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# Security on the American Continent

## Challenges, Perceptions, and Concepts

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## 1 Introduction

The UN Security Council had to set up a peace enforcement mission in Haiti to prevent a civil war which might spill over into neighbouring countries. The death toll is rising daily in Mexico and Central America due to cross-border fighting between rival gangs or *maras*. To establish the rule of law, the Brazilian government decided to send troops into Rio de Janeiro to stem a tide of violence associated with drugs trafficking which is using the weapons of war. In Colombia, the authorities announced that they were going to implement the „Patriot Plan“ to reclaim territories where the state lost jurisdiction decades ago from guerrilla forces. This decision triggered fears in neighbouring countries, especially Ecuador, that conflict would spread across the border. Amid the socio-political polarisation in Venezuela, the government arrested nearly a hundred Colombian paramilitaries accused of subverting national order. In Bolivia, against a backdrop of instability, the armed forces withdrew to barracks in protest against a military trial being transferred to a civil court. This happened during increasing mobilisation against the policies of President Mesa. Bolivia's maritime claims against Chile undermined dialogue between the two countries. Argentina has been plunged into an energy crisis which is exerting an impact on neighbouring states. For Chile, this meant launching a diplomatic and technical debate about fulfilling contracts and respecting commitments. From the perspective of the United States, threats from the region focus on the narcotics trade, which is being linked to international organised crime and thus to extremist and terrorist structures in the greater Middle East.

The scenario described above shows how, in the 35 countries of the American continent, there is a strong interplay between the security, governance, defence and development agendas, driven by a broad spectrum of stakeholders in a context heavily interlinked with international and domestic factors. The focus of attention in Latin America and the Caribbean is the hemisphere itself, but also the sub-regional environment. Only Brazil defines itself as a global and regional player, which is why it supports initiatives such as the G3/BISA (Brazil, India and South Africa) and the South American Strategic Area. There are four sub-regions in Latin America and the Caribbean: in the north, the Caribbean (both Spanish- and

English-speaking) and Central America (7 countries) plus Mexico. Together these two sub-regions make up the extensive Caribbean Basin. South America consists of another two sub-regions: the Andean nations (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela) and MERCOSUR (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay); to these we must add Bolivia and Chile as associated states.

## 2 International security: Where does Latin America fit in?

During the present post-Cold War and post-11 September period, there is no clear vision shared by the various international players on the essential path forward for the international order. The attacks of 11 September 2001 in the United States, combined with subsequent terrorist attacks up to 11 March 2004 in Madrid, indicate that the main threat is international terrorism with its global reach. This is most widely perceived as the prime threat by countries belonging to the United Nations. However, perceptions of just how close and/or imminent this threat actually is differ substantially from one region of the world to the next. In structural terms, the United States is perceived to be consolidating its hegemony by creating a hard power gap of such magnitude that it has no counterweight. This gives it more scope to wield its essential tool of influence – soft power. The re-ordering of the global hierarchy is taking place outside the traditional institutional mechanisms of multilateralism. The United States is building a de-institutionalised capacity for global control based on „ad hoc coalitions“. This translates into a policy of *radical unilateralism* using intervention and pre-emptive strikes as its means. It is not yet apparent whether this will be long-term state policy or whether it is simply the political expression of a specific administration led by George W. Bush. Through the UN Security Council the international community, including Latin America and the Caribbean, has granted the biggest coalition of states, with the United States at the helm, broad powers to combat terrorism, authorising the intervention in Afghanistan for this very purpose. This, however, was not enough for the Bush Jr. administration. His obsession with Iraq prompted him to break that coalition and exercise unilateral power, with grave consequences for multilateral cooperation and stability in the region, including the stability

of international oil prices. A year after the intervention in Iraq, it has been effectively demonstrated that, however great the hard power of the United States may be, establishing peace and political, economic and social stability in Iraq – as in any other conflict – calls for the kind of legitimacy derived from institutionalised multilateralism backed by material support.

The region which feels the influence of the United States most directly is the American hemisphere. Even so, it is granted scant attention or priority. Latin America plays a marginal role in world affairs. The region has sought to adopt and maintain a marginal position on strategic issues. It has been defined as a region of peace, non-proliferation, free of nuclear arms, strategic carriers or warheads, and chemical and biological weapons. By the same token, military spending in Latin America and the Caribbean is lower than in any other region of the world. Latin America does not pose a threat to any international players. Quite the reverse: it contributes effectively to global stability by participating in peace-keeping missions created by the United Nations.

Peace is not maintained of its own accord. One or more states must assume the responsibility and accept the burden required to uphold it. On the American continent, the will of Latin America will not in itself suffice to preserve stability and peace. The will of the United States is an essential condition. The change of tack in US policy as it pursued its „multilateralism à la carte“ combined with a process of unilateral intervention beyond the pale of UN legitimacy has strained the opportunities for cooperation in implementing peace. Moreover, the United States is promoting partnerships which divide the region. This happened over Iraq, with seven countries condemning the invasion and seven supporting it, of which four dispatched symbolic military contingents (El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic). US policies towards the region are perceived as stimulating the militarisation of conflicts and the „securitisation“ of the agenda. In the light of these trends, and also of the external/internal influence which the United States exerts in every country in the region, Latin America faces the option of: a) splitting further in pursuit of sporadic advantages for individual countries; or b) establishing effective mechanisms for dialogue

with high standards of transparency to address questions of common interest. There is no consensus on commercial integration (American Free Trade Area) and the region is divided on whether or not to support it. Brazil has campaigned hardest against the idea.

The region does not share a common position on reforming the United Nations. Support is expressed for principles and proposals calling for „more democracy“ and more „participation“ in decision-making, especially in the Security Council. Views have been expressed that the UN should be restructured to enhance its representational balance. At least three countries – Argentina, Brazil and Mexico – have announced that they will be seeking a permanent seat on the Council if it is enlarged. Competition has paralysed the dialogue and proposals.

Faced with the emergence of new threats which are non-territorial, asymmetric and transnational – the hallmarks of global terrorism – Latin America may display a number of vulnerabilities, but it is not a logistic springboard for planning acts of global terrorism, in spite of US insinuations to this effect. All the evidence collected since the attacks of 11 September 2001 indicates that cells linked to global terrorism are not operating from Latin America. This is one area in which it is important to continue cooperation and the exchange of information to prevent Latin American territory being used to attack the United States or the European Union and their interests.

### 3 State security: accelerating change

States remain the primary actors within the international order, but they are not the only actors. Today they are obliged to share arenas of power and co-operation with non-state stakeholders, civil society organisations, multi- and transnational corporations and even individuals. This has brought about a fundamental change in regional and global relations. State security has traditionally been founded on two fundamental components: a) internal cohesion in organising domestic power relations, including the formation of a government capable of asserting the rule of law, within a set territory and for the whole population; b) relations between sovereign states, whether they are competing or co-operating. These two components have changed substantially throughout the world in general and in Latin

America in particular. Frequently different players compete within the same territory, thereby fragmenting society; this is the case in Haiti, Central America and Venezuela. In addition, when state action fails to satisfy the demands of peoples or societies, domestic security and the capacity for governance are subject to vulnerabilities. This is illustrated by the situation in Bolivia, Ecuador or Peru, and also in Central America. However, the main focus of inter-state relations is founded on the capacity for sovereign decision-making and full territorial integrity. Traditionally, this was the pivotal factor in the perception of threats to security. Peace between states is Latin America's greatest asset and one which needs to be preserved. The principal threat to state security in this region derives from domestic vulnerabilities. An inability to satisfy the demands and needs of the population makes it harder to establish effective democratic institutionalisation and to move forward from *electoral democracy* to *civil democracy*, as formulated in the UNPD Report of 2004.

Progress in security and defence relations was achieved during the nineties because the major disputes over state borders – between Argentina and Chile, Peru and Ecuador, Chile and Peru, El Salvador and Honduras – were resolved and strategic military competition eased between the major players, notably between Argentina and Brazil in the nuclear field. Agreements and cooperation have consolidated this scenario of broad inter-state stability, enabling South America to declare itself a Peace Zone.

Maintaining proactive measures designed to consolidate peace between states is an ongoing task. If existing processes of economic complementarity do not evolve into strong, intensive processes towards association and integration, there will be a need to address all the aspects associated with territorial sovereignty, border demarcation and strategic balance. The traditional conflicts have not disappeared. In fact, there are a considerable number of disputes linked to the underlying issue of territorial sovereignty. Taking all the sub-regions as a whole, there are more than forty situations relating to border disputes coupled with territorial claims and/or demarcation problems on land or sea. The principal active controversies concern Belize-Guatemala, Bolivia-Chile, Honduras-Nicaragua, Colombia-Nicaragua, Costa Rica-Nicaragua, Colombia-

Venezuela, Venezuela-Guyana, Argentina-Great Britain and the United States-Cuba. In addition there are many dormant conflicts. The experience of the nineties shows that these border issues led to a broad use of force. On more than 25 occasions force was demonstrated by means of effective military deployment or a readiness to mobilise. In the case of Ecuador-Peru in 1995 there was a brief war, and active international mediation was required to end it. This involved the United States, Argentina and Chile via the Military Observer Mission to Ecuador and Peru (MOMEP).

In the light of these facts, it is essential to establish specific mechanisms for recognising disputes, proposing alternative solutions and designing effective measures to promote a climate of stability and trust. Regional institutionalisation – born during the Cold War – is still weak. There are no early warning systems. On the other hand, major advances have been achieved when it comes to confidence- and security-building measures, resulting in a range of progress from protocol initiatives to joint military exercises. This process has now been underway for ten years. 21 states have announced the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures of this kind, above all exchanges of information and visits to military installations. A large number of countries in the region have specified defence and security policies in the form of Defence Papers: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala and Peru. There is now also more transparency in military spending, founded on national sources but adopting a standardised methodology. Argentina and Chile launched an initiative, subsequently joined by Peru and with support from CEPAL, which will permit the creation of a comparative framework to express military spending. This is a field with huge potential for expansion at regional level. Deeper knowledge mitigates the distrust which arises around military spending and procurement.

The main perception of threat – notwithstanding the above – is no longer rooted in inter-state disputes. The transnational dimension is now a central feature. Threats are affecting several states at once, and such threats cannot be resolved within national borders. Moreover, they are being provoked by players or agents who do not represent governments or states. Organised cri-

me is a fundamental player in the emergence of these new threats. *Intra-state* tensions, gaps created *within* society, against a backdrop of growing access to light arms, have prepared the ground for various non-state forces, notably organised crime with its international links, to challenge the state's legitimate monopoly of force. There is a need in the region to address post-conflict situations in order to stem the transfer of weaponry which otherwise occurs. In other words, effective action must be taken as soon as a state and its society are pacified to withdraw as many arms as possible from circulation, to establish strict supply-side control and to restore the state's monopoly on the use of force. This is one of the tasks currently posed in Haiti, which never reached its completion in Central America, and which will constitute one of the pivotal elements in Colombia. *Urban violence* causes more deaths in Latin America and the Caribbean than does open conflict. The region suffers 25.10 homicides per 100 thousand inhabitants, a rate higher than in any other region of the world; more than a hundred thousand people are murdered every year, quite apart from other crimes such as abduction and robbery. We should point out, moreover, that there is a major gender gap and big differences from one country to another. The overwhelming majority of murder victims are young men. Rates are extremely high in Central America and Colombia. In the former, this is a consequence of the wars in the 1980s and confrontations between cross-border youth gangs, known as *maras*. In the latter, it is the result of the present conflict, which has been dragging out now for almost 50 years. Brazil has witnessed a big increase in violence. Two countries display very low levels: Chile and Uruguay, both less than 4.6. The IDB estimates that altogether these deaths cost the region 14.2% of its GDP.

#### 4 Human security: individuals and communities

The concept of human security entered the world stage in the mid-nineties in a context when new paradigms were being sought to anchor changes in the international order, with growing theoretical and practical debate about the traditional concepts of security which inspired actions taken by countries for much of the last century. The academic community, but

also some international organisations and even states, promoted the concept of human security to define new security challenges more appropriately and place individuals at the focus of attention. The origins can be traced back to the UNDP Report *New Dimensions to Human Security*, which argues that „human security centres on the human being“. Human security, the authors continue, means that people are able to exercise their options in security and freedom and that they can be relatively confident that the opportunities they have today will not vanish completely tomorrow.

May 2003 saw the publication of the report *Human Security: Now*. Human security clusters different types of freedom: freedom from deprivation, freedom from fear and freedom to act on one's own behalf. The report suggests that there are two basic strategies for achieving the objective described above: *protecting individuals* or *empowering individuals*. On the one hand, human security emerges in this sense as a concept which complements the notion of the state's territorial security. On the other hand, however, the concept challenges the „doctrine of national security“ by focussing firmly on individuals and human rights. Human security integrates a multidimensional perspective which, in contrast to the classical concept of state security, places the emphasis on non-military factors and on cooperation.

Canada and Chile have promoted this human security perspective. Both are members of the Human Security Network set up by 13 countries on different continents: Austria, Canada, Chile, Slovenia, Greece, the Netherlands, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Switzerland and Thailand, with South Africa as an observer.

At the Special Conference on Security in the Americas, to which we will be returning later, the concept of human security was taken on board after lengthy debate as a basis for protection of the individual and respect for human dignity. This marked some changes in structural trends up to 11 September, with the implementation of concrete policies from the Network's agenda (mines, control of small arms, child soldiers, human trafficking). These initiatives complement those relating to state security and will reinforce international security.

## 5 Latin America's prime vulnerability: (un)governance

If we analyse the security and defence situation in Latin America in 2004, we can conclude that the main threats are rooted in domestic conflicts. The key risk factors in Latin America and the Caribbean are associated with lack of governance, instability and weak democratic institutionalities. The evidence of the last 15 years indicates a high level of regional instability and, in many instances, overspill from national conflicts into neighbouring countries and beyond, triggering conditions in which inter-state issues may re-emerge and escalate. The tensions between Colombia and Venezuela, or indeed between Ecuador and Brazil, are examples. The crisis in Haiti reflects a similar scenario in the Caribbean.

Instability has become a persistent feature of Latin America and the Caribbean. Political and economic crises accompanied by social upheavals have provoked the resignation of eight heads of state, 19 military crises or states of tension and five coups d'état. During the nineties Latin America and the Caribbean witnessed more than twenty-five institutional crises. The most striking cases were in Paraguay, Haiti and Peru. Since 2000 new hotbeds of tension have developed in Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela, quite apart from the renewed eruption of crisis in Haiti (see appendix table 1).

Instability calls for action to reinforce democratic regimes and implement support mechanisms of the kind envisaged in the Democratic Charter for the Americas signed in 2001. There are very high levels of dissatisfaction with democracy in the region: 66% in 2003. National and regional alternatives must be developed in order to reduce social divisions and combat poverty. Particular importance is attributed to formulating and implementing a plan for democratic governance, paving the way for stability, growth and human development as a foundation for national and regional security.

## 6 Regional security: defining the threats and devising new concepts

Major efforts have been undertaken on the American continent over the last ten years to establish a common concept of security, founded on shared values, which would facilitate effective political commitments in this area.

The American Presidential Summits – Miami in 94, Santiago in 98, Quebec in 01, Monterrey in 04 – reflected the priorities, with specific measures expressed by means of action plans. In the field of security, this protracted process culminated in the Special Conference on Security held in the District of Mexico in October 2003, where a new, broad and multidimensional concept of security was proposed which emphasised non-traditional threats.

### Identifying the threats: sub-regional factors

By ranking perceptions of threat in the various sub-regions we can observe strong similarities around the key themes of overarching concern. These are: drugs trafficking, terrorism, arms trafficking, organised crime, the environment and natural disasters, poverty and social deprivation, and guerrilla activity and subversive groups. Analysing perceptions of threat from the perspective of the region as a whole, we will note that in all their contributions the authorities stress drugs trafficking and terrorism as threats. Second place goes to poverty and social deprivation, arms trafficking and problems relating to the environment or natural disasters. There is a third category which includes organised crime, although this might also be associated with arms trafficking or with terrorism and drugs trafficking. The list is completed by guerrilla activity and subversive groups. However, if we then analyse perceptions of threat sub-region by sub-region, priorities vary after the top two. Poverty emerges as a strong factor in the Andean region and the Caribbean, whereas natural disasters are a major concern in Central America. Only the Andean countries attach mid-ranging importance to guerrilla activities, while these come bottom of the list in the other sub-regions (see appendix table 2).

The Special Conference on Security defined the key threats as: 1) terrorism along with cross-border crime and related offences, 2) extreme poverty and social exclusion, 3) natural disasters, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, and environmental degradation; 4) illegal human trafficking, 5) attacks on digital security, 6) potentially hazardous substances in maritime freight, 7) weapons of mass destruction and their carriers. The Declaration on Security in the Americas lists 36 commitments. At least 50% of these are aimed at

solving the concerns and challenges described above.

### **Establishing a new concept**

The Declaration on Security in the Americas adopted a broad approach to conceptualising security, rooted in a notion of multidimensionality as the interlinking factor. This places the concept on a wider footing, applying conventional methods to tackle new, unconventional threats, including their political, economic, social, health-related and environmental aspects.

This new concept of security with its broad approach facilitated consensus at the Special Conference on Security. It embraced the worries of all stakeholders, from the superpower to micro-states in the Caribbean. In fact, the United States facilitated agreement by accepting two paragraphs, indicating its dissent in a footnote (landmines and climate change). A very broad concept is, however, harder to operationalise. Tackling the security, defence, environmental, health and development agendas simultaneously is such a comprehensive task that a coherent programme of activities is highly unlikely. Nevertheless, given the satisfaction felt by the states who subscribed to the concept, it is conceivable that each sub-regional structure will permit the formulation of action plans which are tailored more precisely to requirements, specific perceptions of threat and the resources available to combat them.

### **The principal actors**

Mexico played a pivotal role in drawing up the agreements, managing – after a postponement – to move the Conference on and achieve consensus around the Declaration. Chile and Canada moved proposals in which the concept of human security was a fundamental factor. The United States focussed strongly on development, although without suggesting any specific additions. Brazil stressed the issue of poverty. The Caribbean countries made a clear case for the concerns of small island states and Central America promoted its model of democratic security.

In debates about security and defence in the countries of the region, there are some differences of a bureaucratic nature between government positions. The delegations participating at the Conference included representatives of

foreign and defence ministries but also officers of the armed forces. It should be noted that, with the exception of Peru, all the South American countries sent their Minister or Deputy Minister of Defence along with their Foreign Minister. In three cases, all from the English-speaking Caribbean, the head of delegation was a military man. 60% of delegations from countries with armed forces included military personnel. The participation of civil society organisations was modest, but they were given a hearing and some of their recommendations were incorporated. There is particular significance in the recognition by states of consultation with civil society organisations in applying a multidimensional approach to security.

Considering this conceptual breadth and the constellation of actors involved, we expect co-operation to develop on a bilateral and sub-regional basis. We should be aware that pronounced bilateralism, especially between such asymmetric stakeholders as the United States and other countries in the region, will limit the scope for multilateral moves, tending to foster „multilateralism *à la carte*” and to fragment the response. As a consequence, this security architecture founded on and developed by the sub-regions will be flexible, modular, and by nature cooperative and collective.

### **A flexible security architecture**

This flexible character, defined in the Declaration adopted by Defence Ministers in Santiago de Chile in November 2002, has emerged because „the region has gradually shifted towards a complex system of security, constituted by a network of old and new institutions and mechanisms of security, both collective and cooperative, which is hemispherical, regional, sub-regional and bilateral in its reach.” The Miami Consensus – an outcome of the expert meeting on confidence- and security-building measures in February 2003 – stated that „the development of measures to promote confidence and security is part of the emergence of a new flexible security architecture in the Americas, as they are a substantial and irreplaceable feature of a network of bilateral, sub-regional, regional and hemispherical agreements on co-operation elaborated to complement the security institutions forged by the inter-American system”.

By virtue of the consensus achieved between states, the Declaration on Security in the Americas recognised and formalised a series of instruments which have instigated the construction of a new security architecture for the American continent:

- The present guiding principles for security in the hemisphere are derived from the United Nations Charter and the Charter of the Organisation of American States.
- The key instruments for the prevention and resolution of conflicts and the peaceful solution of disputes are the Treaty of Rio (TIAR) and the Bogotá Pact, although it is imperative to review these and adapt them to present-day security and defence needs.
- The institutions and processes with an active role in this field are the Organisation of American States and its Security Commission. The Presidential Summits and Conferences of Defence Ministers provide orientation and define priority issues.
- Within the Inter-American family, the bodies operationalising the new architecture are the Inter-American Commission on the Control of Drug Abuse (CICAD), the Inter-American Anti-Terrorism Committee (CICTE) and the Inter-American Committee for the Reduction of Natural Disasters (CIRDN). A role is also played by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. In addition, there are links with the Inter-American Defence Council (JID).

## **7 By way of a conclusion: the security trilogy**

In the last decade, the countries and societies of Latin America have been absorbed in a process of deep reflection and reformulation surrounding concepts of security. There has been a conceptual shift from a Cold War perspective, with its sights set clearly on an enemy, expressed in the actions of a state and backed by powerful military weight, towards a new post-Cold War stage in which the threats are diffuse and transnational. The influence of traditional military factors has receded as a result and many of these threats do not seem to be connected to state actors.

One of the major challenges, both intellectually and institutionally, has been to bring together the links in a conceptual chain which reaches from human security to international security via state security. The way in which this relationship is constructed will determine the ability to satisfy, operationalise and implement at one and the same time the requirements of global and national security and the security of individuals and communities.

The essential nature of today's new international conflicts, centres on intra-state problems, demonstrates the need to explore a more appropriate definition of the inter-relationship between these three levels, especially given the impact of globalisation. The new threats are by character transnational and they are part and parcel of „parallel globalisation“. They involve actors and agents who for the most part do not represent nations or governments, nor are they located in a clearly demarcated state territory. The risks and vulnerabilities which affect the security of one nation simultaneously – in the context of globalisation and interdependence – influence the security of others, and so they cannot be exclusively resolved within the borders of one state. Wars have also changed radically. The great majority do not take place between states. Conflicts are intra-national with inter-state consequences. Their origins and driving forces are more likely to be socio-economic, ethnic, religious or inspired by self-determination than the result of border disputes. Non-state actors have acquired a greater weight. There are, moreover, growing calls for international inter-governmental bodies and NGOs to intervene. As a result, we are witnessing a further diminishing of state capacities in this field, especially in the case of states with relatively little power.

In this trilogy of human, national and international security, scenarios will determine which factor has the greatest significance. In by far the majority of cases where the state has power and influence, it will be under pressure to take responsibility for preventing a domestic situation from spilling across its borders into neighbouring territory, or from triggering major population displacements and, as a consequence, intra-state tensions. This re-affirms the continuing importance of states as the principal players on the international stage. In some geographical regions, especially Africa and the Caribbean, the



centre of gravity will tend to lie more with international security and its key actors, those who have to respond when some states display weakness. The focus, then, is on the capacity of the international system to respond to crises in fragile or failing states, either to create stability or to initiate and promote cooperation and assistance during humanitarian disasters.

In the case of Latin America, the key vulnerabilities derive from a crisis of governance throughout the region, which hampers the promotion of human security and produces, rather, the opposite effect by generating opportunities for intense insecurity, reflected in a fear of violence and fear of the wide-ranging dissatisfied needs. Given the low level of conflict between states and a crisis of governance which falls short of humanitarian crisis, the international community pays little attention to the problems affecting Latin American countries.

In short, Latin America and the Caribbean have enhanced global security thanks to denuclearisation and their status as an inter-state Peace

Zone. They weaken security because of their lack of governance. To achieve effective security, the conditions of one factor must be met at the same time as the conditions of the others. An international crisis is simultaneously a state crisis and a human security crisis, just as a crisis of human security is simultaneously a state and international crisis. Hence the need to construct a holistic, integrated perspective. For this we will need new terminology and new concepts befitting this era which we cannot yet define, which is why we describe it variously as post-Cold War, post 11 September and post-Security Conference.

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**Appendix**

**Table 1**

**Crises of political institutions in Latin America  
1990-2004**

Country/year	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04
Argentina	■											■			
Belize															
Bolivia														■	■
Brazil			■												
Chile	■			■		■									
Colombia						■									
Costa Rica															
Cuba															
Ecuador								■			■				
El Salvador															
Guatemala				■				■							
Haiti		■				■						■			■
Honduras		■						■							
Mexico															
Nicaragua						■									
Panama															
Paraguay					■	■	■				■	■			
Peru			■								■	■			
Surinam	■														
Uruguay															
Venezuela			■										■		

Source: Compiled by FLACSO Chile from press reports.

- Coups d'état
- Military uprising or tension
- Dismissal/resignation of the head of state

**Table 2**

**Perceptions of threat ranked according to sub-region**

MERCOSUR	ANDEAN NATIONS	CENTRAL AMERICA	CARIBBEAN
Drugs trafficking	Drugs trafficking	Drugs trafficking	Drugs trafficking
Terrorism	Terrorism	Terrorism	Terrorism
Arms trafficking	Poverty and social deprivation	Environment and natural disasters	Poverty and social deprivation
Organised crime	Guerrilla activity and subversive groups	Organised crime	Environment and natural disasters
Environment and natural disasters	Arms trafficking	Poverty and social deprivation	Arms trafficking
Poverty and social deprivation	Organised crime	Arms trafficking	Organised crime
Guerrilla activity and subversive groups	Environment and natural disasters	Guerrilla activity and subversive groups	-----

Source: Compiled by the author from speeches by Defence Ministers at the V Ministerial Conference in Santiago, November 2002, and replies submitted by countries to the Hemispherical Security Council of the OAS. The trends indicated in the table tally with national contributions to the Special Conference on Security in 2003.

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