“Dealing with a Perfect Storm?”
Strategic Rules for the Hemispheric Security Crisis

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The New Strategic Scenario I

The emerging of a system of powers I

• The US strategic withdrawal

  **Signals:** The closing of Manta Air Base / The expulsion of the US ambassadors from Venezuela and Bolivia.

  **Causes:** The economic crisis / Strategic exhaustion in the Middle East / The new priority given by the new US administration to the internal affairs above that of foreign policy issues.

• The arrival of new extra-Hemispheric powers to the region.

  **Russia:** Russian arms transfers to the region / Increased Russian military presence in the Caribbean / Russian investments in the Latin American energy sector

  **China:** The increase of Chinese strategic investments. Chinese strategic co-operation with Venezuela

  **Iran:** The increase of the Iranian diplomatic deployment in the region / The Iranian- Venezuelan Nuclear Cooperation agreement.
The New Strategic Scenario II

The emerging of a system of powers II

- The ideological division of the region
  
  The emergence of a Bolivarian Block gathering around the Bolivarian Alternative for Latin America (ALBA).
A group of intermediate countries: Argentina y Brasil
A group of moderate governments committed to the promotion of Liberal Democracy and Free market economy: Colombia, México, Peru, Chile…

- Leaderships and coalitions in competition.
  
  The rise of Venezuela as the head of a set of Bolivarian inspired governments
  
  Brazil: the unwilling power
  
  Mexico, Colombia and Chile: Different motivations for an equally impossible isolationism.
The New Strategic Scenario III

The rise of Non-State Threats

• The Weakening of States.
  Factors: Globalization / Reduction in the political autonomy of States / The Economic Crisis.

• The Expansion of Illegal Economies.
  The extension of coca crops in Bolivia and Peru / The emergence of new narcotrafficking routes (West Africa) / The technological sophistication of organized crime (Semi-Submergible Boats) / New Criminal Activities: Human Trafficking, Forgery, etc.

• The Modernization of Terrorism.
  Non-Latin American Terrorist Groups: Increasing signal of presence of Islamic Terrorist organization in the region (Hezbollah, Al Qaeda...).
The New Strategic Scenario IV

The rise of Non-State Threats II

• The Rise of Mixed Political-Criminal Actors.

Politicization of Organized Crime: Emerging Criminal Gangs in Colombia, Zetas in México

Criminalization of terrorist groups: FARC in Colombia and Shining Path in Peru closely connected to Drug Trafficking.
The New Strategic Scenario V

Changes in the pattern of conflict

• The Fusion between internal and external security.
  The use of international safe havens for terrorists and criminals. / The connections of some governments with terrorist groups.

• The new motivating factors: strategic competition and ideological rivalry.
  **Factors:** The rise of ideology – nationalistic, ethnic or radical leftist – as a motivation for violence / The increase of strategic competition in the region. The connection between revolutionary ideologies and strategic rivalries.

• The decline of limited war as a pattern of conflict and the tendency towards total confrontations.
  **Factors:** The weight of ideology as a motivating factor for conflicts / The introduction of more powerful and sophisticated weapons systems. (SU-30).
The New Strategic Scenario VI

Changes in the pattern of conflict

• Proliferation of conventional weapons

  **Factors**: The introduction of new military technologies in the region (UAVs, IV Generation Submarines, high-tech fighter-bombers, etc.) / The development of national defense industries

  **Strategic impact**: The connections between revolutionary projects and rearmament programs (Venezuela) / The political and strategic consequences of increasing military imbalances: ¿”Carte Blanche” for expansionism?

• The increasing strategic relevance of urban terrorism and the decline of rural guerrillas.

  **Factors**: The urbanization of Latin American societies / The vulnerability of fragile democratic systems to terrorism.
The Ten Rules of the new game

• Rule 1: The rationale behind the behavior of governments is changing: the economic and commercial incentives have been replaced by strategic and ideological motivations as the key drivers of countries in the region.

Chavez’s manipulation of commerce with Colombia to press the Uribe administration even though the costs are detrimental to the Venezuelan economy.

Morales’ opposition to exporting gas through Chile because of nationalistic motivations even if this deal is key to the development of Bolivia.
The Ten Rules of the new game

• Rule 2: The Hemispheric homogeneity is over: Let’s build like-minded government coalitions.

The Bolivarian Axis is diplomatically and strategically coordinated through ALBA (Bolivarian Alternative for Latin America)
The moderate governments lack of any formal mechanism for political coordination

• Rule 3: Hemispheric Security is closely inter-linked: The US and Latin America need each other.

The moderate Latin American governments will need US political and military support to deal with increased regional instability.

US security will depend on the capability of the Latin American governments to contain both external and internal threats
The Ten Rules of the new game

• Rule 4: Internal and external security are no longer separate realms: Let’s develop comprehensive strategies to guarantee at the same time internal peace and international stability.

The activities of terrorist groups and organized crime networks will increase the tensions and conflict among governments in the region. The ideological rivalries dividing Latin American countries will increase the difficulties to develop common regional strategies to deal with transnational threats.

• Rule 5. The Hemisphere is a part – an important one - of the global strategic scenario: Let’s be ready to deal with regional projections of global strategic challenges.

A group of emerging global powers – Russia, China, Iran... - are penetrating the region. There are signals of an increased presence of Islamic terrorist networks in the Hemisphere.
The Ten Commandments of the new game

• Rule 6: Inter-State Conflict is back: We have to develop CBM and Arms Control Agreements but be ready for Deterrence and Defense.

The rise in the number of Inter-State tensions and crises (The Colombia / Venezuela- Ecuador crisis in March 2008, etc.)
An increase in the proliferation of conventional weapons in the region.

• Rule 7: Not everybody is playing with the same rules: Let’s develop Coalition strategies to deal with a new breed of rogue and revolutionary regimes.

Venezuela is supporting terrorist organizations in the region and developing links with other rogue States such as Iran.
The Ten Rules of the new game

- Rule 8: The dissolution of some Latin American States will be a key challenge: Let’s be ready to deal with a set of failed States.
  An increase in ethnic tensions could lead to a civil war in Bolivia.
  The influence of drug cartels on some Central American countries could provoke the emergence of a set of Narco-States.

- Rule 9: The stabilization of a divided region will put a premium on the developing of a political dialogue mechanism between the different blocks: Let’s promote basic consensus shared by all –or the most– of the actors.
  Institutions such as the OAS should bring together all the region, independent of their ideological differences. In this sense, the OAS would play a similar role to the European Security and Cooperation Conference during the Cold War.
  A set of basic détente mechanisms –such as some rules of transparency in military acquisitions – should be agreed upon among the countries involved.
The Ten Rules of the new game

• Rule 10: Confronting the rise of non-state threats will demand minimum consensus above the ideological divisions of the continent: We have to develop inclusive agreements to deal with transnational threats and then sanction those governments which do not accomplish them.

A broad regional consensus overcoming ideological differences should be sought on key questions such as the fight against narcotrafficking.
The Ten Rules of the new game

• The final rule: Be ready for a radical change in the nature of the Hemispheric strategic scenario

The strategic factors which kept the Hemisphere as an area of peace are changing dramatically. The age of American “exceptionalism” is over.

The emerging of an unstable system of powers and the rising of non-state threats are becoming “normal” in the Hemisphere. America is becoming more similar to other regions, such as Eastern Europe or the Middle East.