



Transforming. e Bulletin



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News

SECURITY AND PEACE FROM ABOVE AND BELOW: THE REGIONAL WORKING GROUP

by Allan de los Reyes

One of GCST's four working groups, the Working Group on Regional Security from Above and Below (WGRS) focuses on perspectives, conceptions, discourses, debates, processes, activities, etc. of formal institutionalized intergovernmental organizations (above) and informal, non-institutionalized non-governmental groups (below) in four regions in order to determine how regional security is viewed by these two sets of security actors in Latin America, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and West Africa in order to find ways by which views regarding regional security by security actors from "below" might be able to provide inputs to and be reflected in security policy making by those from "above".

The WGRS will undertake a mapping exercise during the first year of work whose output will serve an advocacy and fund-raising purpose, among others. The second year of work will focus on finding ways of mainstreaming human security and voices from below in regional security policy making.

In particular, the WGRS seeks four principal objectives. The first is to understand how different processes articulate and address regional security in four regions of the world and, whenever relevant, how each affects the others; it is also to find ways by which links between formal and informal forms of regional security cooperation, particularly views and voices from "below" that have impacts on regional security cooperation and activities of groups seeking solutions to insecurity outside of formal frameworks might be established and institutionalized in regional security policy making. The third objective is to find ways of grounding human security within regional security frameworks in a manner that would promote security and peace at the grassroots level; and finally, to develop and promote innovative conceptualizations of linking regional security with human security that would advance the research agenda on security and peace as well as provide policy makers with an innovative regional security focus to promote security and peace for all.

The WGRS recognizes the diversity of the four regions proposed to be studied as well as the enormous differences between and among them. It also recognizes that some of the goals being sought by the WGRS are shared with numerous groups doing research and advocacy work on security and peace, in particular in East Asia whose traditional view of comprehensive security, enriched by concepts of cooperative and human security, is increasingly informing the interactions between the security actors from above and below. Nonetheless, the WGRS's value added lies in a comparative perspective so lacking in existing works on regional security.

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Topic of analysis

A NEW CONVERSATION ABOUT THE DRUG PROBLEM?

John Bailey (*)



Two recent developments open at least the possibility of a new conversation between the United States and Latin American countries with respect to the problems of illegal drug trafficking and abuse. First, as a result of various factors, many of the Latin American countries are expressing more independent and critical views about US policy in the region. Second, President Barak Obama's administration has indicated greater willingness to listen to his counterparts from the region. The willingness was evident in Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's visit to Mexico in late March, in which she emphasized US responsibility to reduce drug consumption and to curtail weapon trafficking. President Obama expressed a similar disposition

to listen at the Summit of the Americas in April. Third, the newly-appointed US drug "czar," Gil Kerlikowske, has expressed the need to place more emphasis on education and demand reduction, along with supply interdiction.

Voices from Latin America since the 1970s have criticized the supply-side bias of US policy, but for the first time that I'm aware of, a group of former presidents and prominent civil society leaders have issued a powerful, collective call for rethinking the drug problem. The report, "Drugs and Democracy: Toward a Paradigm Shift," was released in February by a commission headed by former presidents César Gaviria, Ernesto Zedillo, and Fernando Henrique Cardoso. The commission included participation by

fourteen additional distinguished citizens from various countries, whose views span the political spectrum.

The point of departure for the report is that prohibitionist, supply-oriented policies haven't worked to substantially reduce drug trafficking and abuse. The policies have, however, contributed to fostering weapons trafficking, pervasive corruption, and more violent forms of organized crime. The main suggestion is to shift the emphasis toward demand-reduction and harm-reduction and to focus government repression on organized crime networks. All this is common sense. The report ventures into controversy with its suggestion to "evaluate from a public health standpoint and on the basis of the most advanced medical science the convenience of decriminalizing the possession of cannabis for personal use."

I have not seen an official US government response to the report, and I'm not surprised. In the midst of an influenza panic, a global financial crisis, two wars and various foreign policy challenges, the new Obama government's inbox is overflowing. My sense, however, is that a new conversation about drugs is possible in the months and years to come. The administration leadership has set a new



tone of openness. Prominent Congressmen, especially Senator James Webb, have also indicated the need to rethink US drug policy. This may be a rare juncture where a shift in the tone and substance of the conversation about drugs is possible.

(*) *Professor of Government and Foreign Service Director, Mexico Project Chair Department of Government (Georgetown University)*

Suggested Documents

PUBLIC SECURITY IN THE AMERICAS: CHALLENGES AND OPORTUNITIES

Secretary General of the Organisation of American States. 2008

<http://www.oas.org/dsp/documentos/Observatorio/FINAL.pdf>

LIGHTING UP THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY: A DEMOCRATIC APPROACH TO INTELLIGENCE SECRECY AND OPENNESS

Laurie Nathan, GFN-SSR. April 2009/ Abril 2009

<http://www.ssrnetwork.net/documents/Publications/Intelligence/Intelligence%20Policy%20Paper.pdf>

SECURITY SECTOR REFORM PROVISIONS IN PEACE AGREEMENTS

Eboe Hutchful, GFN-SSR and ASSN. January 2009/Enero 2009

<http://www.ssrnetwork.net/documents/Publications/SSRPIPA/SSR%20Main%20Report.pdf>

Topic of analysis

CALCULATING THE COSTS OF VIOLENCE: AN IMPORTANT TOOL FOR PUBLIC POLICY IN PUBLIC SAFETY

Erik Alda (*)



During the last decade there have been various efforts made to calculate the impact of violence and crime on the economy of a country. These efforts began with a multi-country study, the impact of which was of much importance because it clarified considerable information about how much is spent in terms of gross domestic product in fighting crime in countries with high levels of insecurity and violence such as El Salvador, Brazil and Venezuela. After this study, there have been others developed by the UNDP and several researchers on the same subject, mainly in the Central American region - Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua - and in Brazil. More recently, estimates have been made in several countries in Sub-Saharan Africa - South Africa, Kenya and Uganda. The estimated costs for these countries range from 11% of the GDP in El Salvador to 5% of the GDP in Uganda. All these calculations have used different available methodologies - accounting, contingent evaluations or hedonic models. However, the methodology most used for these calculations has been the accounting approach, which allows for rapid estimates in countries where data availability is limited. Also, given that violence is a problem with multiple causes, this approach allows us to make a comprehensive analysis of losses in several key sectors of the economy -- health, justice, police, investment environment and the private sector, and material losses; on the contrary, not having a comprehensive

and multi-sectored approach on costs can lead to biased decision making.

While comparisons of these estimates should be taken with caution, they shed light on important information. On one hand, the impact on the economy in terms of GDP is enormous, even in countries where levels of violence and crime are not extremely high. On the other hand, learning in more detail the distribution of costs by sector reveals important information regarding where to allocate budgets, often with severe limitations, in order to combat this problem.

Estimates of the costs of violence should be an essential tool for the design of public policies in this area. Unfortunately, these efforts have not had the expected impact in terms of more cost-effective policy choices. There is still heavy spending on repressive policies, but these are not sufficiently effective in reducing violence in a prolonged and sustained time period. At



the same time, the choice of these policies and low investment in prevention creates a vicious circle. High and persistent levels of crime have led to increased spending for institutional safety - police, justice and correctional efficiency, but its efficiency has not increased. In parallel, violence is not reducing, and health care costs for victims is shooting upwards, while there is less investment, more spending on private security and substantial material losses.

In conclusion, studies on the costs of violence should constitute an essential tool for the design of public policies on public safety. A thorough analysis of the costs will help improve the effectiveness of spending to combat violence and reduce costs on the economy.

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Suggested Documents

KEY OAS SECURITY DOCUMENTS VOLUME II: PUBLIC SECURITY

Secretary General of the Organisation of American States

http://www.oas.org/dsp/documentos/ministers_volumen2_web.pdf

SEEN, BUT NOT HEARD: PLACING CHILDREN AND YOUTH ON THE SECURITY GOVERNANCE AGENDA

David Nosworthy, DCAF, 2009

SECURING DEMOCRACY?- A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF EMERGENCY POWERS IN EUROPE

Anna Khakee, 2009

<http://se2.dcaf.ch/serviceengine/FileContent?serviceID=DCAF&fileid=CBD3764B-810C-4849-BB0B-D188DFB228D8&lng=en>

-BB0B-D188DFB228D8&lng=en

Developing Project in SST

SSR IN THE ARAB WORLD

Salam Kawakiwi (*)



Taking into account the importance of this aspect of the political reform, ARI has realized that the majority of projects in the region undertaken by external actors focus on organizational and technical issues. Hence, there is a need to launch an initiative that tries to go further, in order to understand, respectively, security service organization charts, the relevance of transparency in their functioning, their respect for the rule of law and their relations with other stakeholders/actors in society.

To do this, ARI began by selecting countries where it is possible to involve all state and non-state actors in discussions. Thus, a group of experts was formed that includes Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen, the Gulf and Iraq.

Based on the confidence of the different actors, ARI has successfully held three meetings on this topic involving its own experts with representatives of the services concerned, as well as with the human rights organizations and the press. The first of these meetings was held in Cairo in March 2008. For the first time, members of the security sector are willing to face criticism from non-state actors on their operation. The discussions

were rich and deep regarding the Egyptian case. Additionally, participants from other countries have contributed to enrich this process by reporting their experiences. In this meeting, it was entrusted to experts from member countries to develop case studies for their respective countries. In January 2009, the experts met in Beirut to discuss the case of Lebanon and to learn about the case studies on other countries. The debate was opened by the Minister of the Interior and top leaders of the sector have attended all sessions. The particular situation in Lebanon has been discussed with greatest transparency. At this meeting, all other member countries also presented the results of their studies.

A final meeting was held in Morocco in March 2009 with intensive discussions on the Moroccan experience in the field and also with the presence and active participation of concerned state and non-state actors. During the discussions that followed the in-depth case of Morocco, the transversal themes to be developed in this project were discussed. Hence, the experts will develop in-depth studies on topics that seem relevant to the objective of the reform such as women as actors and victims (Morocco, Jordan), privatization of the security sector (Lebanon and the Gulf), fragmentation and tribalism (Iraq and Yemen) and relations with the judicial system.



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Current and Recent Events



Training Courses

Center for Security Safety Studies, University of Chile

V International Course on Community Crime Prevention. Viña del Mar, Chile. June 29 -4 July, 2009. More information: www.comunidadyprevencion.org

Seminars and Conferences

Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI)

The Future of Security Sector Reform (SSR). May 4-8, 2009. More Information: www.ssrfuture.org

Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences in Guatemala, FLACSO

International Seminar: Populism and democracy in the contemporary world (August 12-14 2009) . More information: <http://www.flacso.edu.gt/POSTGRADO/index.htm>

Institute For Development Studies, University of Sussex.

Conflict, Crime and Violence seminar series. May, 2009, United Kingdom. More Information: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/go/about-ids/events/conflict-crime-and-violence>.

Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces.

8-9 International Security Forum (ISF). 18-20 May, 2009. Geneva, Switzerland. More information. <http://www.8isf.ethz.ch>

14th. German Congress on Crime Prevention.

8-9 June, 2009. Hanover, Germany. More information: <http://www.gcocp.org/nano.cms/en/14-GCOCP>.

GFN SSR Events

International Conflict Conference.

18th may, Amsterdam, Netherland

Human Rights Fieldwork.

31 may to june, 2009. Ireland.

Promoting Political Freedom and deeping democracy.

22-25 june, 2009. West Sussex.

Seminar on Intelligence Reform and Accountability

june 10th, 2009. London, UK.

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