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U.S. COLLECTIVE SECURITY PROGRAMS FOR LATIN AMERICA: A TOOL FOR COOPERATION OR REGIONAL HEGEMONY?

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Solo Flight

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Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.

- Henry Ford

INTRODUCTION

A vital prerequisite for organized human societies is to consider measures to counter perils, that condition of perceived certainty for safe development of social and economic goals is security.¹ Humankind has led a historical evolution towards the progress of nation-states as a common denominator to organize societies. These states are represented by Governments that are ultimately responsible for providing the public good of security (among others) to their peoples in exchange for taxation. However, what should a country do if the threats it faces surpass its capabilities or capacities? A first approach to deal with this question is “that states find security in combining with other states, which on the whole share some of their values and most of their interests.” In an ideal scenario where universality is achieved by compromising isolated national interests in exchange of a greater common goal, it would be easier to think that “a worldwide combination of all states directed against all potential aggressors could create a global system of collective security.”²

Collective security took some steps forward in the twentieth century when the League of Nations made the first attempt to institutionalize a common framework to determine which circumstances would need a collective response to an illicit act against

¹Otto Pick and Julian Critchley, *Collective Security* (London: Macmillan Education UK, 1974), 15.

²*Ibid.*

any of its members. However, World War II (WWII) was a sign of the League's failure, and the creation of the United Nations (UN) tried to address those shortcomings with a "greater enforcement capability."³

The end of WWII brought with it the rise of the United States of America (US) along with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) as rival superpowers in a bipolar structured international system, this dichotomy generated "systems of regionalized collective self-defence,"⁴ represented by the American led North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the extinct Soviet headed Warsaw Pact. Although these alliances may not have formed a collective security system in conjunction, they surely represented "a conceptual compromise between the old balance of power, which became uncontrollable in an industrialized world, and universal collective security."⁵

In the realm of regional collective security within the Western Hemisphere, it is important to recognize that the US "had perused ideological objectives in its policy towards Latin America before, during, and after the Cold War,"⁶ this is why the development of collective security programs are still part of US foreign policy towards Latin American countries.

³Lynn H. Miller, "The Idea and the Reality of Collective Security," *Global Governance* 5, no. 3 (1999): 305.

⁴Pick and Critchley, *Collective Security*, 16.

⁵*Ibid.*, 45.

⁶Jorge I. Dominguez, "US- Latin American Relations During the Cold War and Its Aftermath," in *The United States and Latin America: The New Agenda* (Institute of Latin America Studies, University of London and Davis Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, Harvard University, 1999), 33.

This paper will argue that US collective security programs in Latin America (LA) are primarily a tool for American regional hegemony rather than a cooperation endeavor to benefit all parts.

For that matter, this paper discusses the referred topic in five major parts. The first one explains the origin of collective security in America, which is older than most people know; for this purpose, this section will explain how the Monroe Doctrine evolved and how it was viewed by Latin American countries, its relation to the Pan-American Union, and the latter's evolution into what is now the Organization of American States (OAS), highlighting as well, the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty of 1947) and how it has worked historically. The second part discusses US' Foreign Policy towards LA identifying American strategic objectives in this region in order to better understand the interests of the US in developing collective security programs. The third major part addresses common and most significant threats to Latin American security to establish a relation of how these affect US' interests. The fourth part addresses which collective security programs regarding LA are in place to tackle the major threats identified in the previous section, as well as the role of the Security Cooperation Agency of the US Department of Defense, and the US Southern Command, which is the Unified Combatant Command with an Area of Responsibility (AOR) that encompasses Latin American countries in the Western Hemisphere. The last section highlights the benefits for Latin American Armed Forces from their participation in US' collective security programs and how the latter influence in Latin American security and participation in the world's security arena.

But why would US collective security programs in LA represent an important issue to address? The answer is directly related to the globalized character of today's international system, where states can seize opportunities to thrive and influence others, as well as threats can. In an era where information, trade, and access to affordable technology are faster than ever, which offers means to transnational criminal organizations to overcome security forces, US collective security programs represent for the international community an example of cooperation but most of all, an effective way to protect the interests of the stronger actors without the use of coercion.

DISCUSSION

The Origins of Collective Security in America

On December 2, 1823, US President James Monroe gave a speech to Congress in which he expressed his “support for Latin American independence,” this came to be known as the Monroe Doctrine, which was a warning against European powers interventionism and colonialist objectives in America, as well as a proclamation to set a difference between the independent republics and monarchies' political systems in light of the risks “that the efforts of the Holy Alliance to strangle all democratic development in Europe might be extended to the western hemisphere.”⁷

The Doctrine included as one of its main ideas “that the United States [would] defend the independence of [the] American countries against European aggression,” which was initially interpreted by the newly independent Latin American countries as an

⁷Mark T. Gilderhus, David C. LaFevor, and Michael J. LaRosa, *The Third Century: U.S.- Latin American Relations since 1889*, 2nd ed. (London, UK.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 9.

assurance of support.⁸ However, the US showed its lack of capacity to enforce this statement in 1833 when the United Kingdom (UK) took the Falkland Islands from Argentina,⁹ in 1838 and 1845 during the French and Anglo-French respectively, maritime blockades to Argentina,¹⁰ and in 1864 during the Chincha Islands War between Peru and Chile against Spain.¹¹ Nevertheless, once the US gained a superpower status after winning the war against Spain in 1898,¹² the use and interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine became more tangible but in a way that most Latin American countries were against it. A clear example was the American interventionism in Panama's separation from Colombia in 1903, which gave the US exclusive power over the construction and management of the Panama Canal. This strategic control was soon taken advantage of by Theodore Roosevelt's administration which in 1904 announced that international policing activities would be practiced by the US, this message was soon known as the "Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine [and] served to justify more than thirty armed interventions in the Caribbean during the following three decades."¹³

The intent for the unification of Latin American states is older than that of independence. However, it was Simón Bolívar who attempted to make it a reality, for this matter in 1824, while exercising the presidency of Peru, Bolívar invited Latin American countries and the US to a Congress which would eventually be held in Panama from June

⁸Samuel Guy Inman, "The Monroe Doctrine and Hispanic America," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 4, no. 4 (November 1921): 636, 643, 648, 649, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2505682>.

⁹Stephen G. Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2.

¹⁰Harold F. Peterson, *Argentina and the United States: 1810-1960* (SUNY Press, 1964), 123-140.

¹¹H. Micheal Tarver Ph.D and Emily Slape, *The Spanish Empire: A Historical Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, 2 vols. (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2016), Stephen G. Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2.

¹²Rubrick Biegon, *US Power in Latin America: Renewing Hegemony*, Routledge Studies in US Foreign Policy (New York: Routledge, 2017), 1.

¹³Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America*, 1.

22 to July 15, 1826, “for the purpose of outlining the bases of [a] pact of union, association and confederation.” The participation of the US in the Congress was considered because “the Monroe Doctrine was to be proclaimed therein.” Both of the US representatives did not arrive at the meeting. Nevertheless, they were specifically instructed, “not to sign any treaty of alliance.” From the Panama Congress, only Colombia further ratified the union pact.¹⁴

Latin American countries continued to meet sporadically after Bolívar’s attempt without achieving essential outcomes, but in 1889 the American Under Secretary of State James Blaine promoted “the First American International Conference, more commonly known as the first Pan-American Conference.” Part of US’ determination for conducting this meeting was its economic recession and interest in new markets; this was supported by “a special government commission that had issued a report detailing the tremendous economic possibilities in Latin America.” Blaine had two main objectives for the conference, one was to establish a free trade zone with a collective external tariff for the Americas otherwise known as a “customs union,” and the other was related to security and international relations which considered the creation of “an arbitration system for international disputes.” The conference did not achieve the proposed goals and developed with major opposition between blocs, specifically because of some countries’ fear of losing internal control over its income tax in regards to the first objective and the advantage that the most powerful nations could gain in case of the second. To address the latter, Argentina and Brazil proposed a deal “that would formally oppose territorial conquest, and the US delegates refused to accept it.” However, the meeting would lead to

¹⁴Alejandro Alvarez, *The Monroe Doctrine: Its Importance in the International Life of the States of the New World* (New York: William S. Hein & Co., 2003), 12-14.

the creation of subsequent organizations, “the Commercial Bureau of the American Republics in 1889 became the International Bureau of the American Republics in 1902, and in turn the 1910 Pan-American Union.”¹⁵ The latter “became the permanent secretariat and headquarters of the Organization of American States (OAS)” in 1948.¹⁶

The Pan-American Union achieved significant determinations in its early years, such as “building of roads that eventually would link together North and South America by a Pan American railroad, questions of trade facilities, and educational development.” Positive interpretations would say that both the Monroe Doctrine and the Pan-American Union were two beneficial political tools as for the former represented the US’ will to maintain the American continent free from the tyranny of overseas monarchies and the latter signified the settlement made by the nations of America to live in harmony promoting the principals of respect, support, and peace; and “linked by the great ideals of democracy.”¹⁷ Other interpretations, as mentioned before, considered the Monroe Doctrine an adaptable justification for US’ interventionism, mostly in Central America, which in turn negatively affected the idea of Pan-Americanism. The financial profits were undoubted, but further intervention in the “the Central American-Caribbean region” led Latin American countries to believe that the US’ objectives in regards to Pan-Americanism were exclusively to exercise financial and political regional hegemony.¹⁸

¹⁵Gregory Weeks, *U.S. and Latin American Relations* (New York: Pearson Education, 2008), 64-65.

¹⁶Joseph Smith, *Historical Dictionary of United States-Latin American Relations* (Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2007), 172.

¹⁷Don Ignacio Calderon, “The Pan-American Union and the Monroe Doctrine,” *The Journal of International Relations* 10, no. 2 (1919): 136, <https://doi.org/10.2307/29738341>.

¹⁸Smith, *Historical Dictionary of United States-Latin American Relations*, 172-173.

A change in Latin American perception started towards better grounds due to US' necessity to care for its internal issues, which erupted because of the Great Depression in 1929. The economic crisis persuades President Herbert Hoover to start stepping back from interfering in LA through US' military might.¹⁹ Hoover also considered the Clark Memorandum, in which Joshua Reuben Clark, as the Undersecretary of State, expressed his opposition to believe in an interventionist nature of the Monroe Doctrine, however, the president never “declined to disavow publicly the right to intervene in Latin America.”²⁰ Latin American distrust towards the US' interests in the Western Hemisphere started to shift once the Monroe Doctrine was modified “to include a regional consensus towards common security concerns.”²¹ This shift was influenced by the Good Neighbor Policy established by US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, with concrete actions like withdrawing “troops and financial advisors from the Caribbean region,” as well as the public announcement opposing the Roosevelt Corollary.²²

By 1936 as possibilities of a global scale war were in sight, concerns grew within the American countries which recognized a common threat, and the necessity to unite “allowing them to pursue a common security purpose and permitting Washington to assume the mantle of leadership in the region.” For this reason, “the 1936 Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace in Buenos Aires” was one of great importance representing a unique chance for security cooperation, and resulting in the 1940 “Collective Security Resolution XV” with the purpose to create a shared security

¹⁹David Green, *The Containment of Latin America: A History of the Myths and Realities of the Good Neighbor Policy* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), 13.

²⁰Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America*, 15.

²¹Betty Horwitz and Bruce M. Bagley, *Latin America and the Caribbean in the Global Context: Why Care About the Americas?* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 183.

²²Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America*, 15.

structure “through the Declaration of Reciprocal Assistance (*Tratado Interamericano de Asistencia Recíproca*-TIAR).” In 1942, “the Inter-American Defense Board (*Junta Interamericana de Defensa*-JID)” was established, it was a US led organization created to manage “military-to-military cooperation in the hemisphere.” After WWII was over, the US and Latin American countries agreed in 1945 at the “Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace in Mexico City . . . to establish an International Organization of the American Republics.” The Act of Chapultepec was signed in the conference mentioned above and bound countries from the Americas to adopt a pact of “mutual security,” which was ratified in 1947 with the “Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance,” often referred to as the “Rio Treaty (TIAR).”²³

Finally, the Inter-American system was officially established in 1948, with the creation of the OAS as its political part and the Rio Treaty as the military association to complement it, “government leaders fashioned [this] regional system of collective security at a series of international conferences in Mexico City, San Francisco, Rio de Janeiro, and Bogotá.”²⁴ The structure design of the Inter-American system which considered the JID and TIAR for security, and the OAS for “democratic/economic issues;” remains in force as for today.²⁵

The effectiveness of the Inter-American system has not been positive historically, evidenced when “[o]nly Mexico and Brazil . . . sent military contingents abroad during the Second World War,” and through the US’ failed attempt to commit support of troops from the OAS countries for the Korean War, resulting in Colombia as the only troop

²³Horwitz and Bagley, *Latin America and the Caribbean in the Global Context*, 183.

²⁴Gilderhus, LaFevor, and LaRosa, *The Third Century: U.S.- Latin American Relations since 1889*, 106.

²⁵Horwitz and Bagley, *Latin America and the Caribbean in the Global Context*, 184-185.

provider because “Latin Americans perceived no communist threat to themselves and resented what they understood as US neglect, specifically the absence of a Marshall Plan.”²⁶

U.S. Foreign Policy towards Latin America

As some of the above-mentioned pieces of evidence explain, one can deduce that US and LA relations could be depicted as a roller coaster of positive and negative periods. The cold hard facts are that generally, the US has not given priority to LA in its foreign policy in comparison to other regions of the world, it has not exhibited much of a “sympathetic rapport with Latin America or its culture” trying to apply American elucidations for Latin American problems, and it has usually preferred American “biases and prejudices to any deeper understanding,” assuming that more economic development meant that Americans were superior in the social, political, intellectual and moral realms.²⁷

From the beginning of the twentieth century up until the Cold War-era “U.S. hegemonic interests” in LA have been: safeguard the unrestricted right to use Latin American unprocessed materials and sea lines of communications, protect the peripheral zones and sea lines of communications of the Panama Canal, protect domestic and international borders, secure regional stability in beneficial terms regarding American interests, and repel unfriendly “foreign powers.” In less priority, the interest in promoting

²⁶Gilderhus, LaFevor, and LaRosa, *The Third Century: U.S.- Latin American Relations since 1889*, 126-127.

²⁷Howard J. Wiarda, *In Search of Policy: The United States and Latin America* (Washington D.C. and London: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1984), 22.

and defending the democratic ideology and human rights has been evidenced during “noncrises times.”²⁸

The interests mentioned above made Latin American countries seek the regional collective security system’s legitimacy when confronted with the newly universality approach of the United Nations (UN), in order to avoid, in the Western Hemisphere, not only foreign interference but also the US’ as well, which were potentiated by the veto power of the permanent members of the UN Security Council. The regional approach was also interpreted as “a means of facilitating the infusion of U.S. economic aid into Latin America.”²⁹

Latin American nations persuaded the US to include Article 51 of the UN Charter and for it to have a narrative that would explicitly “affirm the compatibility with the UN Charter of existing and future collective defence arrangements” such as the one established by the Chapultepec Act.³⁰ Article 51 considers the legitimacy of both “individual and collective self-defence” intrinsic rights.³¹ Therefore, by “reconciling universalist and regionalist views,” as well as “permitting defensive measures to be taken alone or in cooperation with others, pending action by the Security Council,” the essence of Article 51 gave the US a preponderant power at a global and regional scale.³²

²⁸*Ibid.*, 24.

²⁹Gilderhus, LaFevor, and LaRosa, *The Third Century: U.S.- Latin American Relations since 1889*, 108.

³⁰Tom Ruys, “*Armed Attack*” and *Article 51 of the UN Charter: Evolutions in Customary Law and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 62-64.

³¹United Nations, “United Nations Charter, Chapter VII, Article 51,” June 17, 2015, <https://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-vii/index.html>.

³²Gilderhus, LaFevor, and LaRosa, *The Third Century: U.S.- Latin American Relations since 1889*, 111.

Currently, US foreign policy towards LA focuses on various American interests, which “include economic, political, security, and humanitarian concerns.”³³ Furthermore, the US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson announced in 2018 what would become the “three pillars of engagement” of US-LA relations for years to come, and these are: “economic growth, security, and democratic governance.” This approach reflects the growing importance of LA, and the US’ interest to maintain a privileged position in the hemisphere as China has increased its presence in the region, and has become “the first trading partner of Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and Peru.” As evidenced above, economic prosperity and security are a common denominator for both US’ interests and foreign policy for LA; after all, they “reinforce each other.”³⁴

Threats to Latin American Security

The propinquity of LA and its increasing economic potential, evidenced by holding 12 of the 20 free trade treaties which the US was committed with worldwide in 2018, and the trade of approximately “\$2 trillion worth of goods and services . . . supporting more than 2.5 million jobs” in the US³⁵ makes it essential for American policy to protect its interests in the region, as explained above. Despite the economic resurgence of LA in the last decade, some countries of the region are still being challenged in the security realm; thus, the “Inter-American multilateral system” is also at risk. The major

³³Mark P. Sullivan et al., “Latin America and the Caribbean: U.S. Policy and Issues in the 116th Congress” (Congressional Research Service, 2020), https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/R46258.html#_Toc36030242.

³⁴Rex W. Tillerson, “U.S. Engagement in the Western Hemisphere” (University of Texas, 2018), <https://www.state.gov/u-s-engagement-in-the-western-hemisphere/>.

³⁵*Ibid.*

threats to security in LA today are “illicit drug trafficking, organized crime (organized criminal networks), and terrorist activities.”³⁶

In respect to illegal drug trafficking in LA, the production of cocaine is one of the biggest concerns, due to the exclusivity of this narcotic’s production by three countries: Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia. These nations are the main distributors of cocaine for “at least 174 countries around the world,” having Europe and North America as their “largest destination markets,”³⁷ which means that drug trafficking ultimately affects US security and its citizen’s health. Drug trading in LA has direct and indirect ties with violence, particularly in the three countries mentioned above as producers, “and Brazil, the Caribbean, Central America, Mexico, and Venezuela, all of which are part of trafficking routes.” The extra value that drugs accumulate throughout the smuggling stage makes manufacture as well as trafficking very likely “to cause violence in a country.”³⁸

Plan Colombia was a US funded economic aid to fight the Colombian illegal narcotics enterprise, which “supplied some 90 percent of the world’s cocaine and a significant portion of the heroin that arrive[d] in the United States” by the beginning of the 21st century.³⁹ However, a decade later, the partial success of Plan Colombia had as an undesirable result that delinquency and violence tied to drug trafficking were relocated in Mexico as their cartels fought to take over the profitable drug trade from South America to the US.⁴⁰

³⁶Horwitz and Bagley, *Latin America and the Caribbean in the Global Context*, 141.

³⁷United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, “The Globalization of Crime: A Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment” (Vienna: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010), 81, [//www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/tocta-2010.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/tocta-2010.html).

³⁸Independent Task Force, “U.S.-Latin America Relations: A New Direction for a New Reality,” *Foreign Affairs* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2008), 29-30.

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰Bruce Bagley, “The Evolution of Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in Latin America,” *Sociologia, Problemas e Práticas*, no. 71 (March 1, 2013): 104.

Regarding organized crime in LA, not only the drug cartels are involved. There are “transnational gangs” that represent a critical peril “to hemispheric security.” Two of the most hostile and preponderant are the MS-13 and the M-18, which by 2008 had “somewhere between 50,000 and 100,000 members distributed among a number of Central American countries (especially Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras) and the United States.”⁴¹ Another great concern in the realm of organized crime, which affects US-LA relations, is the smuggling of migrants. This illicit activity is nurtured by the extreme poverty conditions from which Latin Americans seek to flee. The combination of the US hosting “the second-largest speaking population in the world,” and the fact that approximately “150 million Latin Americans live on less than two dollars per day;” makes immigration to the north very attractive for the less developed countries in the Latin American region.⁴² Therefore, people from these nations are disposed to pay criminal organizations to get assistance in their illegal immigration, resulting in that:

. . . an estimated 80% of the illegal immigrant population in the United States is from Latin America. Most clandestine entrants to the USA come across the Mexican land border, most of these entrants are Mexican, and over 90% of illegal Mexican migrants are assisted by professional smugglers. Some 88% of the total 792,000 migrants apprehended in 2008 were Mexican nationals, and the remainder were mostly other Latin Americans.⁴³

Finally, terrorism has been a deep concern for Latin American countries, some of the most threatening insurgent groups were “the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces

33. ⁴¹Independent Task Force, “U.S.-Latin America Relations: A New Direction for a New Reality,”

⁴²United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, “The Globalization of Crime,” 4.

⁴³*Ibid.*

(FARC), the Army of National Liberation (ELN), the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), and Peru's Shining Path.”⁴⁴

Up until the 1980s, insurgency against the government in office was the main objective of terrorist groups in LA, however during the decade mentioned above, ties to drug trafficking changed the nature of terrorism in the region, and these new “narco-terrorists were driven by profit not ideology.”⁴⁵ Therefore, fighting terrorism in LA today serves the same purpose, domestically and regarding US interests in the region, as the war on drugs.

US Collective Security Programs in Latin America

Currently, the US strengthens collective security through its worldwide security cooperation and security assistance programs.⁴⁶ These programs have increased from 57 to 107 since the War on Terror started after the World Trade Center terrorist attacks in 2001. Different departments of the US Government administer the programs, more specifically “87 are managed by the Defense Department, 14 by the State Department, 2 jointly by both State and Defense, and 4 by other agencies.”⁴⁷

The programs that address (but not limited to) the main security threats in LA and thus the US interests in the region are:⁴⁸

⁴⁴Weeks, U.S. and Latin American Relations, 250.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 249.

⁴⁶Defense Security Cooperation Agency, “Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) Manual 5105.38-M,” 2012, <https://www.samm.dsca.mil/chapter/chapter-1>.

⁴⁷Adam Isacson and Sarah Kinoshian, “Putting the Pieces Together: A Global Guide to U.S. Security Aid Programs,” April 2017, 3. <https://www.wola.org/analysis/publication-putting-pieces-together-global-guide-u-s-security-aid-programs/>.

⁴⁸Defense Security Cooperation University, *Security Cooperation Programs Handbook* (Defense Security Cooperation University, 2019), <https://www.dscu.mil/pages/resources/publications.aspx?id=0>. Official Programme names were gathered from this source.

- a) Support for Counter-Drug Activities and Activities to Counter-Transnational Organized Crime. This program is “the second-largest source of military and police assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean.” It is authorized to cover expenses such as “transportation, base construction, training, air and sea traffic detection and monitoring, linguist and intelligence analysis services, and reconnaissance” in order to fight transnational criminal organizations and illegal narcotics trafficking.⁴⁹
- b) Excess Defense Articles (EDA), this program gives the US the ability “to transfer used, nonessential defense equipment from US military stockpiles to foreign security forces,” for LA this support is usually focused on developing the effectiveness of counter-drugs activities.⁵⁰
- c) Foreign Military Financing Program (FMFP), it “provides grants and loans to help countries purchase U.S.-made defense articles and defense services,” in respect to LA, approximately \$380 million US dollars were granted in the period from 2012 through 2017.⁵¹
- d) Foreign Military Sales (FMS), this program allows the commerce of “U.S.-made weapons, equipment, and related training to other countries. Typically, countries purchase the defense articles and services with their own funds.” In LA, sales were accounted for almost \$2.3 billion US dollars for the period from 2010 through 2015.⁵²

⁴⁹Isacson and Kinosian, “Putting the Pieces Together,” 41.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 68.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 76.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 81.

- e) International Military Education and Training (IMET), “is the main non-drug military training program in the foreign assistance budget. Funds provide grant training and education to foreign military and related civilian personnel, including police.” This program was established in 1976 to tightened bonds between military organizations from overseas. However, in 1990 its reach was extended through “a sub-category that funds courses on management of defense resources, military justice and human rights, civilian control of the military, and anti-drug military-police cooperation.” Approximately \$236 million US dollars were assigned for the preparation of Latin American military personnel in the period of 2000-2017, amounting more than 43,000 people that received training, and Colombia being the first beneficiary.⁵³
- f) Regional Defense Combating Terrorism and Irregular Warfare Fellowship Program (CTIFP), this program considers the instruction and training of “foreign military officers, defense ministry officials, or security officials” in order to support the fight against terrorism. For Latin American officials, the program finances their education at “Regional Centers for Security Studies, like the Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies at the National Defense University in Washington.”⁵⁴

As it was mentioned above, the US Department of Defense manages the most significant part of the security aid programs. An essential actor within the referred department is the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), having as its mission “to advance U.S. national security and foreign policy interests by building the capacity of

⁵³*Ibid.*, 104.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 144.

foreign security forces to respond to shared challenges,”⁵⁵ it becomes a key component in the development of collective security in LA considering that this agency:

. . . integrates security cooperation activities in support of a whole-of-government approach; provides execution guidance to DoD [Department of Defense] entities that implement security cooperation programs; exercises financial and program management for the Foreign Military Sales system and many other security cooperation programs; and educates and provides for the long-term development of the security cooperation workforces.⁵⁶

Another key actor within the US Department of Defense is the US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), directly related to LA because its AOR “includes: The land mass of Latin America south of Mexico, [t]he waters adjacent to Central and South America, [and] the Caribbean Sea.”⁵⁷ USSOUTHCOM is the “Geographic Combatant Commander. . . [responsible] for all security cooperation matters” within the AOR mentioned above.⁵⁸

The Director of the DSCA is responsible for the delegation of “the administration of security cooperation programs, in whole or in part, to the . . . Combatant Commands.”⁵⁹ Therefore, the joint work and relationship between these two entities in regards to the promotion and development of collective security in the Western Hemisphere become essential, for the DSCA represents the primary management and

⁵⁵Defense Security Cooperation Agency, “Mission, Vision, and Values,” The Official Home of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, accessed April 24, 2020, <https://www.dscamilitary.com/about-us/mission-vision-values>.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

⁵⁷U.S. Southern Command, “SOUTHCOM’s Area of Responsibility,” accessed April 24, 2020, <https://www.southcom.mil/About/Area-of-Responsibility/>.

⁵⁸Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, “DOD Directive 5132.03: DOD Policy and Responsibilities Relating to Security Cooperation” (U.S. Department of Defense, 2016), 12. http://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodd/513203_dodd_2016.pdf.

⁵⁹Deputy Secretary of Defense, “Department of Defense Directive 5105.65” (U.S. Department of Defense, October 26, 2012), 2. <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/510565p.pdf>.

guidance source for the USSOUTHCOM as an implementer of the required actions to operationalize cooperative security programs in LA, always considering that:

. . . efforts to build allied and partner nation defense and security capabilities will only be pursued when the foreign country is able to, or is working toward being able to, absorb, sustain, and responsibly deploy such capabilities in support of U.S. security objectives.⁶⁰

Aligned with the US National Defense Strategy, USSOUTHCOM's line of effort of Strengthen Partnerships considers as a pillar, the activities to Build Partner Capacity which provide "both strategic and operational support to assist partner nation militaries and security forces with planning, training, and equipment."⁶¹ Within some of the activities in the endeavor to construct the mentioned capacities, USSOUTHCOM hosts, through the funding allocated in the previously discussed programs, "multinational exercises like UNITAS and PANAMAX, providing opportunities for the Services to test new warfighting capabilities in a low-risk coalition environment."⁶²

Latin American Armed Forces and Collective Security

As discussed in the previous section, Latin American Armed Forces achieve beneficial outcomes from US programs, as they are able to familiarize with state of the art military equipment, as well as increase the level of interoperability with the world's most significant military. However, these benefits are not the only ones; positive changes are also achieved in both national and regional collective security, evidence of this is how Colombia from the years 2000 to 2016 "significantly strengthened its institutional

⁶⁰Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, "DOD Directive 5132.03," 14.

⁶¹U.S. Southern Command, "U.S. Southern Command: Lines of Effort," accessed April 25, 2020, <https://www.southcom.mil/Lines-of-Effort/Strengthen-Partnerships/Building-Partner-Capacity/>.

⁶²Craig S. Faller, "Posture Statement of Admiral Craig S. Faller Commander, United States Southern Command," § Senate Armed Services Committee (2020), 9. https://www.southcom.mil/Portals/7/Documents/Posture%20Statements/SASC%20SOUTHCOM%20Posture%20Statement_FINAL.pdf?ver=2020-01-30-081357-560.

capacity and made notable progress combating drug trafficking, fighting illegal armed groups, and securing government control of territories.”⁶³ By 2012, Colombia had provided training for “over 11,000 police officers from 21 Latin American and African countries, as well as Afghanistan.” It delivered security aid through exchanges and programs to train officials from “Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Haiti, Peru, and Paraguay.”⁶⁴ However, most importantly are the results by 2016 which show that Colombia had reduced violence and criminality from proportions of “62 per 100,000 people in 1999 to 27 per 100,000 people in 2014, and the annual number of kidnappings decreasing from more than 3,000 in 1999 to less than 300 in 2014.”⁶⁵ For these achievements, “US political leadership, military and police training, and technology assistance were crucial.” Today, Colombia is the single Latin American country incorporated as a “global partner” of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), giving it the possibility to participate in military multinational exercises, instruction and preparation.⁶⁶

Chile is also showing positive signs of development in the military realm as it is now exporting its security knowledge “to both the Asia-Indo-Pacific region and Central America.”⁶⁷ Further proof of this development is the training provided to US Army

⁶³The Atlantic Council of the United States, “The Untapped Potential of the US-Colombia Partnership” (Washington, D.C.: The Atlantic Council of the United States, September 2019), 14. https://atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/AC_US-COLOMBIA-REPORT-FINAL_Print.pdf.

⁶⁴Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, “The Colombia Strategic Development Initiative (CSDI),” U.S. Department of State, April 14, 2012, //2009-2017.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/2012/187926.htm.

⁶⁵“S. Res. 368: Supporting Efforts by the Government of Colombia to Pursue Peace and the End of the Country’s Enduring Internal Armed Conflict and Recognizing United States Support for Colombia at the 15th Anniversary of Plan Colombia,” Pub. L. No. 368 (2016), 2-3. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-114sres368ats/pdf/BILLS-114sres368ats.pdf>.

⁶⁶The Atlantic Council of the United States, “The Untapped Potential of the US-Colombia Partnership,” 14-15.

⁶⁷Faller, Posture Statement of Admiral Craig S. Faller Commander, United States Southern Command, 7.

personnel by the Chilean Army Mountain Warfare School at the imposing South American Andes.⁶⁸ Other countries like El Salvador have sustained efforts to support “coalition operations with 12 rotations to Iraq and Afghanistan.”⁶⁹

In Central America and the Caribbean, Jamaica is integrating the “Joint Interagency Task Force South counterdrug operations” with an aircraft designed to exercise maritime patrol capabilities. Guatemala’s Naval Special Forces are now conducting about 80% of the country’s narcotics confiscations after the continued instruction from US “Naval Special Warfare teams.” El Salvador, Panama, and Costa Rica are leveraging with maritime interception capabilities developed through US led preparation, and enhanced with American gear provided to this countries, conducting drug seizures in their exclusive economic zone at distances as long as 100 nautical miles from the coastline disrupting the calamitous effects of drug consumption and related violence that affect their population.⁷⁰

As evidenced above, the capabilities and capacities that seldom Armed Forces of LA achieve through US enhancement of the respective collective security programs are favorable to set better conditions in terms of national security and integration to the world security architecture (WSA). Nevertheless, they are a byproduct of US “specific, focused, and differentiated security interests in the region, such as the concern with drug trafficking and terrorism vis-à-vis Colombia.”⁷¹ The involvement of LA within the WSA,

⁶⁸Matthew Pargett, “U.S. Soldier Recounts Experience at Chilean Mountain Warfare School,” U.S. Southern Command, 2018, <http://www.southcom.mil/MEDIA/NEWS-ARTICLES/Article/1704468/us-soldier-recounts-experience-at-chilean-mountain-warfare-school/>.

⁶⁹Faller, Posture Statement of Admiral Craig S. Faller Commander, United States Southern Command, 8.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 11.

⁷¹Arie M. Kacowicz, “Latin America in the New World Security Architecture,” in *Routledge Handbook of Latin American Security* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 340. The author explains the term World Security Architecture (WSA) as “the contemporary structure of the international system

thus exportation of its military expertise as well, has been usually related to US regional hegemony and dynamic forces that affect US-LA relationships. Therefore, “when and if the United States neglects Latin America, the region is marginalized in terms of its relevance to the WSA.”⁷² However, as China poses serious competition to American global hegemony, the previously mentioned programs are a tool that keeps that antagonism in the Western Hemisphere affairs, especially within the security realm in LA, in favor of the US.⁷³

CONCLUSION

Collective security in LA is not a new enterprise, evidenced through the discussed initiatives of the *Libertador* Simón Bolívar in the early 19th century. The US also involves promptly in developing the collective security concept in the American continent, as the Monroe Doctrine represents the first official position of its desire to do so, this generated positive expectations from the newly formed Latin American republics as a warranty of their independence over European colonialism. The failure of the US to concretely implement the principals of collective security embedded in the Monroe Doctrine until its upraise as a superpower of the international system in the latter years of the 19th century, in addition to the reinterpretation of the doctrine to justify American interventionism in Central America generated mistrust from the Latin American countries. This distrust has been evidenced in political and collective security issues mentioned in this paper, such as the inability to fulfill US’ objectives of the first Pan-American conference by suspicion of American expansionism, the persistence of Latin

defined in security terms (alliances and polarity, institutions and norms, stability, war and peace, security threats and issues).”

⁷²*Ibid.*, 336.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 344.

American countries to establish a narrative which recognized the legitimacy of the OAS in Article 51 of the UN Charter in order to repel European and American interventionism, and the US failure to obtain troop support from LA for the Korean War in response to a perceived post-WWII American neglect to establish an equivalent to the Marshall Plan for LA.

The US approach to collective security in LA considers military aid programs which are aligned with its National Defense Strategy. These programs are undoubtedly related to the accomplishment of the strategic interests of American foreign policy, seeking economic growth through Latin American markets and the preservation of US domestic security within a regional scenario where Latin American threats can negatively affect it. Therefore, US collective security programs for LA are managed by the DSCA and, implemented and operationalized by USSOUTHCOM in order to meet those strategic objectives, which are now contested primarily by China, but not yet surpassed in the security realm thanks to the effective and long processes of strengthen partnerships and partner capacity building that the programs have sought to achieve over time.

While some evidence of improvement in both Latin American domestic security conditions and Armed Forces capabilities and capacities were addressed, ultimately only Colombia shows the most important developments, to the point of representing the one and only NATO's global partner within LA. This shows the relation between Colombia's development in the security realm and US' specific interests in LA. In this case, the interest was to counter Colombian drug trafficking (which affects American security and its people's health) through the funding of Plan Colombia and the IMET program in which Colombia was the foremost recipient among other Latin American countries.

The facts mentioned above indicate that a greater benefit to US strategic interests is gained through the discussed collective security programs. Therefore, under the narrative of security collectiveness, assistance, and cooperation, an attractive and effective tool for US regional hegemony is nurtured.

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