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## Colombia's New International Role

Peter Birle / Eduardo Pastrana Buelvas (eds.)



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## Foreword (2022)

Peter Birle / Eduardo Pastrana Buelvas

This publication is based on the contributions to the symposium “Colombia’s New International Role,” held on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2017 at the Ibero-American Institute (Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut) in Berlin. The organizers wanted to publish the transcribed contributions translated into English as soon as possible in order to make them accessible to an international audience. Unfortunately, for various reasons, this plan could not be realized for some years. If today, a good five years after the contributions were written, we have decided to publish them after all, it is above all because Colombia under President Petro once again is in a situation of new beginnings.

The national, regional and global context is very different today than it was in 2017, but nonetheless the authors of this publication address questions that have lost none of their relevance and are also of interest for an understanding of the processes taking place today. In 2017, Colombia had just begun to implement the peace agreement negotiated between the government of President Juan Manuel Santos (2010–2018) and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Already under President Santos, this process was very slow; under his conservative successor Iván Duque (2018–2022), it became more and more stalled. Duque presented himself on the international stage as a champion of the peace process, but his government’s policies conveyed very different messages within Colombia. The establishment of a “Special Jurisdiction for Peace” as a transitional justice system to deal with crimes committed during the armed conflict was delayed by Duque and could only be implemented after a ruling by Colombia’s Constitutional Court. The financial resources provided by the state for the implementation of the peace process were far too small. Only thanks to a substantial financial commitment by the international community was it possible to move the peace process forward at all. It was a clear political gesture that Duque, just a few weeks before the end of his term in June 2022, stayed away from the official ceremony to hand over the report of the “Commission for Truth Clarification, Coexistence and Non-Recurrence.”

The nearly 800-page report meticulously examines the human rights violations and criminal acts committed during Colombia’s more than 50 years of armed conflict. Conservative estimates put the death toll at more than 260,000, the number of missing persons at 80,000, and the number of displaced persons at approximately seven million. The final report is the result of numerous interviews with victims, armed actors, and public officials who were involved in the armed struggle between the Colombian state and the FARC. In addition to a meticulous review of the armed conflict, the report also includes recommendations on how the country can make progress toward peaceful and nonviolent coexistence despite the armed conflict, which has not ceased even after the 2016 peace agreement. The commission’s recommendations are intended as a contribution to shaping a forward-looking agenda to advance a dialogue on the necessary changes in the country and

to put an end to the ongoing armed conflicts. Last but not least, it is a matter of overcoming those social, economic and political factors that are responsible for the persistence of numerous conflicts.

While President Duque stayed away from the ceremony to hand over the Truth Commission report, his already elected successor Gustavo Petro, who then took over the reins of government in August and is elected as president until 2026, accepted the report. Petro is the first leftist politician to assume the presidency in Colombia. In addition, he himself once participated in the armed struggle against the Colombian state. As a 17-year-old, he joined the M-19 urban guerrillas. In the wake of a demilitarization agreement, he returned to civilian life in the early 1990s and served as a deputy in national congress and mayor of the capital Bogotá, among other positions. In the runoff of the 2022 presidential election, he narrowly defeated conservative candidate Rodolfo Hernández with 50.47 %. His vice president is environmentalist and human rights activist Francia Márquez, the first Afro-Colombian to hold that office.

The government of Gustavo Petro speaks of the goal of a “perfect peace” (*paz total*). This must be understood against the backdrop of the fact that even after the peace agreement with the FARC in 2016, violence in Colombia has not ceased, but rather very different violent actors are still active. These include parts of the FARC that have split off and continue to fight, plus the country’s second largest guerrilla, the ELN (Ejército de Liberación Nacional), which was not part of the 2016 agreement. In addition, there are paramilitary groups and drug cartels that operate in remote parts of the country, often in border areas with neighboring states, and are often more powerful than the state.

The concept of “perfect peace” is intended to make the search for peace a long-term state policy. At its core are peace negotiations with all illegal armed groups. A law passed in October 2022 gives the government the authority to initiate negotiations with the ELN and with FARC dissidents, as well as with criminal gangs such as the Clan del Golfo. The concept also provides for the creation of a peace fund to ensure social investment in remote areas affected by violence and the presence of illegal armed groups. Ultimately, the aim is to anchor the creation of conditions for peaceful coexistence as a cross-cutting task in all policy areas. The Petro government hopes that the international community will not only provide massive financial support for the implementation of the 2016 peace agreement and the efforts to achieve “perfect peace,” but also, and not least, that it will turn away from the previous repressive drug policy. As Petro emphasized during his address to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2022, the decades-long “war on drugs” has failed and other international ways must be agreed upon to deal with the drug economy and drug addiction.

The challenges facing the Petro government are enormous, especially since the regional and global conditions are anything but easy. Nevertheless, given the strong political will of the new Colombian government, there is every possibility that important steps toward greater justice, less inequality and violence, and democratic conviviality will be taken in Colombia in the coming years. In this context, not least the question of the future international orientation of Colombian policy and, conversely, the attitude of Latin American neighbors as well as the international community toward Colombia plays an important role. This is the reason why we – with a delay that was not planned in this way – are now publishing the contributions to the symposium held in 2017 after all.

Berlin / Bogotá, November 2022

## Introduction (2017)

Peter Birle / Günther Maihold / Eduardo Pastrana Buelvas

The Peace Agreement between President Santos' government and the FARC Guerilla Group marks a critical step in a peace process that hopes to bring a more than 50 year-long violent conflict in Colombia to an end. This internal conflict has negatively affected Colombia's development and severely stunted Colombia's pursuit of its own potential. It is worth noting, however, that this Peace Agreement demands not only an intensive commitment on the part of the Colombian government, but of the international community as well. The results of the peace process' implementation are of central importance for the future of Colombian foreign policy.

The fluidity of regional sociopolitical conditions, particularly the removal and replacement of various left-wing regimes in South America, open up many new opportunities for Colombia, especially as it relates to its foreign policy. The nation is currently striving to create a formative role for itself in international politics, a task which poses some challenges based on its current limited foreign policy capabilities.

Set against this backdrop, the symposium "Colombia's New International Role", held on January 30 and 31, 2017, at the Ibero-American Institute (Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut) in Berlin, strived to analyze the current transformation of Colombia's position in the international system with the input of academics and politicians. In this unique historical situation, where a successful peace process is being realized in an "emerging country", the following questions were posited:

1. What role do international protection and international intervention play in achieving long-term success and sustainability for the peace process?
2. What exactly is required of the international community and states' collective foreign policies during this transitional process, especially as it relates to Germany and the European Union?
3. How can Colombia itself contribute to the success of its peace process through foreign policy initiatives and new international posturing?
4. How does Colombia, and how will Colombia, define its role in regional politics? How does this role relate to the changing trans-regional and sub-regional political environments, i.e. Pacific Alliance, UNASUR, CELAC, etc.?
5. How does Colombia fit into a global framework, and what are the country's potential opportunities for participation in said framework?
6. Which future opportunities could arise for cooperation between Colombia and Germany, as well as between Colombia and the European Union as a whole?

## **The Topics up for Debate: Colombia and its International Role**

Drug trafficking, violence, and (in)security have all characterized Colombia's international image over the past decades. The Andean nation has been perceived by the international community as a "problematic country", whose internal conflicts and the involvement of external actors (such as the United States in the form of Plan Colombia) could lead to an overflow of violence in the neighboring countries, or even bring the entire subregion into a geopolitical dynamic under the hegemony of the USA. Simultaneously, however, Colombia has been increasingly viewed as a rising power, particularly for economic and political reasons. This rise in power is made evident by Colombia's inclusion in the group CIVETS, of which Colombia represents the first letter. Colombia, along with Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey, and South Africa, makes up this cluster of "new emerging countries and economies" which in 2010 the HSBC investment bank believed to show remarkable momentum for future global economic development. Colombia has itself taken measures to reinforce its participation in global markets as shown by its 2013 decision to open accession talks with the OECD.<sup>1</sup> In doing so, however, the nation also subjects itself to "group pressure" and "best practice" evaluation criteria of this club, one that is dominated by powerful industrialized countries. Even though the current economic situation may have proved the aforementioned prognostications over-exaggerated, there are nonetheless indicators that with the improvements seen in the state of internal and regional affairs, Colombia can and should play a key role for both the reorientation of Latin America's position in the international system, as well as for its own repositioning as a competent and capable actor on the global level.

## **Colombia's Quest for a Role in Global Politics**

The efforts to overcome Colombia's marginalization in both regional and international power systems have lasted more than a decade<sup>2</sup> and have been featured prominently in the foreign policy strategies of multiple Presidents (Gaviria Trujillo 1993; for an overview see Randall 2011). The question throughout these various presidencies has always been the same: how can Colombia make better use of its geopolitical position, be it in regard to the USA, the Caribbean and Central America, or the Amazon Basin, the latter of which hosts a wealth of resources and security concerns. With so many possibilities of regional interaction, many wish to assign Colombia the role of "hinge"<sup>3</sup> or "bridge nation" – the linkage that connects and solidifies the various regional affiliations (Carvajal 2012). However, refraining from adopting positions limited to the Andean region, the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has increasingly stressed the country's involvement in the global agenda, focusing particularly on objectives like sustainable development, the reorientation of international drug policies, and climate change (Holguín 2015). This also has made obsolete the metaphor used by former Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez who had said that under the leadership of Álvaro Uribe, Colombia was becoming ever more isolated in the region. Instead, efforts are being made to position the country as an "emerg-

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1 On the state of the OECD's review on the developmental conditions in Latin American, see: <http://www.oecd.org/latin-america/countries/colombia/> (November 17, 2022).

2 As an overview, see Cardona Cardona (2011).

3 As is posited in: Luis Alberto Moreno, the Colombian serving as President of the Inter-American Development Bank, IDB: "Colombia es la bisagra de la región." <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/temadeldia/colombia-bisagra-de-region-luis-alberto-moreno-articulo-337189> (November 17, 2022).



ing power,” with hopes of proving itself on the international stage by taking on an active role as an issue-resolver (Ramírez 2015). This includes the assumption of certain responsibilities for UN-Peacekeeping Missions, for which the government plans to provide up to 5,000 members of the armed forces during the next three years.

### **Colombia’s Foreign Policy Options**

Because of the worldwide decline in oil and gas prices – the two most important exports of the country – Colombia has barely advanced with its external energy policy towards Caribbean and Central American markets (Kögl, Maihold and Husar 2010). The reduction in earnings gained from foreign trade has also restricted the possibilities for economic development and international trade. The precarious cooperation with the “leftist governments” of Latin America has only further intensified Colombia’s regional marginalization. A certain counterweight to this has been achieved through deepened cooperation with the partner nations of the Pacific Alliance (Chile, Peru and Mexico), a group that in a short time has achieved significant advances in regional integration. Despite this move towards a more intertwined connection with its bordering nations, Colombia’s relationship with its neighbors has long proved to be a critical variable in matters of foreign policy. The political tensions between Colombia and Venezuela, particularly the issues of border politics and migration, are always suitable to be instrumentalized in Caracas and Bogotá for short-term domestic political purposes.<sup>4</sup>

The dominant pattern that evolved during the administration of President Alvaro Uribe (2002-2010), has since been broken off by the internationalizing policies of his successor, Juan Manuel Santos.<sup>5</sup> While the privileged relationship with the United States, which has been well-documented by the massive influx of funds during the Plan Colombia, has not been questioned, the Colombian government was, and still is, striving to diversify its bilateral agenda. These efforts can be seen in the push to bring to the forefront, issues of science and technology, competitiveness, energy cooperation, and support for the implementation of the peace process. Despite constitutional problems, the use of seven Colombian military bases by the U.S. forces has never been questioned.

### **The Peace Process’ International Dimension**

With the implementation of the peace process in the coming years, Colombia will be closely linked to the international community. This connection will manifest itself in at least four dimensions (Pastrana Buelvas and Gehring 2016):

- The negotiation of a peace agreement with the ELN Guerrilla Group;
- The monitoring of the peace agreement’s implementation with the FARC and a possible agreement with the ELN, all within a post-conflict scenario;

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4 See Ramírez (2004); the subsequent work by the autor also deals with border relations between the neighboring countries of Colombia, such as Brazil, Ecuador and Venezuela; same for Pastrana Buelvas, Jost and Trujillo Curre (2012).

5 “Lineamientos de la Política Exterior de Colombia”, [http://www.colombiaun.org/Colombia/Politica\\_Exterior.pdf](http://www.colombiaun.org/Colombia/Politica_Exterior.pdf) (November 17, 2022).

- The assurance of correct and legal processing of human rights violations through the process of transitional justice with the participation of international actors;
- The financial support for reconstruction and support for further socio-economic development, a key component for a lasting peace.

The participation of international actors is essential for both the negotiation and implementation of the peace agreement; it could be said that the internationalization of the peace negotiations was crucial to its overall success (Borda and Gómez 2015). Without the successful mediation provided over the past four years by Cuba and Norway as guarantors, and Chile and Venezuela as witnesses, the signing of the peace treaty between the FARC-rebels and the government would hardly have been possible. The internationally supported diplomacy of peace has brought Colombia closer and closer to the goal of a viable and enduring peace process (Maihold 2016b). This is also true of the pending negotiations with the second, smaller guerrilla group, ELN.

In view of the extent of internal polarization and the severity of wounds caused by fifty years of violent conflict, the United Nations (UN) has also committed itself to a post-conflict political mission in hopes of circumventing future turmoil related to the agreement's implementation. On January 25, 2016, the World Security Council unanimously initiated a special political mission, which was designed as an unarmed observer mission for a period of initially 12 months that included monitoring and verification of the armistice, the end of hostilities and disarmament. A key role was provided for the Member States of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), who declared at their summit in Quito, Ecuador, on January 27, 2016, that they were willing to serve as observers of the peace process' implementation.<sup>6</sup>

From a foreign policy perspective, Colombia interprets the international community's participation in the peace process also as a contribution to international confidence building in the country.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, Colombia's future foreign policies are inextricably tied to the continuation of international participation in the peace process. The continuation is indispensable for the legitimacy of peace on a domestic level and forms the basis of the modernization projects that the Colombian government intends to implement following the demobilization of the rebel forces.<sup>8</sup> The government will be very interested to ensure that the actions of external actors are not arbitrary or patronizing, or could be perceived as such. It is not without a just cause that in their respective roles of guarantors and mediators, Cuba and Norway, and Chile and Venezuela, have taken a more removed position in recent years.

The international dimension of the peace process will also be important in dealing with the human rights violations committed during the armed conflict. Beyond the domestic efforts put forth for the actualization of transitional justice, external actors such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in Costa Rica and the International Court of Criminal Justice in The Hague could also play an essential role in bringing justice to the many victims of violence.

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6 Special Declaration of CELAC for the support of the Colombian Peace Process, Quito, January 27, 2016, <http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/newsroom/news/declaracion-especial-celac-apoyo-proceso-paz-colombia> (November 17, 2022)..

7 Speech by Minister María Ángela Holguín to the United Nations Security Council, New York, January 25, 2016.

8 National Council on Economic and Social Policy. Republic of Colombia. Federal Department of Planning: *Fondo Colombia en Paz. Documento CONPES 3850*, Bogotá 2015.

Furthermore, the international commitment refers to financial support for socioeconomic development in post-conflict Colombia through funds created by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the EU, other regional organizations, and even individual states. For example, the Obama administration in the United States has committed to giving 450 million USD in the FY 2017 through the Peace Colombia aid package, and the European Union has initiated a “trust fund” for Colombia in March 2016 which will take funds from member states and various financing instruments of the EU budget. For the years 2016 and 2017, the EU has allocated some 70 million EUR, which can be then further increased – not least by contributions from Member States – via development cooperation initiatives. With the holding account “Colombia in Peace,” the Colombian government has readied itself with a framework that aims to strengthen the mechanisms of institutional coordination between the UN System, the EU fund, the Fund for Peace and Post-Conflict, and the Trust Fund for a Sustainable Colombia.<sup>9</sup> This is also to ensure alignment with the priorities of the peace process and a corresponding review of the results.

As a result, a strong presence and a comprehensive need for coordination between the various international actors in Colombia are to be expected. These actors will have to confront the deeply entrenched mistrust towards international actors that still percolates through Colombian society. To do this, international agencies and foreign bodies must direct their foreign policy towards overcoming such perceptions and creating new confidence amongst the Colombian population towards external actors.

### **The Regional and Sub-regional Dimension of Colombian Foreign Policy**

Historically, Colombian foreign policy has focused on regional integration. However, this priority suffered a significant setback with the departure of Venezuela from the Andean Community (CAN) in 2006 (Sainz 2007). The relationships between Colombia and the fellow Member States of the Pacific Alliance (Chile, Peru, and Mexico) have developed much more dynamically in recent years. This has resulted in significant progress towards regional integration in just a short period of time, a development which is being followed quite closely by many international observers. With free trade agreements signed with the USA and the EU, Colombia finds itself with a favorable legal framework to facilitate integration into the global economy. This integration should allow Colombia to claim a role that goes beyond its traditional archetype as an exporter of extracted raw materials. For now, however, entrenched power structures, as well as counter-productive incentive structures, make actualizing more advantageous alternatives a difficult, if not impossible, task. Allegations of human rights violations are also on the agenda of international actors, and Colombia must act and resolve these violations as part of its international responsibility (Lowe 2016).

Although the former Colombian President Ernest Samper did hold the post of Secretary General of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), an organization that was established in 2008, Colombia’s relations with UNASUR have been rather distant. With the political uptick seen in several South American countries, especially Argentina and Brazil, Colombia will encounter new options. The same is true of Colombia’s crucial relationship with Brazil. The

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<sup>9</sup> <https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/Conpes/Econ%C3%B3micos/3850.pdf>, p. 35 (November 17, 2022).

1,645 km long border that separates Colombia from neighboring Brazil presents both responsibilities and opportunities. While this shared border necessitates that these two nations work together on an ecological level to help preserve the Amazon Basin, the border has also added dynamism in the areas of trade, spurred scientific and technological cooperation, and intensified cross-border contacts (Pedroso and Souza 2016). With the change in policy seen in Brazil since 2016, the scope of action for Colombia's foreign policy could very well expand, since this new balance in South America limits the protagonism of Venezuela, which had long been tolerated by Brazilian foreign policy (Maihold 2016a). Brazil could become an important partner for Colombia – a partner that would allow Colombia to establish a stronger mooring in South America and to overcome its existing position on the margins. Colombia must also confront the issue of its souring relationship with Venezuela and the migration pressure on its border, and thereby put the two nations back on good terms with one another. The Santos government has placed increased regional cooperation at the forefront of its agenda – as is clear with Ecuador – as well as an expanded presence created in the Caribbean, where the peace negotiations in Havana have created a greater basis of trust with Cuba.

As Colombia aspires to boost its economic development, it increasingly looks to the Asian-Pacific region for inspiration and interaction. President Santos' announcement to support and lobby for the inclusion of Argentina in the Pacific Alliance reveals the possibility for Colombia to play a mediating role in the gradual rapprochement between MERCOSUR and the Pacific Alliance.<sup>10</sup> The Pacific Alliance exemplifies Colombia's efforts to further its involvement in international value chains and to cultivate its profile as an exporter of processed goods (Trujillo Acosta 2014).

### **Perspectives and Options for German and European Cooperation with Colombia**

Germany possesses a special relationship with Colombia as its most important European trading partner. Germany is also a key player in development cooperation and a crucial partner in scientific and technological cooperation (Birle 2016). With the German Foreign Office's appointment of a Commissioner for the Colombian Peace Process and the establishment of the German-Colombian Peace Institute (CAPAZ) in Bogotá, the Federal Republic of Germany has proven itself ready to take on its fair share of responsibility in the peace process. For the EU, which for years has played an important role in the promotion of peace communities in Colombia, the question that must be answered is how to interact with Colombia in the future. Despite the free trade agreements signed in 2012/2013, uncertainty still dominates as to which potential linkages can be developed with Colombia (Pastrana Buelvas 2011). Although there exist comprehensive plans for certain topic areas, such as the "alternative development" as a "European response" to American drug-control policy, the corresponding projects themselves do not yet have the territorial scope to ensure sustained success. The European-Colombian dialogue on respect for human rights will continue to be a central theme on the discussion agenda.

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10 "Colombia impulsa la entrada de Argentina en la Alianza del Pacífico," [http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2016/06/15/colombia/1466019521\\_268058.html](http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2016/06/15/colombia/1466019521_268058.html) (November 17, 2022).

## About this Publication

The symposium “Colombia’s New International Role” was designed as a dialogue between academics and politicians, which, in view of the current challenges, is of central importance in the Colombian peace process. Participants in the symposium ranged from politicians to renowned academics and members of think tanks. As the implementation phase of the peace agreements unfurls, the cogs and wheels of Colombia will really begin to turn; the international community, especially Europe and Germany, will undoubtedly confront challenges as to how to best assist this critically important peace process. It will always be necessary to re-adjust positions and to think about suitable formats for the external support of this difficult and complex transition process. With the end of the peace negotiations in view, the Colombian Foreign Minister expressed the hope that Colombia, “will be a normal country.”<sup>11</sup> This unmistakable spirit of optimism was not limited to the Foreign Minister, however, as governmental representatives continue to spread this cause for hope.

The symposium took place entirely in Spanish. In order to make the conclusions of the event accessible to as many people as possible, this publication hopes to present an English version of the most fundamental points brought up in the lectures. This would not have been possible without the support of Alexander Hawley who during his internship at the Ibero-American Institute translated all contributions from Spanish to English.

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# The International Dimension of Post-Conflict in Colombia. Introduction

Günther Maihold

If we analyze this first panel with some sort of historic perspective, we will find a certain alteration, or variation, in the vision of Colombia and of Colombia's relationship with the world, oscillating somewhere between a more nationalist and a more internationalist position. There has been much debate over the question: to internationalize the conflict, to nationalize the debate concerning its solution, to find solutions outside of national courts, or to find solutions outside of an internationalized solution-finding mission. These uncertainties combine to put the agreement's national character in jeopardy. There have been situations where the internationalized aspect of the peace treaty has been seen with more favorability. The most recent developments in the pursuit of peace have been characterized by this logic: on the one hand the search for decent support, not very protagonist in the peace negotiations in Havana, where there were guarantors, where there were international facilitators who did not seek at all a strong protagonism. With the plebiscite's rejection of the peace treaty, a new debate quickly arose over whether or not the peace process was an issue that should be resolved "in-house". This stemmed from the fact that certain sectors of society viewed international interference in the support of the first peace agreement as an attempt to influence distinctly national processes. In the end, we can now say today that the post-conflict period retains a clear international dimension. There is a United Nations mission, participation from many Latin American countries, there are funds established by the European Union and by the United Nations to support the peace process, but nevertheless, debate over one issue remains heated. Until what point should the international community play an important role in the post-conflict context? One manifestation of the worries that feed such a question can be seen in the role that the International Criminal Court will play in the post-conflict context: this international body will retain a special international jurisdiction to rule on cases that have occurred in Colombia and to consequently hand down decisions.

In this panel, we would like to touch upon some issues surrounding the international dimension of the post-conflict period, thereby expanding our focus to more than just the fluidity of the current context. The position of the Trump administration is surely of importance, especially seeing as he has said that he will re-evaluate the U.S.'s participation in a post-conflict scenario and decide whether or not to maintain the support promised by Obama. Equally salient are the characteristics surrounding future negotiations with the ELN, in which international support from other Latin America countries will play a role. Then, there is the question of whether or not this peace process will provide a new chance to reorient Colombian foreign policy. There is

also the possibility that we will find ourselves in a situation where the creation and selection of foreign policy will be solely dependent on its compatibility with the requirements of the peace process, thereby restricting foreign relations to merely guaranteeing the success of the peace process. In respect to the institutional reforms, we hope that the efforts to realize a Colombian peace deal and its subsequent implementation can serve as a template for future scenarios where pacific negotiation is needed to resolve a conflict. Similarly, the compatibility of traditional frameworks for cooperation will be examined to see whether or not we must adapt them or adjust to new international challenges represented in the post-conflict period. We find some aspects that are quite easy to agree upon, though: the internal polarization of Colombia, especially in light of the electoral campaign's commencement and all of its resulting implications for the peace process and governmental corruption. The point that most people do not show much interest or pleasure in talking about, however, is how the debate over corruption will affect the implementation of the peace deal.



# The Peace Process' International Dimension

Sandra Borda

I would like to emphasize two specific points that were posited in a pair of investigatory works that we have completed at the Universidad de los Andes, with colleagues from the USA, related to the international dimension of the peace process. I am going to connect the analysis concerning the process of the peace negotiation's internationalization with an analysis that is intimately linked to the former and very related to the question of what a future post-conflict foreign policy will look like: what does Colombia hope for in its international integration once the conflict has ended and once the peacebuilding process is well underway? Indeed, there are important questions to be investigated in both domains.

There are various aspects from a comparative vantage point concerning the internationalization of peace negotiations that can possibly provide important lessons concerning how the ELN negotiations can advance onwards. One question has to do with how the current and/or previous internationalization processes can contribute to a better understanding of the advantages and problems associated with the internationalization of peace negotiations. In an article I recently wrote reviewing the participation of international actors in ongoing peace negotiations, I termed the internationalization process as restrained (temperate, moderate, measured) yet progressive, comparing it particularly to the previous El Caguán peace process, a process which was characterized by the premise, "the more, the better:" the more international actors, the better, the more high-profile actors, the better – everyone is welcome.

In the current peace process, what took precedence was a very well-planned out internationalization – planned out from before formal negotiations began or were even publicly announced. No matter how you spin it, this process of internationalization was – and I insist that this term is used – restrained. I believe that this clearly exemplifies one of the first declarations Santos made at the beginning of the peace process concerning international actors. I believe what he said, though succinct, was quite eloquent: the peace process is a process forged by Colombians, for Colombians. With that, he wants to say that the role and thoughts of international actors would certainly be taken in account, but these roles would not be as major as the roles international actors had in the El Caguán peace negotiations.

It was also progressive because, as I'll soon explain, it is clear that, when one looks at the duration of the current peace process, one sees that we began with a very restrained, limited participation of low-profile international actors. Overtime, this has gradually grown as peace negotiations have advanced. There have been particular situations of crisis in the peace process where international actors have played a key role in bringing together the different parties to the conflict within situations where support could very well have been quashed. There is one

scenario in particular where the government pursued a project that did not end as expected. I think it's worth asking the question why it didn't work and why international actors were utilized as a type of mechanism to make up for the national deficits of legitimacy from which the peace process suffered. The logic here is: ok, so we have a divided country; a large section of the country has serious and profound concerns on how the peace process is being advanced and negotiated; and we are debating whether or not to use the "unquestionable" authority of certain international actors to restore a bit of public trust in the sustained support of this peace process. I am thinking, in this case, of actors such as the Pope, seeing as Colombia is a Catholic country and one would imagine that if the Vatican supported this peace process, public opinion would see some positive movement. Sometimes at the beginning of the peace process, declarations from the U.S. State Department and government endeavored to do the same. It is a distinct type of authority, but an authority nonetheless – if the USA supports this peace process, then it can't be too bad. Multiple actors were used in this capacity, but when the results of that plan are examined, it is clear that it failed. It is quite interesting to ask why this plan failed, because in other cases – I'm thinking specifically of Central America, El Salvador and Guatemala here – that type of international pooling of support did in fact function to some degree. In the case of Colombia, however, it did not. It would also be worth asking whether or not this variation in outcome has something to do with the traditional and historical isolationism of Colombia or if it has something to do with the public opinion driven by notions over sovereignty that do not allow these international actors to claim any sort of power – at least argumentative, discursive, or substantial power. One must ask what happened here. I have the sensation that in Colombia, notions of sovereignty have not yet been unpacked and analyzed sufficiently. This perception has only been reaffirmed for me following the discussion that was had over the participation of international judges in the special jurisdiction for peace, something I found quite surprising. An international judge in Colombia seems to be an unacceptable incursion on national sovereignty. I think this is an important question.

What particularly catches my attention in the process of international participation is the case of the United States. This is because I believe the role that the USA played in the negotiation, a role that was quite salient and high-profile until the end, featured a direct White House envoy to participate in the conversations. Of course, this figure had not previously existed in the same way; but, just that he had been sent from the executive office means something. That leaves us in a scenario where we don't exactly know if the compromises made by the U.S. will be maintained as it relates to the problems of judicial immunity or extradition of FARC General Secretary members. That's a question that the whole world is asking Colombia: if, in effect, the first thing the Trump administration will do is to activate the judicial processes against members of the General Secretary and ask for their extradition. In which position will the Colombian government find itself in if there is a strong pressure to follow through with these extraditions? We already know that when it comes to these matters, the USA doesn't just ask for a favor.

I am not so sure that the United States will substantially reduce their assistance, in part because it is in a policy that is actually supported by the Republican Party Agenda. The agenda of cooperation with Colombia in view of the armed conflict also lies on the Republican agenda. I think that they are as interested as the Democrats were interested in selling Colombia as proof

of a success story of economic and security cooperation. This will only serve to reinforce these past actions. We are totally in agreement that the emphasis will change in character. What the Obama administration had been trying to do was to place a greater emphasis on the social and economic help that was being sent to Colombia. I think that this emphasis will change and this will have to do with the changes that material discourse will undergo. I also think the U.S.'s stance on The War on Drugs will experience a brusque 180-turn.

Finally, the other theme of internationalization of the peace process has to do with the space that Colombia occupies on the international level vis-à-vis a sort of weighty global governance in relation to issues of justice. All of these norms and courts that have served within the context of the Colombian peace process and have been demanded to do so, well, it's interesting because we see how the language of negotiation and agreements is the same as the language of the courts and international human rights and juridical norms. It's almost as if all of this international normativity had been given to Colombia as an important part of the very libretto that was utilized to discuss peace and term it accordingly. After making this analysis, when one hears part of the Colombian opposition saying that these agreements do not follow through with the rules of the International Criminal Court, the statement is a bit laughable. This is because if you look at the language of the agreements, it is as supremely eloquent as the language that had been used during the entire duration of the peace process discussions. It is a language absolutely permeated by a legal international logic reinforced by themes of justice and human rights. It is all too clear why this will continue to be a conversation in Colombia. Of course many will depend upon the implementation process of transitional justice, but these norms – founded on paper and in discussion, in the rhetoric and discourse that was utilized – were present throughout the negotiations that occurred in Colombia.

I now will move onto some brief reflections on Colombia's current reinsertion into the international scene. It does not please me to say that it is just too soon to speak of a foreign policy in the post-conflict period. I just think it is one of those dilemmas Colombia will have to confront later on the global stage. It will have to restructure and redefine its international identity based on the end of fighting, yes, but also keeping in mind that Colombia will simply substitute some security threats for others. Colombia will not overcome traditional security threats by ending the internal conflict; that is just one in a set of many threats. In that sense, part of the dislocation that arises from the in-between position Colombia finds itself in – not entirely on the other side of the conflict, yet not in the eye of the hurricane either – complicates national discussion over what kind of country we would like to be on a global level. It is neither a light nor an easy discussion; we have invested a lot of time, as Ecuador suggested at the beginning, in defining our international role on the basis of two basic premises: the dynamic of the armed conflict and the war against drugs, two very interconnected themes. These were the only two things thought of by the people who were in charge of making foreign policy for Colombia, and that shouldn't sound like an accusation. Basically, the internal agenda was one that was so heavy and complicated that it caused us, for quite a long period of time, to think of our international role in terms of the satisfaction of our domestic needs. In the end, it is something that is done by all nations, but the specific case of Colombia is that our needs were much more pressing.

So we obviously find ourselves in a situation in which one of the defining factors of our foreign policy does not yet exist. Well, now think about it, what are we going to do on an international level? If it is not going to be the search for military and economic resources to sustain the war, then what will it be? Before, we were in the eye of the international hurricane, but where exactly are we now and what exactly are we going to do? For Colombia, that is the question that is still without answers. The government has done the work of beginning the discussion, and in the process of initiating the discussion, certain suggestions have been put forth, by both sides, which have been a bit confusing. One doesn't really know where to position themselves in these discussions because the discussions often give the sensation that the happy end of the conflict that we are searching for is a type of social ascension on the international scale; we are now free of conflict, we can enter into the OECD; we are now free of conflict, we can have a FTA with the USA and EU; we are now free of conflict, we need fewer entry visas. It is a process of social ascension for which we are searching. If you compare the foreign policies of Colombia with those of Brazil some years back, the utilization of power on the international level is totally distinct. Brazil refused to be a part of OECD and wanted to establish itself as the nucleus of regional power. Colombia should spend some more time, as President Santos has said, thinking of how to get into the "big leagues" rather than how to activate itself regionally.

Another alternative arose from the same governmental discourse, and that alternative is one of regional leadership. And the utilization of the following term, if it was up to me, would be prohibited in the Colombian diplomatic sector: the conversion of Colombia into a "hinge country" (*país bisagra*), following more or less the path of Turkey, serving as a hinge or connector between the North and South. Then, Colombia could take advantage of all we have done to strengthen our relationship with the USA to try and be a type of mediator with a South that doesn't appear to come off as a good friend or ally of the North. This project is of course not necessarily incompatible with the previous project, but is just an example to give a glimpse at the still primitive conversation that is being held over our desired position on an international level.

This regional leadership project has the problem – one of many – that during the end of this armed conflict, the participation of regional organizations was very deficient. You will remember when we were thinking of verification mechanisms, there was a discussion over whether or not UNASUR should or shouldn't be an organ charged with this duty. UNASUR and ex-President Samper were very enthusiastic, despite the fact that UNASUR lacks both the know-how and experience to conduct such a task. Nevertheless, they were enthusiastic. In the end, the Colombian government decided against it, and that they would instead go through the UN: a body that has dedicated itself to such tasks for its entire lifespan. I do not question the decision. It is simply that in the situations where there was a chance for regional organizations to participate, it was never taken advantage of properly. Therefore, one cannot attribute Colombian peace to the activities of such regional organizations. While regional participation was seen, quite clearly, in the roles taken on by Cuba and Venezuela, it is difficult to give other countries or organizations such credit.

I would like to finish with a pair of reflections that I think are crucial to understand what the role of Colombia might look like in the future. These reflections have to deal with two themes that I believe will continue to be fundamental to our foreign policy, but in two distinct ways.

One of these themes is human rights and the other is drugs. In terms of human rights: one time we conducted an investigation with a Colombian lawyer colleague of mine over what has been Colombia's foreign policy as it relates to human rights since the beginning of the conflict. The conclusion, which was not a surprise for anybody, is that we have always ignored our own issues with human rights in our international persona. Colombia has maintained a discourse that claims human rights violations as isolated incidences; that we're not talking about massive, systematic violations; and that Colombia has tried the entire time to decrease the volume of international pressure. They have done this by arguing that these human rights problems are not nearly as pressing, grave, or profound as the international community and NGOs make them out to be. With the end of the conflict, it is quite probable that human rights issues in Colombia will decrease, however they will not disappear. And I think this is a key opportunity to begin the process of training and learning that guides us towards more proactive conversation over human rights vis-à-vis the international community. Listening to the national government a few weeks ago, the Minister of Defense said that the assassinations of social leaders are nothing more than a few isolated cases. That language sounds a lot like older epochs of human rights violation-negation. If Colombia wants to advance its transitional process towards a true post-conflict standing, and if it wants to construct a solid and serious peace, this type of attitude simply will not work. And this isn't true just in terms of satisfying the international community; when one is presented with murders and then negates them, you are simply creating the conditions necessary for impunity to take hold. Therefore, I believe that we can begin designing ways to relate and interact with the international community that would be more useful for our own peacebuilding process. I believe this to be true because the attention the international community places on human rights is not going to disappear overnight once the conflict is rectified. In some moment in the peace mission – the foreign policy mission – which we have spent a long time working on, we suggest that it was more important that the foreign minister had a human rights division. That is to say that they would have a person who would be in charge of conducting international dialogue for Colombia concerning human rights, seeing as we currently lack someone with that directive. There is still internal infrastructure, but this international aspect is a theme that is still very much lacking in our foreign policy. This responsibility falls on the shoulders of the missions in Geneva, and here and there, and is just not a long term assurance of our international compliance towards this issue. I believe that we will have to pay particular attention to this issue.

Finally, we come to the issue of drugs. This theme demands a process of re-accommodation. What has happened with drugs from Colombia's international standpoint is something actually quite interesting. What the government has done from the beginning is to slowly engage in a process of revising the international drug program. The first time that President Santos mentioned this was at the beginning of his administration when he was in London and said: "Here, I'm not going to adopt a particular policy as the Colombian government seems to be doing, but rather, I'll invite reflections on this issue." The war against drugs, as we have defined it on the international stage, is simply not working. We are riding a stationary bike; you pedal, pedal, pedal, but you go nowhere. A process of reflection was initiated that continues with the key participation of the ex-Minister of Justice Yesid Reyes in the UN, where he invited a more open dialogue

about this process. With Colombia playing a relatively major role in the UN, you have Colombia saying, ok, we're going to talk about this, this is certainly an issue that merits re-evaluation, especially when thinking of the armed conflict, but we must make it absolutely clear that the logic of the war against drugs is a logic that is inseparable from the armed conflict. Even if it wasn't necessarily accompanied by the U.S. government, it at least did not try to impede it. It was an international effort that had a slow, yet effective, result. While these processes of changing international norms seem to demand all the time in the world, they do in fact move along bit by bit. With the rise to power of President Trump in the United States, I believe that we will be entering a very difficult scenario for international politics. I do not believe that his administration is going to come to the table with a productive discourse, nor will it be willing to slightly revise policies concerning drugs. If the Obama administration didn't change a lot on an international level, it did at least change a lot of its own domestic policies towards the war against drugs. I do not believe this will happen for a Trump presidency. The Republicans just aren't like that. Trump isn't like that. I fear that our attempt to readjust policy will suffer from Trump being in the White House. Sadly, we Colombians, on account of traditional and historic foreign policy, are very good at pleasing our partner, the United States: regardless of the government in charge. My fear is that we are going to hurt six hard-won years of reforming discourse on the international stage, through which we have gained some international allies – some more unconditional than others. What will end up happening is that we will once more transform into the eternal, prohibitionist army that criminalizes the war on drugs – something we know has not worked and something I definitively believe will not positively impact the peacebuilding process in Colombia.

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# Changes in the Global Environment and in the Regional Arena

Andrés Serbín

Coming from the perspective of a regional think tank like CRIES, it is of particular importance to trace the development of the Colombian peace process because it is a prime point of reference on a regional level, and will continue being so for some time. By doing so, we can really capitalize on this experience and draw comparisons and contrasts with other such processes in the region and the eventual involvement of civil society. The most important thing to keep in mind is that times of conflict and times of peace reflect, and are connected to, the respective sets of interactions taking place within a certain domestic context. One must analyze these situational contexts in light of peace and conflict, and then examine how these domestic factors interact with one another in the Colombian arena in relation to the changing international environment. Throughout these past years, we have seen how the international system has developed its own dynamic that must concord with the peace process's requirements vis-à-vis a Colombian foreign policy attuned to the international context. This agreement can come in the form of either increased cooperation, establishment of new forms of interaction, or the support of the new model of interaction that's being developed within this peace-post-conflict environment.

Within this general framework, I wish to refer to two important themes: first, changes in the global environment, and second, changes in the regional arena (and how the regional context can be affected by what's happening now in Colombia).

On a global level we have a new distribution of global power and economic might. This is exemplified in the movement, or rather displacement, of the traditional Atlantic axis to the Asia-Pacific region and to Eurasia. Even though this displacement is more applicable to the economic, commercial, and financial aspects of the global context, it is also of great importance to geopolitics and power relations. Understanding this displacement of focus means many things. First, it is possible that the world order, established as it was under Western norms and rules, could now be taking on another form. I don't want to say with this that the pre-existing order will disintegrate or disappear. Rather, I want to frame this change as an evolution, a transformation. An example of this change is the diminishing in number and in strength of proposals to continue advancing the mega-Free Trade Agreements (FTA), as can be seen in the Atlantic realm via the paralysis of TTIP. Another test of this changing world order is the difficulty the Obama administration had in both supporting the Trans-Pacific Partnership as part of the Asian "pivot" and guaranteeing a strategic U.S. presence in the Asia-Pacific region.



In this process of transition, a curious element appears. While the two mega FTAs suffer from either paralyzation or reconfiguration, as is seen in Trump's cancellation of U.S. participation in TPP, what we are witnessing now in the Asia-Pacific region is a parallel process of globalization through the construction of alternative multilateral institutions: the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the BRICS Bank are two such examples. These are distinct instances of China's growing influence in the region and in Eurasia. But, even more so, these are examples of a change in the global rulebook. For example, many new FTAs have been advanced in terms of agreements in which special attention is paid towards tariffs and custom taxes, but relatively little towards non-commercial aspects – such as environmental or labor legislation. Similarly, former rule takers are becoming, in this context, rule makers within the global system.

What we are currently seeing is a surge not only of multilateral bodies, but also of mega-agreements promoted by China. It is quite curious that when the possible cancellation, of a trans-pacific FTA was announced in Lima following the United States withdrawal, China offered those countries that were going to participate in the FTA another option. They could also participate in the Regional Comprehensive Regional Agreement (RCEP) proposed by China as an alternative, thereby setting the stage further down the road for an even broader, more expansive Asia-Pacific FTA.

While the new U.S. administration is moving towards protectionism and isolation, there are two elements that configure a sort of a parallel globalization. The first was announced by President Xi Jinping in Davos, where he clearly stated that the world is moving deeper and deeper into globalization and China is committed to this process, a statement that stands in stark contrast with the words of President Trump since he took office. The second is the unique set of movements taking place in the Asian region. For instance, China has launched its "Silk Road" initiative (OBOR), a set of new routes – land and maritime – to connect Central Asia, Russia, and Europe (The Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road). Another interesting development is that some are beginning to call this globalization post-Western, or even refer to a post-Western world, due to the growing cooperation between China and Russia in Eurasia. President Trump has announced the he wants to befriend Putin and is going to repair the U.S. relationship with Russia. However, reality seems to contradict this promise, and that very reality is seen in the intensification in the rapprochement between China and Russia. Exemplified by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, this deeper cooperation has been an important element in this coming together of China, Russia, and other Central Asian republics traditionally under the influence of Russia. Somewhat paradoxically, what had started as a security agreement had, over time, evolved into a free trade organization closely resembling the traditional neoliberal global order with which we are familiar. This time, however, the organization features a few more norms that contest the grain of traditional "Atlantic area" values like human rights and democratic values. However, something should be made very clear. The non-Atlantic character of the organization reinforces a very important idea for the Russians. I want to remind you that the conception of Eurasia from a Russian point of view has historically been one of European and Russian rapprochement, in particular one of a Russo-German character. Today, however, it seems that the conception of Eurasia takes the form of a closer Sino-Russian

relationship and the building of closer ties between the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Eurasian Economic Zone.

This all implies a very important reconfiguration in the current world order, where one gets the impression that Latin America will play a secondary role. It's said that Latin America is just not a strategically relevant area. But, it indeed can be an important area from a commercial point of view; China recently released its second document speaking on its relationship with Latin America and has also reiterated its invitations to many Latin American countries to incorporate themselves into a comprehensive Asia-Pacific regional agreement. Presidents Bachelet from Chile and Macri from Argentina were invited to Beijing to the official launching of OBOR. Nevertheless, to say that Latin America is a privileged region from a strategic point of view on a global level would be a bit exaggerated. I put forth this idea because this new global dynamic could very well have a regionalized effect on the outcome of the peace process in Colombia.

We have, first and foremost, a reconfiguration of the regional political map. The reconfiguration is related to the weakening of the so called “pink-tide” – so termed by some North American analysts – and its left and center-left governments who spent some time in office in several Latin American countries. More than a simple reconstitution of political tendencies in government, however, this reconfiguration hints at the possibility for an end to the cycle of a post-neoliberal, post-hegemonic regionalism with a distinctive regional flair, fueled by the commodities boom of previous years. This new regionalism was marked by the relevance of the State over Market and politics over economics, as well as an emphasis placed on social aspects as part of a regional agenda.

When we analyze the three regional organizations born out of post-liberal regionalism at the beginning of the century, that is, ALBA, UNASUR, and CELAC, we see that they are taking on water from all sides, particularly after the deepening of the Venezuelan economic, political and humanitarian crisis. In the case of ALBA, Venezuela has lost its previous capacity of oil financing to such a degree that its oil assistance to Cuba has shrunk some 40 %, similarly to the situation of the oil assistance program Petrocaribe aimed at the Caribbean and Central America; as such, ALBA's capacity to exert some influence or impact in the region has been at a minimum paralyzed if not fully reversed, even if the recent voting at the OAS still showed some support to the Venezuelan regime. In the case of UNASUR, I believe that the positive agenda based on themes that could actually lead to a more intensive regional cooperation – such as public health policies or infrastructure – has been displaced in favor of more political concerns. In the case of this South American organization the issue of a Venezuelan dialogue between the government and the opposition during the current crisis has been focused on in such a way that clearly demonstrates UNASUR's incapacity to promote an effective dialogue, even with the assistance of the Vatican. Currently we are witnessing, at a minimum, a clear failure and paralysis in this process. Finally, in the case of CELAC, a group that is supposed to be the valid interlocutor with foreign actors as it was originally designed to be, has thrown aside an important external actor that projects a major influence in the region, as is seen by the changes that the Trump administration is enacting: the United States. CELAC simply does not engage with the USA. CELAC interacts with China, Russia, the EU, and India, and leaves the OAS as the only North-South forum for the hemisphere. This detachment can, in some sense, be associated with the fact that

the last CELAC Summit featured presidents and heads of states mostly from Bolivarian persuasion and is becoming of less interest to most of the other countries.

In this context, we have a serious challenge in terms of the future of regionalism in the region. If neoliberal Washington Consensus regionalism has conquered the post-neoliberalism or post-hegemony processes of the past 15 years, then we have not discovered any new way for regional integration. What we will continue seeing in the region is incapacity to speak with one united voice – as shown both at the OAS and CELAC – and incapacity to advance further into an integration process; the fragmentation that has presented itself until now will continue to further intensify. This is particularly worrisome because we will continue experiencing the emergence of new dynamics in the region. I believe that the tension generated between the USA and Mexico is a tension that will be reflected throughout the whole of Latin America, not necessarily because of the attitude of the USA, which, based on the new administration we could at least presume to know, but rather because of the role Mexico will try to fill, as they historically have each time they've experienced difficulties in the U.S.-Mexican relationship: a role of throwing themselves away from the USA and back towards Latin America. Similar considerations can be made vis-à-vis the recent Trump announcements regarding with regard to the U.S. policy on Cuba which will probably contribute to alienate Latin America and the Caribbean from Washington within a still not defined hemispheric U.S. policy.

There is, on the other hand, another example that one should take into account, and perhaps now is the time to return to the case of Colombia. When one nation establishes very close ties with another country, or when one country associates itself excessively with a specific ally or partner to advance a strategic or trade association, as is seen in the NAFTA agreement between Mexico, Canada and the USA, it is possible that a reversion occurs when conditions become ripe for a man like Trump to change things. I say this because when we briefly take stock of all the information presented on Colombia, we have several scenarios that we need to review. In the confirmation hearing for Rex Tillerson before the Senate, he clearly laid out what the attitude of the USA towards Colombia will be, what the relationship will look like, what the continued support of the peace process will manifest itself as, but also, what things and issues will be revised under the Tillerson lead State Department. He doesn't specify which particular things will be reviewed or re-evaluated, but I believe it's quite probable that the FTA with Colombia will be revised, the assistance that would have come with the funds promised by Obama will stop short or will change its priorities, and that President Trump's agenda will have a new, stronger emphasis on issues that go beyond peace and post-conflict themes. But, these are themes that you know your way around much better than I, so I will stop now with this general overview of a still uncertain U.S. policy towards Latin America within a changing and turbulent global environment.

## German Cooperation with Colombia

Tom Koenigs

I am going to just give a few historic and cultural elements or aspects to help better understand the Colombian-German relationship, a relationship that is quite happy indeed. It can be considered happy because the historic relationship lacks some of the burdens that mark Colombia's relations with other countries. We don't claim a sunken frigate loaded with stolen riches in the Gulf of Cartagena, for example. We are not, nor were we ever, a colonializing country in Latin America, as Spain or the U.S. were. We were never involved in a "hot war," despite the Colombia declaration of war on Germany in 1943. There isn't, nor was there ever, a German community in Colombia or a German refugee colony after the Second World War. Nor did Germany get itself involved in Colombian politics, be it reactionary, elitist, or coup-supportive, etc., as it did in Chile, Paraguay, and even Brazil. It's also worth saying that the rich Germans that were living in Colombia integrated into Colombian culture and lived like their peers, and if they tried to supported military figures or the like, they did it the same way as their Creole brothers. Therefore, this can't really be considered a negative facet of our relationship.

We have economic, political, and cultural relations, the latter being of particular importance. And it is this aspect of our relationship that I will focus on because it truly is something special that we share with Colombia. One of the most important cultural products in Germany that is linked with Colombia is magical realism, or as I call it, modern romanticism. We Germans love ourselves romanticist authors Heine or Hoelderlin. And the Colombians, too: José Rivera, Álvaro Mutis, and García Márquez. Apparently, the renowned novel, *Love in the Time of Cholera*, has more readers here in Germany than it does in Colombia: and it continues today as such. That's because we are both romantics. And amongst this romanticism that's more magical than realistic, there is also a certain sympathy felt on the part of leftist/European/German nostalgia for the wars of the Guevara-era – wars that failed spectacularly across the entire world, in all countries, save one impoverished island. Maybe it didn't fail too badly in Bolivia, but it still continues living in parts of Colombia. We – the Leftists of my generation, the generation of Schröder and Fischer in German politics, or the generation of Bill Clinton and Felipe González on the international level – still maintain a certain semblance of nostalgia for our youth that has been transformed in today's context into a responsibility for the errors committed in the past. I believe that the sympathy felt towards the Colombia peace process by all of Europe, and specifically in Germany, has roots in our desire to correct and overcome such wrong-doings, this time identifying with the victims of similar fortunes. In one of the novels written by Gabriel García Márquez, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, a woman, in a very decisive moment, must decide with whom she will sympathize. The husband says that they are members of the two families, to which she responds, in

case of doubt, one must always side with the victims. This is exactly my view on human rights: in case of doubt, one must always side with the victims – and there are plenty of victims. There are victims of war, of armed forces, of criminal gangs – but every process that begins with the plight of the victims retains the capacity to focus on the protection and realization of human rights. We have an exchange with Colombia in respect to reconciliation and memorialization through processes of transitional justice and how exactly to organize and activate said processes. But the exchange doesn't stop there; we also have an exchange occurring between NGOs, civil societies, students, political party foundations – all of these in one way or another are represented within Colombia. And – this is rare – we also have a support group for the peace process in Parliament. This can be credited to those in Germany who support the peace process: the Church, NGOs, developmental actors, and actors facilitating cultural exchange.

German foreign policy has undergone a process of redefinition during the past four years. It began by surveying the nation about what exactly they hoped to get out of a modern foreign policy fit for the times. There was also a survey sent to friendly states around the world that asked what they hoped to find in Germany's foreign policy. All in all, two results stood out as particularly salient. Everyone wanted a German foreign policy that took on more responsibility in bringing about world peace, and everyone wanted Germany to get more involved in preventative processes and conflict resolution negotiations. And German foreign policy continues to focus more and more on these issues.

Colombia is a country where they have realized a negotiated peace, one of the few countries where peace was centered around negotiation and victims, and because of this, there is a strong presence of mutually shared sympathy present in the foreign policy of the German Foreign Ministry, as well as the politics of the Parliament and the Prime Minister. This influenced the four-part decision made two years ago by the Foreign Ministry towards the peace process: first, they would politically support the peace process; second, they would orient pre-existing programs towards the peace process' actualization; third, they would cooperate in the international organizations like the EU and UN to promote the peace process; and fourth, they would prepare to accompany and support the peace process in the long term. What exactly does this mean for the peace process? I'll give seven points already mentioned in a couple presentations thus far. First, if one makes a decision and wants to represent it, one creates and sends a special envoy to do so – here I am! Second, we needed to revise and motivate pre-existing developmental and cooperative projects with a focus on the peace process, concentrating in three geographic regions where the war and conflict was especially harmful to the victims: Norte de Santander, Meta, and Caquetá. There are perhaps a few more, but we'll focus on these three for now. There's a need to cooperate in transitional justice, the creation of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, a pillar of Colombia's commitment to reconciliation and memorialization. This is a theme that particularly interests Germans and is a theme propelled by exchange, not just one teaching the other. I always tell my German friends that I believe that we have done good work in respect to our history and working to remember it – *die Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. But the process took us 70 years to actualize, and we simply cannot wait that long for a solution to the Colombian situation. Furthermore, another lesson learned is that, in respect to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, one must always begin with the truth. We in Germany, conversely, ended with the truth. There has

never really been any murderer or human rights criminal in Germany who has confessed, told the truth, and spoken openly about the atrocities committed. In Colombia, they are beginning with the truth rather than ending it, which means that no one can participate in the processes of transitional justice and clemency without having confessed, taken responsibility, and spoken openly about the truth. This stands in stark contrast to Germany, where not even the over 90-year-old concentration camp worker sentenced two years ago told the whole truth about his involvement. This is something Colombia could really teach us a thing or two about. We want to cooperate and help out. There are other elements of cooperating as well, such as demining. And even within the over-arching theme of demining, you have many different branches of support that can be given, such as Church-led prevention, training of demining soldiers/civilians, the actual process of demining, and also attention to victims with handicap caused by mines.

We are currently collaborating in two funds, one through the UN and the other through the EU. We have created the CAPAZ Institute (Colombian-German Peace Institute) and have been accompanying the negotiations with the ELN. What results this accompaniment will bring is still not known, but one thing that is known is that we are supporting the overall peace process, not one side or the other. What we are doing is being done in total transparency with respect to both parties. We are not going to secretly converse with the ELN without telling the government what's happening; we'll tell the government, look, we're talking to the ELN and telling them that they have to be willing to exchange bullets for votes. We have also supported the process of institution-building to take advantage of the political processes available to find legal solutions to the conflict approved by all those involved.

What are our expectations of Colombia?

One is democratic stability – the prevention of conflicts. What really struck me during the negotiations was the look President Santos gave immediately following the plebiscite over the peace agreement. Really my biggest worry is stability in the country. This is of the utmost importance because without democratic stability, there's nothing stopping war from returning. This is an element that contributed to Santos winning the Nobel Peace Prize. We all remember that Monday that we all lived through, looking at him as he exited the grounds after having heard the news that the peace accord lost the popular vote. A stable democracy, in addition to a strong institutional presence, must be maintained. Secondly, as to the implementation of the peace agreements, it is worth mentioning that the peace process must be sustainable. This is an enormous challenge because we are going to have elections in Colombia soon, and without knowing what will happen, Germany nonetheless maintains the expectation that regardless of who might lead the next government, they will continue to implement the agreed-upon peace accords. Third, as to the internationalized politics mentioned by the ambassador – Colombia has changed their national or Latin American perspective to one of a much more globalized and internationalized scale. No one would have thought two years ago that this newly found internationalized vision could now find itself under pressure/threat. But in this moment, all countries have to decide whether or not they are nationalists and whether or not they will keep their gazes focused inward. Or, the other option is to continue cooperating with international, multilateral organizations. We as Germans have chosen to collaborate, to continue collaborating, with multinational and international institutions. This is a question that confronts all countries – Latin

American ones in specific. We already have seen cooperation vis-à-vis the environment, as seen through the Paris Conference. This cooperation with Colombia is much closer than it had ever been before. Clearly, though, it's a bit more difficult to bring out nationalism in matters of the environment.

Ultimately come human rights, which consist of three elements, or rather, the government's obligations to human rights consists of three facets. The first of which is respecting human rights, an obligation that has led to Colombia facing some exaggerated criticism. The Colombian State really seems to be trying to respect human rights – the thing that they are not doing in this moment is giving the proper protection to all those that deserve these rights. This is the second state obligation: the protection of human rights. The third obligation is the promotion of human rights and the values associated with human rights. Out of the three obligations, it is protection that is the current problem facing human rights: protection of rights, the people, the activists, and institutions.

There is a final element which I will briefly mention, and that is the issue of drugs and the accompanying uneven distribution of responsibilities surrounding it. We have this notion, a notion we had even more so in the past, that the drug problem is the fault of Colombians; our kids here in Europe just smoke a joint every once in a while, but that's not the issue. See, this is where the difficulty arises, surrounding responsibility. I have even discussed it with the President of Afghanistan in my time there. Finding himself in an angry mood, he told me, "I learned economics in the United States, and what I learned was that all economies rely on the demand: if you cannot, or will not, control the demand, how do you expect us to control the supply?" And he's right. At the very least, we have half the culpability, half the responsibility, in relation to the drug issue. We cannot add to the problem.

A solution to the drug problem can only be a solution when it takes on a global character. There are worries about decriminalizing the consumption of drugs, but the real care should be directed towards the countries suffering the brunt of the problem: poor, Southern, unstable countries. That is where we need to focus our efforts to solve the drug problem. This problem is not only Colombian, it is not only U.S. American, it is not only German: it is a problem that belongs to all of us. What the UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is doing right now is mapping the production and consumption of drugs, but they are not limited to only doing this. I hope that we will find a solution to this global issue, but in the meantime, we can hope to find a solution that heals Colombia's relations with neighboring states. I hope that this cooperation can bring future successes to these countries.

# Europe, Germany, and Colombia's New Presence

Peter Birle

## Introduction

In my presentation, I will touch upon the responses to two questions: Which role can Germany/Europe fill in the post-conflict (post-agreement) period and what can they do to assist in the construction of a stable and lasting peace in Colombia? What negative and positive incidences of international cooperation can be useful for Colombia's post-conflict period? To achieve a stable and lasting peace, one cannot lose sight of the profound causes that preceded the longest-lasting violent conflict in Latin America. Colombia continues to be one of the countries with the most unequal distribution of income and land in the world. After decades of military conflict, the fractures seen within Colombian society are enormous. Different forms of violence are so inter-mixed in society that some authors talk of a political culture of violence and the normalization of violence. The support from the international community is a crucial factor in recognizing the challenges brought on by the post-conflict period. The international community can and should support the implementation of the peace accords by means of foreign policy and development cooperation. Fortunately, the assistance of the international community in the search for a lasting peace doesn't have to begin at zero. This is primarily due to the fact that a long time ago, and despite an active and armed conflict, large sections of Colombian society have mobilized to achieve and support peace by outwardly searching for the support of external actors. Colombia already has many international partners that have promised to contribute to the construction of peace (Germany, Korea, Spain, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Sweden, European Union), human rights (Finland, Norway, UK, EU, USAID), strengthening of the rule of law (France and EU), and assistance with those forcibly displaced (Switzerland).

While the mid-2000's were marked by a diminished interest on the part of Europe towards Colombia, during the last five years one can observe a tendency on the part of EU and countries like Germany to engage in stronger, more comprehensive compromises.

## Possibilities and Limitations of External Actors in the Search for Peace

Essentially, we can distinguish between two different groups of external actors: on one side we have states and international organizations; on the other, we have non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Neither one of these groups is homogeneous. The opportunities for states and international organizations to contribute to the construction of peace are seen as being limited or constrained by international law, above all by the concepts of national sovereignty and non-intervention. Without the explicit consent of the Colombian government, no other government can engage in or order the execution of cooperative actions within Colombian national territory. Therefore, a preliminary requirement for any action taken by foreign powers to aid in the devel-



opment of peace would be a formal agreement between the participating governments, agreeing upon the specific fundamental objectives and concrete mechanisms to be used for cooperation.

Additionally, this grouping of NGOs is made up of many diverse sorts of organizations. In the German case, it ranges from political foundations to religious and charitable organizations. One of the advantages of a NGO is often their access to specific social and political groups. They can organize support for these groups and help them to realize their respective objectives. Even more, they can help contribute to the realization of a social dialogue. However, the activities that NGOs take always face scrutiny over their representativeness and legitimacy.

The activities of both groups of external actors depend not only on their own interests and mandates, but also on their respective perception of the Colombian situation. This idea, when applied to the support of peacebuilding, highlights the significance of the respective perceptions that external actors hold towards the causes of the conflict, the roles of the different actors involved in the conflict, and the dynamics that can be expected to significantly influence the cooperation strategies. It is important to consider the fact that these actions taken by external actors are not necessarily contributing to peace building. These actions, regardless of whether or not they are international, can have at least four types of deficiencies:

- A. An incorrect interpretation of the complexities that characterize the conflict and its causes;
- B. Strategies of intervention that have a very limited time frame;
- C. A lack of coherence among the piecemeal policies of different external actors;
- and
- D. A fundamental lack of international coordination

A sustainable strategy should, above all, aim to combat the causes of the conflict, socialize and civilize the actors engaged in violence, and strengthen civil actors. Such activities can be imagined to fit within four different types of action: a) changes in political culture; b) the democratic strengthening of the state; c) the increase in political participation; d) the change in how national resources are accessed and utilized. This means, for example, that external actors could contribute to the transition of a political culture marked by violence to one marked by peace. This could be done by means of activating organizations that begin dialogue processes between the many different actors. A central objective to these dialogues would be that the different parties to the conflict take account of the positions and beliefs of the other parties involved, and analyze them accordingly. The external actors can also contribute to the strengthening of the state of democratic development. While the Colombian state possesses many repressive capacities, its capacities to foster integration and its democratic legitimacy feature many deficiencies. By supporting and advising the Colombian state in regards to the betterment of its tax collection system and the establishment of transparent mechanisms to control expenditure, external actors could bring about a positive and much needed contribution.

### **German Foreign Policy and the Peace Process in Colombia**

In recent years, one can see an increasing density of reciprocal visits amongst the highest levels of power. In all of these visits, the German representatives have expressed their total agreement

and support of the peace process. During their visit to Colombia two weeks ago (presentation presented on January 30, 2017), Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier emphasized that Germany wanted to be an ally to Colombia during the peacebuilding process. The German government has supported the peace process both financially and technically. One element of this support has been the designation of the Special Envoy, Tom Koenigs, to attend and assist with the Havana Dialogues. The motive behind this designation was to have Koenigs accompany and assist the institutions of Colombia in their search for peace, and, more importantly, to radiate German support given to Colombia on its path towards the post-conflict period. However, it also seems that the naming of Koenigs caused some preoccupations on the Colombian side; some feared that this nomination signified a coming German interference in the affairs of the country. These initial worries have since been overcome. In his first report, Koenigs talked of the Seven Positions for the projects to support peace:

1. Place emphasis on the cooperation between victims and organizations: “women, children, survivors and relatives of the disappeared are the greatest protagonists of truth, justice, and non-recurrence” (Koenigs 2015, 6).
2. Concentrate developmental aid in the priority regions.
3. Coordinate the activities of external actors: the utilization of coordinating mechanisms should be part of the planning of any project among civil society. No project supported by public German funds should be immune to this logic.
4. “Peace” also means territorial and environmental peace: the war has taken place in neglected and forgotten regions and provinces. Because of this, the peace agreements should manifest themselves in the form of a territorial peace. This also includes natural resources and their use. If these respective conflicts continue, this could mean the weakening of the peace agreements.
5. With the intention of financing the implementation of the peace process, diverse instruments should be utilized; for example, other programmatic loans and the utilization of the EU Trust Fund for Colombia.
6. The peace process has lasted for a long time and still requires a high degree of patience. Many initiatives of peace have failed along the way. The compromise that these international actors have made with Colombia is only credible if they stay involved in the long term and ride out both the highs and lows.
7. Throughout this period, one must keep in mind: for the development of democracy and peace, and for the creation of a culture of peace, people need to change their minds and worldviews. Therefore, cooperative projects should look first and foremost to better education at all levels via capacity building and the transference of knowledge and technology amongst and between educational institutions.

The recently created Colombian-German Institute for Peace (CAPAZ) is supported by the German Ministry of Foreign Relations and has as its goal the accompaniment of the peace process in Colombia by means of research and investigation. As an institution for investigation, study, and consultancy, the CAPAZ Institute will be in charge of providing and transmitting knowl-

edge surrounding peace studies, cultural and historical memory, conflict prevention, and the organization of a post-conflict society.

The consortium is made up of, on the German side, the Justus-Liebig-Universität (Giessen) as lead; Georg-August-Universität (Göttingen); the Freie Universität Berlin via the Institute for Latin American Studies; and the Institute for Peace Research Frankfurt; an additional partner is the Clinic for Psychosomatic Medicine and Psychotherapy of the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität (Freiburg). A parallel consortium exists in Colombia – the Alliance of Universities for Peace – established and coordinated by the Universidad Nacional, the Universidad Externado de Colombia, the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, the Universidad de los Andes, and the Universidad del Rosario. Other institutions and additional partners, including universities of different regions in Colombia, such as the Universidad Industrial de Santander (Bucaramanga), are already, and will continue to be, invited to participate. This is without a doubt an ambitious project with many objectives.

The total financial and technical contributions from Germany to the peace process since the year 2014 rise to some €495.3 million, of which €457.5 million are loans; €27.5 million are technical cooperation programs focused on the strengthening of local authorities and the teaching of peace policy, victim assistance, historical memory, transitional justice, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and land restitution; €3 million are part of the EU Trust Fund for Colombia and €5 for the Multi-Donor UN Fund. Lastly, €2.3 million correspond to the Humanitarian Route Clearance/De-Mining Program.

Steinmeier assured Germany's support of the OAS Mission to accompany the peace process, especially its active and financial participation in the de-mining and re-integration processes. Likewise, he reiterated Germany's support for cooperative programs for rural development, environment, and technical education.

Insofar as bilateral cooperation, Germany is the first country in terms of cooperation with Colombia as it relates to the environment, science, technology, and innovation.

### **The German Federal Republic's Official Development Cooperation/Aid**

Development policy cooperation between Germany and Colombia has existed for more than 50 years. The priority areas of cooperation are defined every two years via intergovernmental consultations and negotiations that aim at the signature of an agreement between both nations. The execution of these technical cooperation projects is under the purview of the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) while financial cooperation is executed by the Reconstruction Credit Institute (KfW).

Currently, there exist two priorities in this binational cooperation: 1) the actualization of peace and the prevention of future crises; and 2) environmental policy, environmental protection, and the sustainable use of natural resources. The most important programs in terms of German technical cooperation that were carried out during the last decade in the fields of peace-building and transitional justice in Colombia were:

- Development of Peace through the Promotion of Cooperation between the State and Civil Society, CERCAPAZ (timespan: 2007-2015).

- Strengthening of Women's Rights for the Prevention of Violence in Colombia, ProDe-Mujer, (timespan: 2010-2012).
- Promotion of Confidence Measures for the Participative Implementation of Environmental Policies AMEM, SerMacarena I, (timespan: 2011-2012).
- Promotion of Dialogue Processes and Negotiation for the Participative Implementation of Environmental Policies AMEM, SerMacarena II, (timespan: 2013-2015).
- Strengthening of the Rule of Law, FortalEsDer, (timespan: October 2004-March 2014).
- Support for the Peace Process in Colombia via the Law for Justice and Peace, ProFis, (timespan: 2008-2014).

German cooperative development has a good reputation in Colombia. In Germany itself, the diverse array of cooperative development projects are periodically evaluated with the goal of comparing expectations to reality. Not many of these reports are publicly available; the few that are, however, show that despite the generally positive evaluations, there are also criticisms and challenges. Some projects achieve solid results at an individual or local level, yet do not scale up to a societal level. The lack of political will of those actors involved in these projects is the greatest obstacle to the achievement of indirect positive externalities related to peace. The evaluations show that the projects are not capable of changing local or even national power structures, and instead work within or with these entrenched structures.

### **The Activities of the Political Foundations**

Political foundations constitute a special element for German policy. Political foundations are meant to be understood as educational institutions with certain sociopolitical and democratic ends. They are often linked to political parties even though they technically are legally independent of them. Their primary functions are political education in Germany and abroad, talent promotion, and cooperative development.

The fact that each political foundation maintains a distinct network of political parties and civil society organizations means that the foundations, as one over-arching entity, cover a broad ideological spectrum and provide a valuable complement to the official Germany foreign policy.

In Colombia, three political foundations are currently represented with their own office: the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (Fescol); the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) and the Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung (HSS). A quick glimpse at the events, training measures, publications, and other activities actualized by these foundations shows that the support of the Colombian peace process is an important objective for all of them. Even if the three political foundations could be classified differently according to varying political ideologies, and could cooperate with different groupings of national partners hailing from diverse political and social backgrounds, they nonetheless unite together under a basic democratic and pluralist consensus. Apart from their activities in Colombia, these political foundations play an important role in informing public opinion in Germany concerning the goings-on in Colombia and the condition of German-Colombian dialogue. These foundations regularly invite their Colombian counterparts to Germany, where seminars, expert round-tables, and conversations are held and where meetings with decision-makers are organized. This type of trans-border dialogue is very enriching for the German-

Colombian relations and represents an important complement to the official binational relations of the two countries.

### **Conclusion**

There exists a great degree of compromise amongst German governmental and non-governmental actors in relation to the search for peace and the democratic development of Colombia. There is a great variety of activities that can continue to be strengthened following the peace accords. Areas in which German experience could prove to be particularly useful include, for example, peace studies, the theme of a memorializing culture/historical memory, transitional justice, and the treatment of gender issues. Of course, this external support will be nothing more than a one-time fix because all projects carried out will only concentrate on certain areas or certain issues. But, these external actors could still give important impetuses and promote training and learning systems that take into account other actors, levels, and influences in a more long-term fashion.

This presentation has focused only on cooperation as it relates to peacebuilding as a strict, well-defined concept. This is certainly not to say that cooperation in other areas (i.e. sustainable development, scientific-technological cooperation) could not also be seen as a contribution to peace, especially when using a broader conceptualization of peace, such as “positive peace” proposed by Galtung.

At the same time, however, one must realize that a country can act in contradictory ways. For example, Germany is often criticized for the huge quantity of coal it imports from Colombia. Critics point out a two-fold contradiction, wherein Germany both imports coal despite its own global sustainability goals promoted by the German Energy Revolution and ignores the human rights violations that occur in the coal mines of Colombia.

The activities of the European Union concerning Colombia are also not exempt from criticism. On one side, the EU has initiated many activities and policies to support the peace process in Colombia. However, critics also point out that the EU and Colombia have signed off on the EU-Andean Community Association Agreement, an agreement that has heretofore produced dubious results. In this sense, one could say that more just and conscious trade could be a very important contribution to peace in Colombia (and the world), as much for Germany as for the European Union as a whole.

# Latin America in Times of Donald Trump

Detlef Nolte

Let me begin with a phrase written by Pablo Stefanoni in the Argentine newspaper, *La Nación*; he says that the world has turned into an almost indecipherable map, and I believe in this moment, no one can disagree with that sentiment. Due to the growth of uncertainty in the world, the need for reliable predictions has also increased; unfortunately, creating these prognostications is anything but easy. Even though the election of Donald Trump presents a challenge for all governments, this challenge is the gravest for the governments of Latin America. As the ex-Foreign Minister of Mexico, Jorge Castañeda, has said, there is absolutely no doubt that “[n]o region will suffer more under Trump’s presidency than the Western Hemisphere.” Latin America is threatened not only by the policies and laws implemented by Trump. The Trump Presidency is occurring in a very tenuous and adverse moment for the region, and it seems that Latin America must confront five additional deficiencies: I’ll call them the five F’s because they are the things that Latin America “faltan”, or lacks, in the landscape that we currently observe for the region. These include the following “faltas”: economic perspectives, political stability, friends and international allies, regional leadership, and finally, regional solidarity.

Now I will touch upon the first “falta”, the lack of economic perspectives. The region’s economy once saw times of abundance and fat cows, but these times, as we now know, are long gone. The great question is whether or not Latin American fully took advantage of the natural resource boom; according to data provided by CEPAL (or the ECLAC, UN Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean in English), the GDP for the region decreased some 1.1% during 2016. Even the forecasts for this year (2017) that were made before Trump’s election are not very uplifting: ECLAC says that the Latin America region can expect a slight recovery of some 1.3% in the following year, while the South America growth rate weighs in at a measly 0.9%. The projections made by the IMF and WB are similar to those of ECLAC, if not a bit lower. The question here then is what effects will Trump’s protectionist and isolationist policies have on the region? According to data provided by ECLAC, after a 14.7% decrease in Latin American and Caribbean exports in 2015, 2016 ushered in a further decrease of an additional 5%. According to ECLAC statistics, in the past 16 years, Latin America has claimed, with minimal variations, a 6% share of participation in the global export flow of goods and services. The lack of growth reflects a region whose export structure is undiversified. In effect, more than half of the exports that originate in the Latin America region consist of commodities or manufactured products originating from natural resources. As such, the participation of Latin America in the markets for high value technologic goods has diminished. All in all, Latin America is confronting a very complicated situation due to a participation in global commerce marked by low levels

of growth and strong tendencies towards protectionism. These conditions create a very weak position for Latin America and give little power in negotiation. As the economist Mario Cimoli of ECLAC summarizes quite well, the desire to sell on the global market is similar to a bunch of people wrestling to try and pass through a tiny door. It seems that with the arrival of Trump, this door has become even smaller for Latin America.

The second “falta” is the lack of political stability. As the most recent report published by Transparency International 2016 says, 2016 was a good year for the fight against corruption in Latin America. This is certainly good news, however despite this momentary ray of hope, the report nonetheless stresses that Latin America still has a long way to go in their fight against corruption. Undoubtedly, in the long term, the advances that have been made in Latin America against corruption can contribute to the sanitization of political systems and the betterment of the quality of the region’s democracies. However, in the short term, and in this point I find myself in agreement with the Madam Ambassador, the advances nonetheless have the capacity to encumber democracy. With every new corruption scandal that is uncovered, the discontent amongst the citizenry towards political institutions grows and the discrediting of the political class strengthens. In effect, these corruption scandals, economic crises, and measures aimed at restoring economic stability and growth have all weakened many Latin American governments. This is made more than evident in the fall in levels of citizen confidence in the region’s governments, as well as in the growth of discontent with democracy. As the surveys of Latino-barometro show, satisfaction levels with respect to the functioning of democracy in the different countries and the support of democracy have decreased. The citizens have little confidence in their respective political institutions, and in many countries, the levels of support for the current governments and presidents are now quite low. This has meant that the risk of social mobilization and massive political protests has recently been on the rise. To complicate this lingering social hazard, many Latin American executives must also contend with the fact that they cannot count on a stable party majority in their respective parliaments. Due to these political and economic circumstances, more and more governments are directing the majority of their efforts towards dealing with internal, domestic issues. With the exception of Mexico, foreign policy is simply not a priority for many Latin American governments. In fact, for some countries like Brazil, policies of austerity or adjustment have meant that resources destined for the foreign ministry have seen a significant cutback.

The third “falta” is the lack of international friends and allies. With the election of Trump, it is quite likely that the relationship between the United States and Latin America will become tenser. Trump has utilized Mexico as a scapegoat; this is especially true for two central issues of his campaign: immigration and the protection of U.S. commercial interests. For example, a few days after Trump’s rise to the presidency, he fulfilled two major promises that he made on the campaign trail. First, he issued a decree to permit the construction of a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, which, according to Trump, would be paid for by using remittances that Mexicans send from the United States. The second promise that Trump fulfilled was the issuance of a decree that penalizes so-called “sanctuary cities” and permits the automatic and immediate incarceration of any undocumented immigrants that are found to be currently residing within U.S. borders.

Amongst other promises put forth by the President on the campaign trail, Trump has also threatened to deport millions of undocumented immigrants and to make drastic changes to the NAFTA agreement with Canada and Mexico. All of these measures have already had a strong impact on the Mexican economy. In other sectors of the Trump administration, many substantial doubts exist. For example, doubt still marks the following subject areas: U.S. policy towards Cuba; the support of countries lying within the Northern Triangle in Central America; the reaction to the Venezuelan crisis; and the position of the U.S. in relation to the peace process in Colombia, which I will refer to in passing but will leave the bulk of to the Colombian experts.

In a book published last year, Joseph Tulchin offered a retrospective on the Obama administration. In this book, Tulchin writes – which I find myself in agreement with – “instead of the ugly American, Obama seemed like the good-looking American.” If we use this frame of reference, it now seems as if power has returned to the ugly-looking American. In an allusion to the film by Wim Wenders, entitled “The American Friend”, it seems as if Latin American governments are now asking themselves how they can substitute or replace their old American friend. One of the candidates that may be able to help Latin America to counteract the influence of the United States may be Europe. However, in the current times, it is quite unlikely that Europe will be able to efficiently fill this role. The European Union is also quite busy dealing with the implications of Brexit, as well as handling the negotiations with the UK that will dictate the nation’s departure from the bloc. The European model is not overwhelmingly attractive to Latin America. In fact, Europe is still trying to figure out its own strategy to take on in the face of Trump’s policies. This year will see key elections in three European countries: France, the Netherlands, and Germany. One may have predicted that in 2017, great European initiatives with Latin America would be advanced. Indeed, 2017 might have proved to be a good moment for Europe to get closer with Mexico, reach an agreement with MERCOSUR, and maybe increase its cooperation with the Pacific Alliance. However, in an election year, it is quite unlikely that European politicians would dare to enter into a conflict with agro-interest groups which are an obstacle for an agreement with Mercosur. If Europe still doesn’t know what role it might play in the new international scenario, it is even less likely that they have thought about what role they will play in relation to Latin America specifically. If Europe is not the knight in shining armor that can save Latin America, who is?

Many countries in Latin America are hedging their bets on China, so much so that China may soon be both their principal trading partner and knight in shining armor. On one hand, China is continuing to present itself as the defender of free trade in various forums, such as those of Davos (WEF) and the APEC summit in Lima. On the other hand, a great risk still exists that tensions and conflicts between China and the U.S. will continue to rise. A trade war between the two nations would have strong consequences and repercussions on many economies, especially those of Latin America – and especially those Latin American nations with strong trade ties to China. However, some academics believe that the trade competition between China and the U.S. could prove to be a good opportunity for Latin America. For example, Oliver Stuenkel of the Getulio Vargas Foundation of Sao Paulo has said that,



[w]hile trade negotiators in Brasilia and Buenos Aires may have hoped for a deal with Europe or the U.S., Beijing increasingly looks like the only partner offering a meaningful opportunity, building on already existing free trade agreements with Costa Rica, Peru, and Chile. Similarly, when it comes to attracting investors to modernize the region's rotten infrastructure, no country offers as much as the Middle Kingdom. China, free to promote alternative trade deals now that Trump promised to pull out of TPP, faces a world of opportunities in Latin America (Stuenkel 2016, n.p.).

In another interview, the same author predicted that in a short while, China will become the most influential country in the region. This vision is also shared – although perhaps not quite as bluntly – by many other commentators. The main question is whether or not the China option is in fact viable and advantageous for all of the Latin American countries; this is something that I believe must be discussed in further detail.

Moving forward, I now arrive at the fourth “falta”, the lack of regional leadership. The times when various Latin American presidents tried to compete with one another for the helm of regional leadership lie in the past; such leaders like Lula da Silva of Brazil and Hugo Chavez of Venezuela are long gone. In today's context, there is no president in Latin America who seems to be willing or ready to take on such a weighty leadership role. The vast majority are just trying to consolidate their own leadership over domestic policy. Furthermore, no country really possesses the material capacity to assume leadership. Brazil is currently experiencing a profound economic crisis from which it is just starting to, slowly and painfully, recover. The country also suffers from a growing social instability; taken together, these uncertainties combine to restrict activities and initiatives that this country may implement in relation to their foreign policy. While there might be a possibility for Brazil to retake leadership of the region, it would first have to define its regional agenda and develop a common policy with respect to the U.S. and China. In other words, the aspiration of Brazil to become a regional power has now passed to the secondary place, or, at the very least, it has been placed on stand-by.

The other economic power of Latin America is Mexico. However, Mexico's future depends on the caprices of the Trump administration, and today more than ever, the relations between Mexico and the U.S. are the nodal point of Mexican foreign policy. Complicating this is the fact that Mexico is currently confronting a scarcity of resources, worsened by the reduction in the Foreign Ministry's and Minister's budget. As such, Mexico also cannot effectively fulfill this much-needed role for Latin America. With respect to those so-called “middle powers” of the region, one also cannot expect too much. Colombia is focused on defending and developing its peace process and that depends heavily on the good will of governments as dissimilar as the U.S. and Venezuela. In Venezuela, policies today are dominated by the economic crisis gripping the country and the fight for survival put on by the Chavista regime. In fact, in relation to their foreign policy, Venezuela has lost quite a bit of power within the region, and it increasingly finds itself further and further isolated, as can be seen from its recent suspension from MERCOSUR. To this issue, one must also take into account the position that Trump will take with respect to Venezuela. On the other hand, in Argentina, the president finds himself focusing on maintaining the power to govern; this is threatened by the current Peronist majority in Congress and a pretty complicated economic situation. Finally, in Chile, the Bachelet government is confront-

ing some of its lowest approval ratings of its term; furthermore, the elections that will be held in 2017 will occur simultaneously with the complex process of elaborating a new constitution.

However, this lack of leadership refers not only to the will or capacity to govern and lead, but also to the ideas that seek to guide the region. There are currently no ideas or unifying principles. Neoliberalism, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Socialism, the Statist Model of Brazil's PT, and even the Liberal Chilean Model have all failed, or are at least encountering serious problems. Furthermore, the region seems to be travelling in the opposite direction of the U.S., and the pendulum in Latin America seems to be moving in the direction of a greater opening, especially as the U.S. continues to adopt more and more short-term protectionist and mercantilist policies.

Now, the last "falta": the lack of regional solidarity. In an article entitled, "Latin America and Donald Trump," Abraham F. Lowenthal advises the governments of Latin America that they "should strengthen their regional and subregional organizations by building or improving those institutions' capacities for effective goal-setting and problem-solving" (Lowenthal 2016, n.p.). In the same vein, the Secretary General of UNASUR, Ernesto Samper, wrote an article in *El Pais* concerning "Hurricane Trump"; in it, he said the threatening policies towards Latin America that the U.S. put forth should be seen in the region as an opportunity to stand in defense of hemispheric interests, fortify the processes of integration, and consolidate alliances with other countries and other regions of the world, such as with China and the Pacific region. The advices of Lowenthal and Samper are good, yet from my point of view, they aren't realistic.

There is just not a sufficient amount of evidence to allow for an optimistic view of Latin America's future following Trump's rise to power. In fact, the recent declarations by the Canadian government indicate that they will leave Mexico alone in the re-negotiations of NAFTA, instead opting for a bilateral trade agreement with their neighbor. I do not believe that Canada's reaction is an isolated case. Rather, I see it reflecting a pattern of behavior that could also spread across the whole of Latin America due to the repeated threats issued by Donald Trump. Thanks to the great weight and influence that the United States has on various nations of Latin America, and thanks to the difficulties that afflict the region, it is quite unlikely that the arrival of Trump will suddenly rile up intraregional solidarity. On the contrary, I believe that a position of "save yourself if you can" will prevail within the region. Or, as the common refrain says, "la caridad bien entendida empieza por uno mismo", in English "charity begins at home." I have the impression that many South American governments are thinking, "poor Mexico, and maybe poor Central America, they're so far from God and so close to the United States... but us, we aren't Mexico, we're different, we're further afield, and perhaps we can reach a special treatment or such." Through this lens, one can say that the Trump factor could very well prove to be a danger for regional solidarity. For example, various Colombian commentators, and a few Colombian newspapers as well, perceive their country to be the nation best politically allied with the U.S. in all of Latin America. Seeing as such, they show their relative optimism in their hope that, despite the arrival of Trump, the United States will continue maintaining its tight relationship with Colombia, especially with regard to the peace process and war on drugs.

Anyhow, in a commentary made in a Sao Paulo Forum, Matias Spektor (2017), also an analyst for the Getulio Vargas Foundation of Sao Paulo, emphasized that Brazil will not be affected by U.S. policies because Brazil's manufacturing sector exports little to the U.S. and Brazilian im-

migration to the U.S. is nowhere near as significant as, say, that of Mexico. Spector recommends that Brazil establish a cooperative relationship between the U.S. and Brazil in terms of security issues and encourage private firms, like Embraer, to seek out deeper levels of cooperation with their counterparts in the United States.

In this respect, it is important to mention that even before taking a position of protest towards Trump, in December of 2016, there was an initiative put forth by different business sectors – as much in Brazil as in the U.S. where it was represented respectively by the National Confederation of Industries (CNI in Portuguese), the American Chamber of Commerce in Brazil (Amcham-Brasil) and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce – that proposed the promotion of a FTA between Brazil and the U.S. following Trump's assumption of office. This agreement would have fit well with the foreign policy goals of the Temer government. On the other hand, other governments in the region seem to be reorienting themselves towards Asia, and especially towards China. China already has many tight relationships, for example with Ecuador and Venezuela, and this is true even more so following the announcement that Trump and the U.S. would not ratify the TPP. After this, China quickly reaffirmed its intention to continue promoting its own FTAs. In fact, some governments of Latin America, like those of Chile and Peru, have already expressed their interest in some of these initiatives. Another element that might help to overcome the discordant and isolated relations in the region following Trump's new policies could be regional organizations. Lamentably, this is also not very feasible, especially seeing that current regional integration processes are stagnating. The lack of leadership and the growing polarization between South American countries have paralyzed UNASUR, whose attempt to mediate the Venezuelan conflict was a complete disaster. Furthermore, and to agree completely with what Andres Serbin has said, the positioning of UNASUR Sec. Gen. Samper with respect to the Venezuelan crisis and the impeachment of President Rousseff has greatly weakened the regional standing of this body.

On the other hand, MERCOSUR also finds itself in a time of crisis. To begin, Venezuela is now suspended from the body. Similarly, a strong pressure on the part of its member nations also exists to end the customs union and permit the negotiation of separate bilateral FTAs. In any case, it remains to be seen whether or not these tendencies will lessen or if, on the contrary, they will be reinforced by the unilateral and protectionist policies of Trump. Another interesting case is that of the Pacific Alliance. Even though this initiative represents the opposite model of Trump's protectionism, all of its member states could see an effect on their economies if changes in U.S. trade policies were to occur seeing as they all have FTAs with the United States. Furthermore, the levels of trade within the bloc are quite small. That said, it is possible that the Pacific Alliance is seen as a model to emulate in the postliberal era of Trump. On one hand, the mini-lateral agreements like the PA could become a response to the current crises confronting the more macro-level multilateral and mega-regional agreements. On the other hand, this agreement could also reinforce the reorientation of the Latin American economies towards the Asia-Pacific region, and as such, it might also help to counteract the adverse effects that a Trump presidency might produce.

Before ending, let me mention a written reflection by Andrew Malamud (2016) in a recently published article in *Nueva Sociedad* where he writes about how Latin America is now witnessing

the emergence of a multipolar world that is producing currents of fragmentation and heterogenization. As a consequence, Latin America is becoming ever more “multi” inwardly and less a “pole” outwardly. All in all though, it is not so grave in terms of comparative historical perspective. A region that is irrelevant, yet democratic, and without wars, is an absolute luxury. I am sure that nobody could disagree with the basic message of this phrase; however, from my point of view, the irrelevance or marginalization of the region are not effective solutions to protect the region from adversities that the world may soon present, a world that is undoubtedly undergoing profound and continuous changes. To make matters more complex, this is all happening against the backdrop of a new U.S. government. For example, Trump’s policies may increase interest rates in the region. If this threat is real, one must remember the effects that the increase in interests rates had in the U.S. and Latin America at the start of the Lost Decade of the 80’s and all of the social and politics consequences that this increase brought to the region. Thus, Latin American governments should not retract, but rather try to develop new strategies that will allow them to recover and consolidate a major role at the global level in the face of current global uncertainties: there is simply no other alternative for the region.

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## Colombia and its Neighbors

Wolf Grabendorff

There can be no doubt that the regional architecture in Latin America was quite complicated even before the arrival of Trump and his possible impact on hemispheric relations. In the last two years, six of the key countries in the region have completely changed their geopolitical profile and subsequently their intra- and extra-regional relations. These are notable changes in their own right, but to make matters worse, in the past couple of years Mexico has lost its capacity of effective governance in important parts of its territory. Secondly, Cuba has markedly changed its political orientation. Half of its population claims to be now friends with the United States, the traditional enemy of the past – but the same cannot be said of the other half of the population, mainly afraid of the changes to come. On the other hand, the close and decisive relationship for the Cuban economy with Venezuela has also changed dramatically.

Moving on to Colombia, one sees that during the Santos administration, this country has completely altered its international profile. President Santos had the great opportunity of confronting the United States in a way that Colombia had never done before. Following pressure from officials and non-officials in Washington to establish a common front against Venezuela, he said, “I will not be an ally against Chavism.” This was really a great rupture for Colombia in light of its long history of a very special relationship with the United States. It was also a chance for Colombia to initiate a reintegration with the Latin America community, where it was more or less absent and isolated for a good fifty years, mainly due to its internal conflict. Therefore, in this context, it can be assumed that Colombia has changed its regional position. About Venezuela there seems to be no need here to discuss the enormous changes that this country is suffering, with so far unknown effects for its neighbors, especially Colombia.

Brazil, as consequence of its dramatic internal turmoil, has lost its regional cloud. The internal conditions of Brazil may not be democratic, but its former policy profile has nonetheless greatly changed. President Temer has now offered the United States the use of a military base in the Amazonian region. When this decision is viewed in the context of the historic Brazilian posturing in sovereignty issues, it appears clearly to be an unthinkable move in the frame of its foreign policy tradition.

Argentina, the sixth country turn around, can be summed up well by the words of President Macri: “I will change Argentina 180 degrees.” This quote also implies that Argentina has, at the very least, a government that wants to change completely the country’s regional and global positioning from what it was before. Many activities of the government reflect such a desire as much in the political-economic sphere as with regard to foreign policy postures.

This pre-Trump situation of the region implies two other defining factors as well, as Detlef Nolte has already mentioned. One is, that the idea, very popular in the past 10 years, of creating a new regional geopolitical architecture, has totally failed despite the seemingly promising discourses of governments that were committed to advance the “geopolitics of integration”. This failure can best be seen in the problems of UNASUR and CELAC to express and support common regional priorities. For example, no other country has boycotted the efforts of UNASUR as much as Colombia. Many diplomats that have worked in a variety of UNASUR councils have complained continuously that Colombia has vetoed a great number of initiatives. Additionally, Colombia was often represented by military officials, just as much as civil ones. Especially with regard to policies that negatively affected regional unity, such as Colombian agreements with the USA, this resulted in a reduced and more diminished role of the regional organization.

The other factor is the current economic situation in Colombia and in South America in general. On the country level as well as on the regional level, unstable conditions and an extremely limited capacity for economic advancement seem to dominate the current internal as well as regional debates. This situation is further complicated by a relatively low level of intra-regional cooperation and trade. But there is a possibility that Chile advances with an initiative that could lead to a closer co-operation between MERCOSUR and the Pacific Alliance (PA). This, however, would probably imply a return to a very extensive but rather weak free trade area in the region. The intra-regional trade levels of the PA are amongst the lowest of any free trade area in the world. Only 6 % of the PA's trade is intra-regional, a figure that is at present only a bit higher for the MERCOSUR, given that intra-regional trade in the Southern Cone has declined especially since the beginning of the economic crisis in Brazil.

In this context, the world seems to be giving the region an important advice how to react to Trump's rise to power: think bilateral! What has been happening for some time is a notable decline of force of multilateralism, a multilateralism that has been applied as much intra-regional as interregional. Most multilateral policies have not been as successful as expected by many Latin American countries, with some exceptions, of course, like environmental policies, because with respect to these types of policy, Latin America has had a relatively unified position and a positive role in the global discussions. But there seem to be very few chances to implement an effective multilateralism within the region since the political willingness of most governments to play by multilaterally accepted rules is very limited.

It therefore appears that some politicians in the region do not actually feel as disillusioned with Trump as many believe them to be. This is because they foresee that a bilateral rather than a multilateral character of their respective country's relationships with the USA is something that actually suits them better. This holds true even for progressive governments that have long talked about their commitment to regional unity. It is interesting to see, however, that they have done very little to advance it, especially when such measures might have had possibly negative effects on their own country. In this context, the rupture seen within Latin America is reflected by the two most recent expressions of regional interest that have been successfully acted upon. One was the reinclusion of Cuba into the Latin American community and the second was fostering the peace process in Colombia. Nowadays, there is no other issue in the region that could unite the countries of Latin America in the same way as the Cuban and Colombian cases were

able to do. In the current situation, there don't seem to exist any unifying international concepts in the region. This appears to be the key weakness and vulnerability that will be the defining markers of Latin America's regional relationship with the United States and possible other external actors in the years ahead.

A policy of diversification, in which every country seeks out its own niche in the international system, is obviously available to Latin America, but only in a very limited way. The only country that can really assist with this diversification, and be a relatively trustworthy ally along the way, seems to be China. In the cases of Venezuela and Ecuador, China has demonstrated that it is a quite responsible country; this responsibility has nothing to do with ideology, but rather with its needs to access natural resources and a way of thinking that entails calculations based not on years but on generations. When the Chinese Government decides upon foreign investment in Venezuela or Ecuador, it considers how these "deals" might be beneficial for China during this century, and not just in the next few years. From the point of view of many Chinese academics, questions like "who is the president of that country" or "what type of regime is governing the country" are simply not the most relevant for decisions over foreign policy or foreign investments. This is partly due to the fact that Chinese foreign investments are rarely of private capital origin, but rather of state capital.

Therefore, taking into account this generally rather complicated international position of the region, it might be worthwhile to ask with what kind of legitimacy can Colombia announce her newfound, and recently obtained, international role. Why does Colombia want to play a quite different regional role from what it used to do historically? Some 50 years ago, Colombia was obviously very capable of avoiding regional confrontations and disagreements. The only effective form of Colombian diplomacy at that time was its active participation in the OAS in Washington. No other Latin American country had a history as notable and impressive within the OAS as Colombia. That was not only by chance, since Colombia consciously avoided involving itself in any regional initiative that could be seen as contrary to United States interests. Obviously, its permanent internal conflict and a tradition of South-North-relations had an effect on this historically favored foreign policy stance. However, this has also something to do with Colombia's process of "return" to Latin America and especially to South America. This process was very difficult for the Santos government and quite disliked by many of Colombian diplomats; it was almost like a diplomatic sea change, something previously unseen in Colombia. Its role during this process of return was not that of a leading actor, but rather of a type of bridge builder aimed to linking the Northern part and the Southern part of the hemisphere. President Santos viewed such a role as essential for Colombia's geopolitical position, but he naturally ran into political problems with it, such as the difficult issues during the construction of UNASUR and the implementation of the peace process. Obviously, many Latin American countries considered the idea to take on a more important role in the Colombian peace process, but abandoned these efforts relatively because of Colombia's political sensitivities. Nonetheless, countries like Venezuela and Cuba remained: Cuba obviously filled a crucial role in it all. But Chile also played an important part, even if it was perhaps not as visible as that of Venezuela or Cuba. Not many people know that Chile created working groups in four Latin American countries to accompany the four years of dialogue and negotiation in Havana. These working groups were principally lead by ex-

diplomats, academics, and ex-military officials that – through one way or another – always tried to support the peace process, an exercise that was certainly of great importance for civil society in the region.

The regional situation is obviously much more difficult now, due to the Argentine initiated leadership aspirations, exemplified by president Macri's remarks, that the two new leaders in Latin America, following Brazil's disappearance from the leadership position, would be conjunctly Colombia and Argentina. The political reactions to this comment were more cautious on the Colombian than on the Argentinian side, but this can surely be attributed to their distinctive form of applying diplomatic initiatives. On the military side, there appears to be a third player in this new regional equilibrium: Chile. This is because all of the preparations and conversations held over the past three years concerning how the peace process will be accompanied militarily have occurred between Colombian and Chilean military officers. The Chileans had a very meaningful and active role in this respect. There is already a tripartite configuration amongst these three nations where each one tries to emphasize its own very specific role in the region. Since each nation maintains certain connections to the current form of the international system, the problem is that this type of international integration and the ease with which these three countries could work in advancing these goals has completely changed with the arrival of Trump. Nothing of the traditional type of international collaboration seems to be assured anymore. So, president Macri promised his supporters that he would open the window to the world for Argentina, but once he opened that window, this world ceased to exist. It is through this type of newfound philosophy, especially commented in the Chilean and Argentine press, that there seems to exist finally the opportunity in the region, after many years of the so-called "pink tide", the chance of entering the "liberal world order" as fully accepted members. Now, perhaps, the often claimed hemispheric division is no longer maintained by the South, but by the North, precisely exemplified by the suffering of the Mexicans from President Trump's style of migration policy.

Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela all have distinct views of Colombia, as we have heard this morning. It is clear that during Colombia's long period of internal conflict, no one in that country ever thought about what effect it might have on its neighbors. Colombia's elites had enough to worry about how to resolve their domestic problems, and the image of the internal enemy was so strong on both sides of the national ideological division that other issues, such as those related to the handling of Colombia's neighbors, were set aside for decades. Indeed, these matters of managing the neighbor-relations are of a relatively recent creation, and have seen some success in the cases of Peru and Ecuador. With Venezuela however, the relationship has been historically much more complex and given the ongoing threat of social implosion or even civil war in that country, Colombia has to fear for a catastrophic impact on its eastern border.

Brazilians, who never had much interaction with Colombia, tend to note that Colombia is looking more to itself and to the North. Now there is, obviously, the need to look to their neighbors as well. And this new orientation is something that is not so easy to implement, because it is a new experience marked by diplomacy and not as much by the traditional priorities of security and militarization. To change this orientation, all of Latin American states need something called "reeducation" – how to act, how to behave like a neighbor, how to conduct the own public



policies taking into account “foreign” neighbors, who are just that: neighbors, not enemies. In this sense the factor that might limit the new role Colombia aspires to take on has much to do with the fact that there exists an urgent need to restructure the state in a completely new way, since the historic enemy of Colombia, the FARC, against which Colombia’s political elites have spent so much time fighting, has disappeared for the time being. Some analysts within the Colombian government have forecast that the period of post-agreement with the FARC will at least last 10 years and the post-conflict period probably 20. What has to be taken into account primarily is the perspective that the post-conflict period will affect only the next generation of Colombians, who can probably count on enormous benefits and a life changing impact. However the transition from one situation to another affects many people and many institutions and will never be easy. The plebiscite of last October has clearly demonstrated that the Colombians are not against peace, but many are against change, especially the type of change linked to the main points in the agreements signed with the FARC. Ninety percent of these points deal with the formation of a new and distinct social contract in the country. Once all of them are implemented, many Colombians fear that they will no longer be able to recognize their own country. The initiative of President Santos to use the historical peace agreement with the FARC to reform all of the country’s many shortcomings and create an efficient modern state is certainly a sign of impressive statecraft, but one has to consider also the large number of Colombians who view the accords with much suspicion and preoccupation.

International cooperation in the peace process is something that should never play a very important role, but is needed nonetheless to implement the negotiated changes. These changes are seen by many as an enormous challenge, mainly due to the fact that the accords entail the dethroning of the USA as the principal foreign actor in Colombia. Since Colombia had developed the concept of “internationalization-by-invitation” for fighting the FARC and reaching a peace agreement, trying to change the internationalization of the process now will require a great turnaround in the political culture of Colombia, the most difficult thing to change in any country. Looking at the current issues dominating Colombia’s foreign policy, the Pacific Alliance (PA) uniting Mexico, Colombia, Peru and Chile in a dynamic free trade mechanism, seems to be playing an important ideological role. However, it is a bit difficult to see what might happen with the PA going forward when one takes Mexico’s role into account. Mexico stands for 82 % of the PA, and as such, there has been only limited solidarity of Peru and Colombia with the problems facing Mexico with the Trump administration. The issue of the OECD, another popular topic now with Colombia’s political and economic elites, demonstrates again how important it is to look at Mexico’s experience. Mexico was never ready, not then and even less now, to join the OECD. Actually, it can be considered one of the organization’s worst decisions to invite Mexico. The move to include Mexico quite early in its development process was the result of intense pressure by Washington. The USA wanted Mexico as a part of the OECD to facilitate the creation of NAFTA in 1994, not for Mexico’s own economic capacity as a country. Also, while Colombia’s current rapprochement towards NATO may be both technically and politically useful, it seems quite suspicious as an obvious move of the USA not to lose its military influence in a country which has been an increasingly important ally for military and security training in a large number of states in Latin America.

Likewise influential for the internal peace building process in Colombia is the civil-military relationship and all of the problems which that relationship entails. Looking forward to the next ten or fifteen years, Colombia will have to find a way to decommission a large number of military officers and soldiers. Colombia certainly has one of the most efficient and largest militaries for its size, yet the new domestic scenario does not require an army of such an enormous scale. The European Union is in many ways involved in the peace process as an external supporter, but can hardly be considered a stabilizer of peace, since the EU has to worry about a whole host of internal problems, not even to mention the international security crises closer to home. This is not so much a problem of financing, but rather a question of the EU's limited political attention span in international affairs. This transition from internal conflict to internal peace building will be decisive for Colombia, and when the EU cannot pay enough attention to this most complicated and open ended transition, it will be hard for the EU to end up having a positive impact on it all.

One way to look at such a scenario is just to accept that there is no internal consensus within Colombia to enact a substantial reform of the state. Many Colombians are backing the implementation of an agreement of the FARC in one way or another, but the accords are with the old enemy, not the current one. Now is it not the FARC that is Colombia's internal enemy, but rather the BACRIM (criminal gangs). Many groups of the BACRIM have much more territorial control over the country today, as well as local control over politics and taxes, than the FARC has ever had. In light of the rise of BACRIM, it can be said that the upcoming years of implementation of the peace accords will prove to be extremely difficult for Colombia. There can be no doubt that the end of the FARC as a political violent actor does not imply the end of wide spread violence in Colombia. However, the most important thing is that the Colombians define and concretize their own desires amongst themselves. No one can free the Colombians of their charge to organize and ensure their own country's peace.

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# Colombia's Role on the Sub-regional Level

Martha Lucía Márquez Restrepo<sup>1</sup>

I am going to concentrate on the role Colombia has on the sub-regional level, particularly in terms of its relations with the neighboring countries of Ecuador and Venezuela – relations marked by the existence of complex borders that these nations have in common with one another. What I wish to defend is that, since Juan Manuel Santo's rise to power, Colombia has searched for cooperative relationships with its neighbors not only to secure the necessary support to advance the peace process (Venezuela was a witness country and Ecuador a host country for dialogues with the ENL at their inception), but also because the consolidation of peace can only be made possible if these nations deal with border disputes and issues in a determined and concerted manner (Márquez 2016).

Additionally, Colombia must keep in mind that the consolidation of peace requires it, and its neighbors, to maintain a significant presence along its borders. This presence will foster the development of border regions through offering alternatives to those dedicated to illicit cultivation and contraband (keep in mind that the solution for the issue of illicit cultivation is a point on the peace agreement); attend to the population displaced by the violent armed conflict in Colombia (around 340,000 on the border zones) and by the Venezuelan crisis (around 40,000 Venezuelans have legally migrated to Colombia). Of this group, hundreds cross the border daily not only to buy foodstuffs and medicines, but also to access health services. Thirdly, this presence will combat illegal economies and all types of associated criminalities. This cooperation, as it relates to border issues, has been relatively successful with Ecuador, but very difficult with Venezuela.

To deal with these themes, I will refer to the situation along Colombian borders; the “Colombian Development Plan for Peace”, the position of borders on said plan, and the vision Colombia possesses towards cooperation; the cooperation with Venezuela and Ecuador. I will then close my presentation with the challenges that these borders create for Colombia.

## The Overall Situation of Colombian Borders

The borders of Colombia have historically been forgotten, swept to the side so to say. Without falling prey to historical determinism, an explanation of this neglect must overcome the origin story of Colombia's construction as a state. Specifically, one should pay attention to the fact that the territorial limits were fixed after independence, respecting the colonial demarcations (*uti possidetis iuris*). This is to say, these demarcations were finalized without wars between states and without the participation of functionaries or armies. To this, one can also credit the centralized organization that has historically characterized the Colombian State. More recently, since

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<sup>1</sup> Associate professor at the Political Science and International Relations School and Director of Research Institut Pensar at Pontificia Universidad Javeriana (Bogotá, Colombia). marquezm@javeriana.edu.co

the end of the 1990's, the armed conflict has been concentrated in these borders zones due to the violent, warring dynamic started by Plan Colombia. To this day, the blunt facts and figures show the marginalization of these regions in contrast to the rest of the country: Even though the Colombian border regions are areas rich in environmental resources, biodiversity, and ethno-culturally diverse populations, and possess a privileged geostrategic location, the bordering departments lag in social and institutional development in comparison to the rest of the country (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2015).

In these departments, the incidence of poverty, extreme poverty, and inequality are higher than the national average. To exemplify this gap, it is sufficient just to examine the percentage of poverty on a national level in 2016, which was 27.8 % (DANE), and then the percentage of poverty in the Department of Guajira, on the border with Venezuela, which was 56 %. In the same vein, while extreme poverty in the country is a condition that affects 7.9 % of the population, in this same department, the value rises to 26 % of the population.

Characterization of the Border departments									
	Nacional	Guajira	Cesar	Nte Santa	Arauca	Vichada	Guainía	Nariño	Putumayo
Poverty Index (2013)	30	56	45	39	ND	ND	ND	48	ND
Extreme Poverty Index (2013)	9	26	13	11	ND	ND	ND	15	ND
Gini	0,539	0,562	0,489	0,48	ND	ND	ND	0,52	ND
Unemployment	9,6	71,	8,3	13	ND	ND	ND	11	ND
Education coverage rate	88	75	94	86	72	67	71	78	78
Homicide rate * 100 thousand 2012	35	27	23	49	82	45	0	41	57
Total forcibly displaced displacement (expulsion) accumulated	4792852	94592	252262	148909	82087	16325	5239	250914	174172
Total forcibly displaced displacement (reception) cumulative	1211246			134555	54998	5463	7314	225473	98477
GDP Participation		1,202	2,03	1,58	0,88	0,055	0,034	1,48	0,52
Secondary viral network paved * 100,000 inhabitants (2011)		30	17	25	ND	ND	ND	8	ND

Information based on DANE. Regional characterization chart.

<https://www.dnp.gov.co/programas/desarrollo-territorial/Paginas/Fichas-de-Characterizacion-Regional.aspx> (November 17, 2022).

The problems of security are also greater in the border regions. Of all armed conflict, 60 % is concentrated in the Departments of Norte de Santander and Arauca (both bordering Venezuela), Putumayo, Nariño, Cauca (bordering Ecuador and Peru) and Antioquia, the only department that is not on the border. In the Arauca department, bordering Venezuela, 92 % of all attacks against the petroleum infrastructure in Colombia in 2014 were carried out – attacks that are continually perpetrated by the ELN (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, DANE 2014, 40). In many of these zones, spaces left empty by the FARC have begun to be filled by criminal gangs.

On another note, impunity is also higher in bordering departments. The departments most affected by this scourge are Chocó (on the border with Panamá), Nariño and Putumayo (on the border with Ecuador and Perú), Vaupés, Vichada, Arauca, and Norte de Santander (bordering Venezuela and Brazil) (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, DANE 2014, 39).

All of the aforementioned facts and figures combine to form a high vulnerability index for the region. This index is an indicator that measures, “insecurity and the defenselessness that communities, families, and individuals experience as a consequence of the impact made by the armed conflict and organized criminality” (Departamento Nacional de Planeación. Dirección de justicia, seguridad y gobierno 2015, 6).

The border areas are also zones with high concentrations of illicit cultivation. According to the United Nations’ Office on Drugs and Crimes, in their report dated July 2016 that covered the year 2015, between 2014 and 2015 there was an increase in production of the coca leaf of 38 %, growing from 69,000 hectares to 96,000 hectares. For the year 2016, it is believed that that value has grown to somewhere in the range of some 130,000 to 200,000 cultivated hectares. The production is also concentrated in the border regions, see: the Pacific Region bordering Ecuador, and the Putumayo-Caquetá Region bordering Ecuador and Peru.<sup>2</sup>

### **The “Plan for National Development” 2014-2018: The Vision for Borders and Cooperation**

Recognizing the current condition of the border, the “Plan for National Development” 2014-2018 was conceived to realize a lasting peace, and therefore makes explicit reference to the border zones (Department for National Planning, DANE 2014, 30). The plan proposes the adoption of an economic development model that would allow for the eradication of extreme poverty by the year 2024, and reduction of demographic and territorial gaps in the provision of health care, education, public services, and connectivity (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, DANE 2014, 58 ss.)

For these objectives to be achieved, the border territories must be properly included into the zones defined by the plan. Therefore, five economically interconnected and integrated regions must be created: The Caribbean region, East Central, the Plains, Pacific, and Center-South Amazon. Then, these regions must search out channels for cooperation and interaction with their neighbors.

This strategy is included within the “Borders for Prosperity Plan”, whose resources were provided in the document *Conpes 3805 Prosperidad para las fronteras de Colombia*, in which it was assigned 46 million USD to be utilized in 13 border zones between 2015 and 2018. The plan has, as its linchpin, extensive investment in development projects, which today number 652 in 75 of the 77 municipal border districts. The strengthening of institutionalism to combat these border issues can also be found in these purposes and goals; particularly between the national border

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2 The increase in cultivation, according to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, is directly tied to the increase in prices of the coca leaf, almost some 50 % (3,000 Peso per kg, 1 US Dollar per kg); suspension of aerial fumigation; in the border regions of Venezuela, the measures against fuel contraband make the mafias search out other sources of income; and, the expectations for the farm workers to secure greater compensation through substitution programs that dis-incentivize illicit cultivation.

care centers CENAF, the binational border care centers CEBAF,<sup>3</sup> and the binational round tables to attend to prompt, immediate issues.

### **Colombian-Venezuelan Relations and the Border: A Difficult Cooperation**

Even though the relationship between Colombia and Venezuela was not easy while Hugo Chávez y Álvaro Uribe Vélez were both presidents, following the re-establishment of ties after Juan Manuel Santos' rise to power, the relationship has been more dynamic and more cooperative. However, this tendency appears to have been reversed as Maduro ascended to the presidency (Márquez 2012)

Between 2010 and 2013 Chávez and Santos met some five times, the last being in March of 2012 in Havana following the convalescence of the Venezuelan president. During the same time period the foreign ministers met nine times, and members of the binational mechanisms that were created during the re-establishment of relations met on various occasions. Many of the meetings between presidents and foreign ministers had the evaluation of the advances made by the binational commissions as their objective. These commissions were created in the meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, 2010, and were established to work on the themes of debt payment to Colombian industries, economic complementarity, social investment along the border, security, infrastructure, energy, and tourism.

In fact, in one of these evaluation meetings, having taken place on April 9, 2011, the presidents signed an cooperation agreement specifically covering the issues of drug traffic/trafficking, industry and tourism. They agreed, for example, to construct an oil pipeline to the Pacific, to create a common industry for the production of generic medications, to found one common steel market, and to construct of a bridge – among other issues.

In contrast, in the four years that the Nicolas Maduro government has been in office, the presidents have only met one another four times, the last time being in August of 2016 to discuss the unilateral reopening of the border closed by Maduro in 2015. Such unilateral decisions made by the Venezuelan government, the last of which was made in December 2016 and involved the Venezuelans claiming that Colombia had been economically sabotaging the regime by hoarding monetary reserves, have paralyzed the binational mechanisms for cooperation. This type of relationship, which can be summed up by the expulsion of Colombians by Venezuela and by the migration of Venezuelans to Colombia, has created a humanitarian crisis according to organizations like the Jesuit Refugee Service and ACNUR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees), which are present in the region.

Since 2013, some 21,000 Colombians have returned from Venezuela, whether through voluntary means or through deportations, the latter of which occurred in August 2015 when Venezuela violently expelled 1,500 Colombian nationals. The problem only intensifies when one realizes that even though around 40,000 Venezuelans have legally migrated to Colombia, a considerably higher number of Venezuelans cross the border daily. These people cross the

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3 The CEBAF are the set of facilities located in a portion of territory adjacent to either one or two member nations of the CAN, such as a border crossing. It is an area where a comprehensive governmental force controls the flow of people, luggage, merchandise, and vehicles, and the provision of complementary services is provided to those who pass through the border zones.

border not only to buy foodstuffs and medicines, but also to receive health services in the nation, taking note that according to our [Colombia's] system of healthcare, emergency attention cannot be denied regardless of nationality. This situation is greatly impacting health services in border cities, especially ones like Arauca.

In addition to the neglect for both the migrant population and the social issues that have generated repeated closures of the border (bankruptcy of traders/dealers, money changers, and drivers) the uncooperative attitude of Venezuela has impeded a proper communal confrontation of the problems that the two nations share with one another, such as high indices of criminality on the Guajira Peninsula on account of criminal bands and gangs such as the Rastrojos, the Urabeños, and even Mexican cartels like the Sinaloa and the Zetas. The militarization of the border has also failed to eradicate illegal traffic (fuels, drugs, and foodstuffs – specifically meat) that occur in the Norte de Santander and Santander Departments. In particular, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime signaled that the barriers erected to halt the movement of fuel have only moved capital towards the industry of coca cultivation. The aforementioned facts and anecdotes can be summarized by the following statistic: according to a report published by the Office of the Chancellery in 2016, the government has only apportioned 60 % of the budget laid out for the “Plan for the Borders”.

This unfavorable harbinger for cooperation does not seem as if it can be modified in the short term, taking into account the fact that the process to impeach Maduro has been suspended by the Supreme Court and that there appears to be no other route for the President to leave power (at least there is no other constitutional way: impeachment is unattainable, the idea of him abandoning power is absurd, and, above all, whichever legislative measure to remove the president that could be created would have to pass through the Supreme Court). One must also point out that the undesirable departure of Maduro vis-à-vis a military coup also does not seem probable due to the difficulties in its coordination. This unlikely chance can additionally be attributed to the support that the military leadership has given the regime due to the beneficial businesses that the government has awarded them, amongst them the importation and distribution of foodstuffs.

The even greater deterioration of the Venezuelan situation has been described by the International Crisis Group in 2015 as a humanitarian crisis the likes of those suffered by countries reeling from natural disasters (ICG 2015) (finishing the year 2016 with an inflation level higher than 700 %, having a scarcity level of 80 % for basic products, and claiming some of the highest levels of violence in the world at 90 murders per 100,000 inhabitants). This crisis could also very well lead to a higher rate of Venezuelan migration. All in all, these conditions could create a regional problem whose scope could worry international actors as far away as Europe. It has been calculated that since 1999, 2 million Venezuelans have emigrated from Venezuela, principally to the USA (30 %), Spain, Chile, Panamá and Colombia. It can be noted that also, due to the fact that Venezuela has been a country open to migration since the 1940s, close to 1 million Venezuelans have dual nationality, especially Italian, Spanish and Portuguese; this would allow those with dual nationality to legally move between these nations. The warning signs ahead of a massive Venezuelan migration have already begun: various means of communication have noted that the Curacao Red Cross has been preparing to receive migrants; the National Party of



Panama has warned of a such a possibility; and in Peru, a wide discussion has been produced in account of the situation of illegality for the 6,000 Venezuelans who have stayed there following Venezuela’s exit from Mercosur, which also excluded these citizens from the right to freedom of movement and residency.

**Colombian-Ecuadorian Relations: Good Will**

Despite the differences between Juan Manuel Santos and Rafael Correa, stemming from not only their ideological positions but also from the fact that Santos was the defense minister that authorized Operation Phoenix – an operation that violated the sovereignty of Ecuador in order to take down the FARC guerrilla Raul Reyes – there has been a re-establishment of relations between the two countries with the help of multilateral institutions and the Carter Center. A certain confidence has appeared to have been re-established between these two presidents that can be seen in the positive allusions that Correa has made concerning Santos and his support that he has given the Colombian peace process, and FARC and ELN’s efforts to contribute to said process.

<b>Goals from the “Border Integration Plan” between Ecuador and Colombia</b>		
	<b>Ecuador</b>	<b>Colombia</b>
<b>Extreme Poverty</b>		
Baseline	15,3 %	17,2 %
Goal for 2017	8,6 %	13 %
<b>Chronic Malnutrition for Children under 5 years of age</b>		
Baseline	28,1 %	16,9%(en Nariño) 9,8%( en Putumayo)
Goal for 2017	3 %	13%(en Nariño) 7,5% (en Putumayo)
<b>Infant Mortality</b>		
Baseline	9,5 %	23,4%(en Nariño) 19,8% (en Putumayo)
Goal for 2017	6,5 %	18,72%(en Nariño) 15,84%( en Putumayo)
<b>Homicide Rate per 1000/h</b>		
Baseline	20,5	42,8
Goal for 2017	10,2	34,4
<b>Rate of Under-employment</b>		
Baseline	57 %	38,9 %
Goal for 2017	43,9 %	35 %
<b>Internet Subscribers 1.000/h</b>		
Baseline	4,1	2,8
Goal for 2017	7,9	4,7

Taken from the Plan Fronteras para la prosperidad and from the Plan Binacional de Integración Fronteriza. Ecuador-Colombia. 2014-2022.

This confidence has been achieved through a great diplomatic activism. From the ascendance of Santos to power until today, the two presidents have met seven times and the foreign ministers more than 20. This close relationship has been decisive in certain pivotal moments, such as the closure of the Colombian-Venezuelan border, when Correa took a position front and center.

The positive scene was made possible by the signing of the 2013 “Plan for Ecuador-Colombia Binational Border Integration” 2014-2022, which was presented as the product of the confluence of a multiplicity of development plans previously made between the two countries. Starting with a diagnostic of the social situation among the border populations, the table below shows quantifiable goals that were created to be reached by 2017.

The plan focuses on the guarantee of comprehensive human security and the pursuit of further development. To accomplish this, these plans apportioned funds and resources to contribute to the investment in electric and transit infrastructure; social welfare and security, specifically with attention paid to healthcare; and the implementation of binational mechanisms for the management and reduction of environment risks and threats.

Even though a consolidated report covering the activities realized through the Plan does not exist in full, the information provided by the press and the Minister’s office allows one to note that social brigades and agencies have been dispatched to the border regions to attend to the populations at risk, infrastructural investments have been made (for example the Rumichaca Bridge), and, even with stumbles, they have spurred the increased of commerce and business. What occurred with the exchange safeguards erected for Colombian imports was a show of force shared between the two governments: in 2015, Ecuador decided to establish exchange safeguards of 4-45 % for 2,800 tariff shipments that affected Colombian products. This was done to compensate the loss of foreign currency on account of the decrease in price of petroleum, which, when combined with the devaluation of the Colombian currency, made imported products substantially cheaper. The disparity was resolved through mutual negotiation. Following this negotiation, an agreement was signed that stated that the exchange safeguards would be maintained until 2017, but would include the elimination of around 600 products from its purview (Colombia is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest origin of Ecuadorian imports).

There has also been cooperation seen in terms of security. In 2015 both countries signed onto the Intergovernmental Cooperation Convention for the prevention of trans-border crimes. With this convention, it is hoped that a consolidation of the information systems regarding border issues can be achieved; that they can share confidential and intelligence information; that they can support civic binational actions in the thematic areas of social, education, health and basic infrastructure; and formulate programs related to technological and industrial security. They also endeavor to continue development and the execution of coordinated operations on the border zones by air, sea and land.

## **Challenges**

The dynamics on the border and between neighboring countries pose innumerable challenges for Colombia in terms of transitioning into the post-conflict time frame, which include the risk that, during the demobilization of the FARC forces, some members remain armed and take ref-

uge in the border areas, particularly on the Venezuelan border in zones like Catatumbo where the State has the most trouble in exerting its presence. The fear that this might occur has also been expressed by the Ecuadorian Defense Minister, Ricardo Patino, who emphasized the need for more effective Colombian military forces to be placed on the border for the conflict to come to a successful end.

The end of the conflict can also catalyze a situation in which many migrants and refugees return across the border. In Ecuador, for example, there are more than 50,000 Colombian refugees who would be able to begin thinking about returning to their homeland, not only due to the newfound peaceful conditions but also in hopes of obtaining reparation and land restitution. In Venezuela, ACNUR has calculated that there are 167,000 people in the country illegally, the majority of them being Colombian nationals.

Since 2013, 21,000 people have returned to Colombia from Venezuela. As such the Colombian State must attend to the returning nationals, not only expanding upon emergency measures like those applied for natural disasters (as did in August 2015), but also by searching for long term plans for economic and social integration. The same measures must also be taken by Colombia particularly as it regards the inhabitants of Guajira, Santander, and Norte de Santander. Those affected by the unforeseeable decisions by Maduro to almost completely cut off bilateral commerce are especially at risk (in 2008 trade between Colombia and Venezuela rose to some seven billion dollars, however today, trade barely reaches 800 million dollars).

Finally, another great challenge that Colombia must face is the many migrants in route to the United State that pass through the country – especially Cubans, Haitians, and Venezuelans. According to figures compiled by Migration Colombia, in 2014, there were 2,100 cases documented; in 2015, 9,000, and in 2016, 34,000. That is to say, in the last year, this phenomenon has increased fourfold. In order to contain this phenomenon, they must utilize a strategy of border outsourcing as well as continue abiding by established policies of humanitarian treatment, which must be conducted by all the countries in the region that are traversed by these migrants. (Chile, for example, is the principal destination in South America; Ecuador, just like Colombia, is a transit country). This phenomenon will acquire new characteristics as Trump puts his migratory policy into place.

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# The Armed Forces in the Post-Conflict Period

Major General Nicasio de Jesús Martínez Espinel

## Introduction

These debates and conversations that you all have engaged in today have been very valuable in my opinion. I come from the land, the area, where the Omega Joint Taskforce first emerged, a taskforce which, since 2004, has weakened the strategic rearguard of the FARC. Today I find myself as Director of the Escuela Superior de Guerra where we have some 300 military students. They include colonels that are taking courses to become generals, and majors that are taking courses to become colonels. In addition to these students, we have 27 foreign officials that accompany Colombian officials and more than 250 civil persons who all play a part in developing and administering our four master programs.

I would like to tell you that Colombia's Armed Forces had been committed to the peace process even before its current iteration by Dr. Santos. With the current plans for stabilization and consolidation, we are even more committed because we know that the war will not be won on the battlefield. A timely example of this would be El Salvador; peace arrived 25 years ago with the end of the war, but since then, institutions have crumbled and today the country is the second most violent in the hemisphere. So, the most important aspect for me is the consolidation of peace through, what we what have called, the "Victory Plan for Stabilization and Consolidation".

## The Evolution of Armed Conflict

The FARC presents a few challenges to the Armed Forces in the Post-Accord scenario. To flesh out the exact nature of these challenges, it is necessary to review a few strategic concepts behind the evolution of this conflict between the Colombian State and the FARC since 1998. Over the course of this evolution, the national strategy (political aspect) began to align with the different levels of military strategy (general and operative)

The Colombian conflict is judged to be irregular, prolonged, ideologically driven, with low intensity, and favorable of China and Mao, wherein another important actor arrives on the scene: drug trafficking. Drug trafficking has turned into a combustible force for those actors who live on the margins of the law. The violence in Colombia during this time period really began in the 1948-1953 era, where violence erupted between liberals and conservatives. The 27<sup>th</sup> of May, 1964 marked the genesis of the FARC. They held their first National Guerilla Assembly one year later, in which they established their status, determined their organizational structure, discussed how their state would look like, conversed about the qualities of their Secretariat, and focused on rural, agrarian problems and issues. In that time, other groups were also born, such as the ELN and the EPL, and later, M19, Quintín Lame, and the PRP.

In the 1980's, the government issued certain amnesties to some groups, cementing agreements with organizations like the M19 and the Quintín Lame Group, which caused some messy incidents. Starting in 1998, the Colombian government began three long and unfruitful years of dialogue with the FARC that were trying, but, in the end, necessary. Unfortunately, this dialogue marked the beginning of another retrenchment of the FARC organization. Therefore, plans to fortify the armed forces were initiated and plans to counteract the huge growth in power of the FARC, whose numbers of armed soldiers reached 19,000, were begun. Today there are around 6,000 soldiers.

In the Pastrana administration (1998-2002), the Plan Colombia was established as a way to enhance strategic initiatives and the implementation of effective military reform. This stands in contrast to the transformation that occurred when majority guerilla warfare turned into a war of FARC-led movements. In the Uribe administration (2002-2010), a "Democratic Security Policy" was established; he consolidated the aforementioned policy and began the "Patriot Plan", which was developed with the end of "weakening the narco-terrorists' will to fight through military defeat." The Plan also contained an offensive component (a. Neutralize the finances of the ONT-FARC; b. Exercise territorial control; c. Neutralize plans and armed capacities), a defensive component (a. Projection of power onto population and resources; b. Protection of economic infrastructure; c. Strengthen capacity to deter), and a supportive element (a. Strengthen and modernize the Armed Forces; b. Comprehensive inter-institutional action; c. Integrated and special operations). Based on that strategy, a strategic withdrawal was achieved, FARC resorted to once again using guerilla warfare, and the Plan Renacer was enacted.

Special operations have also been realized, such as the "Liberty Operation" I and II. These were missions aimed at expelling FARC factions that had set up camp around Bogota in Cundinamarca and retaking the FARC's strategic deployment center located in the eastern mountain range above the city. In some ways, these were success stories; however, these forces moved and took refuge in the strategic rearguard areas in the Meta, Guaviare, and Caquetá departments. This was where the OMEGA Joint Taskforce was created to attack and begin to destabilize the FARC. Not to mention, the FARC was also labeled a terrorist organization by 32 countries, in addition to garnering attention as a powerful drug-trafficking cartel in its own right.

With the arrival of President Santos, a new comprehensive security and defense policy began. This policy hit back hard against the FARC: for the first time, a FARC leader was taken down. Alfonso Cano was killed in 2011, marking a turning point where the FARC said that it was no longer possible to come to power through arms. The group recognized that the only option left was to engage in dialogue and look for political means to resolve the conflict. It was only through democracy that the FARC could hope to eventually be able to exert some power. So I think that was the moment in which the President aptly decided to enter into dialogue with the FARC.

### **Challenges Posed by the Post-Accord Period to the Armed Forces**

The Colombian state has developed a security policy that kept in mind the regional context that has permitted it to confront and neutralize criminal actions. This policy is reflected in the "Strategic Plan for the Defense and Security Sector" 2016-2018 (Ministerio de Defensa 2016), which

in turn is closely related to and is included in the “National Plan for Development” 2014-2018 (DNP 2014). The security policy, together with the “Strategic Plan for the Defense and Security Sector” (2016), lays out 8 areas of responsibility that fall within the Defense Sector’s purview, along with each area’s specific objectives:

1. Co-existence Between Citizens: Guarantee better and higher levels of personal security for citizens;
2. Public Security: i) Contribute to the end of the conflict, ii) Combat new forms of organized crime;
3. National Defense: Guarantee sovereignty and the protection of national interests;
4. Risk Management and Disaster Preparedness: Create new capabilities, mitigate climate change, and assist in the case of natural disasters;
5. International Cooperation: Strengthen international projection, and bilateral, triangular and multilateral cooperation with strategic allies;
6. Protection of the Environment and Natural Resources: lend the capacities and support of the Security Forces to protect the environment and natural resources;
7. Contribute to Development: i) contribute to the modernization of rural communities, ii) lend the capacities of the Security Sector to advance national development; and
8. Projective Management, Support and Development: A continuous transformation of the Defense Sector (22).

This, at the same time, is articulated through and complemented by the vision of transforming the current Armed Forces to the Multi-Mission Armed Forces. This transformation would guarantee the necessary configuration, training, equipment, and abilities to meet the challenges of the Mission Areas of the Defense Sector (Ciro and Correa 2013).

Thanks to the phenomena present in the Santos government (2010-2018), the foundations for the end of the conflict were created: the negotiation process with the FARC; the Havana Peace Accords; the “Sword of Honor Plan”, and the “Victory Plan” (Marks 2008). The “Sword of Honor Plan” is the war plan designed by the Military Forces for the 2014-2018 period that seeks to: a) break apart the enemy; b) neutralize the enemy’s capacity for aggression; c) win the loyalty of the civil population by breaking the link between them and the enemy; d) protect the economic infrastructure of the nation; and e) make the achievements made in matters of security and consolidation irreversible (Ministerio de Defensa 2014).

The advances developed in previous governments reflect the consolidation of a singular security and defense policy. Even though these policies and advances might not fall under one clear heading or fit nicely into one document, they did serve as a jumping off point for developments made during various different governments. This can be observed if one were to look at the three presidents that governed with the same goal in mind: the military defeat of the FARC. The result of this consistency has been the comprehensive recuperation of territorial control, increases in governability, bettering of socioeconomic development for the country, and the overall guarantee of democratic civil liberties for the population. It was in this way and with

these goals in mind that the Peace Agreement between the National Government and the FARC was achieved in Havana.

The Grand Strategy for the Post-Accord period is to achieve a “Unified State Action Plan”, especially a convergence between the urban and rural life, by searching for: a) an effective diagnostic tool to create long-lasting solutions; b) the integration of state capacities to generate a positive synergy through comprehensive institutionally-focused solutions; c) a priority given to efforts and resources; d) the proper articulation of the security forces’ capacities to serve as the political decision-maker to secure these objectives; e) the proper recognition of all involved institutions; obtaining the: f) inter-institutional cooperation that reinforces a transparent and institutional vision; g) synchronization and coordination of state efforts; having as a result h) the executive body’s control of the processes.

In terms of security, the “Unified Action Plan” is reflected in the following aspects: a) institutional control of the territory by means of integrated, coordinated, and inter-institutional/inter-agency operations; b) the strengthening of institutions by means of heightened levels of legitimacy, judicial security, and the construction of historical memory; and c) social and economic development programs, humanitarian missions, environmental protection and international cooperation (General Command of the Armed Forces 2016).

Relating to the themes of consolidating peace and transformation, we have created a plan – with the help of ministries, the government, and all governmental institutions – that is called the “Victory Plan”. It is a plan to stabilize and consolidate the gains we have made thus far, and the plan has been in effect since January 1, 2017. It affects every level of governance: national, regional, departmental, municipal, international, etc., and looks to unify state actions. This is a very important strategy, combining policies under one singular strategy. We as military officers are often embedded within joint operations – operations that include the army, navy, air force, and police forces –, and these operations are marked by cooperation and the participation of many state institutions so that the necessary goals can be achieved. This strategy focused on 17 critical areas, 12 of which were land and 5 maritime. There was a focus given to 160 municipalities that are under the influence or are influenced by the FARC. The areas left behind by the FARC have to be covered by both the military and maritime infantry so that criminal gangs can continue to be attacked as they have been.

I want to make an assertion. The state has control and there are no areas that are off-limits to it. In this moment, there is a state presence in all of the national territory and what we want is to fortify this presence through unified action, integrating the capacities of each of the branches of armed forces and giving priority to these efforts by articulating the institutions used and giving the community a shared vision for a solution. We are looking to maintain the legitimacy vested in the armed forces. We are living in a state of law, fulfilling the constitution and the laws, and that is our center around which we are focusing our efforts.

### **The Role of Colombia in Global Security**

Colombia has acquired great resources and experiences following 52 years of conflict. Therefore, Colombia is expected to contribute to the international bettering of governance in matters of security, strengthen the participation of intergovernmental organizations, and share knowledge



and continue being a strategic partner in issues of military industry (Ministerio de Defensa 2016). The former can be achieved by fortifying the international projection of the defense sector as a participant in the government's foreign policy. The sector could conduct basic actions such as: a) the positioning of Colombia as a leader of reference in issues of defense and security at the regional, hemispheric, and global levels, through mechanisms and cooperative efforts based on the security forces' experience and capacities; and b) the training and deployment of security forces' personnel to support distinct multinational and international efforts for the ends of world peace and security, especially through participation in international missions (Ministerio de Defensa 2016).

To end, Colombia should be considered a reference for matters of security in the region since it has already faced different phenomena that have threatened national security and affected regional interests. At the same time, Colombia possesses the experience and capacity necessary to contribute effectively to the continued bettering of global security through different international mechanisms that permit the fortifying of strategic alliances and contribute to the defeat of various delinquents, criminals, and terrorists which threaten the legitimate interests of the State at a global level.

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## Colombian Role Concepts at the International Level

Eduardo Velosa

It seems to me that a few substantial elements concerning the general theme of today's symposium have not yet been addressed. We have talked about the new role Colombia claims; but, what I find interesting is that no one has yet spoken of "roles" in the plural sense. Colombia is not limited to only having one role, and it will certainly not have only one role in the future. Considering this condition, I would like to put forth here three fundamental arguments that will be the three core themes addressed today. The first is – repeating myself here – that Colombia does not only have one role. They have conceived and performed, and indeed prioritized, some of these roles throughout their history, or at the very least during the last 20 years, but they have never only had one role. Depending on the scenario, interlocutor, theme, etc., they have continually defined themselves in different ways. One can even note changes within one theme, where they have switched understandings over how to project themselves onto the international system.

Another fundamental element here is to clearly and definitively differentiate between concepts associated with their role, we can say, from the theoretic point of view. But more than that, how does Colombia conceive itself or hope to be seen, and how do the other actors in the international system view Colombia? One may try to sell oneself in a certain way, self-identify a certain way, but that does not necessarily mean that they will be received in the same way by important actors in world politics. And it is here, in the array of expectations, where we have a few important elements to analyze.

Finally, the international system offers the right conditions for Colombia to re-engage with roles that we have already played, but this time, to improve them and redeem ourselves. That is to say, we do not need to totally change our conception of ourselves or the role we play in the international system; it's just that the international system is giving us a few chances to better our performance.

To start, I want to define the roles in relation to two fundamental base elements. The first is the societal position. By this I mean the roles associated with the position occupied within a certain society. The second is the possibility of producing actions or of being someone within this society, apart from one's given position in and of itself. The role can, on one hand, be associated with status, and on the other, with the differences or stratifications that exist in that society. Colombia can fill different roles depending on the conditions of the different societies into which it integrates.

In that sense, then, there are three fundamental elements. The first one is a state's conception of itself: how do we see ourselves, how will decision-makers select the role that Colombia should play or the position that Colombia should occupy within the international system. The

second part plays a fundamental role. By the other part, I mean that we assign a fundamental value to that relationship between us and those with whom we interact. In our interactions, they also confirm to us that the possibility exists for us to exercise or play this role or that role. This then should really be termed “expectations”. Finally, the performance of the role itself: by which I mean foreign policy, including for example, concrete votes in the UN or calling up an ambassador.

I would also like to add another fundamental element. We here in Colombia have already begun our electoral cycle. There are already candidates who have announced their intent to run, and even more will soon be hurdling down the path. But this phenomenon is more than just finding out who will be the next president; through elections, we also find ourselves discussing the definition of Colombia as a nation. In this sense, apart from the fact that the conception of Colombia’s “role” is not shared in the societal space, the definitions of the “role” are disputed according to the different visions or ideological orientations belonging to the different political elements hoping to ascend to power. In that sense, we should begin to evaluate the situation as if the question of today’s symposia were, “what roles could Colombia enact in a postaccord scenario?” We should begin evaluating the propositions of those who might one day fill these important positions where they will be given the chance to define and realize these roles.

With a foundation based on these succinct definitions, and without further ado, I am going to quote a bit of Holsti and Cameron Thies to define some roles that Colombia has developed in the past 15 or 20 years. We have, for example, performed the role as defender of the faith. What is this getting at? Basically that we defend certain values, specifically liberal values, and above all, liberal economic values. Since the fall of communism, we have defended these values through support of free trade agreements, many of which we have participated in, and alignment with key logics in the fight against terrorism and the redefinition of security following the attacks of 9/11: the latter of which clearly refers to our relationship with the United States, with whom we have long identified. Indeed, they have confirmed our role as defenders of liberal western values in this sense.

At the same time, however, Colombia has also intensively developed a role that could be termed internal developer. What I want to say with this role is that we have long worried more about our own development or the conditions and domestic requirements for our own development than that of the world around us. This has been fundamental every time. For example, we have tried to isolate our problems: Colombia has a drug problem; Colombia has a terrorism problem; we need more international cooperation; democracy and security politics during the Uribe government guides both our domestic and our foreign policy even to this day. In various instances, President Uribe spoke of domestic issues when he should have talked about global problems. For example, at the UN, he spoke of the “familias guardabosques” (rural families against the illegal cultivation of drug crops), and how to help them, how the money invested in them generates growth and development – this type of things. But, always, with a domestic perspective rather than an international one – this internal element is fundamental.

However, Colombia has also developed other roles, such as the role as an independent actor. What do I want to say with this? On some occasions, Colombia has been able to define positions for itself that venture outside the boundaries of its role as “defender of the liberal values”, such

as when it criticizes the distortions of the global market resulting from European and U.S. protectionist policies. This independence can also be seen in its revision of its drug policy. By doing this, Colombia has begun to leave behind the prohibitionist logic propagated by the U.S. Instead it has said that, well, we are going to do what we want to do and how we want to do it – this war on drugs is not working and we need to discuss it.

Another role that Colombia has been able to develop, or at least has tried to develop, is the role of example for the international community. And here we touch upon two elements that were discussed yesterday. On one side is the security and protection of human rights. This part will rehash a few elements that were discussed yesterday in terms of Colombian negations of human rights violations in international scenarios. Colombia has said things like, nothing's happening here, we're implementing our security politics but we're also protecting human rights. After signing the peace agreement with the FARC guerrilla, a number of regional leaders have been assassinated – but you know what, no worries. They say that these are isolated cases. They try to push these kinds of public relations campaigns and policies. My point here is that Colombia has tried to conceive itself as an example as a stable democracy with respect for human rights. The figures showing otherwise are dismissed or hidden away. Another example is, as Senator Barreras clearly mentioned yesterday, that Colombia is an example for the world in terms of peace processes. Our peace process is an example of how such negotiations should really be conducted. These speeches are aimed at building an image of Colombia as a point of reference for other nations, regardless of their correspondence with reality.

Colombia has already filled a few additional roles with Santos as president which help to give a fresh look at this new Colombia, or at least at the future possibilities it has. The first role is that of developer, provider of international cooperation. This role has two important elements: the first of which is the dual theme of drugs and security in Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean region; and the second was derived from the power and privilege of occupying a non-permanent seat on the UNSC. With this seat, Colombia tried to get the international community, and specifically the region, to pay a bit more attention to what is currently happening in Haiti.

The second role, and in conjunction with the previous one, is the role of a regional, subsystem collaborator. Although some critics or foreign policy analysts, especially from the Uribe administration, say that Uribe got us out of the region, which subsequently converted us into the regional pariah – a point worth debating – President Santos has nonetheless had a much stronger presence in the region in regard to foreign policy. Themes, or at least comments, include: “this is Latin America's decade”, and “Latin America and the Caribbean can play an international leadership role”, which in fact, was well exemplified by the development of the Summit of the Americas. It also showed Colombia's desire to play a role of collaborator once more in the system, a role that was not filled during the Uribe government. Additionally of note is the role that Colombia played in the Honduran Coup, wherein it theoretically developed its role as mediator. In the past two years, it has also begun to see itself as a regional leader. That does not necessarily mean that they have done so effectively, but they have at least begun to say, “look, we have a few conditions we want to bring to the table.” If one were to begin reviewing some facts and figures, one would find that, despite everything that has happened in Colombia and the economic un-

balances, our economy has somehow been able to continue growing while the region becomes more and more complicated. And in this realm, a few elements exist where Colombia can really mobilize itself, perhaps not necessarily to become a regional leader, but at least to incrementally increase its influence in the region.

With this framework, we can basically address some of the principal issues unfolding in the international system. One of the elements that characterized the discussion over the international system in the last few years has been the competition between China and the United States. As such, one of the most important elements will be to begin to examine which roles these states, China as much as the USA, can confirm or begin to develop in a much more significant way. China, for example, has developed a few roles that could really interest us. The first of which is that of developer. China is seen as holding a responsibility to cooperate on an international level, especially from the South-South viewpoint. The figures in Africa, for example, in terms of development aid, but also investment and loans, are pretty important, and China has contributed in similar ways to Latin America – Brazil in specific. In light of this, Colombia can begin to specifically position itself in the post-conflict or postaccord framework as a receptor for certain resources: not necessarily development aid, per se, but certainly for investments and loans. The important thing is how Colombia portrays itself to China vis-à-vis these issues.

China plays an active and independent role in the international system. That means that they play with the international rules, not necessarily by them. They try to ignore or avoid obeying all the rules that have been enacted since 1945, and instead try to mold the rules to fit their own interests. On this note, we can begin to speak of a new world economic order – but not necessarily one that will rival the one currently established in the world. This new order could just be one of multipolarity: cracks visible in a Western- or Atlantic-led economic hegemony. That was very evident in Davos when the Chinese President said, one way or another, that well, OK, if the United States does not want to continue this liberal order as it was conceived, then China is going to come help out. This is not a new phenomenon. China has been saying this for at least 20 or 25 years. From here, we can begin to find some elements of compatibility amongst, and confirmation for, these roles.

Another element, a recent one, is Trump's presidency in the United States. President Trump has shown in his first days of governing through the bit of foreign policy that he has implemented that he will begin to change a few of the elements typical of the current world economic order. One must wait a while to be able to really get a sense of what exactly Trump will bring to the region and the greater international order in general. But one can say that Colombia has to be much smarter and more proactive seeing as Republicans are in charge of Congress, even though they may not share the exact same agenda as Trump. Here, Colombia should, and has the chance to, act in a smarter and more prudent manner.

To close, the characteristics of our foreign policy impose certain limitations upon us in regard to the aforementioned international scenario. The first is the marked presidential style of governance in which the president in power has the power to define the country's orientation, to define the country's problems, and to define how to portray Colombia in the international system; that is, he can decide both how to conceive Colombia and dictate the terms of its performance. We need simply to remember how, for example, when the presidency switched from

Pastrana to Uribe, the way in which Colombia solicited international cooperation also changed. Additionally, some internal characteristics of Colombia's foreign policy need to be addressed, like the professionalization of the diplomatic corps, or the nominations of politicians, or their relatives, for foreign posts. These types of things undermine the conception of roles and the capacity of the president to interact within the international system. In the end, they limit Colombia's role performances.

Under these premises, Colombia has a wide variety of roles; there is not just one singular role that they can play, and as such, they must begin to consider which scenarios they want to develop and implement a certain type of role. The movements that have occurred within the international system and that continue to occur allow us to keep our deck of cards open to the world. We have to identify ourselves in one way or the other, and the way in which we decide to define ourselves, including the conception and capacities of this role, will allow us to carry out additional roles, or at least allow us to improve the ones we have historically played.

# Aimed Images of Colombia at the International Level

Rafael Castro

What I would like to present today is essentially the idea or the image that Colombia has searched to portray vis-à-vis its foreign policy, giving a particular emphasis to matters dealing with global scenarios. From these elements, and keeping in mind the current situation and elements that define the domestic dimension of the country, I will try and establish the challenges that Colombia faces in its quest to present this desired image to the international system. First, I will analyze the domestic and systemic factors that have caused a certain transformation of Colombian foreign policy during the Santos presidency. After, I will explain why I believe Colombia hopes to project a persona of a more autonomous, more proactive, and more active country in the international system. I will then close by laying out the challenges that Colombia faces in its efforts to project this desired image.

One of the defining characteristics of Colombian foreign policy during the Santos government is that it has sought to give a greater geographical and thematic diversification to foreign policy. Through the former, it has sought out new partners in other regions of the world just as much as within Latin America – much more than during the Uribe administration. By thematic diversification, we understand that drugs and security are not the only issues that appear on Colombia's international agenda; there are other elements within these priority issues that give an important voice to Colombia within the international system. Apart from a thematic and geographic diversification, we also have a pretty important diplomatic element in the search for legitimacy and international support concerning the peace process. A question that now arises is: why have these transformations of Colombian foreign policy occurred? What are the factors that we could point to to explain this turn? Some changes are changes of form, while others are much more profound.

Amongst domestic factors, one could surely point to Santos' arrival to power in 2010; at the same time, however, his arrival coincided with an improvement of internal security conditions in comparison to other presidencies. Another domestic factor that also contributed to the partial transformation of Colombia's international image is its characterization as a medium-high income country. This has had an immediate implication and that is that Colombia is no longer included on the priority lists for development aid and cooperation.

Now I will lay out some of the systemic factors: There was a crisis in the USA in 2008 that also impacted Europe; the crisis implied that these commercial partners were not going to bring their sizeable flows of trade and investment to Colombia. Seeing this possibility, it was worth the effort to see which other actors could increase the depth of their relationship with Colombia. As Santos arrived to power, the U.S. were engaging in a withdrawal from Latin America and Latin American countries were increasing their autonomy in moves closely linked to the "Turn to the Left."

Having already mentioned some of the domestic and systemic factors that influenced this distinct projection or this distinct foreign policy persona, I will now move onto some important characteristics of said image. I will first show some examples or cases that permit us to say that Colombia wants to be more proactive in the international and hemispheric scenarios. As an interesting example, I can mention that Colombia launched an initial proposal for the “Objectives for Sustainable Development” at the Rio+20 Summit in 2012, which followed the Millennium Goals. Colombia proposed the goals there for the first time, and after the proposal had been accepted, the country sought to contribute more by sending more specific proposals, made in 2013 between government and Colombian civil society within the UN Framework. Colombia’s proactivity can also be seen in the coming together of Colombia with Mexico and Guatemala to compel the speed up of the UN Summit on the Fight against Drugs. They finally achieved that. Additionally, during the last Americas Summit, Colombia formulated a proposal that garnered a certain attention; this was the proposal for the creation of an Inter-American Educational System. On the other hand, we also see that the country gave an important push to the creation of the South American Security Council within the Union of the South American Nations (UNASUR). Especially, in light of the council’s specific treatment of issues that were concordant with the themes Colombia wanted to address in these types of scenarios: those of citizen security and transnational crime. Colombia also encouraged the idea of a rapprochement between the Pacific Alliance and MERCOSUR.

I’ll now set forth two examples in which the issue of Colombia’s autonomy in the international scenario can be discussed. On one side, we have a country looking for recognition as a more stable state with consolidated institutions – the element of peace is also very important here. At the same time, Colombia also wants to belong to or cooperate with international institutions where many developed countries can be found – OECD and NATO, for example. In addition to these two examples, we also see that the country has sought to link itself to commercial agreements, to enter into institutions like the APEC and negotiations like the TPP, and also to move closer to South Korea, Japan, and China via new free-trade agreements. All of this is related to the idea of portraying themselves as a trustworthy trade partner and a good destination for foreign investment, and relatively reduced an extreme alignment with the United States.

Another point is that Colombia wants to portray itself as more **active** in the international scenario, and by doing this it wants to emphasize that it not only receives cooperation but can offer it, too. Examples of this include Colombia’s cooperation concerning security and the war against drugs with Central America and Mexico. This cooperation is in many cases triangular and is funded by the USA, even though the thematic expertise is Colombian in origin.

At the same time, as a part of the process of transforming the armed forces, Colombia endeavors to have its armed forces participate in peace missions through the UN. It has also sought to support other countries in instances of natural catastrophes, such as Haiti in 2010, Nepal in 2015, and Ecuador in 2016.

One last idea would be that Colombia, thanks to its peace process and the model used to develop it, wants to project itself as a role model in relation to issues of conflict resolution. They have tried to present an image as a supporter and advisor in some cases, but this endeavor has also encountered some essential challenges, of course.



So, we now have the idea that Colombia is looking to present itself as a more proactive country, a more autonomous country, and a more active country on the international level. To close, I will mention a few challenges posed to Colombia's new desired international image. In respect to the issue of portraying themselves as a leader – e.g. as a leader in the pursue of the Objectives of Sustainable Development – there are several challenges such as profound problems concerning inequality, poverty, and violence, which still exist. There are also quite a few political inconsistencies concerning the environment that could really problematize Colombia's international projection of its new image as an important voice in these matters (e.g. the opencast mining).

In regard to revising the focus of the war against drugs, the fundamental challenge is overcoming the ever-present prohibitionist logic and focus of the policies. Until what point can one really be a reformer when one continues to operate using the same model and logic? Likewise, there has been a challenge in relation to the search for truly innovative alternatives for how this idea can be presented at the international level.

In respect to UNASUR and the regional projection of power, there is a sizeable contradiction in the assistance given to the region and the other aspects of the organization that have been boycotted and neglected by member states.

With regard to the idea of Colombia as an benefactor of international aid and cooperation, at least in those specific cases of cooperation with Central America and Mexico, there will be a challenge stemming from three situations: first, Colombia's economic situation – which isn't the best; second, the fall of petroleum and commodity prices; and lastly, the international context following the arrival of Trump and his highly touted cuts in international aid. If Trump were to cut those items related to triangular cooperation, it would diminish this cooperation, and Colombia would have to sustain it with its own resources, reduce it or definitively suspend it – all of which would undoubtedly affect the image that Colombia is trying to project as a cooperation "offerer."

There is a challenge in the idea of presenting Colombia as a role model for conflict resolution and that is that there is a certain preoccupation on the part of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in respect, for instance, to one of the aspects in the laws for the accords' implementation that refers to the command responsibility of the ex-guerilla leaders. Therefore, it's hard to see Colombia really matching up with this image if problems and complications with the Rome Statute emerge in the future and the jurisdiction of the ICC is activated.

In a nutshell, Colombia is looking to project an image of itself as a more proactive, more autonomous, and more active country in the international system, but this endeavor is marked by enormous challenges.

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# Colombia as “Emerging Power”: Pretension and Realities

Eduardo Pastrana Buelvas<sup>1</sup>

Four different categories or roles have traditionally been used to determine what niche states fill in the international power hierarchy: superpower, great power, middle power, and small power. However, the only definition that specialized literature agrees upon is that of the solitary superpower (following the fall of the USSR): the USA. In contrast, we see a varied series of terms used to give meaning and categorize the other sets of states within international power hierarchy: Secondary Powers, Second-Tier States, Great Powers, Intermediate States, Middle Powers, Middle-Tier States and Regional (Great) Powers. Due to dispersion and conceptual inflation and conflation, for methodological reasons, we will make use of the term Secondary Power to understand the space that Colombia occupies in the regional power hierarchy in South America. This concept has been proposed by the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA) for the analysis of implicit/explicit drivers of the contestation of secondary powers' roles in the face of the regional leadership's pretensions towards ascending powers. Therefore, the Secondary Powers are the states that, in the context of a pre-determined region, possess relatively important power resources that could be capable of both challenging, or at least gradually slowing down, the objectives of regional super powers and directly competing with other powers with similar capacities. The secondary powers constitute a special category of possible future leaders – who in this case may follow Brazil – for whom the safeguarding of their regional interests, or even global interests, depends on the cooperation of, at the very least, tolerance and consent of, the more powerful.

## **Colombia and its Reaction to Structural Changes in the International System**

We are now bearing witness to the international system's transformation from unipolar to multipolar. This is due to a new distribution of power that, within the last decade, has been reproduced and spread on the international level. In this way, nuances and characterizations of the new global order are beginning to emerge from the ashes of the old bipolar system. Consequently, the multipolarity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is characterized by the changes and innovations introduced through the establishment of a new intergovernmental foreign policy: one that is characterized by its reticular structure. The new emerging powers like Brazil, China, and India have shown that they can use the new perks of their international status by acting as agenda-fix-

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1 Professor at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana de Bogotá (PUJ), leader of the Investigatory Group for International Relations, Integration in Latin America (GRIALI), consultant for the Escuela Superior de Guerra (ESDEGUE) and the Fundación Konrad Adenauer - Colombia (KAS). Doctor in International Law from the Universität Leipzig in Germany. Contact information: epastrana@javeriana.edu.co; efastranab@gmail.com

ers, intermediaries, and coalitions-forgers. In this ordering of ideas, the multipolarity of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century presents some unique characteristics. First, its geographic scope now stretches further beyond Europe and the West, two regions which have traditionally dominated the global order in past centuries. As an effect of economic globalization, the new order is accordingly also much more global; this multipolarity possesses poles that extend to Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Secondly, the decision makers behind conduct and norms in foreign policy within the international system have drastically switched positions. The Great Wars between the Great Powers, as well as the quarrels between superpowers, are no longer the dominating mechanisms that guide and dictate large scale changes within the global power structure. In the past decades, substantial transformations in the structuring of international politics have been produced through new forms of negotiation, formal and informal alike, as well as through the establishment of new foreign policy networks that take on a more intergovernmental character. Thirdly, the diplomatic culture has radically changed; subsequently, the new global reticular order is now characterized by an informal multilateralism in which very specialized political coalitions determine the results of global negotiations.

Accordingly, Colombia's foreign policy has also tried to respond to these impacts and their resulting structural changes that have been generated in the Americas. On one hand, the period stretching from the end of George W. Bush's second administration into the two Obama administrations has been generally perceived as a period of the USA distancing themselves from South America and subsequently focusing on the most unstable zones of the world. On the other hand, Colombia has tried to adapt itself to this new policy without alienating itself from up-and-coming Brazil, which is hedging its bets on consolidating its power as a regional hegemony based on its superior geographic, demographic, economic, and military might. Its view is not solely limited to the regional, however, and it seeks to position itself, whether alone or through coalitions like BRICS,<sup>2</sup> as a "global player" with the capacity to exert its influence on the systemic level.

### **The "New" Image of Colombia Under the Santos Presidency**

Colombian foreign policy during the Santos administration can be characterized by its thematic and geographic diversification. However, the initiation and advancement of the peace dialogues has proved the relevance of geographic diversification in its foreign policy, especially seeing as Colombia has received the support of the entire region, the USA, the EU, China, and Australia – amongst many other actors who have together legitimized the peace process that continues to develop within the country. Seeing as such, it is expected that the finalization of the peace dialogues and the implementation of the post-conflict agreements will reinforce the strategy of geographic diversification of foreign policy.

Additionally, the administration of J. M. Santos has busied itself with disseminating the idea that Colombia is a country ready to shed its label of a "problem state" in order to construct a

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2 Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa make up the BRICS acronym (originally introduced by Jim O'Neill of Goldman Sachs without the mention of South Africa [BRIC]), which has been converted into a coalition and forum for dialogue that considers new, more promising, industrializing economies. See: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y Cooperación de España. 2013. "Países BRICS". In <http://www.exteriores.gob.es/PORTAL/ES/PO-LITICAEXTERIORCOOPERACION/PAISESBRICS/Paginas/InicioBrics.aspx> (November 17, 2022).

new image that will permit it to participate at multiple levels of global policy, thereby generating confidence in the country's diplomatic and legal systems. The Santos era also saw the reinforcement of the idea that led Colombia to promote itself as the "consultant" state – outsourcing in areas of security, "best economic practices", peace and reconstruction – and co-participant in formulation of certain points on the "global agenda." These are incipient roles that, in addition to recuperating a certain legacy in foreign policy, include the promotion of normative instruments and laws in international law, the co-foundation of regional organisms and agreements, the cooperation and/or competition with Brazil – who is now trying to consolidate its position as a regional power – and the re-validation and/or actualization – without any ambitious reforms – of the Inter-American System (OAS) and the UN.

Diverse national and international factors contributed to the emergence of a favorable scenario that allowed for the engagement with and conclusion of the peace negotiations between the national government and the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC). While preparing for such a scenario, one of the tools employed by the President J.M. Santos was foreign policy. Through the bettering of relations with their neighbors, and in general, with other neighboring countries of the region, support from states such as Venezuela was earned and later used to convince the leaders of the guerilla forces to take a seat at the negotiating table. Similar support was given by Ecuador in the effort to open exploratory conversations with the National Liberation Army (ELN).

Colombia also managed to garner the support from key international partners such as the United States, Germany, and the European Union, all of whom sent special envoys to the negotiation and promised their support to Colombia in diverse parts of the post-conflict agenda. At the same time, Colombia was also able to obtain the willingness of the UN and CELAC. to take part in the accords' verification process following its implementation.

The construction of a new international role is also linked to the participation in other instruments and organs, specifically NATO and the OECD. Colombia has already signed an agreement with the first organization concerning the exchange and sharing of information and security. Furthermore, it is hoped that the agreement facilitates the acquisition of new knowledge and best practices regarding peace and humanitarian missions; this intent is in line with the Colombian Armed Forces' objective of participating in these sort of activities. The various declarations having something to do with the agreement recognizing that this is the first pact of its kind to be signed by a Latin American country and therefore highlighting the experience that Colombia may be able to bring to the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking. For Colombia, a successful process of OECD adhesion could very well contribute to the edification of an international image more favorable to investment and the economy; even more so, it could permit the amplification of Colombia's cooperation with states that could teach Colombia important economic lessons. As such, it is hoped that a greater intimacy shared between Colombia and the countries of the Global North could contribute to heightening Colombia's pretensions of linking themselves with commercial mega-blocks such as the Trans-Pacific Agreement (TPP) and the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

### **Aspirations and Realities**

Colombia is a country that is currently witnessing an expansion of its economic and military capabilities, as well as its diplomatic influence in respect to other states in the South American region. It is furthermore aspiring to project a more active role in the global order as well. With respect to the first affirmation, it should be noted that Colombia has managed to improve various internal indicators and simultaneously increase its position relative to other South American states, particularly in respect to the misfortunes that the other three main members of Mercosur have experienced, namely Brazil, Argentina, and Venezuela. Colombia aspires to play a more active role in the global order, and this pretension should be one that is shared with other countries claiming significant economic and military resources. Those with some degree of normative legitimacy to project their might beyond their immediate geographic surroundings should also play a more active role and subsequently assume more responsibilities in relation to the maintenance of the global order. One of the most important responsibilities is certainly the accompaniment of the principal powers, which includes a sustained ability to actively participate in the construction of some of these very themes in international political agendas.

The country continues to adapt its resources and tinker with its strategies within a wider regional scenario, but that is not to say that they are thinking of renouncing the prestige gained within their immediate geographic surroundings; they're still hoping to attract and entice Brazil to join favorable multilateral agreements and transactions. However, it also exhibits a certain level of restraint in respect to its goals and strategies by using institutional and soft-power counterweights to their grander efforts. This includes the formation of regional sub-coalitions like the Pacific Alliance and/or the utilization of regional organs like the OAS and UNASUR. Colombia also competes for prestige and influence within their zone with other similarly powerful states, such as Venezuela, Chile and Argentina. The individual factors<sup>3</sup> specific to each domestic scenario help to explain in large part the construction of this new foreign policy image, but it is important to note that systemic and external factors also play a deciding role.

The dynamic role laid out for Colombia in the Pacific Alliance Constitution has also been particularly notable in its future hope to eventually realize an enlarged, Trans-Pacific market through an agreement the likes of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) – a partnership bearing the marked inspiration of the United States. There is also a strategy present in the geographic demarcation of MERCOSUR as a semi-protectionist bloc and of Brazil as a principal influencer on processes of further integration. Furthermore, Colombia's bet on its alternative insertion in U.S., European, and Asian-Pacific economies increases the interest shown by Canada (a major buyer and investor in the mineral and energy sectors).<sup>4</sup> This "other" insertion also includes the maintenance of relations with the principal financial, monetary, and commercial global organs (World Bank, IMF, WTO).

This systemic diagnosis of opportunities, executed in light of a new found self-confidence, has led President Santos to argue that Colombia is capable of transforming itself into a "bridge

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3 Santos' pragmatism, or his lesser proclivity to idealize foreign relations, as well as his belief in Colombia's potential have strengthened and marked his leadership.

4 *Dinero*, May 22, 2013. "Canadá con sus ojos puestos en la Alianza del Pacífico."

country”<sup>5</sup> due its emerging economy as much as its mediating role in conflict resolution in diverse geographic and political environments. The roots behind this desire to be a “bridge” or “hinge” country can be found in the teachings of Neoclassical Realism. This school posits that multiple diplomatic linkages permit states with fewer power resources in the international system, and an abundant number of national interests, to grow closer with more powerful states; in the end, these “weaker” states are able to consolidate and fortify their networks of interstate exchanges. These very networks permit the bridge states to intervene in the formulation of international agendas, and it is this very role – one of a regional conciliator – that these governments strive to gain. As a regional conciliator, the “bridge” state wins a vast number of opportunities to multiply their exchanges and interactions with all those around them. In addition to the aforementioned role, Colombia can also supplement it with high economic achievement, a high level of biodiversity, and an abundance of hydrologic resources. These far-reaching, positive characterizations also include the potential to successfully receive immigrants, Colombia’s great educational and cultural potentials, its military strengthening, and the high value Colombia has historically placed on multilateralism.

Colombia continues to portray itself as a supporter of South-South cooperation, while also attempting to steer its international image away from one as a primarily receptor state: from a recipient to a provider. It has not only created the Colombian Presidential Agency for International Cooperation, but it has also attempted to synchronize its internal-external programs and direct its foreign funding in accordance with the primary objectives of the “National Development Plan”: reducing poverty, increasing employment, and strengthening security, not to mention providing mechanisms on an international level to help struggling states achieve the Millenium Development Goals (MDG) and neighboring states to manage border policy. There is much controversy surrounding Colombia’s desire to help others due to the fact that Colombia itself claims insufficient compliance with its own internal goals. Colombia is still trying to formalize its multiple bilateral cooperative efforts as a middle-income country (MIC) and implement its three far-reaching plans: the “Strategy for Cooperation with the Caribbean”, the “Regional Program for Mesoamerica” and the “Strategy for International Cooperation in Matters of Comprehensive Security”.

However, Colombia will confront two major economic challenges in this post-conflict scenario. One, of a structural character, is to create a sufficiently prosperous economy so that they can overcome the outlook of inequality and inequity that has contributed to the prolongation of this conflict for decades. The other, of an economic nature, is the issue of financing the implementation of the peace accords.

In terms of economic development, the country should readjust its policies with regards to attracting foreign direct investment, which, up until this moment, have been relatively successful at attracting foreign capital, but have not successfully translated this grain into a productive and sustained economic transformation. On the other hand, Colombia has concentrated

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5 This idea isn’t necessarily totally new in the presidential imagination and Colombian foreign policy, however. Formerly, Virgilio Barco (1986-1990) defended the notion of Latin America and Colombia – the latter especially due to its Pacific coastline – as being “bridges” between the “old world” (Atlantic states) and the “new world” (Pacific States). See González (2004).

its efforts within the mining and energy sectors, thereby initiating the reprimarization of its economy. To the extent that investment into higher value-added sectors can be achieved, more goods with a higher technologic value can be added to the export basket, thereby supporting Colombia's strategy for a diversified international insertion. As a result, this internationally focused economic plan will help increase social well-being and overcome some of the structural causes of conflict.

Notwithstanding the former point, Colombia's definitive entrance into the OECD would entail a multitude of short-term, medium-term, and long-term challenges for the domestic agenda that include: bettering the quality of education; increasing investments in sectors other than mining and energy; diminishing the informality of the labor market; investing more in research and development – especially business-focused; increasing investment in infrastructure; making better use of comparative advantages; implementing a host of re-organizing measures to its fiscal policy; professionalizing the public service corps; substantially strengthening the fight against corruption and notably reducing inequality.

In conclusion, Colombia will encounter numerous challenges in its path towards deepening its international insertion. In a global context, Colombia should confront internal barriers to reform implementation so that it can succeed in its tripartite mission: joining the club of developed countries; developing a new international role; and mobilizing itself diplomatically so that it can enter into some of the commercial global mega-blocs. Colombia is still far from having its wishes align with its material capacities, and therefore, Colombia is still far from being considered – based on its actions at least – as a true emerging power.

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## Commentary on Pastrana Buelvas' Presentation

Sandra Borda

Listening to Eduardo and having participated in discussions concerning Colombian foreign policy in past years, I am given the impression that we are in a very distinct situation. We are now moving away from the past situation in which we had almost no options and where the margins of autonomy were reduced. I'm not only talking about Uribe here either, I'm also referring to our past foreign policy which contained the language of imposition and the language of reduced autonomy margins and others on account of the war on drugs and what we needed in terms of conflict. Well, that left us a much reduced space – or at least, we had the perception that we had a reduced space – to do things at an international level. Today I have the impression that, at a minimum, the menu of options available to us seems to be much more varied. I am speaking of a menu of options for roles or identities that we could perhaps eventually adopt on an international level.

My worry is – also in light of Rafael's talk – how we are addressing this issue at the moment and the form in which the government is directing these conversations. We are currently holding a supremely superficial discussion over what we want to be on the international stage. The language, reiterating what Rafael said, of images that we want to project onto the international system is an obvious and eloquent example of that; we are just too preoccupied by how the world sees us. We are too concerned with getting rid of the burden on Colombia's image that is associated with the drug trade. I don't know, but the foreign minister is always very sure to boldly react every time some link is made tying modern Colombia to our past image as drug traffickers. I'm not sure, but it seems that this is all being held at a level of perceptions and image rather than one of substance. The impression that I have is that this type of conversation is serving as a postponement of a much more profound and substantive conversation. We have an opportunity – an opportunity window – to discuss what we want to be in the current international system but it can close at any moment. I say this in all seriousness. We need not discuss the image we want to project nor how we want to be seen by others; what we need to do is seriously think of what type of international actor we want to be that differs from our previous identity (like the Hurricane Model, etc. etc.)

I have the impression that the process of finalizing the armed conflict and the discourse over reforming drug policy has opened a space to have these discussions, a space that we are simply not properly taking advantage of because we are busy thinking about other things and addressing issues in a supremely superficial manner. We are again going off topic and celebrating the fact that we no longer need the Schengen Visa, that they see us in a better light, that they don't stop us in airports anymore, etc. etc. This is all important, yes, but only important for a minority of Colombians who are able to travel abroad, not for the majority of the people who will stay in Colombia and who are waiting for other issues to be resolved.

I have an additional worry and that has to do with a two-part tendency. It's healthy in one way, yet very dangerous in another. There are many foreign policy issues that have come under the purview of the domestic political electoral agenda that were not there before. We never spoke of international politics in relation to elections before. In fact, this was our – the internationalist academics' – exact complaint! No one talked about foreign policy issues, not even in the presidential debates. Now, we talk about foreign policy issues regularly, like Venezuela and Nicaragua for example. I am not so sure that it was a good idea to invite us to speak on these issues on an electoral level, because they are now being exploited for electoral gains – as expected. The discussion between *uribismo* and *santismo* [the respective ideologies and politics of Uribe and Santos] surrounding the issue of Nicaragua, the discussion between *uribismo* and *santismo* surrounding the issue of Venezuela, well this has resulted in the incorporation of international issues into the domestic conversation. But, this has also served to intensify the political polarization that is currently gripping the nation. It distresses me a bit that more and more international political issues are beginning to be incorporated into the national discussion. I think that this is a substantial change; it did not happen before, but it is happening now. Obviously, there are issues regarding national sovereignty and these themes always interest many people in the electorate. But, I do not know if this path, the path that we are on, is leading us to a discussion that deals with the primary goal: the goal of defining our international identity. Instead, the current sort of discussion could very well lead us down a different path, a path that does not end in such a pretty place.

# Colombia as an “Emerging Power”: How Does a Country Without an International Identity Construct Foreign Policy?

Günther Maihold

To speak about the theme of emerging powers in today’s context seems to be just a retelling of the past decade. Out of all of the candidates that have been mentioned or positioned as possible emerging powers, two have endured: China and India. All other emerging powers have been cast aside. For this reason, I have given my presentation the following subtitle: How Does a Country Without an International Identity Construct Foreign Policy? I believe that if one were to revise the debate over how to define the term “emerging”, multiple elements worth considering would appear. First is the issue of whether or not Colombia’s problem is simply one of achievement or performance. That is to say if, in Colombia’s case, one only needs to make foreign policy more explicit, more activist, etc. etc. to solve the problem. In this hypothesis, Colombia is already emerging, already well-positioned, but it must continue its efforts. Or, on the other hand, is the question one of projection? That is to say, as the debate that we’ve recently had suggests, is it a question of how to sell ourselves better? What kind of image for the country do we want to create, to define our nation? And how do we take this image and succeed in being defined as “emerging”?

## **Colombia’s Interest in a New International Role**

Certainly we can identify a discourse in Colombia carried by a desire in the domestic political debate to change Colombia’s international image, as well as the will to gain international status. And with that, we touch upon another theme that always plays a role in our debates: policies to gain international status are different from substantive policies because the internationally recognized nation branding does not depend on a concordance between domestic and foreign situational contexts. If we were only to talk in terms of what Colombia wants to do to gain international status, the scope of the policies would vary to a much greater degree. And there is precisely the issue of the plurality of role models and the capacity to implement roles that the country can play. The key question is about the coherence between the different roles because roles can be quite contradictory. On another note, it does not help us much if these very roles aren’t at least recognized. The third initial point would be whether or not a country can assume the role of emerging power if it is absent on the global stage. Colombia in fact is quite distant to an outspoken international presence. It is not a member of the G20, and it does not play an important role in any part of the international agenda. So, the question is: is the will of the leadership alone enough to warrant the terming of Colombia as an emerging power, and in what

dimension will said leadership realize this goal? Here we must also consider the theme of soft power, a theme to which I will return later.

### **Past and Present of Colombia's International Role**

In the past few years, Colombia has been given a new position on the international scene. On the one hand, the country's aspiration for global ascension is accompanied by the goal of accession to the OECD. There is certainly a selling point supporting Colombia's return as an example of Latin American exceptionalism in regards to: Colombia's institutional underdevelopment; Colombia's position as a role model for South-South cooperation – an effort that stretches further than Santos to increase relationships with non-traditional partners from Australia to Kazakhstan; and Colombia's expansion of its diplomatic apparatus with the opening of new missions abroad. In general, we are on a path from anomaly to exception. That is to say, the anomaly was a country that formerly fought against guerillas and was unable to initiate a peace process. In this sense, peace is the opportunity to break the country's traditional isolationism towards the world, but it will also lead to what I believe to be a strengthening of another process. This process is one of forced internationalization, whether it be the outstanding role of the regulations observed by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the peace process or the expectations articulated by the various donors and other international actors. In the way of this path from anomaly to exception the country faces and will face increasingly regional competition and imbalances and will have to contend with dominant models of economics. The truth of the matter is that a decrease in the importance of Brazil does not automatically correlate to an increase in the importance of Colombia, especially given the fact that the forums in which a new role of Colombia could develop, are characterized by either a damaged, incoherent, informal multilateralism or by a bilateralism that can malfunction given the sheer number of different, overlapping relations. A key question in this current moment is, then, in which areas is Colombia the subject and in which areas is Colombia the object of foreign policy? On one side, we are witnessing a precarious process of regional insertion. Colombia was the sponsor of regional initiatives related to the Central American peace process in the 80's, the regional "problem" state in the 90's, the perturbing country in the 2000's, and now, in the 2010's, it is looking for a new place – a new role. It is suffering from the loss of important markets. The breakdown of the Venezuelan market, for example, has been and will continue to be an element that stunts economic development. Colombia also shares a silent animosity with UNASUR. It finds itself in the paradoxical situation that despite sending the highest number of secretary generals to UNASUR, it has still been unable to use that influence to meaningfully contribute to the development of its foreign policy. It has two uncertain projects at an international level, TPP and the Pacific Alliance. Now, it has a third international condition with the UN peace mission that accompanies the current peace process, a process which also contains a dimension of subject and object for Colombia and which will have an important impact on the domestic electoral debate because that is precisely where it suffers from substantial critiques.

How will the official discourse react? Which are the challenges for the country's foreign policy ambitions?

1. Colombia has a favorable geostrategic location. Colombia is, in effect present in different spaces: It is a Caribbean nation, an Andean nation, an Amazonian nation, a Pacific nation. It has the potential to function as a natural bridge between these regions. This image of a “bridge” is a classic geopolitical image in which no one questions who the users of said bridge are and which are their stakes in using this bridge. It is a central actor in the consolidation of the integration of hydrological, energy, and communication resources. If one were to return to the plans for energy cooperation that Colombia made in the past and look at them in today’s context, we can identify a high level of promises and a very low level of implementation. A sample of what had been planned: an electric linkage with the Dominican Republic, a participative role in the refineries of Central America; there are a whole slew of such projects that were left unrealized, just as can be said for areas outside energy cooperation. Colombia considers itself to be an exemplary role model as it relates to political and macroeconomic stability despite the number of domestic problems with which Colombia still contends; it also fancies itself an actor in matters of biodiversity. Furthermore, with soon-to-be peace gracing Colombia, a new situation for foreign policy will be created. Such a situation is like the return to the neighborhood of an important, relevant neighbor who possesses the capacity to assume hemispheric tasks: all through a three-dimensional process of diversification: diversification of the foreign policy agenda towards the key sectors of national development, education, agriculture, infrastructure, environment, energy, and trade. Bilateral relationships with traditional and non-traditional partners alike and the consolidation of the presence and position of Colombia in a multilateral, regional, sub-regional, and global scope for the defense and promotion of national interests, according to the “National Plan for Development” (CONPES). Binational mechanisms as binational plans for the development of the border zone with Peru and Ecuador are additional elements present in the official discourse.
2. But we are also presented with uncertainties and challenges, such as the border problem. From my point of view the problem of the Venezuelan situation for the foreign policy projection of Colombia is highly underestimated and cannot be sufficiently visualized and explicated in internal and external dimensions. If there is an implosion or explosion in Venezuela, there will be an acute pressure placed on the border Colombia shares with Venezuela that can dramatically affect the peace process because that is the very region in which the ELN is still present. We have the ELN’s presence, precarious governance, almost no projection of state power, the presence of BACRIM (criminal gangs) etc.; if anything were to happen, Colombia would fall onto hard times. As such, forgive my frankness, but there is simply no chance for Colombia to play a regional leadership role without taking in to account the future development in Venezuela. It is not possible for Colombia to assume a position of regional leadership when neighboring countries are unstable and when the effects of such instability can easily spread into Colombia and cause pretty disastrous damage.
3. New positioning in international law and adapting to international standards. If Colombia wants to play a role in multilateral spaces, it has to resolve loads of problems in human rights issues, illegal mining, climate and energy regulations as well as the resource

course of its economy. Colombia exports a ton of coal. We are currently discussing the de-coaling of energy and the control of climate effects on the international level. Germany, in a total lunacy, still imports Colombian coal. That is to say, we are in many ways running against international currents to solve global problems. Especially if we look to human rights. There is a crisis in interlocution with civil society organizations that is especially present in the Latin American region. There are not substantial relations between Colombia and the other large countries in these global issues save some economic ties. So, I believe that we are facing an integral element that will impede discussion on the regional role Colombia could fill due to the distrust sown in the region vis-à-vis Colombia.

### **Possible Foundations and Limits for Colombia as an “Emerging Power”**

How can an emerging role for Colombia be imagined? In the past there was a clear history of conceiving and building emergence based on natural resources and their respective market prices. There are also examples of cases where Colombia is called to be emergent. It feels like an emerging power vis-à-vis its relationship with China and the Pacific area. Let's not forget the grand announcement made at the start of the Santos administration concerning the dry canal that was to be constructed, passing through the entire country. That is a project that, I would say, is of a pharaonic dimension, not to mention that we already have three additional projects for dry/wet canals in Central America.

What could be an appropriate role for Colombia in international relations, then? First, I believe that many roles, especially in the regional context, are already occupied. There are always players who already claim the function as “the bridge”, to be the leader, the strategic nexus or the preferred and recognized interlocutor. So, it is not as if there is a wide range of options since the few positions that exist are already occupied. The aspiration of Colombia in some way is being misconstrued through a perception trap, suffered by the very country that is now becoming more and more recognized for its peace process, but these perceptions do not correspond with the sense of its neighboring countries. So there is a gap between Colombia's own perceptions of itself and the perceptions of foreigners towards Colombia, something that could profoundly affect the international presence of the nation. There is an inoperative regional situation insofar as a deficit in conflict-resolution. We see no one clear instance of regional capacity to resolve said conflicts. And that, returning to the issue of Venezuela, can dramatically affect the country. Imagine a crisis in Venezuela, who would be able to help Colombia confronting massive migration flows? Who in the hemispheric region would be capable of controlling the presence of armaments within Venezuelan society and the quantity of violence actors in that society? So, there might very well be a situation where Colombia implements the peace process as Venezuela simultaneously suffers from an eruption of internal violence, and no one will be left to help to control the developments. I doubt the United States would get involved either.

And now we come to the issue of the limited anchoring of foreign policy within domestic policy. We'll quickly touch upon this aforementioned point. I am not convinced that foreign policy is just like any other public policy. This corresponds a bit with the debate that we've seen in all the countries where it is always said that foreign policy needs to be a policy of the State.

What we don't want is that every change of domestic policy means that we must also reorient foreign policy. And I would be against establishing such a logic that states that domestic politics should define the priorities of foreign policy. Because, if we examine the five priorities that come from the National Plan and everything else that has to be implemented with the help of foreign policy, we find ourselves far outside the central elements that make up foreign policy. These are the dimensions of autonomy for foreign policy in the face of the other spaces occupied by national-level decision-making. That is to say, to generate a climate of confidence amongst neighbors is a totally autonomous dimension of foreign policy with nothing to do with the dimensions occupied by national development. So one must consider foreign policy as an autonomous dimension, and that generates a special challenge in the search for an anchor to cast into national debate. What I have seen so far is that foreign policy has not yet been considered in such a scope. Yes, there are autonomous interests of foreign policy and those must be reflected in national consensus, but foreign policy as an entity remains removed from this space.

### **International Presence by Thematic Leadership**

If we revise the concept of “emerging power”, we'll see different layers or dimensions. The question is whether these nations are revisionists, whether they have an orientation towards the status quo, whether they have high growth levels, whether they form a part of the regional scenery, whether they are searching for a great increase for the dimensions of the global economy. I do not believe in the concept of international hierarchies of power. That is a chimera of realism. I also do not believe in the concept of so called “secondary regional powers” because that generates an image as if a country's foreign policy could be cut and ordered according to these dimensions. And when we're talking about these emerging countries, we know that they do not have the capacity of being simultaneously present in the full range of global and international policies, but rather only for certain areas that seem opportunistic, where there exists a specifically relevant situation. So, this nesting of secondary regional powers generates an image that simply does not correspond to reality. It could be that Colombia is a super-relevant country in terms of biodiversity, but it doesn't play any role in global health policies, for example. The specific insertion of a country that is not a large power is thematic. It could therefore vary. I think that for this reason one must look at the material attributes of this debate, where we see the arrangement and allocation of resources, military capacity, the capacity to produce collective regional goods, the arrangement of a sufficiently capable and extended diplomatic apparatus. What is most interesting to me are the attributes of behavior. Does a capacity for collective action, for the formation of alliances, exist? Does a disposition for burden sharing exist? For assuming the costs accompanying the generation of said collective action? Where is there a thematic leadership emerging? What are the ideational attributes, the national conception, the clear strategies? And what are the contextual attributes? Is there a recognition made by others? What is the space for action in regards to the interdependence of others' interests? Does there exist a systematic role for the country or is the country able to successfully move in strategic niches?

The tax haven countries have a strategic niche and have been able to settle down within those niches quite well. In this case as well, different dimensions come into play. Different types of emerging power exist. We have already heard about regional power, secondary power, economic



power, middle power, and a “hinge” country. The great question is: in which areas, in which sectors, can Colombia play a more visible role? A crucial contextual element of this situation is selling peace as an opportunity for Colombian foreign policy. We see that the country looks to offer peace as its unique selling point; that is to say, that they want to publicize peace as a model for conflict resolution, transitional justice, for its global presence.

This idea certainly has a basis because that was the original goal of the negotiation processes; but, we are also witnessing the extreme complexity that is the peace agreement: over 150 legal and constitutional changes were needed for the agreement, as well as 584 governmental actions which were mostly part of the agreement’s drafting. If the agreement is to be properly executed, the complex and interconnected challenges that must be overcome lie far outside the mere realization of peace. Instead, what is needed is a sufficient state capacity and exceptional management, and that would imply a reform of the State, a process for which I do not see the prerequisite conditions currently existing.

But peace can also become a risk for Colombian foreign policy. First, I think that we are already seeing this happen with peace becoming the only dimension defining or limiting external action. That means a reduction of external action under the criteria of peace compatibility. Everything that isn’t compatible with peace, we’ll stop doing. This implies a certain burden for the future and the disappearance of certain other scenarios. And the expulsion of violent actors towards border zones also occurs, which could also generate many conflicts for the country.

### **Options for Colombia**

The conditions for assuming a role as a regional power do not currently exist for Colombia. There are opportunities for thematic leadership, and topics like drugs and biodiversity, amongst others, have already been mentioned. But here one sees a crucial element. The precondition of such a thematic-based leadership is that there is a correspondence between the internal and the external dimensions. If you aren’t congruent, if you aren’t trustworthy, if you aren’t credible, if you can’t generate followers, then the aspiration will continue to be an aspiration. A pulse is needed to spur the creation and recognition of alliance formation. Colombia will not be able to play a role alone. It needs to generate alliances in key priority areas. Not in all areas, of course, but at least in the priority areas in which it was to have an impact. Colombia has to invest in its neighborhood as a multiregional country. With a clear multilateral orientation the country will be able to overcome its limited access to the global scenario. The absence in certain important fora is a clear restriction that must be resolved, and this implies that by assuming courageously international initiatives, it must generate adhesion and bonds, engaging its neighboring countries and international partners.

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