



Transforming. e Bulletin



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News

REGIONAL WORKING GROUP: TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

by Liza Zuñiga (*)

Much has been written and studied about organized crime, but a review of the literature on this subject shows that these analyses have been confined to the western world, and within it, mainly Europe and the United States. This has led to the development of analytical perspectives focused on the criminalization and prosecution of many practices that have been the subject of organized crime, focusing on the control of supply and demand (by varying the relative importance of these two variables). Factors such as institutional weaknesses in the control of crime and law enforcement have been less discussed in the southern hemisphere, and even less in relation to organized crime. The development of local perspectives of analysis has been minimal, either because of the relatively minor importance placed on the topic or because of the fragmentation of points of view with respect to illicit activities.

The Working Group on Transnational Organized Crime seeks to develop a comparative analysis on this topic in different regional contexts. This is expected to promote debate and generate knowledge about the main problems concerning the development of these types of crimes, the implemented policies and their results, and the role of civil society and other non-governmental actors in the construction of policy agendas to address the issue. This group includes experts from different regions of the world who, through the development of a substantive agenda, activities and final products, will generate awareness and proposals regarding the subject.

The working group seeks three principal objectives: first, to analyze the current scenario of organized transnational crime, highlighting similarities and differences. Second, to collect and analyze information on the public agenda and international cooperation that seeks to respond to this phenomenon. Finally, to systematize and disseminate new perspectives of analysis (particularly from agents of civil society) for the development of recommendations for new policies and working agendas.

The outputs of the working group can be divided into two areas. First, there will be two working group meetings: a closed one, devoted to the discussion and analysis of pre-established subjects (a report from this meeting will be disseminated in the Global Consortium's electronic bulletin) and a public seminar on the subject. The second area consists of articles on each geographic region that will provide a general and comparable overview of transnational organized crime in the world. The articles will be compiled into a final publication to be presented at the group's second meeting. A second output will consist of 6 policy reports that will address specific topics or case studies.

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Topic of analysis

CRIME AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

Raymond Gilpin (*)

High crime should not only be viewed as a law and order issue; it is also an economic development issue because it diminishes economic prospects, diverts development resources and deters productive investment. Consequently, strategies to reduce crime must integrate socio-economic development initiatives more fully, and should actively involve a much broader range of stakeholders - to include non-governmental and international actors. Global crime rates rose from 2,300 incidents per 100,000 in 1980 to 3,000 in 2000¹. Developing countries in Latin America accounted for much of this increase. For example, 2004 homicide rates in Venezuela and El Salvador (37 and 59 per 100,000) far exceeded the global average of 7.6. This rise has been sustained by a de facto institutionalization of crime and an evolving nexus of collectively-reinforcing factors. Examples include narcotics cartels, conflict economies, trans-national illicit markets and pervasive corruption. On the whole, criminal activity costs Latin American economies millions of dollars every year and effectively stymies productive economic opportunities. In 2002 crime cost the Chilean economy an estimated \$1.4 billion, over 2 percent of gross domestic product². The effect is that human security has worsened as citizens are more fearful for their safety, their rights are not guaranteed and their economic prospects are less certain.

The relationship between economic development prospects and crime is often cited but seldom well understood. One example is the proverbial 'chicken and egg' conundrum, namely: is crime caused by weak economic development or does

poverty breed crime? Available evidence points in both directions. Economically depressed regions account for most reported crime, while reductions in poverty and income inequality correlate positively with reductions in crime³. Conversely, crime affects economic output. Available data suggests that if Jamaica were to reduce its crime rate to the level of Costa Rica, its economic growth rate would increase by just over 5 percent annually⁴. Crime increases the cost of doing business, scares investors, forces skilled labor overseas and reduces economic opportunity⁵. Over time, this costs affected countries millions of dollars, causes the loss of thousands of jobs and results in significant foregone investment.

Given the multifaceted nature of the crime-development relationship, successful crime fighting strategies must combine innovation, investment in communities and incentives for good performance with a strong human security focus. Examples include Safer Community Councils in New Zealand, crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) programs and a shift from the traditional criminal justice approach to investments in crime prevention in countries like the Dominican Republic⁶. Successful initiatives have three things in common. First, they combine traditional approaches with multi-sectorial strategies that are more efficient. Second, they focus on the socio-economic causes of crime. Third, they involve local communities in project planning, execution and monitoring.

Reversing high crime in Latin America and elsewhere requires imaginative strategies and persistent efforts. There are no quick fixes or universal templates. Traditional approaches (which have proved inadequate



and ineffective) should be replaced with well-resourced, long-term programs that highlight the crime-development nexus on a country-by-country basis. Some countries in the sub-region have recognized the importance of a long term integrated approach and are taking appropriate steps. More communities and countries need to integrate economic development more explicitly and effectively in their crime-fighting strategies if conflict is to be mitigated and peace promoted throughout the sub-region.

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1 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime database.

2 Olavarria-Gambi, M. (2007), The Economic Cost of Crime in Chile in "Global Crime," Vol 8, Issue 4.

3 Fajnzylber, P., D. Lederman and N. Loayza (2002), Inequality and Violent Crime in "Journal of Law and Economics," Vol. 45, No 1.

4 "Crime, Violence and Development: Trends, Costs and Policy Options in the Caribbean", March 2007, UNODC and the World Bank, Report No. 37820.

5 See "Global Burden of Armed Violence" <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/pdfs/Global-Burden-of-Armed-Violence-full-report.pdf>

6 See "Investing Wisely in Crime Prevention" <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bja/182412.pdf>

Suggested Documents

**TRANSFORMING SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AN UNEQUAL WORLD
IDS BULLETIN, VOL. 40, Nº2, MARZO DE 2009.**

<http://www.ntd.co.uk/idsbookshop/details.asp?id=1079>

Developing Project in SST

ARMED FORCES AND AT-RISK GROUPS: MONITORING AND IMPACT FROM CIVIL SOCIETY

Ana Maria Tamayo (*)



In Peru discriminatory practices and violations of fundamental rights based on gender and ethnic motives still permeate all levels of society and the state, including the security corps. Indeed, the largest number of violations of fundamental rights in Peru's armed forces is committed against personnel performing military service which come from ethnic groups that have been marginalized for centuries.

The Ombudsman, in successive reports, has mentioned dozens of cases of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment against soldiers who perform voluntary military service. The reports of the Ombudsman's Office indicate that although these cases can be classified into three categories - physical abuse, excessive exercise and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of a psychological nature - usually these forms of abuse cannot be clearly distinguished.

In addition, the process of integrating women into the nation's armed forces is far from consolidated and is in a particularly vulnerable condition. The entry of women into the corps of officers and sub officers is relatively recent in Peru, dating back only to 1997. However, the number of women in the armed forces

today is still small as an overall percentage of military personnel, accounting for only 5% of the total.

Another aspect that hampers the complete integration of women into the military is restricting their admission from certain specialties, particularly most of the so-called combat weapons. Moreover, in the last year it has been revealed that female soldiers and cadets in training centers of the Peruvian armed forces have been victims of harassment and sexual violence.

The intervention project of the Instituto de Defensa Legal (IDL) and the Desco Center for the Study and Promotion of Development - both of which are civil society leaders in Peru - has been oriented towards making this problem more visible and influencing the adoption of public policies to address this situation of potential vulnerability.

The concerned state institutions have demonstrated interest in this project and have given course to the suggestions for substantive changes that have been developed in relation to legal instruments central to these groups. In particular, to the regulation of the new Military Service Act, as well as the regulation that homogenizes the principles of that system and explains clearly for the first time the rights and

duties of male and female cadets, and those of students of various military training centers in Peru.



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Current and Recent Events



GCST Events

Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO)-Chile

Workshop on Democratization and Reform Processes in the Security Sector in Latin-America and the Arab World. July 14th, Santiago de Chile.

www.securitytransformation.org/esp/news_events2.php?id=48

Institute for Strategic and Development Studies (ISDS Philippines)

Workshop on Regional Security. August 1st, Manila, Philippines.

www.securitytransformation.org/esp/news_events2.php?id=50

Security and Development Institute of Mexico and Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO)-Chile

Workshop on Transnational Organized Crime. August 19th and 20th, Mexico City.

www.securitytransformation.org/esp/news_events2.php?id=49

Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO)-Chile

Workshop on Crime Prevention. October 21st and 22nd 2009, Santiago de Chile.

www.securitytransformation.org/esp/news_events2.php?id=51

Training Courses

Course on Security Sector Reform

September 14th-19th, 2009, Sandö, Sweden.

www.folkebernadotteacademy.se/roach/Course_on_Security_Sector_Reform.do?pagelid=280

Seminars and Conferences

First International Seminar on Organized Crime and Money Laundry

August 12th, Concepción, Chile.

www.cejamerica.org/cejacommunity/?id=79

Asia Pacific Women's Conference on Peace and Security: VISIONS FOR A NEW WORLD

September 8th 2009, Philippine Normal University, Manila, Philippines.

www.visionsforanewworld.net/

Find more information about events, seminars and courses related to the GCST at:
www.securitytransformation.org/esp/news_events1.php

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