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The Special Conference on Security

Introduction

Miguel Ruiz-Cabañas

The OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security (CHS) is proceeding with preparatory work for the Special Conference on Security, which will take place by the end of 2003, as mandated by Resolution 1908 from the XXXII OAS General Assembly.

The moment to thoroughly evaluate security in our hemisphere is timely. More than ten years ago, with the adoption of the Santiago Commitment in 1991, the OAS determined that it was necessary to overhaul the inter-American system in all aspects.

For various reasons, the task of evaluating our approaches and institutions with respect to security in the hemisphere has been postponed, and now is the moment to approach it with all seriousness. It is no secret that the institutions and plans of the Cold War have been superseded by a new reality.

In view of the changes taking place in the world, our leaders recognized the need to adapt the hemispheric security system to a new reality at the Second Summit of the Americas, which took place in Santiago in

1998, and consequently entrusted the CHS of the OAS to:

“Analyze the meaning, scope, and implications of international security concepts in the Hemisphere, with a view to developing the most appropriate common approaches by which to manage their various aspects, including disarmament and arms control...and... pinpoint ways to revitalize and strengthen the institutions of the Inter-American System related to the various aspects of Hemispheric Security.”

At the Quebec City Summit in Canada, our leaders agreed to convene a Special Conference on Security in 2004, once the CHS concludes “a review of all issues related to approaches to international security in the Hemisphere.”

However, the seriousness of events on September 11, 2001 prompted the XXIII Meeting of Consultation of Foreign Ministers to hold the conference earlier.

Subsequently, the XXXII General Assembly of the OAS, which took place in Barbados, through the “Bridgetown Declaration”, amplified the concept of security in the hemisphere, giving it a multidimensional approach, in recognition that “security threats, concerns and other challenges in the hemispheric context are of diverse nature and multidimensional scope, and that the traditional concept and approach must be expanded to encompass new and non-traditional threats, which include political, economic, social, health, and environmental aspects.”

With this approach, the CHS, in its capacity as the preparatory body for the Special Conference on Security, has oriented its work so as to comply with the various mandates that were assigned by the respective Summits as well as the General Assembly.

The sessions of the Committee have been organized in 16 thematic areas defined by Member states, which include a comprehensive list of items on the hemispheric security agenda, as addressed in issued

mandates. The consideration of this list at the weekly sessions of the CHS has yielded a diversity of opinions and approaches that prevail in the various sub-regions of the hemisphere and among OAS Member states in the area of hemispheric security, and culminated in a consensus that all threats, concerns and challenges to security of States are equally legitimate and are defined as a function of each State’s particular circumstances.

The discussion items encompass all concerns in the area of Member states’ security and include, among others, human, economic and environmental security, reducing the vulnerability to natural disasters, drug trafficking and organized crime, fostering confidence and security, proliferation and illicit trafficking of small arms in all of its aspects, pursuit of nuclear weapons and the prohibition of nuclear tests, transparency in the acquisition of conventional arms, action against anti-personnel land mines, the fight against terrorism and conventional security.

In addition, the preparatory work for the Conference has been enriched with contributions from important meetings on security, such as the Second High Level Meeting on Special Security Concerns of Small Island States, the XXXII Regular Session of CICAD, the Third Session of the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) and the First Special Session of the Consultative Committee of CIFTA.

Thus, the thematic agenda has been developed through a comprehensive, democratic and broad exchange of opinions in the framework of the CHS, and will serve as the basis for the Special Conference on Security and Political Declaration, to be adopted in Mexico.

- *Miguel Ruiz-Cabañas is Ambassador of Mexico to the Organization of American States*

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(Introduction)

Towards an Inclusive Security Conference

Francisco Rojas Aravena

At the upcoming Special Conference on Security in Mexico City, countries from the region will establish the foundations of a framework for stable security relations, capable of effectively dealing with threats as well as broadening and further developing avenues for cooperation in the region.

The international security system for the Americas in the XXI century will be based on a new consensus and new principles. The democratic consensus is the basis for generating the organization, structure and execution of efforts for prevention, deterrence and cooperation. It is therefore central to the strengthening of democracy and hemispheric integration, which defines the parameters for the new international security system.

The democratic political system reflects a plurality of views and seeks to incorporate distinct actors of society. It follows that in the area of security the focus should be multidimensional, that is to say, it should incorporate the various dimensions that affect and condition the relative aspects of international security, national defense and domestic security.

One of the difficulties with the existing international system relates to the changes that have occurred in the context of globalization as a result of increased presence and importance of non-state actors. New multidimensional concepts should incorporate mechanisms to listen and establish specific means of participation for the various players in the system.

The particular concern with security is closely related to intra-state matters, and it is here that the most significant vulnerabilities are manifest. These challenges are structurally held in common by Latin American and Caribbean countries and are non-military in nature. They are linked to development and the fight against extreme poverty. The vulnerabilities derived from the lack of development create conditions that produce problems ranging from increased political violence to the AIDS/HIV pandemic. We need to better understand what is the link between development and violence, as applied to the current characteristics of Latin America.

Even if the lack of development is a source of security concerns, the answers to the issue cannot be resolved through improving security measures per se. In other words, to make the 'fight' against poverty a security matter is erroneous. The mechanism to increase the level of development are essentially linked to the capacity of the State to carry out political, economic and social reforms. In the same way, it is not evident that

there is a direct and unidirectional link between poverty and violence.

The weakness of preventative mechanisms and measures to stave off conflict in Latin America and the Caribbean is evident. This is especially true in case of new, asymmetrical threats involving the use of force.

A multidimensional focus on security requires effective measures to prevent violence, especially violence stemming from organized crime. This assumes the State's capacity to do the following within the framework of constitutional democracy: exercise full sovereignty within national boundaries, and exercise a monopoly on the use of violence. Based on these two assumptions it is possible to design and operationalize effective contributions to collective security.

As was pointed out by the OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security, the multidimensional aspect of security which currently shows no prioritization, requires a priority framework. That is to say, it requires elaboration on how to face specific questions without militarizing state policies. Also, it should prevent two tendencies: the militarization of police personnel and the assumption of policing duties by the military.

The changes in the international system have placed the individual as the central object in global and national politics. The concept of Human Security is a contribution from civil society while the concept of State Security bases security concerns on the security of the State, and the concept of International Security is concerned with stability on the global scale.

The exchange of views on each of these three concepts is the key to successfully moving forward at the Special Conference on Security. This exchange will make it possible to develop a basis of joint principles and the development of operative concepts and mechanisms. That is to say, rather than getting caught up in a debate on the conceptualization of security per se, it is important to consolidate the consensus on fundamental concepts such as cooperation, prevention, mitigation and dissuasion, as recognized and supported in the Americas within international security.

The political declaration should delineate a process. It should be expressed in an effective plan of action to make effective security in the Americas in a multidimensional sense. For this reason, the Conference should touch upon two things: the establishment of a working group to organize operative principles of a security charter of the Americas, and stock-taking of active mechanisms that are currently in place to establish how this architecture can

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Security Challenges and Engagement in the Caribbean

Ivelaw Griffith

As is true for most OAS member-states, security in the Caribbean is multidimensional, with military, political, economic, and other dimensions. Scholars studying the Caribbean agree with the assertion by the Barbados Prime Minister at the June 2002 OAS General Assembly: "It would be a fundamental error on our part to limit security concerns to any one area while the scourge of HIV/AIDS, illegal arms and drug trafficking, transnational crime, ecological disasters, and poverty continue to stare us in the face."

Thus, the region's security landscape has traditional and non-traditional challenges. Border and territorial disputes and geopolitics are key concerns in the first area. Regarding disputes, with the Belize-Guatemala dispute is on the way to permanent resolution the most serious ones remaining involve Venezuela and Guyana, and Suriname and Guyana.

Drugs, crime, poverty, HIV/AIDS, and terrorism are the main non-traditional security concerns. There is no uniformity in their impact on societies in the region. These issues are largely transnational in nature. Public security issues are especially prominent, and drugs present the most serious threat.

As is the case elsewhere, there are links between poverty and crime and drugs and crime, which is on the upsurge in many countries. Some of the crime is transnational and organized, extending beyond the region to other parts of the world. Moreover, the criminal enterprise in some countries is complicated by the activities of nationals who are convicted, sentenced, and later deported from elsewhere.

As to terrorism, the Caribbean is vulnerable to attacks directed against the United States, but the region has not been immunized against terrorism from within. The most devastating incident occurred in October 1976, when a *Cubana Air* flight was blown up after departing Barbados. All 73 people aboard—57 Cubans, 11 Guyanese, and 5 North Koreans—were killed. Anti-Castro exiles based in Venezuela later claimed responsibility for the action, but no one was ever brought to justice.

In many respects the HIV/AIDS pandemic has created a form of terror in the region. It has spread so rapidly since the first reported case in 1982 that the Caribbean is the second hardest-hit region, behind sub-Saharan Africa. Still, it is not just the number of people involved that makes the pandemic a

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Mine Action and Hemispheric Security

Elizabeth Spehar

For more than a decade, the Organization of American States (OAS) has acknowledged, through various resolutions, the importance of strengthening confidence-building measures between the member states to promote peace and security. This vision has been broadened and consolidated in the “*Bridgetown Declaration*” AG/DEC. 27 (XXXII-0/02), approved in Barbados last year.

Consistent with the mandates of the OAS, the development of an active program against antipersonnel landmines has been a part of this *multidimensional* vision of security in the Hemisphere. The program was created in 1991. The activities developed have grown gradually in response to the diverse needs of the affected member states. From being primarily focused on landmine removal, the program has become known as Comprehensive Action Against Antipersonnel Mines (AICMA), or OAS/Mine Action.

Based on the different OAS mandates, Mine Action has developed three activities in the area of mine action: 1) humanitarian demining, 2) destruction of stockpiles and 3) personal security of the population in mine affected countries.

The first contribution in the area of hemispheric security has been mine clearance in afflicted Central American countries. OAS/Mine Action has accurately followed the indications expressed in the mandates of the resolutions approved in the last 12 General Assemblies on the subject.

As a result of the financial support of 19 donor countries, the program in Central America has cleared more than 1,400,000 square feet of land and found more than 22,000 antipersonnel landmines. The 40 million dollar budget channeled through the OAS to Central America for this purpose has been crucial to concluding demining operations in countries such as Costa Rica, which last year was declared itself as the first country free of antipersonnel landmines in the Americas.

OAS/Mine Action has been supported by the Inter-American Defense Board, a military entity within the inter-American system, whose collaboration has proved essential in mine clearing operations.

The second contribution of the OAS/Mine Action program to the strengthening of mutual confidence measures has to do with the information exchange between countries and the OAS regarding mines stockpiled by national military forces. The OAS, through the Inter-American Defense Board, has ensured that stockpiled mines are destroyed according to international safety and environmental

standards. Moreover, this collaboration has ensured that funds from the international donor community are channeled in a transparent and accountable manner.

As of 2001 Honduras, Nicaragua, Ecuador and Peru destroyed their stockpiles, which in aggregate numbered 500,000 units. These member states have complied with the timeline instituted by the Ottawa Convention. Perhaps the most important aspect of security is that of the individual. The populations inhabiting mined zones have gradually reclaimed their sense of security, which has evaporated in areas where fields have been mined and contaminated with explosives.

OAS/Mine Action has collaborated in strengthening the security of the individual in three ways: a) mine awareness education; b) victim rehabilitation and labor training and c) land rehabilitation.

Through mine awareness campaigns in the affected zones, the OAS coordinates its efforts in collaboration with various actors such as the armed forces, schools, community leaders and local media. Through these channels a message is transmitted to the population to provide reaction guidelines that should be followed in case a mine or explosives are found.

OAS/ Mine Victim’s Rehabilitation Program is the second key element of individual security. More than 450 individuals handicapped by landmines have been assisted with medical treatment and prosthesis. Moreover, since last year, OAS/Mine Action included a new component: labor training in various occupations for landmine victims to ensure their reentry into the labor force.

Clearance of landmines is the third element of promoting individual security. Through collaboration with the OAS, nearly a million and a half square feet of land have been returned to governments for potential use in raising livestock or agriculture. In this manner the affected population has regained a sense of security.

In conclusion, OAS/Mine Action is ready to serve any member state that requests the assistance of the Organization of American States in the area of mine clearance, and is confronting security concerns with a multidimensional approach so that the ideal of a hemisphere free of landmines urgently becomes a reality.

- *Elizabeth Spehar is Executive Coordinator of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy at the Organization of American States*

“It would be a fundamental error on our part to limit security concerns to any one area while the scourge of HIV/AIDS, illegal arms and drug trafficking, transnational crime, ecological disasters, and poverty continue to stare us in the face.”

Summit-Mandated Meeting of Experts on Confidence and Security Building Measures

Giovanni Snidle

The Plan of Action emanating from the 2001 Quebec City Summit of the Americas mandated the holding of an “experts meeting, prior to the Special Conference on Security, as a follow-up to the regional conferences of Santiago and San Salvador on CSBMs, in order to evaluate implementation and consider next steps to further mutual confidence.” The United States hosted this Meeting in Miami from February 3-4, 2003. The conference consisted of one General Committee, which heard plenary statements and presentations by various delegations and organizations, and two working groups tasked with drafting the final outcome documents of the conference. The United States, as host of the Meeting, was elected Chair of the General Committee. Chile was elected First Vice-Chair, El Salvador was elected Second Vice-Chair, and Argentina was elected as Rapporteur. Civilian and military representatives from 30 OAS member states participated: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Also participating were several observer states, including Russia and France, as well other international organizations, such as the United Nations and the Inter-American Defense Board. Representatives from a variety of non-governmental organizations were also present, and they held a “Civil Society Forum” after the conference proceedings on February 3 that discussed the role of civil society in defense budget transparency. The Conference issued two final outcome

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be made flexible to adjust to the demands of the XXI century.

The Conference should make explicit and reaffirm the guiding principles for cooperation in the area of hemispheric security and recognize emerging vulnerabilities in a manner concomitant with globalization. If the mandate clearly expresses the development of coordination mechanisms in the actual architecture, it would be logical to establish a specific and centralized mandate for the establishment of a Code of Conduct in the area of international security in the Americas.

For the western hemisphere and especially Latin America and the Caribbean, the maintenance of peace is its greatest capital. New investment in security will be rooted mainly in interstate affairs, which require collaborative answers that in turn are made possible through effective cooperation and multilateralism. Cooperation in this area is a necessity which stems from growing interdependence and globalization. The process of finding appropriate solutions has progressed and will culminate in the Special Conference on Security.

The success of this Conference is a collective responsibility of states, non-state actors and civil society. Assuming joint responsibility for security in the Americas in a new context of constitutional democracy is a guarantee for stability and future progress.

- *Francisco Rojas Aravena is the Director of la Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) in Chile*

(Security in the Caribbean):

security matter. It is so because of the deleterious effect it will have on the capacity of states in coming years to provide and sustain human capital and security capabilities. These are needed both for the preservation of formal sovereignty and the exercise of "positive sovereignty," which entails having the economic, technical, military,

and other capabilities to declare, implement, and enforce public policy at the domestic and international levels.

Because of smallness, capability limitations, and vulnerability, adoption of a multidimensional strategy by Caribbean states is crucial for them to cope with the challenges cited above. This has several elements, including pursuit of measures individually and with others. Regarding the latter, it means engaging multilaterally. Regional engagement is a key aspect of this.

Hence, there are several *Multilateral Security Engagement (MSE) Zones*, which I define as geographic spaces for policy and operational cooperation by state and non-state actors in relation to defense and security matters. The Zones exist at the sub-regional, regional, hemispheric, and international systemic levels.

Within the first two are the Regional Security System, the Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police, the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency, the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, and the Caribbean Information Sharing Network, among other entities.

Hemispheric and International Systemic Zone engagement is done through participation in the Inter-American Defense Board, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, the Organization of American States, the Pan-American Health Organization, the International Criminal Police Organization, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, among others.

Working within the MSE Zones entails meeting several challenges, includes ones related to setting and maintaining priorities, institutionalizing agreements, cooperating with other nations, and sharing intelligence. Of course, most of these challenges also exist in bilateral relationships.

In conclusion, Caribbean security threats are largely transnational in nature. Consequently, collective responses are not just desirable, but necessary. And, while

regional and other cooperation surely brings its own challenges, the numerous actions and achievements within various Multilateral Security Engagement Zones offer reason to have hope for the future.

- *Ivelaw L. Griffith is Professor of Political Science and Dean of Honors College at Florida International University*

(Meeting of Experts on Security Measures):

documents: the "Consensus of Miami. Declaration by the Experts on CSBMs: Recommendations to the Summit-mandated Special Conference on Security;" and the "Miami Group of Experts Illustrative List of CSBMs for Countries to Consider Adopting on a Bilateral, Sub-Regional, or Regional Level." The adoption of these documents marked major successes for the Conference. Both of these documents will provide a practical roadmap for resolving interstate border tensions, lowering pressure for arms spending, promoting democratic norms, and fostering a climate of trust, transparency, and cooperation in Hemisphere over the next decade. In addition, the Conference recommended permanently institutionalizing the CSBMs process by the creation of the Forum for Confidence and Security Building Measures to discuss and advance CSBMs. More specifically, the "Declaration" recommended the voluntary application of 35 military and general measures by OAS member states. The "Illustrative List" expanded on the measures contained in the "Declaration" by providing a catalog of 53 specific political, diplomatic, military, educational, cultural, and other measures that states of the region can draw upon as they seek to improve ties and build confidence with their neighbors. The CSBMs developed by the previous conferences (Buenos Aires, 1994; Santiago, 1995; San Salvador, 1998) strengthened regional military-to-military relations, reduced inter-state tensions, and fostered cooperation and security among the democratic states of the region. The results of the Miami Meeting of Experts built on this progress by recommending bold, new measures. It also furthered the expansion and institutionalization of the CSBMs endorsed by the previous conferences, and contributed directly to the May 2003 Summit-mandated Special Conference on Security. This Special Conference will be the culmination of a comprehensive review and revitalization of the region's security institutions.

- *Giovanni Snidle is Special Advisor and Coordinator for Regional Confidence and Security Building Measures with the U.S. Department of State*

For more information on the three issues discussed in this edition of the Bulletin, please see the following Web sites:

***OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security:
- <http://www.oas.org/csh/english>***

For general comments or questions on the Summit Process:

*Summits of the Americas Secretariat
Organization of American States
1889 F St, NW, Washington, DC, 20006
USA*

*Telephone: (202) 458-3127
E-mail: summit-info@oas.org*

Webpage: <http://www.summitoftheamericas.org>