying to do in South American region.

Increasingly, **violent** and **very well-organised criminal organizations** operate across the states boundaries:

- in **North American Complex**: that is the case in the **Mexican-USA border** , for example, or
- in **South American Complex**: the **Tri Border region** (Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil border) or the **Amazon region** (across Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Bolivia).

Challenges and risks of the new threats:

=> **they are linked with internal and external issues** (from the nation-state point of view) so affecting **defense** and **national security** at the same time: that is why the **concept of “regional security”** is **emerging** (in South America at least, with Unasur, as we will see later).

=> they are **multidimensional**, so they are linked with many fields such as:

- * economic and financial (money laundering)
- * legal and illegal fields (sometimes it is difficult to separate both !), but also
- * social (poverty, unemployment, health concerns),

So it is more difficult to set up an efficient policy.

=> **they are able to create (or wake up) inter-states conflicts or disputes** (as it was the case on 2008 between Colombia and Ecuador; or on 2010 between Colombia and Venezuela concerning the eventual presence of FARC out of Colombian territory).

And **they have the potential to produce problematic regions** insofar as there are already several **“no-go zones”**⁶: that means that there is a **lack of effective sovereignty of the state** over parts of some territories, like

- some cities on the **Mexican border** (Ciudad Juarez, for example)
- **Amazon region or Triple Border region**, for example

6 PION-BERLIN D. and TRINKUNES H. 2011. “Latin America's Growing security gap”, Journal of Democracy vol. 22 1 January 2011.

- some **urban regions** (specially in shantytowns or slums) in Rio de Janeiro or Buenos Aires, among others cities.

I agree with David Pion Berlin when he says: “globalization has sapped states' ability to maintain effective sovereignty over their national territories, and placed ever more powerful tools in the hands of nonstate actors. (...) Nonstate actors now have capabilities once only available to states (...)”

and he adds: “When nonstate actors use such capabilities to organize violence, threat levels can exceed the capacities of traditional police forces”⁷. We will talk about this, later.

No-go zones are a real challenge for states because “in these zones, **violent actors** actually **play a role in providing public goods**” and even more: “these zones are hotly contested between states and violent nonstate actors”⁸. May be the most important “**weapon**” to fight against insecurity is the **law** (I mean **a strong and independent justice system**): there is no security and peace while there is impunity and corruption.

An other real challenge is that

=> **drug trafficking and organized crime is contaminating not only the whole region but also other regions of the world:**

see map⁹

First of all, the most prominent **drug trafficking organizations** in the region are **Mexican and Colombian “cartels”**. They “**control various aspects of the drug supply chain**”¹⁰ and, under military pressure in both countries (Plan Mérida, Plan Colombia), they exported some of their illegal and violent activities to the south of the region:

- to the **Andean Region** (in Peru the radical communist organization Sendero Luminoso/Shining Path is getting importance again)

7 PION-BERLIN D. and TRINKUNES H. 2011. “Latin America's Growing security gap”, Journal of Democracy vol. 22 1 January 2011, p 41.

8 Ibid. P 43

9 Clare RIBANDO SEELKE, “Latin America and the Caribbean: Illicit Drug Trafficking and U.S. Counterdrug Programs”, USA Congressional Research Service, May 12, 2011, p. 7

10 Ibid. p 8

- to the **South Cone**, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and south of Brazil, which were less violent regions until recently.

Secondly, (as we can see on the map) several USA reports “suggest that **Mexican and Colombian “cartels”** (drug trafficking organizations) have a **presence throughout** Europe, West Africa, and the Asia-Pacific regions”¹¹. They are suspected to have Al-Qaeda and Hezbollah connexions.

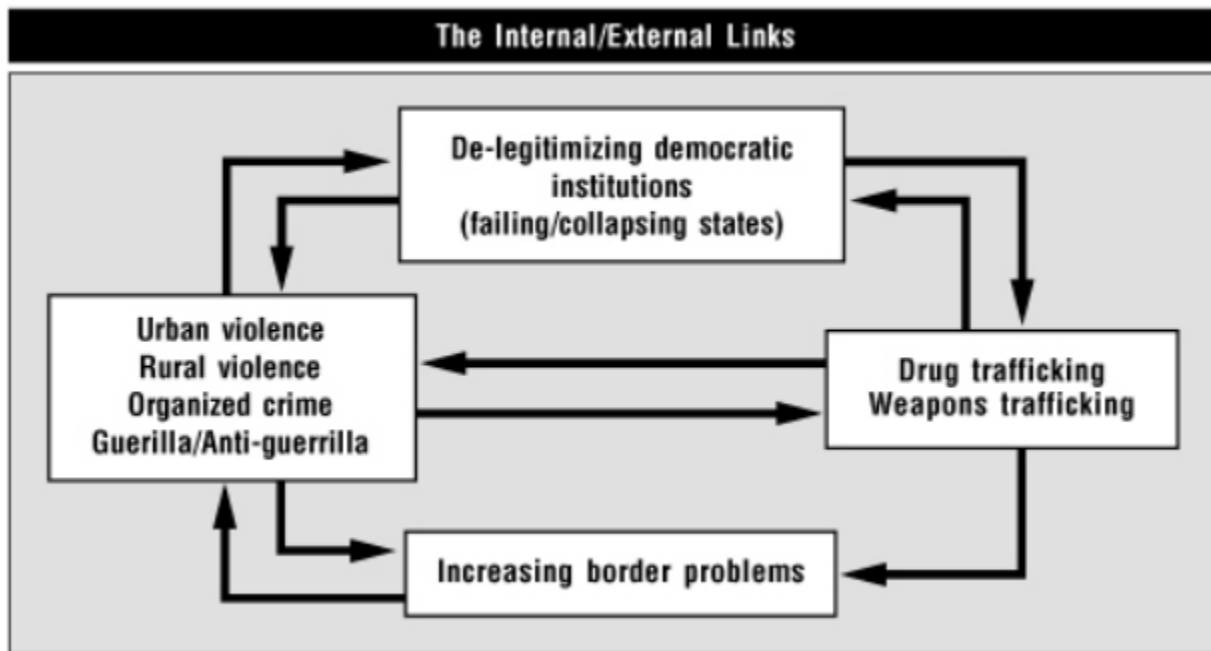
=> **So, to summarize, Transnational concerns and border issues are the most important common threats for both regional complexes**, particularly concerning the combat against drug trafficking as an expression of transnational organized crime¹². A VICIUS CIRCLE Bernardo Sorj

Bernardo SORJ¹³, a Brazilian researcher emphasizes “the links between internal and external security problems” as “they can produce failing states as much as they can destroy state-building efforts in the region”. So there is a **vicious circle indeed**:

11 Idem.

12 Emilse CALDERON GROSSO. 2012. “La impronta legal de la participación de las Fuerzas Armadas en la seguridad pública: lucha contra el narcotráfico en América del Sur”, URVIO, Revista Latinoamericana de Seguridad Ciudadana, N° 12, Flacso Sede Ecuador, Quito, Dic 2012, p 97-109.

13 SORJ Bernardo, “Security, human security and Latin America”, 2005?
<http://www.centroedelstein.org.br/PDF/humansecuritylatinamerica.pdf>



SORJ Bernardo, "Security, human security and Latin America", 2005?
<http://www.centroedelstein.org.br/PDF/humansecuritylatinamerica.pdf>

So: **How does L.A. face new threats?**

I will develop **2 new trends to face them:**

-on one hand: **South America is trying to build a sub-regional security governance**

- on the other hand, **there is a more general trend in L. A. to fight against new threats: the Armed Forces are diversifying their role.**

New trends :

Towards a sub-regional security governance in South America: the building of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR):

UNASUR: a short presentation

UNASUR is an **intergovernmental organization** comprising **12 South American countries** (all of them, except French Guyana). It was a **Brazilian initiative in 2008** and the **Constitutive Treaty**

entered into force on 11 March 2011. So it is a **quite new organization**.

UNASUR is composed of **four bodies in charge of making decisions** according to their rank:

1. **Council of Heads of State and Government** : they hold an annual ordinary meeting. The Pro Tempore Presidency is to be held successively by each of the member states, in alphabetical order (of the country), for a period of one year. Today the Pro-tempore President is Tabaré Vazquez (from Uruguay).
2. **Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs**
3. **Council of Delegates**
4. **Secretary General**

Regional Security conceptions:

Unasur was working hard to reach a **consensus** about definitions of Defense and Security. According to this consensus, **Security** is a broad concept which has a **double dimension: defense and public security**.

On one hand, Unasur recognizes that **both areas are strongly connected**: the regional security coordinates the defense indeed, because “territorial integrity and sovereignty of each country requires a stability and balance scenario in the interstate relationships”¹⁴.

But on the other hand, for most of the states it is very important to **distinguish Defense and Public Security**. By the way, “currently, public security and defense have specific legal frameworks in most of the countries of the region”¹⁵.

So:

Defense: “constitutes a fundamental function of the State that is connected to the **protection and maintenance of its sovereignty** and to the integrity of its **population, territory and institutions**; as such, it covers security issues **related to the foreign sphere**; and it takes shape as the specific and exclusive space for the use and the organization of the State's military force, based on risks or threats

14 Centro de Estudios Estratégicos (CEED) del Consejo de Defensa Suramericano (CDS) de la Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (UNASUR), “CEED'S PRELIMINARY REPORT TO THE SOUTH AMERICAN DEFENSE COUNCIL IN THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE CONCEPTS OF SECURITY AND DEFENSE IN THE SOUTH AMERICAN REGION”, 2011, page 9. <http://www.ceedcde.org.ar>

15 Centre for Strategic Defense Studies (CEED-CDS), South America Defense Council, UNASUR, “CEED's preliminary report to the South American Defense Council on the terms of reference for the concepts of security and defense in the South American region”, 2011.

related to its own integrity and its independent and sovereign existence”¹⁶.

And:

Public Security (or homeland security or public safety): “is related to the **social peace, the State's institutional stability**, the control of the **public order** and the **guarantees of civil political, economic, social, and cultural rights**”¹⁷.

This **separation** appears as an **important value** in countries where during the 1980's the Armed Forces (or part of them) had operate a coup d'état and violated constitutions and human rights¹⁸ considering that the enemy (communism) was “in and out” of the State.

That explains why, when Unasur has organized several ministerial Councils to coordinate policies in important sectors of interest, this separation has taken an institutional way, with 3 different councils:

- **South American Defense Council – SDC**

- **South American Council of Citizen Security, Justice and Coordination of Action against Transnational Organized Crime**

- **Council for the Fight Against Drug Trafficking :**

Besides, to develop and analyze Unasur's security conception and practices Unasur has created the **South American Center for Strategic Defense Studies**. It was in charge of **defining risks, threats and challenges** for the **regional security and defense**.

The main work in this field consists in **reconciling divergent interests and positions**:

- while into the **Southern Cone** (Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay) **bilateral security relations** are mostly **good**,

- into the **Andean region** (Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela) there is often a **lack of trust** in bilateral security relationships.

About drug matters, for example, we can see that Unasur is willing to “prevent the ministries of defense and the Armed Forces from dominating the formulation of policies to fight drug trafficking”¹⁹.

16 Ibid. p. 7.

17 Ibid. p 5.

18 Paraguay (1954-89 so 35 years!); Brazil (1964-85, 21 years); Bolivia (1971-82, during 11 years); Chile (1973-90, 17 years); Uruguay (1973-84, 11 years); Peru (1975-80, 5 years); Argentina (1976-83, 7 years); Ecuador (1976-79, 3 years); Guatemala (1982-86 Rios Montt; but civil war 1960-96).

19 NOLTE D. et al , 2012.

Consensus is not always easy to achieve and states go on working on it.

=> Concerning the **main threats for the region**, Unasur has identified these **Risk Factors**²⁰:

- **Natural and anthropic Disasters**

- **Risks connected to the threats against sovereignty of the natural and strategic resources:**

this is “**a new and different security concept**”²¹ which is emerging into the region. => **securitization of strategic resources is one of the main points of consensus**. A prospective study prepared last year (2015) by the South American Center of Strategic Studies for Defense affirm: “our region have all the resources required for human subsistence”, so “**South America, as a region, is a self-sufficient resources geopolitic unit**”²². And this is what Unasur is willing to protect and defend. Of course, the study let us guess who could be threatening South American resources, it just talk about “nations where there is a lack of resources or who strongly depend from external resources”²³

- **Risks linked to the Defense threats** (territorial occupation, war) => out of the main scenario

- **Risks linked to the Public Security threats** => they mostly overlap 2003 OAS Declaration.

Regional Security practices:

As a new organization, Unasur's Security practices are still incipient. However, we can stress the work made on:

- **Conflict mediation and crisis management** (to prevent democratic breakdowns in Bolivia on 2008 and Ecuador on 2010; to reduce border tensions between Colombia and Venezuela on 2010 as well as to establish dialogue between Colombia and the rest of the countries after Colombian decision to permit USA military bases in Colombia, on 2009; democratic crisis in Paraguay on 2012)

- transparency measures and compared legal frameworks made by the **South American Defense**

20 Centro de Estudios Estratégicos (CEED) del Consejo de Defensa Suramericano (CDS) de la Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (UNASUR), “Informe de avance a diciembre 2012 sobre conceptos e institucionalidad de seguridad y defensa, amenazas, factores de riesgo y desafíos del Consejo de Defensa Sudamericano”, <http://www.ceedcde.org.ar/English/00-HOME/Home-English.html>

21 NOLTE and WEHNER 2012

22 Centro de Estudios Estratégicos (CEED) del Consejo de Defensa Suramericano (CDS) de la Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (UNASUR), “Estudio Prospectivo Sudamérica 2025”, CEED 2015, p. 9

23 Ibid. p 9

Council – SDC due to the **Center for Strategic Defense Studies (CEED-CDS)**.

- creation of the **South America Defense School**
- **South American Registry of Military Inventories**

We can observe an **overlap** concerning **hemispheric and regional security challenges** inasmuch both OAS and UNASUR “adopted a **multidimensional concept of security** within which traditional and non-traditional security issues converge”²⁴.

While UNASUR hopes to “form a South American **strategic way of thinking**, in order to address existing security challenges”²⁵ we can't avoid to see that **there is a continental (hemispheric) consensus** that has almost been reached **about what is threatening Latin American societies and States. Excepting**, perhaps, **resources** issues.

So: why this overlapping?

Moreover, UNASUR was born to built a sub-regional governance in South America based on his own security / defense definitions and the methods to deal with main threats. That means, for most countries, **the willing of balancing OAS and the USA sight about defense and security**. In others words: Unasur intend **keeping South American Regional Security Complex out of influence of the USA**: “South America for the South American” (in opposition to “America for American” and Monroe Doctrine that many South American never forgot).

However, Unasur is NOT a permanent consensus, of course! Brazil's leadership is occasionally contested (by “middle powers” like Argentina or Venezuela, for example). And not all the countries are in a clear opposition face to USA (Brazil, for example, has an autonomous position more than a confrontative one).

But the goal is to create a **shared sight** and a **South American identity**.

However, simultaneously with this South American trend,

24 WEIFFEN B. et al. (2013). “Overlapping regional security institutions in South America: The case of OAS and UNASUR”, *International Area Studies Review*, 16(4). pp. 370-389.

25 WEIFFEN B. et al. (2013), op cit, p 383.

there is a most **general trend** to **reconsider the Armed Forces role**, who are more and more acting on Public Security concerns.

Towards a new role for the Armed Forces?

Since 2001 security scenario has changed putting **transnational threats** at the **core** of **defense** and **security concerns** and making less clear the **difference** between **internal and external issues** into the State.

So, even if in many countries (specially South American) **efforts were made** to **separate** the areas of **defense** and **security** (both legally and in practice), **some countries (specially in Central America)** followed a **different way**.

Today, one finding emerges: the **Armed Forces** are **diversifying their activities** in the whole continent and in some countries they are **acting on Public Security arena** (without changing their main role on national defense) .

Atlas RESDAL p 41 (pdf): As we can see on the slide,

From a constitutional point of view, there is a **quite important difference between countries** in Latin America **concerning the missions of the armed forces**. For example: support in combating drug trafficking is not a constitutional mission in the region (except in Honduras) .

Atlas RESDAL p 41 (pdf): However,

several additional legislations give the armed forces the **possibility to cooperate with internal order and security** in the **whole continent** (sometimes under state of exception only: case or Argentina and Dominican Republic).

Atlas RESDAL p 71

But:

Although the political and legislative aspect that we have seen, which show a quite restrictive mission,

in practice, “in recent years **the range of activities undertaken** by the Armed Forces **has expanded**”²⁶: of course, **traditional defense activities remains** but other activities have been incorporated:

=> **Community support** in several fields: development, education, health and infrastructure campaigns.

=> **Assistance during Natural disasters**: military forces are employed in response to natural or man-made disasters, within a context of complex systems driven by civilian humanitarian organizations. But there is a **key principle: military assets** should be **the last resource** (so: employed when there is no comparable civilian alternative).

The Armed Forces are also involved in the protection of natural resources and economic activities: hydrocarbon reserves and production, mining and agricultural activities and forest reserves. Remember that resources issues are at the core of security concerns in Unasur.

=> **And there is a novelty : the armed forces cooperation in Public Security:**

as you can see (Atlas RESDAL p 71)

“in 2014, 94% of countries in the region regularly performed an activity or operation related to public security:

- combating drug trafficking
- urban patrols
- permanent border control
- security at large events
- pacification of violent areas

and /or: security at penitentiary centers”²⁷.

And

- “**65%** (sixty five) of the Armed Forces considered **possesses some program related to citizen security**”

26 DONADIO Marcela. 2014. *A Comparative Atlas of Defense in Latin America and Caribbean*. Buenos Aires, RESDAL (Latin American Security and Defense Network). p. 70.

27 Ibid., p 71

- **“76% (seventy six) of the Forces possesses regular programs for combating drug trafficking or organized crime”²⁸**

This is a major trend in Latin America's practice, even if there is a quite different situations depending on the countries, as we can see on the slide - Atlas RESDAL p 81

But **in practice**, even in those South American countries (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay) where official discourses are hostile (unfriendly) regarding militarization of public security, scholars agree to say that “there is a real trend in South America to militarize public security”²⁹.

Why did it happen? Why do we see a generalization of the Armed Forces performing activities connected with public security?

Of course, the **violence** and the **important means** that some **Transnational Criminal Organizations have**, explain partially this trend: “police forces in Latin America lack military capacity (organizational strength, intelligence ability and fire-power)”³⁰.

In other words: there is a **security gap** between

- **citizens security requests**, and
- **police capabilities and efficiency**.

But many scholars also consider³¹ that **in some of the cases** (Mexico, Central America) **criminal policies and penal justice systems (including police) have failed** (so there is **impunity** and

28 Ibid. p 81.

29 CALDERON GROSSO E. (2012). “La impronta legal de la participación de las Fuerzas Armadas en la seguridad pública: lucha contra el narcotráfico en América del Sur”, URVIO, Revista Latinoamericana de Seguridad Ciudadana, No 12, Quito, dic 2012, p. 108.

30 PION-BERLIN D. and TRINKUNES H. 2011. “Latin America's Growing security gap”, Journal of Democracy vol. 22 1 January 2011, p 45.

31 “La militarización de la seguridad ciudadana: una tendencia regional”, interview with Jenny PONTON CEVALLOS; URVIO, Revista Latinoamericana de Seguridad Ciudadana, No 12, Quito, dic 2012, pp 143-146.

Luis Octavio COIMBRA, “El involucramiento de las Fuerzas Armadas en actividades de seguridad en las Américas”, Ibid, pp 127-140.

For deeper information and analysis: José Raul PERALES (ed.), (2008) *Reforma de las Fuerzas Armadas en América Latina y el impacto de las amenazas irregulares*, Washington: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

corruption). Frequently the **police forces** have poor pay, bad training and low level of education, which make them easily permeable to corruption.

Concerning the efficiency of the Armed Forces in combating organized crime: scholars affirm that the **best results** occur when **military capabilities** are employed **only as a support for police**; by the way, helping with **intelligence** system³².

And many researchers consider **several problems or risks about military action in public security field, mostly:**

- linked to **human rights**, which are not always respected and civil population risks to be considered as a “collateral damage”; of course, human rights question is important everywhere.

But in L.A. this question is strongly connected with recently history: during the 1970's and 80's, in many countries³³ the Armed Forces (or part of them) operate a coup d'état and initiate a very violent period of military dictatorship and committed serious and systematic human rights violations. There was no distinction between internal and external security concerns and this is a painful past for many people.

So, **since democratization period** (in the 1980's), even if some countries reformed police an armed forces, the **role** of the **Armed Forces on internal affairs** is a **very delicate subject** for mostly of civil societies and governments. That is why there is often a **gap** between some **discourses** and **practices**.

- **an other problem** that many scholars point is that in L. A. the **Armed Forces** are traditionally organized to assume defense matters and they are trained to combat external enemies. They are **not trained** to be in **contact** with **civil population**. Besides, there is often **distrust** between the **military** and the **police** (= low-enforcement agencies): thus, coordinate operations is not actually so easy today.

So the question remains: how to fill the Latin American security gap (between citizens security requests, and police low capabilities and efficiency)?

32 Jenny PONTON CEVALLOS, 2012.

33 Paraguay (1954-89 so 35 years!); Brazil (1964-85, 21 years); Bolivia (1971-82, during 11 years); Chile (1973-90, 17 years); Uruguay (1973-84, 11 years); Peru (1975-80, 5 years); Argentina (1976-83, 7 years); Ecuador (1976-79, 3 years); Guatemala (1982-86 Rios Montt; but civil war 1960-96).

Geneva Center for Security Policy -
Maison de la Paix, Geneva, Switzerland,
Leadership in International Security Course
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To finish:

You probably know Alicia Bárcena, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC in English, well known as CEPAL in Spanish), one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations.

I would like to finish by telling what Alicia Bárcena said recently (on april 2016) talking about Latin America in the next United Nations 2030 Agenda :

we need a holistic approach, and not to forget the links between peace, security, rights and development. And I would like to add: justice.

Dr MORENO SAINZ was born in Argentina and is alumni of Universidad de Buenos Aires where she started studies in political science. She moved to France in 1994 and mastered at Institut d'Etudes Politiques (IEP) Grenoble (Political Section, 1997). She defended her PhD in sociology in 2003.

Since then, Dr MORENO SAINZ is senior lecturer at ESTRI- School for International Careers of Lyon Catholic University, and course lecturer at Institut d'Etudes Politiques (IEP) Lyon (France). Strongly involved in education, she delivered lectures on Latin America against the backdrop of changing international relations (contemporary history, geopolitics, as well as intercultural translation).

Her doctoral research activities focused on social, political and cultural representations of militancy from a sociological and anthropological point of view. As a researcher she also worked on regional integration in South America (Imaginary and people identities linked with regional integration construction) and she is currently working on geopolitical concerns in Latin America.

Her last paper (2016, with Dr Béatrice Blanchet) deals with the Falkland / Malvinas war and the present dispute discourses, representations and memories (2012-15) in United Kingdom and Argentina.