Kingston Conference on International Security
War Without Borders

The Multidimensional Nature of Security in Latin America

Ambassador Albert R. Ramdin
Assistant Secretary General
Organization of American States

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Opening Remarks

• Appreciate the invitation
• From Kingston Jamaica to Kingston Canada
• From “Aid for Trade” to “Wars without Borders”
• Important issue to be discussed as we live in challenging times as well as interesting political relations between states in the Western Hemisphere
Introduction

- OAS Background and Principal Objectives
- Introductory perspectives
- Regional Instruments
- Organizational Framework
- New Challenges and Threats to Security
- Conclusion
Organization of American States 1

- Spirit goes back to Simon Bolivar
- Originally Pan American Union (1910)
- Modern OAS
  - Established in 1948 in Bogota, Colombia the OAS is the oldest regional political organization in the world
  - 21 independent countries signed OAS Charter, incl. Haiti
  - Now 35 member states, 34 active as Cuba has been suspended, representing a complex diversity
  - OAS 60th anniversary: new era to focus on mutually reinforcing objectives of democracy, development and security
Organization of American States

- Government driven
- Consensus based
- One country one vote, regardless of political, economic or military power
- 5 groups: ALADI (South America and Mexico), CARICOM (Caribbean), SICA (Central America), USA and Canada

OAS is still the most effective political platform for dialogue, consensus and collective action
OAS Principal Objectives 1

- Strengthen peace and security in the Hemisphere
- Create incentives for negotiation and political solutions
- Provide disincentives for the use of force
- Promote and consolidate representative democracy through cooperative action, the development of individual members and the region as a whole thus increasing people security
OAS Principal Objectives 2

- Provide for common action in the event of aggression against any member state
- Seek solutions to political, juridical, and economic problems that may arise in a member state
- Increase collective action on multidimensional security as regards issues of illicit drug trafficking, and firearms, human trafficking; terrorism; and transnational organized crime, etc.
Overview 1

- Last century a century of wars marked by polarization and conflicting ideologies, was one of superpower confrontation and containment, an escalating arms race, and deterrence, creating in many regions long periods of instability and uncertainty.

- The end of the Cold War created an opportunity for greater collaboration and political cohesion at the sub-regional, regional and hemispheric levels.
Overview 2

- Subsequently, many regions witnessed an increase in integration movements and mechanisms which impacted traditional hemispheric approaches to security.
- The world has changed since 9.11 and there is an unprecedented efforts against terrorists and terrorism.
- This has created a new agenda, new challenges for existing instruments and debate between member states.
Overview 3

- Democracy flourished because of an absence of security threats in the Western Hemisphere.
- However, as we examine the evolution of security in the Americas, achieving greater peace and security remains one of our most critical challenges.
- Today we observe additional dimensions to our security stemming from inter and intra state conflict. These new elements are changing the nature of hemispheric security, and if not addressed can also undermine the foundations of democracy.
Different players

- Global: UN/UN Security Council – Relations with OAS
  - Art, 52, 53 and 54 of Chapter 8 of the UN Charter allows regional organizations to be involved in peace building, but not in enforcement without Security Council mandate
- Regional Multilateral organizations: OAS and its instruments
- Sub-Regional
- States: Executive, Legislative bodies and Law enforcement entities
- Non-State Actors: civil society groups, illegal entities
In introductory perspectives 2

- Different types of conflict
  - Geographically: Inter-state and intra-state
- Different sources of threats to democracy, stability and security
  - Traditional border and maritime disputes
  - Social conflicts
  - Transnational organized crime
  - Natural Disasters
  - Poverty

Multidimensional nature of security
Regional Instruments

- 1997: Inter-American Convention Against the Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and other Related Matters
- 1996: Treaty establishing the OECS Regional Regional Security System
Inter-American Democratic Charter

- Adopted in 2001 on 9.11 as a follow up to the mandate from Heads of Government during the III Summit of the Americas in Quebec City.
- not meant to be a punitive mechanism, more trying to preempt political crisis and focus is on strengthening democratic governance and with that strong nation-states.
  - art 17 provides opportunity for threatened country to seek OAS engagement.
  - art 18 provides OAS the opportunity to seek to assist in resolution of political crisis.
  - art 20 calls for OAS assessment of democratic situation and make recommendations
Regional Debate

- 1995 (Santiago de Chile) and 1998: (San Salvador) Conferences on Confidence and Security Building Measures
- 1998: First Meeting on Special Security Concerns of Small Island States
- 2003: Second High Level Meeting on the Special Security Concerns of Small Island States held in Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines adopted the Declaration of Kingstown concluding that the small island states and other coastal states of the hemisphere were deeply concerned about the possible threats posed to their economic and maritime environment by the transshipment of hazardous waste.
More than a decade ago, the OAS demonstrated foresight in working to expand the concept of security to include new threats, concerns and other challenges which affect democratic governability and stability in and among our member states.

While the OAS was perhaps ahead of the game in terms of reconceptualizing the notion of multidimensional security, it was nonetheless difficult to anticipate many of the new security threats or crises that would impact our hemisphere.
Following the terrorist attacks of 2001, the OAS has devoted important efforts to tackling the new threats, concerns and other challenges facing our Hemisphere through various instruments.

In 2002, the OAS General Assembly adopted the Declaration of Bridgetown launching the new concept that security encompasses the political, economic, social, health and environmental aspects and was multidimensional in scope and diverse in nature.
Special Conference on Security 2003

- In 2003, the OAS Special Conference on Security in the Americas held in Mexico City, Mexico reiterated that the security of the states of the Hemisphere is affected in different ways, by traditional threats and several new threats, concerns, and other challenges of a diverse nature.

- Mandated the Permanent Council to study and assess the Rio Treaty and other hemispheric instruments to make them more effective and have these mechanisms reflect the new thinking on security.
Regional Instruments and Framework

- Other security instruments include:
  - The Declaration of Nuevo Leon (2004) adopted in the Special Summit of the Americas held in Nuevo Leon, Mexico, which introduced policies that strengthened the social security systems in our countries; proliferation of communicable diseases and the threats they posed to the security of our people; food security; and social justice.
  - This Declaration deepens the human dimension of security.
  - At its core lies the principal that the basis and purpose of security is the protection of human beings.
Specialized inter-American entities: Institutional environment

- Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), 1959
- Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), 1986
- The OAS Convention Against Terrorism (CICTE) 2003
- The Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunitions, Explosives and other related materials (CIFTA) 1997
Inter-American Defense Board

- Restructured and now an OAS institution under civilian authority.
- Canada’s effort in this regard to be recognized.
- The Inter-American Defense Board is an international committee of nationally appointed defense officials, who develop collaborative approaches on common defense and security issues facing the Americas. The IADB provides technical advice and services to the OAS.
- Its current programs include humanitarian demining in Central America, reporting on confidence and security building measures, and developing educational programs on regional security.
Inter-American Defense College

- To elevate the awareness of future leadership in security matters and cooperation
- Focused Curriculum on Hemispheric Defense and Security
  - Fundamentals of Defense and Security
  - The Global Situation
  - Global Security Instruments
  - The Hemispheric Situation
  - The Inter-American System and Hemispheric Security Instruments
  - Practical Application of Knowledge and Techniques
Committee on Hemispheric Security

- On June 9, 1995, the 25th OAS General Assembly adopted a Resolution instructing the Permanent Council to establish a Committee on Hemispheric Security.
- The resolution created the region's first permanent forum for the consideration of arms control, nonproliferation, and security issues.
- It widened the scope of OAS activity on democratic defense by facilitating the possibility of early, rapid & preventative response to crisis situations
Inter-State Conflicts

- Colombia-Ecuador
- Belize-Guatemala
- Argentina-Uruguay
- Suriname-Guyana

- And many more inter-state issues

Without comprehensive solutions to these issues, integration process in the Americas will be hampered.
Recently, the OAS was called upon to address—what many perceive to be one of the most critical disputes the hemisphere has seen in many years—the situation that arose between Colombia and Ecuador, with all its’ complexities.

It was an opportunity to observe the strength of multilateralism and the commitment and power of a consensus-based organization, like the OAS, to maintaining peace and stability in the region.

The dispute between Colombia and Ecuador also demonstrates that traditional threats to security cannot be entirely overlooked.

In this regard, effective conflict prevention and timely management of crises are essential to maintaining a secure regional environment and important to ensuring hemispheric integration in the region.
Belize-Guatemala

- Since 1999, the OAS has been instrumental in managing several interstate disputes in Central America. In 2000, the OAS established the Fund for Peace, a mechanism to help finance the costs involved in assisting member states resolve their territorial disputes.

- The recent resettlement of Guatemalan families from the Adjacency Zone was the result of the well coordinated efforts between the Governments of Guatemala, Belize and the OAS.
Intra-State Conflicts

- For most member states, the new security agenda now focuses heavily on intra-state problems. The different sub-regions of Latin America and the Caribbean are characterized by disturbing levels of intra-national conflict, where violence plays a major role and affects perceptions of security that go beyond the borders of each state.
- Bolivia
- Nicaragua
- Haiti
- Colombia/Mapp
Crime: Citizen security is being seriously threatened by the rise in both organized crime and criminal violence, and by rising social tensions resulting from increasing poverty in the region, and more recently the abrupt rise in the cost of living.

Youths gangs: Criminal gangs, have become major security threats in every region across the Hemisphere, in particular, in Central America and the Caribbean. This new cross-border phenomenon and security challenge has traceable links between gangs in the United States with partner groups in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Jamaica, etc. The gang network has also been implicated in illegal weapons and drug trafficking.

Confronting Gang Violence: OAS partners with other inter-American organizations, UN, INTERPOL and the region's Ministers of Justice on specific technical assistance programs.
Thematic threats: Human Trafficking

- Human Trafficking is a growing problem for the Americas. Clearly, the commercial exploitation of human beings for profit is reprehensible and criminal. The scope and impact of this problem is magnified in the Americas with its broad expanse of porous borders and unsecured spaces.
Thematic threats: Food Security

- Two weeks ago, world leaders met in Rome, Italy to consider measures to ease the impact of the global food crisis affecting millions of people across the world and to coordinate the best ways to offset the consequences and impacts they bring to the stability and governability of countries. Evidence of riots in Haiti and demonstrations in other parts of the Hemisphere is symptomatic of the scope and potential of the threat.
Thematic threats: Energy Security

- Throughout the Americas, the rising cost of fuel and basic staples, as well as the use of certain crops for alternative energy is affecting everything from food prices to consumption patterns.
- In several developing countries, we are witnessing increased levels of social unrest due to increased costs of living which have resulted in further incidents of starvation, malnutrition, and loss of income from small businesses.
- This has a potential to increase the level of extreme poverty in the Americas and with that the security climate.
Thematic threats: Natural Hazards

- Natural phenomena such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and flooding can devastate small and large economies and eco-systems (e.g. Hurricane Katrina in USA [20050; Jane in Haiti [2004]; Ivan in Grenada [2005]; earthquake in Peru [2007]. This concern has been echoed several times by the most governments of the Small-Island States of the Caribbean
Thematic threats: Poverty

- Sustainable development is increasingly becoming a key parameter for a stable security environment and vice versa.
- Currently, 30% of the population in the Americas still lives in abject poverty, surviving on less than $2 a day.
How to mitigate potential threat 1

- Multilateralism, because most of the problems are of a cross-border nature and only a collective response can be effective.
- Collective Political will to cooperate.
- Information exchange and other forms of communication, especially in areas of tension.
- Disaster Mitigation and Risk Reduction.
How to mitigate potential threat 2

- Attack poverty through sound economic and social policies
- Education to increase opportunities, but also to facilitate a process of dialogue, understanding and respect
- Job creation
- Focus on youth, which represents the now and future of our societies with almost in every country more than half the population
Notwithstanding the many problems facing the Hemisphere, effective solution is often complicated by the lack of coordination at the state level. This can often be attributed to differing organizational cultures, issues of jurisdiction, command authority and intelligence sharing.

Added to this, at sub-regional levels, are sovereignty concerns and the fact that international security institutions are not well entrenched in several regions of the Americas. This magnifies the problem of the lack of coordination and missed opportunities both for dialogue, policymaking and information sharing among key actors and with other partners.
Impendiments to peace 2

- The new dimensions of security are not just critical because of their immediate impact on the well-being and even the survival of entire societies, but also because they are likely to impinge on or even erode the hard-fought democratic, social and economic gains of the last three decades in many of our member states.
- Clearly, a development agenda that fails to deliver at expected levels and which leaves large segments of the population marginalized has, in many cases, contributed to governance and security challenges in the region.
- Cross-border nature of these specific thematic threats to security.
Role OAS 1

- Important for the OAS to be pro-active with timely application of the spirit of the Democratic Charter, not as a punitive document by to build confidence and foster dialogue in and between states.
- Facilitate an umbrella structure through the Social Charter to foster inclusion, equality and prosperity for all in society.
- Study the possibility of a comprehensive security arrangement for the Western Hemisphere that can facilitate confidence and mechanisms to strengthen peace and mitigate and/or prevent conflict.
Role OAS 2

- Increase efforts towards nation building and strengthening institution
- Deal with cross border challenges like HIV/AIDS, terrorism, illegal trafficking in drugs, firearms and persons

Only by addressing these issues holistically we will be able to effectively mitigate and prevent “Wars without Borders”
Conclusions 1

- There is no doubt that multidimensional security requires multidisciplinary and innovative responses.
- There is need for a new security paradigm that is holistic and comprehensive and must of necessity go beyond traditional frameworks to address development, good governance and the rule of law.
- The OAS welcomes the decision of the Hemispheric leaders to meet in the coming months at the level of Ministers of Security to address many of the threats, challenges and other security concerns facing the Americas. The V Summit of the Americas need to be informed through these preparatory meetings on a way forward to be decided by the hemispheric leaders in April 2009 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.
Conclusions 2

- Clearly there is need to seriously consider what is existing, how those measures can be applied/enforced more effectively, but also to consider what mechanism to put in place for the new dimensions of international security.
- It is equally important to take a good look at our democracies and how we can improve its delivery in improving the life of the peoples of the Americas in concrete terms, because so far the results are marginal and the dissatisfaction is growing.
Conclusion 3

- While we all have a collective responsibility to create change, to build peace, and restore confidence in the democratic system; ultimately this can only be done through the civic and political leadership of each and every country.

- Our role as third party institutions must focus on helping to build and maintain environments that support domestic and regional objectives of peace and security, justice, social equity, development, prosperity, and democratic governability as well as provide hope and opportunity for all the citizens of the Americas.