

SOUTH AMERICA IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA: WAR ON DRUGS AND THE RESHAPING OF THE US SECURITY AGENDA

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ABSTRACT

The end of Cold War apparently put the South America region out of the main concerns of the US security agenda. After 9/11, such perception has gained importance in literature, when US global strategy focused on an otherness whose geographic position was nothing but

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distant from the southern territories of the Americas. Otherwise, this article general aim is to discuss the space occupied by South America in the US current security concerns and goals through the analyses of the US war on drugs. We argue that the US counter-narcotics policy is a local variation of its global security strategy. Through a historical perspective, we present a transition from an approach that associates the war on drugs with a Cold War enemy, particularly the communist guerrillas, toward another one that recognises the fight against illegal drugs as itself a threat to the US national security and a justification for the US intelligence and military presence in South America.

Keywords: South America; U.S. War on Drugs; Post-Cold War

AMÉRICA DO SUL NO PÓS-GUERRA FRIA: A GUERRA ÀS DROGAS E O REDIMENSIONAMENTO DA AGENDA DE SEGURANÇA ESTADUNIDENSE

RESUMO

O final da Guerra Fria aparentemente colocou a América do Sul fora das preocupações centrais da agenda de segurança dos Estados Unidos. Após os atentados terroristas de 11 de setembro de 2001, essa avaliação ganhou importância na literatura especializada, enquanto a estratégia global estadunidense focava numa alteridade cuja posição geográfica estava muito distante dos territórios meridionais das Américas. Num outro sentido, o objetivo central desse artigo é discutir o espaço ocupado pela América do Sul nos atuais objetivos e preocupações de segurança estadunidenses através da análise de sua

guerra às drogas. Argumentamos que, no novo século, a política antidrogas dos EUA é uma variação local de sua estratégia global de segurança. Por meio de uma perspectiva histórica, apresentamos a transição de uma análise que aproxima a guerra às drogas do inimigo da Guerra Fria, em especial as guerrilhas comunistas, para outra que reconhece a luta contra as drogas ilegais como algo assumido pelos EUA como um tema de segurança nacional e uma justificação para sua presença de inteligência e militar na América do Sul.

Palavras-chave: América do Sul, guerra às drogas estadunidense; Pós-Guerra Fria

INTRODUCTION

The assumption that South American region has been forgotten by the US security agenda after the end of Cold War, and especially after the 11/09 terrorist attacks, has become a common argument in the specialized literature on security studies. The main point would be the centrality gained by the Middle East and the South Western Asia as major hot spots regarding terrorist activities.

However, such affirmations must be sought in more accurate lens, and this contribution exactly brings a different point of view. This article bears two general aims. The first concerns the diplomatic rhetoric regarding the role of South America in security issues, as well as what is politically recognized as a threat by those countries when it comes to their foreign affairs. The second is to debate Buzan and Wæver (2003), as well as Mares (2012) assumption that, in the post-Cold War scenario, South America is not absent from the United States Grand Strategy, although it might have witnessed a gloomy attractiveness regarding its role as a burning threat to the US National Security.

Under the first goal, this article addresses the common belief behind part of the South American diplomatic rhetoric regarding the role of this region in the agenda for peace and security in the twenty-first century. These discourses, based on the assumption that the absence of weapons of mass destruction within the region associated with the lack of huge border

disputes, neglects the existence in the region of the so-called new threats to international security. This traditional grasp of security issues carries the covert intention to keep military extra-regional interference away from the sub-continent – and so does the military-diplomatic concert of states around the UNASUR's South American Defence Council.

The intention to avoid the association with a broader political instability related to entrenched fluxes of, for example, transnational crimes, such as drug trafficking, could be easily understood. By denying their own relevance in these matters, South America's states implicitly recognize that, far from being outside of Washington's geopolitical concerns, it is, on the contrary, a preferential area for the United States' preventive, and perhaps even hasty, unilateral interference.

Since no other state-actor would militarily rise up against the US Foreign Policy in the region, as would Russia and China in their immediate neighbourhood, initiatives such as the referred South American Defence Council intend to affirm regional capacity to preventively deal with security issues. Cooperation with the US is not completely averted, as the 3+1 Initiative on Money Laundry for the Southern Triple Border (common borders among Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay) exemplifies.

On the one hand, these interactions build mutual confidence and provide a perspective of control to the over Brazil's, Paraguay's and Argentina's intentions regarding sensitive issues to the US National Security. On the other hand, this agreement enlarges the region's space for autonomy in other security issues.

The specific goal of this article focuses on the first general aim as it follows a narrative that introduces South America's shortcomings on drug trafficking into the connection between the so-called US War on Drugs and the War on Terror in the twenty-first century. Aware of the political consequences of both denying and accepting the fragility of international security in South America, this article does not intend to prescribe better Foreign Policy approaches. However, it offers a rather constructivist exercise of perceptions, identity and interests from the US toward South America.

In its first part, we offer an overall grasp of the US security framework to South America in the last decades. In the second part, we present the specific cases of Andean countries perceived as key players on the drug trafficking supply stage through the recognition that the

US attitude toward those scenarios is as multidimensional as it overtly encompasses the strategic elements of democracy, trade and security via a militarized tactic.

Washington's intention in dealing with these countries' alleged problems through a similar approach recently adopted in Mexico, and the differences over what has actually been implemented in South America might signalize to a success on the part of the previously mentioned diplomatic rhetoric with the major exception of Colombia (where the militarized approach is well rooted).

The following third bit of this narrative glances at the American institutional structure for Anti-Drug Policies in the 1990s, providing the construction of drug trafficking as a matter of public security as well as national security to the United States. Then, we underline a few changes to the United States' doctrinaire spirit and policies regarding the role of suppliers to the issue of drug trafficking.

Puritanism, epitomized by prohibition and repression, eventually worked in favour of the concept of shared responsibilities, when Washington recognized its own liabilities over drug consumption and the generation of significant revenues to the illegal organizations that might support other illegal activities, such as terrorism.

Once again, the Andean cases are brought to discussion, especially Plan Colombia, because the post-9/11 Patriot Act allowed the US government to identify FARC as a terrorist organization, raising the stakes when it comes to the tactics applied to fight them, as well as to the urgency to destroy them. Naturally, this linkage ends up creating more space to repression and prohibition, in light of the burning need for structural shifts in order to provide suppliers with plausible alternatives to their economies and to the insertion of those alleged criminals in society.

Finally, in the fourth part, we clarify a shift in perception whose trigger might hold tight connections to 9/11. This swing would have entailed an overlap of the identities and interests of the war on drugs and the war on terror, in a process related to the crossed securitization of groups connected to the war on drugs and the combat against the leftist guerrillas, especially in Colombia.

MAPPING OUT US SECURITY INITIATIVES TOWARD SOUTH AMERICA

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States' hemispheric security agenda toward South America enregistered some remarkable changes. Despite the historical pattern based on certain levels of standardization toward Latin America, the new US security agenda established subtle differences between sub-regions: in the Caribbean the persistent Cuban issue; in Central America, the recurring bloody civil wars initiated during the Cold War era; and, in South America, the reshaping of the guerrilla threat into some sort of hybrid menace –the narco-guerrilla– and the emergence of drug trafficking organizations with transnational capacity and variable levels of institutional penetration. Included in the negotiations under the first 1994 Summit of the Americas, in Miami, the attention to the war on drugs bypassed both other elements in the US broader strategy to Latin America.

This emphasis, however, had their roots during the last Cold War decade, when the Ronald Reagan Administration (1980-1988) retook the Richard Nixon's 'war on drugs' discourse (launched in 1971) and gave to it a new dimension (RODRIGUES, 2012). In 1985, Reagan signed the National Security Decision Directive 221, called 'Narcotics and National Security', in which he assumed that the 'old communist' threat – the Andean leftist guerrillas such as the Peruvian Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) and the Colombian Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC; Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) – had been connected to the drug trafficking. This connection represented, according to the document, a threat both to the stabilization of 'fragile democracies' and to the US homeland security due to the articulation with local drug gangs and local drug use rates (MARCY, 2010).

Reagan reinforced the war on drugs logic stating that drug trafficking must be considered an issue of national and regional security. This conception of the problem meant that the repressive tone traditionally given to the illicit drugs issue would be complemented with a militarized approach focused on the interception of illicit drugs flows through the US. This attack must be complemented by supporting other Latin American military troops to fight their own illegal drugs organization (CIMADAMORE, 1997). Despite of the fact that the strict distinction among consumer and producers countries do not correspond exactly to

all kind of illicit drugs, the political economic distinction between these two categories has proved powerful as a security discourse while it places the US as simple victims of greedy foreign illegal groups. The success of this discourse is embedded in the American long-term tradition that relates xenophobia, racism and prejudice against certain types of drugs (RODRIGUES, 2015).

The emergence of a 'drug trafficking security agenda' during the Reagan years continued into George H. W. Bush's office (1989-1993), with new projects that tried to push through the militarization as a general solution to address the drug production and trade in the Americas (CARPENTER, 2015).

In this context, if South America insisted to highlight its problems as State-based and State-solved, following a period of rapid re-democratization, the relevance of its security issues for the US post-Cold war agenda were to plunge. However, authors like Buzan and Wæver (2003) and Mares (2012) do not share this opinion.

According to their perspective, although Latin America does not have the same strategic importance in comparison to other regions, such as the Middle East, Western Europe and Asia, the US has not left the region entirely off its geopolitical radar, having kept it in their strategic calculation via coherent, yet usually underdeveloped, security policy for the sub-continent. This policy is based on a solid consensus among Democrats and Republicans that guarantees the continuity of some general goals focused on the maintenance of friendly governments that could keep safe environments for investments and stable political environments in highly unequal societies (MARES, 2012).

Thinking specifically on strategic matters, the US has to deal now with several threat perceptions different from the Cold War ones. The old threats such as Communist states, leftist parties or social movements are not taken anymore as main menaces, but actors and processes, such as drug traffickers, migrations, money laundry, and terrorism. In order to address these challenges, since the 1990s, the US government has promoted the signature of both anti-drug and anti-money laundry agreements in the Inter-American system. At the same time, it has promoted military initiatives as Plan Colombia and the installation of military bases, like the Manta one in the Ecuadorian Pacific, and developed operation bases (Forward Operating Locations; FOLs) as a way of advancing the support to tactical operations against drug traffickers and other agents considered

to be terrorists (LABROUSSE, 2010).

In this last case, Washington is also worried about the remainder (mainly in Colombia and to a much lesser extent in Peru) of a very active guerrilla such as the *Forzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC). The decision makers of the Departments of State and Defense suspect that these groups may occupy more strategic positions like what happened at the end of the 1990s, when the FARC managed to control 40 per cent of Colombian territory.

The American unusual military activism in South America is highly related to these decision-makers perceptions who describe those groups as possible threats against US's homeland security [reference]; and since the 1990s, this manace perception is increasingly related to illegal drug issues.

Right in the beginning of the 1990s, the US consumed fifty per cent of total amount of cocaine while having only five per cent of the world's population (Hargraves, 1992). Although the United States government admits, since the Clinton Administration (FALCO, 1997), that "producers" and "consumers" must share responsibility, the predominant idea since the 1980's has been the based on training and selling military weaponry and equipment to Latin American military anti-drug special units. The Barack Obama's support to the second phase of the militarized *Iniciativa Merida* in Mexico (firstly negotiated by George W. Bush Administration in 2007) in a proper example of this continuity (BENÍTEZ MANAUD, 2010).

Thus, the policy of 'going to the source', that prevailed on the beginning of the 1990s, continues to be very strong. The main argument is that countries such as Bolivia and Peru produce 80 per cent of coca-leaf while Colombian drug organizations are responsible for 80 per cent of the world's cocaine (MARCY, 2010). In Peru and Colombia, the strategy adopted by the US has been the eradication of coca-leaf plantations. Certainly, it has led the US government to invest resources in military and technical aid. On the other hand, this kind of assistance has been complemented with a program of substitution of plantation of coca by alternative plantations (MARCY, 2010).

In sum, the US anti-drugs policy toward South America has been based on a repressive formula that combines eradication of coca-leaf plantations, military advice to dismantle the biggest cartels of drugs, extradition of drug traffickers to the US and a certification policy to countries that the Department of State considers non-cooperative in the

anti-drug initiative. The last stage of anti-drug policy that started under Clinton's second administration included an improvement of military means in combating drugs. This phase was divided into two important stages. The first one was the allocation of an enormous amount of financial resources to purchase military equipment to be used in places like the South of Colombia, where the large part of plantations and coca paste processing labs are located, besides serving as a shelter for drug trafficking groups. The second one was the installation of military bases that monitor countries such as Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay and Venezuela; countries considered escape routes for drug trafficking and money-laundry plazas.

The most significant movement that established the actualized patterns of US militarism toward the drug-trafficking problem was the Plan Colombia (DUARTE VILLA; OSTOS 2007). Negotiated in 1999 between President Clinton and Colombian President Andrés Pastrana, the plan was thought as an anti-drugs package of US\$ 1.2 billion. At first, the plan aimed at deal only with drug trafficking organizations that remained in operation after the dismantling of the Medellín and Cali "cartels" in the first half of the 1990's.

Seventy per cent of Plan Colombia's resources was directed to military aid, including purchasing of military equipment, training of troops and eradication of coca-leaf plantations and cocaine processing labs (HERZ, 2006; SANTOS, 2011). Moreover, during Álvaro Uribe administrations (2002-2010), the US took advantage of the political convergences between both governments in security issues. Quoting Luis Alberto Restrepo (2004, p. 50), "Uribe has put all the foreign policy to the service of the security. And even though he has scored important political, financial and military victories, on the other hand, his strategy complicated the Colombian relations the neighbour countries".

The 09/11 terrorist attacks also caused an impact in American security policy toward South America. Indeed, one important change after terrorist attacks was the emergence of conceptual and political shifts in the way US decision makers perceived the relations between national threats and terrorism. As part of its global strategy at that time, there was a conceptual and practical overlapping between the "war on drug-trafficking" and the "war on terrorism" both in the Americas and in the South Western Asia, mainly in Afghanistan (LABROUSSE, 2005). Therefore, from the conceptual and practical perspectives, Colombian guerrillas, as well as paramilitary groups, became synonyms of terrorists. President

Uribe, elected with a strong security discourse, took advantage of it and associated the internal efforts in combating the FARC and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN; National Liberation Army) with the US global 'war on terror'. Thus, issues such as drug trafficking, terrorism, military assistance and economic aid started to be treated as linked to each other. In this context, in 2001, George W. Bush government launched the Andean Regional Initiative (HERZ, 2006). This program aimed to direct funds not only to Colombia, but also to all the Andean countries, besides Brazil and Panama. The American Congress approved a budget for this program, renaming it as Andean Counterdrug Initiative. Repeating the budget distribution of Plan Colombia, more than 70 per cent of the resources of this new plan were allocated in the military use.

The militarized anti-drug plans came together with the widening of the US military presence due the negotiation to establish FOLs in some South American countries. In 1998, the Ecuadorian government conceded the Manta air base in the Pacific Ocean to the US. This base was strengthened by military logistic units in Larandia and Puerto Legizano in south Colombia, units that supported sophisticated radars at Guaviare and Leticia, both also located in Colombia.

The US negotiated in the beginning of the 2000's the installation of another base in Iquitos, deep down inside the Peruvian Amazon jungle. The negotiations with Paraguay, in 2006, lead the Paraguayan Congress to approve the temporary presence of US FOLs that included the acceptance of immunity to the acts eventually committed by American troops.

In July 2009 the US and the Colombian governments signed an agreement that allowed the allocation of seven FOLs in the Colombian territory, even though the agreement points out that the military will be limited to use Colombian bases that is already installed.

That decision provoked the first important situation in UNASUR (Union of South American Nations) after Brazilian President Lula da Silva reacted badly to the fact that the Colombian government did not consult its South American counterparts before signing the agreement (RODRIGUES, 2012).

In fact, it is possible that the displacement of troops and the installation of bases in South America arise as a part of preventive policy developed by US administrations since de 1990's. Analysing the map of South America, one can notice that the FOLs and troops allocated have been set up close or inside countries of political instability in the last fifteen

years, such as Paraguay in the Southern Cone, and Ecuador, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela in the Andean region. These countries also concentrate incredible amount of natural resources. Besides of that, these bases establish a belt around Brazil, a country that has been leading the process of defence cooperation within UNASUR and its Council of Defence.

DRUGS AND US SECURITY AGENDA: THE ANDEAN COUNTRIES' CASE

Since the Reagan years (1980-1988) the drug-trafficking agenda has been explicit securitized. If national security is a public problem – and, in this sense, derived from what is perceived as a real ‘existential threat’ that demands public responses – securitization, following Buzan, Wæver and De Jaap (1998) appointments, is a discursive resource that allows the application of measures beyond the regular borders of the liberal regimes constitutions. Since the Nixon’s administration, the identification of drug trafficking as a source of public and national insecurity allowed the reform of the US anti-drug apparatus and the increasing reform of legislation, addressed especially by Reagan’s government, which authorized a broader role to the military in counter-narcotics operations both in the US and abroad (MARCY, 2010).

Indeed, the 1980’s phase of the “war on drugs” was developed through the Bush Senior’s ‘Andean Strategy’ approved by the 1989 National Security Decision (NSD) No. 18. At the same year, the Bush Administration launched the ‘National Drug Control Strategy’, which “made explicit the externalization of fight through the use of foreign policy [tactics]” (CIMADAMORE, 1997, p. 21). The Andean Strategy had three main pillars. The first one was the strengthening of political institutions in key countries taken as sources of illicit drugs (Bolivia, Colombia and Peru).

The second one was the operational strengthening of political and military units in charge of combating all the economic circuit of drugs (eradication of crops, trade of chemical precursors, laboratories destruction, drug interdiction, routes identification and money laundry penalties), as well as military and police advising to Andean countries for the dismantling of drug cartels (Colombia) and firms (Peru). The third official goal was commercial and fiscal assistance to those Andean countries, plus Ecuador, to attenuate the social consequences that emerged, as they did, from the privatization of subsistence means of local communities. In practice, the first point of the Andean Initiative was neglected.

There was no specific program aimed at strengthening democratic institutions in the region. Among the thirteen programs toward South America financed by the Department of State under the Initiative, only one called 'Transition Initiatives' funds as aimed to the strengthening of democratic institutions (HERZ, 2006).

As we will see, the subsequent plans, such as the Plan Colombia, did not altered this situation: only 25 per cent of Plan Colombia funds (equivalent to more than US\$ 1,3 billion) are dedicated to the strengthening of democratic institutions, as the judiciary and human rights NGOs.

Thus, it is possible to affirm that since the end of the Cold War, the US 'democratic discourse' toward South America was subjected to the reshaping of the US hemispheric strategy. This articulation combined the evoking of the democratic clauses institutionalized by OAS since the end of the 1980s with support for the militarization and securitization of regional issues such as the drug trafficking and the guerrillas.

The US concentrated its attention on the second point of the Andean Initiative: the operational strengthening of military and police units in charge of combating the drug economic circuit. The militarized approach, designed by Nixon and developed by Reagan and Bush settle the basis to the general pattern of illicit drugs combat that is still, in the second decade of the twentieth-first century, on the core of the US security agenda toward South America. In addition to these policies aimed to reduce the illicit drug offer, the US Counter-narcotics politics has been promoting two fundamental measures related to the US diplomatic-military dispositif.

The first one is the mobilization of US Armed Forces to a foreign territory action, with direct presence in some cases, especially in Bolivia and Peru in the late 1980's, but mostly through military consultancy and training of local military forces. The second one is the use of a 'punitive diplomacy', which, among various mechanisms, applies economic sanctions, denies authorization for exports toward the United States and exerts a strong pressure on international organisms looking forward to boycott the country retaliated (PROCÓPIO; VAZ 1997; RODRIGUES 2012).

The US securitized perspective on the drug issue was reaffirmed in the George W. Bush's 2002 National Security Strategy that brought the same general content of the Reagan's NSDD 221 and Bush's NSD 18: the combination between national security menace and regional instability. The document states that "parts of Latin America conflicts specially arising from the violence of drug cartels and their accomplices. The conflict and the unrestrained narcotics trafficking could imperil the health and security of

the United States” (NSS 2002, p. 15). George W. Bush’s drug strategy focused on the militarization (technically called ‘interdiction of crops’) and the eradication and fumigation of coca and poppy illegal crops. Interdiction refers to the displacement of US troops and civilians (‘security advisors’) in foreign bases and a straight cooperation with local security forces, with the objective of identifying centres of drug production and detaining drug loadings by terrestrial, maritime or aerial means. Eradication is related to the use of herbicides (through ‘fumigation’ of fields) whose function is to destroy as much as possible those illegal crops (ISACSON, 2005, p. 44).

As for the interdiction, as Bruce Bagley defends, the National Defence Authorization Act (NDAA)⁴, approved in the first year of Reagan government, authorized the raise in the American Armed Forces participation in the anti-drug strategy, as well as permitted its action in foreign territory (BAGLEY, 1993, p. 183-184).

The US military involvement was no strange to controversy among the US military staff. Accordingly to Marcy (2010) many of the engagement against transnational criminal organizations was not part of the main core of the military functions; representing a deviance of purposes. Besides of that there were legal constraints that needed to be faced.

The main question was the avoidance of the military engagement in public safety issues inside US territory related to the Posse Comitatus Act, approved in 1878, which aimed to prevent the use of the military in periods of political disruption within American borders. The law was revisited by Reagan in order to allow the increasing involvement of the military in counter-drugs operations not only abroad but also alongside (and within) American borders.

INSTITUTIONAL AND ANTI-DRUG POLICIES IN SOUTH AMERICA

The US interdiction and eradication policies in Andean countries assumed a non-interventionist façade when, since Reagan’s Administration, tried to co-opt local governments around the military repressive approach. President Bush advanced that receipt when promoted two conferences of Heads of State – Cartagena (1990) and San Antonio (1992) – aimed to establish high level military coordination between military anti-drug special troops (TOKATLIÁN, 1992).

⁴ This law is also known as Nunn Amendment because it was the Democrat Senator Sam Nunn who proposed it to Congress.

This effort continued during the Clinton years when the concept of “Shared Responsibilities” was diffused within. Latin America and the Caribbean. The ability of this discourse was clear: the Bush’s brutalized proposition to constitute a continental multinational army lead by the US military gave space for a softer one which didn’t eliminate the previous defined military approach but overlaid it with a more acceptable discourse (RODRIGUES, 2015).

The collaborative approach involved the participation of several US federal agencies, in from the Department of State, and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). from the Department of Justice. The participation of the Department of State, up to INC, in anti-drug strategies, gave greater relevance to the theme in Washington and in the American embassies located in the affected countries (FREEMAN et al, 2005). Despite this growing role of the Pentagon (Defence Department or DOD) in anti-drugs policies during the 1980s and 1990s, the INC⁵ continued to be the main source of military and police assistance to all American countries (FREEMAN et al, 2005).

Nevertheless, according to Bagley (1993, p. 168), the more discrete role in the DOD’s ‘anti-drug war’ has been calculated: “for its part, the Pentagon has systematically expressed its reluctance to get involved in the war on drugs, in part because of concern that the drug effort would divert funding away from its central mission of defending US interests abroad, and in part out of concern that an expanded military role might expose US armed forces to corrupting influences”.

However, DOD’s role is not irrelevant. After the promulgation of the law’s Section N.º.124 (1988), which defines the role of Armed Forces in the defence, DOD monopolizes activities such as controlling illegal drugs traffic on the US by air and marine forces, and in this sense, it is authorized by the Section to carry out drug interdiction operations, such as radar installations, air reconnaissance, Navy Coast Guard maritime patrolling and intelligence meetings throughout Latin America and Caribbean.

The Section No. 124 also allowed the presence of American militaries in anti-drug operations led in Latin America. DOD’s power was even more strengthened in 1991, when the Bush administration approved Section No.

⁵ INC is considered to be the more versatile institution of American government to combat illicit drugs. It aims at funding interdiction and eradication operations, as well as promoting economic and social assistance, which include alternative development programs in areas of drug production, judicial reform programs and humanitarian assistance to victims of conflicts related to drug traffic (FREEMAN et al, 2005).

1004 of NDAA, which allowed that the DOD uses its budget for different types of military assistance (training, intelligence, equipment supply) aiming to combat drug trafficking without the participation of the State Department (ISACSON, 2005).

In turn, the DEA dedicates to investigative operations against drug-trafficking organizations. Although its goal is to coordinate anti-drug information and intelligence abroad, it does not have the legal authority to put investigations and detentions in practice in other countries, its action occurs only through bilateral agreements with intelligence and police agencies from other countries willing to cooperate (FREEMAN et al, 2005).

Despite of this, there are many claims and suspicions of DEA agents acting undercover and disguised as diplomatic personnel (Rocken 2004). Finally, the Andean Strategy supported specific programs of the State Department such as the Military Assistance Program (MAP), the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and the International Military Education and Training (IMET), which had their apogee in the 1990's. Created in the 1970s and 1980s, these three programs were the principal means of US military assistance to transfer funds during the Cold War, including the greater military programs of Reagan administration toward Central America in the 1980's (ISACSON, 2005).

This information is interesting in order to identify how the security and strategic structures conceived during the Cold War were, at least partially, reconverted to anti-drug operations since the end of the Cold War. Thus, the coordination among US agencies led to the training and equipping of military special forces, as it happened in the case of Bolivia anti-drug force – Unity of Anti-Drug Fight (UMOPAR) –, as strategy supported by the US government simultaneously to Plan Dignidad ('Dignity Plan'). This plan aimed to eradicate the production of coca leaves during the Bolivian presidency of former general and dictator Hugo Banzer (Hargraves 1992). Peru also created its own anti-drug force, the División Nacional Anti-drogas (DINANDRO; Anti-drugs National Division), besides promoting assistance to the National Intelligence Service (SIN). In Colombia, before the Plan Colombia, the US' funding was directed to the National Police of Colombia, elite squads and spray herbicide campaigns. Mainly in Peru and Colombia, the militarized emphasis of the 1990's was articulated to the their internal civil conflicts: the Alberto Fujimori's war against Sendero Luminoso and Tupac Amaru guerrillas and the Cesar Gaviria's, Ernesto Samper's and Andrés Pastrana's combat to FARC, ELN and the 'drug cartels'.

DOCTRINAIRE SHIFTS AND POLICIES

The new millennium brought up important changes in the doctrinaire aspect of the US war on drugs. In this sense, the document titled *The National Drug Control Strategy (2007)*, formulated during President George W. Bush's mandate – based on the Section No. 201 of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act (2006) – is also the indicator that the original strategy was changing. This report presented a strategy focused on three main pillars: (a) drug consumption prevention; (b) intervention and recuperation of former consumers; and (c) the disarticulation of the illicit drugs' market.

The main actions that sustain the third point of the strategy – eradicating illegal crops, interdicting illicit drugs' circulation and attacking illegal drug organizations – were conceived in order to reduce the drug offer, inside and outside the country's boundaries. However, the main change observed was related to the first pillar – the objective was to identify the drug consumption found in the US as a problem, once it gives strength to this market.

Nonetheless, since Clinton's 'Shared Responsibility' approach, the American *mea culpa* as the consumption centre of the hemisphere was part of a refashioned strategy that could not give up the repressive perspective (which has been kept intact in the 2007's third pillar).

The National Drug Control Strategy reinforced the evaluation that the drug trafficking phenomenon is a transnational threat to security (both to the US and to each of the Latin American countries, especially the South Americans). Through interdiction and eradication initiatives, the counter-drugs operations aimed to raise the costs of illicit trade for dealers and consumers. In other words, this doctrine admits what was not admitted in the Andean Strategy: the problem was not found solely in the source, but also in American drug consumers. Nevertheless, it did not change the general recommendation to face this "problem": repression through militarized approach and denial of any attempt to review the international treaties on drug control (VIGGIANO, 2007).

Precisely, one of the most notorious trends observed on the war on drugs is the creation of global programs, such as Plan Colombia since 2000, and also a change on the attention directed to various Andean countries in order to focus on the impact of Colombia's internal conflict for the anti-drug strategy. In Colombia's particular situation, that of a fragmented country in the end of the 1990's, the US directed its strategy toward

greater financial and military involvement. Individual programs financed by the Department of State, especially International Military Education and Training, lost relevance. Others, like International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement and International Narcotics and Crime, have their budgets diminished (as in the Bolivian case) or have been deactivated (Youngers and Rosin 2005). This does not imply that the US has lost interest in financing anti-drugs militarized mechanisms. Indeed, since the end of the 1990's, there has been a minor preoccupation regarding isolated programs in agencies such the Department of State, and a stronger attention toward initiatives with a global character such as Plan Colombia and Anti-Drugs Andean Initiative.

On the other side, the US diplomacy evaluated that coca production was controlled in Bolivia and Peru by the end of the 1990s. Then, they turned their attention to Colombia. The multiplicity of actors engaged in Colombian armed conflict made it clear that there were other problems for US security, which were but dependent from the problem of illicit drugs production and traffic (TOKATLIÁN, 2001).

Thus, the Clinton administration elaborated, in 1996, the National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement (NSSEE), supporting the idea that in the post-Cold War era the US security was threatened by various problems and, as a global power, the country should direct efforts to combat them. An interesting aspect of NSSEE was the great importance that it gave to a set of issues that were grasped as threats. Among these problems, Clinton's Doctrine mentioned ethnic-religious conflicts, the re-emergence of nationalisms, environmental degradation, the accelerated population growth, proliferation of arms of mass destruction, terrorism, and drug-trafficking (HERSCHINGER, 2011).

According to Scheer (1996), Clinton's anti-drug strategies were not different from the former administrations: they used the demand and offer reduction measures to fight drug trafficking. The limited success of this general policy led to critiques in the domestic sphere, especially in Congress – including Congressmen of the Democratic Party. Possibly sensible to these critiques, Clinton approved stronger measures to contain the illicit drugs trafficking which included his formal asking for a Congressional authorization to use the International Emergency Economic Powers Act⁶, which permitted to block financial transfers that used to

⁶ IEEPA was approved in 1977 and allowed the President of the United States to announce the existence of a threat to national security. It also gave to the American President the power to block and freeze any transaction suspected to cooperate.

benefit the organizations responsible for the drug trafficking. By the end of the 1990's, Colombia was pointed as a major cocaine, heroin and marijuana supplier to the American consumer market, as well as a focus of activity related to money laundry and international crime⁷.

Besides of that, the US government alleged that multiple small drug-trafficking organizations emerged after the dismantling of the two major 'drug cartels' during the 1990s (Cali and Medellín 'cartels') (PIZARRO, GAITÁN, 2006) and part of drug related activities would had begun to be controlled by left guerrillas (PÉCAUT, 2010).

In that context, the US Congress approved the Plan Colombia in 1999 after a solid consensus between Democrats and Republicans. Projected to count with US\$ 7.5 billion, the Plan presented three components: a) the approximation between the Colombian State and the population affected by violence through social investments and the substitution of coca crops. To achieve this goal, the Colombian State should raise US\$ 4 billion; b) American technical, military and financial anti-drug assistance in the Andean region, especially in Colombia, supported by US\$ 1.3 billion and c) the European contribution for peace evaluated in US\$ 1.7 billion (Tokatlián 2001, p. 81).

In fact, in 2000, US\$ 329 million were directed to the neighbours (Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador) to assist in the eradication of coca crops, in the creation of areas of control alongside Colombian boundaries, in the development of social programs and in the increase of local polices forces and military equipment and training (RIPPEL, 2005).

However, "not all the financial resources of American assistance will enter the country. A major part will be reserved to warcraft procurement with American enterprises and hiring mercenaries from the United States to go on combat in Colombian soil' (ANZOLA, 2001, p. 79).

FARC (Pécaut 2010). This ambiguity existed because there were not given proves that FARC troops produced and traded on cocaine. Besides of that, the US Congressional consensus was around illegal drugs and not on authorizing a broader combat against the guerrilla. This political and juridical imbroglio ended sooner after Plan Colombia approval because of the 09/11 events.

⁷ The INCSR are formulated annually by the INC of the Department of State, according to the Foreign Aid Act (FAA). These INCSR contain information about the development of programs and policies related to the drug combat, the American government assistance as well as a outlook as regards the situation of the countries in this theme.

After de 2001 terrorist attacks, the US government started treating the Colombian issue as a local problem with global connections, and not something restricted to the Andean region. In concrete terms, the Bush Administration, in an evolution of the Plan Colombia, implemented the before mentioned Andean Regional Initiative.

Afterwards, renamed as Andean Counter-Drug Initiative (ACI), the program was approved by the US Congress with a budget of US\$ 700 million for 2003 and US\$ 731 million for 2004. However, in both budgets the priority given to Colombia was evident: 63 per cent of total amount accounted for eradication and fumigation programs in large scale, as well as for military training and equipping, while the rest of the funds were shared between Peru, Bolivia and Equator, in this order.

In these years, Colombia reached the third position in the foreign defence funding by the US, following Israel and Egypt (HERZ, 2006).

The political innovation of ACI could be understood as an attempt to erase any trace of a differentiated strategy to combat the guerrillas, paramilitaries (private groups originally organized to fight guerrillas and after converted to drug trafficking activities) and drug-traffickers.

All these actors were equally qualified as terrorist groups. In that sense, regarding Colombia, the war on drugs corresponded entirely to the war on terror. The already mentioned 2002 National Security Strategy refers specifically to the Colombian case as the recognition of “the link between terrorism and extremist groups that challenge the security of the state and drug trafficking activities that help to finance the activities of such groups” (NSS, 2002, p. 34).

In such context, the ACI pointed to the new architecture of regional security, whose elements could be already identified in the George W. Bush Administration before 11/09 events and even before, since the Clinton years. In this sense, according to a Centre for International Policy document, before the 9/11, the George W. Bush Administration had begun a “review process” which considered the possibility of transcending security policies toward Colombia beyond anti-drug strategy, with the objective to help Colombian government in their fight against guerrillas and paramilitaries (VAICIUS; ISACSON, 2003).

FROM WAR ON DRUGS TO FIGHTING AGAINST GUERRILLA INSURGENCE

The constraints around authorizing a broad combat against drug trafficking and the guerrillas ended after the legal innovations that followed the 2001 terrorist attacks. The new exception legislations that followed the Patriot Act, in November 2001, allowed the US state agencies to classify a huge amount of non-state organizations worldwide as “terrorists”. It was also applied to the Colombian guerrillas FARC and ELN.

The indistinct definitions among “threats” allowed a more open and free use of the Plan Colombia funds to fight which both the US and the Colombian governments considered the main menaces to the state power in the countries: the guerrillas. Nevertheless, the global process of securitization of transnational terrorism reached Colombia following its own particularities

Some of the conceptual changes that led to a jointed treatment of the guerrillas and drug-trafficking as terrorists had already been developed before 2001. In 1985, for example, the former US ambassador to Colombia Lewis Tambs stated that the Andean Region was facing a new threat represented by the hybridization between leftist guerrillas and the drug trafficking organizations. This ‘menace’ was then called ‘narcoterrorism’ (RODRIGUES, 2006).

This term was also employed by the Gaviria administration to name the attacks by Pablo Escobar’s ‘Cartel of Medellín’ against politicians, journalists, civilians, and state facilities in late 1980’s and early 1990’s. Since the mid-1990’s, both the US and Colombian governments have been insisting in the straight links between Colombian guerrillas and drug traffickers. In President Ernesto Samper’s (1994-1998) words, the FARC and the National Liberation Army (ELN) were ‘narcotized’ (SAMPER, 1997, p. 96-97), meaning that they were allegedly supported from ‘the war taxes’ and the payment for protection of crops, laboratories and shipments of illegal drugs.

The George W. Bush Administration had made an alert, since the beginning of his government, in 2001, regarding the lack of attention by his predecessors toward the armed conflict in Colombia. Thus, it was clear for him that US participation in this conflict should contribute to weaken the Colombian drug trafficking industry, detain the guerrillas and put an end to the violence in the region known as the ‘Radical Triangle’ (alongside Colombia, Ecuador and Peru borders).

The 2001 US Department of State's world list of terrorist organizations included four Latin American armed groups, all of them located in South America: three from Colombia – FARC, ELN and the paramilitary group United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) –, and one, the Sendero Luminoso, from Peru. Nevertheless, the two Colombia guerrillas were included in the Department of State's Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) even before, since 1997 (CRONIN, 2003).

Additionally, the military doctrine that recovered and readapted the Cold War counter-insurgency procedures was combined with a new legislation sphere in order to accomplish the "war on terror" purposes which included, certainly in a peripheral position, the Colombian armed conflict as a small component of a global strategic scenario.

The key for this change was the broad coordination of intelligence operations between US agencies and Colombian security forces. Since the beginning of George W. Bush first government, some groups inside Department of State were notably critical to what they considered a lack of clear links between drug-trafficking organizations and the guerrillas (SCABOUROUGH, 2002).

The problem was to collect evidences to support that anti-drug and counter-insurgent strategies were mixed in Colombia. Due to that, after 2001, efforts were taken to adapt the US defence legislation in order to consolidate that kind of connection.

The first sign of change came in August 2002, when, through the HR-4775 approval, George W. Bush government demanded Congressional antiterrorist funds to Colombia. This allowed the Colombian government "to use all past and present counter-drug aid – all the helicopters, weapons, brigades and other initiatives of the past several years against the insurgents" to fight the guerrillas, simply named "narcoterrorists" (VAICIUS; ISACSON 2003, p. 12).

Once this change in doctrine on the National Security Strategy took place, George W. Bush Administration called for US Congress to erase the division line between counter-terrorism and anti-drug programs. This move enabled the security aid to be directed also to counter-guerrilla and paramilitary activities.

In practice, as put by Ricardo Vargas Meza (2004, p. 25), if the 9/11, the non-declared fight against guerrillas was justified on the grounds that guerrillas represented an obstacle to fight drug-trafficking (because it depended on and protected this activity), after the terrorist attacks it became "a legal extension of this aid to anti-terrorist activities". Thus, the

war on drugs in Colombia was connected to the global war on terror: “for the Bush administration officials and their supporters in Congress the two ‘wars’ simply overlap” (VAICIUS; ISACSON 2003, p. 11).

In this direction, Andean countries – especially Colombia – were identified as ground for the activity of this amplified concept of ‘terrorism’. As the 2006 US Report on Terrorism pointed out, “terrorism in the Western Hemisphere was primarily perpetrated by Foreign Terrorist Organizations based in Colombia and by the remnants of radical leftist Andean groups” (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 2006, p. 12).

In this sense, the overlap between these two wars in the official US diplomatic-military discourse was completed. In one hand, it provided the push forward to the US to keep controlling this military bases in Colombia, its main ally in South America and trampoline to project power over the southern lands of the continent.

In the other hand, it gave the financial and political support for the Álvaro Uribe Administration to strengthen this internal war against the guerrillas, reversing the strategic situation that he inherited from Pastrana’s. Uribe left to your successor – his previous Ministry of Defence Juan Manuel Santos – a weakened FARC controlling less than 15% of Colombian territory (PÉCAULT, 2010).

The drug-trafficking activities, however, did not cease. Instead, the multitude of smaller groups – that arose after Medellín’s and Cali’s fall – continued to produce coca leaf, cocaine and heroin. Nevertheless, the impact of militarized repression over them displaced the centre of gravity of the continental drug-trafficking economy to the Mexican cartels.

Then, the US started addressing the Mexico’s situation following the same general recipe: the militarization of the fighting against ‘drug cartels’. The Mexican history on the militarization of drug trafficking is not new.

FINAL REMARKS: SOUTH AMERICA ON THE SECURITY MAP

When the Cold War ended in the beginning of the 1990’s, it became a common sense among scholars that Latin America, and South America in special, would not have any significance in terms of security or defence. The drug-trafficking problématique would be the only exception according the diplomatic-military discourse by George H. W. Bush Administration and William Clinton Administration.

Nevertheless, this “security issue” would not assume a position of relevance in comparison with the Middle East geopolitical problems, the risen China superpower, or even the emergent trans-territorial fundamentalist terrorism.

The drug-trafficking organizations of course could challenge the stability of weakened states, especially the young new democracies that arose from decades of authoritarian rule, but this kind of question would interpose only collateral problems to the US national security. The militarized approach to the drug-trafficking issue, drafted during Nixon Administration, and deepened during Reagan’s and George H. W. Bush’s had its roots in an old and very well settled tradition of prohibition and repression against drug dealers and consumers.

This tradition is strong among the Americans, both from the Northern and Southern portions of the continent. For that reason, the new security approach after the end of the Cold War did not find difficulties to mobilize politics within the US political, social and military levels and also within their Latin American counterparts. In a sense, this shift made sense because it was directly related to the old counter-communist policies. According to Buzan and Wæver, in some extent the “war on drugs [...] pushes South American militaries back toward dealing with (new) internal threats” (2003, p. 321), namely drug trafficking.

The previous ‘internal enemy’ –the communist, the subversive, the guerrillero– could be easily be replaced by the ‘drug-trafficker’. This substitution would be even more feasible in countries with extent experience of internal conflict during the Cold War, and in which that were expressive illicit drugs activities such as Colombia and Peru.

Authors like Mares (2012) agree with this interpretation, arguing that the region is not a pacific field (just because the interstate conflicts are rare) and also that Latin America is completely uninteresting for the American defence policy. Our article tried to highlight precisely the fact that Latin America, and especially South America, are not forgotten parts of the world for the US geopolitical concerns.

The way we chose to suggest it is the analysis of how the “war on drugs” issue assumed a relevant position in the US security agenda during the 1980s and 1990s and, particularly, how this agenda was interconnected to the main global security issue elected after the September 11 events: the global “war on terrorism”.

We do believe that something relatively new happened in the US security policy regarding South America in the beginning of the 21st

century. The two new global initiatives here analysed, the Plan Colombia and the Anti-drug Andean Initiative, could be taken as examples of this shift, once they differentiate from the past policies because they are explicit programs to fight by military means the guerrillas and the drug-trafficking organizations taken as intertwined threats.

Above all, both initiatives, especially ACI, distinguish themselves from the past ones for incorporating South America in the global strategy of 'war on terrorism'. It would be possible to support the general hypothesis that South American is not a complete isolated area in terms of security agenda for the US. The first element of this is the concrete connection established between the "war on drugs" and the "war on terror".

The second and subtler element is the conceptual and doctrinal challenges put by this new kind of conflicts that involves non-state actors, military private companies and military forces reshaped to face volatile and agile targets. The French political philosopher Frédéric Gros (2010) calls "states of violence" the current stage of conflicts in the world.

In his analysis the Clausewitzian way of warfare, based on fixed temporalities, territorialities, jurisdiction and composition of fighters have given path to undefined "states of belligerency" that do not present clear beginnings and evident fighters.

A kind of global civil war emerges, mixing the ambiances of security previously separated between the "internal security" and the "international security". The internal and the external has become interconnected in a "continuum of security" (Bigo 2010) well represented by the drug trafficking and the terrorism phenomena to their transterritorial, both local based and transnational moved particularities.

This transnational character provokes an increasing process of "policialization of the military" and the "militarization of police forces" (RODRIGUES, 2012) to the fact that the enemies do not respect borders or the traditional political limits of the nation-state.

In that sense, the inclusion of South America, through Plan Colombia and the Andean Initiative – in the US security calculations would not be seen as an odd movement. Instead, it would suggest how our region is directly connected with the new security challenges of this century.

Our reflection stops on purpose when the relationship between the 'war on drugs' and the "war on terror" was made by the US and the Colombian diplomatic-military efforts. This process, nevertheless, did not stop fifteen years ago. Instead, the general politics directed both to the drug-trafficking issue and the terrorism still are militarized and securitized.

Our pledge here is only an invitation to look at South America as an interesting laboratory to analyse some of the main aspects of this unclear and fugacious realm of the security challenges of our century and of our region.

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