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MDS – Master of Defence Studies

**Security analysis in South America: Regional Security
Complex Theory application**

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ABSTRACT

The end of the Cold War marked the beginning of a time when many politicians and defence officials began to consider security as a regional issue. This reinforced a trend that started with the decolonization process. Today, it is very difficult to think about any security consideration without considering regional integration, the relationships between nation-states, and their interaction with global powers and other regions.

Within international relations, there exist a number of schools that try to explain security based on different concepts and theoretical foundations. Realists, liberals, and constructivists represent different approaches to the study security and the relationship between nation-states. These traditional theories, however, are in many ways incomplete in regard to understanding the effect of regional integration on the international system. More contemporary theories made an effective contribution combining old elements with new developments. Regional Security Complex Theory is a good example of one of these modern theories. Its scope is adequate to analyze security because it contains elements from the traditional views (nation-state, alliances, balance of power, and interdependence) and at the same time incorporates new and useful concepts (social construction, use of speech act, securitization process, and patterns of amity and enmity).

South America is a region that fulfills the required characteristics to be analyzed from the Regional Security Complex (RSC) perspective. Its history passed through all the steps required for this “regionalization” process. Within the South American region, all the elements that are part of the RSC are present, and through the combined analysis of these elements, a clear picture of security in the region is possible. Using the Regional Security Complex Theory is the most accurate means of analyzing the South American security structure. After the Cold War, alliances and partnerships originated in an effort to protect nation-states from common threats (i.e. the relationships between Argentina, Brazil, and Chile), a more shared and integrated vision of South America was achieved, and their greater organization in terms of economic policy and domestic policy (MERCOSUR) aimed at producing a better quality of life for South Americans.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The nature of security has become more complex since the end of the Cold War. Theoretically, there have been new developments in terms of the variables used to analyze security, new sectors and levels of security, and a greater emphasis on analysis at the regional level. One of the most intriguing new theories, Regional Security Complex Theory (which comes from the Copenhagen School), covers all these new variables and allows for a more detailed and accurate analysis.

The end of Cold War had a significant effect on the relations between the only remaining superpower, the United States, and regional powers. Once the threat of communism disappeared, United States “penetration” into different regions diminished. Penetration occurs when “outside powers make security alignments with states within a Regional Security Complex.”¹ Regional Security Complex Theory suggests that when a superpower distances itself from certain regions in the world based on its own national interests, nation-states within these regions are often left to agree to security arrangements with the other nations within their region. Historically this process is linked to the decolonization processes and the end of the Cold War.

Traditional approaches to the study of security do not cover all the variables that exist within the realm of security today. New actors play significant roles in the international system (as liberal theory argues), and at the same time, the state remains the principal player at the international level keeping with the concepts of sovereignty and national interest (realist theory). Finally, the new approach to security, constructivism, focuses on social construction within a human group, and prioritizes the importance of the defence of human rights and the relevance of human dimension of security. These theories complement each other. Regional Security Complex Theory draws from a number of these traditional approaches and includes the concepts necessary to analyze all the variables of security. At the same time, RSC theory provides an excellent tool for the

¹ Buzan Barry and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers. The Structure of International Security* (London: Cambridge Studies in International Relations, 2003), 46.

study of interactions within the entire international system (global, inter-regional, and regional).

A review of the different theories that sustain Regional Security Complex Theory, starting with an analysis of the real scope of security, will set the theoretical framework to apply within the South American region. Latin America presents an ideal scenario for the application of RSC theory. The South American region passed through an organized decolonization process after suffering from a severe penetration by global powers during the Cold War. Its relevance was largely ignored by the United States after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Currently, security issues within this region are directly related to the type of foreign policy that states exercise and the role they want to play within the international system. Across the depth of the South American continent, there exists an intention to integrate despite the existence of many young democratic nations and a strong presence of populist leaders. These are both challenges that the region faces.

By using a historical analysis of the region, the tendencies of the actors within the region, and by applying the Regional Security Complex Theory, this paper will clarify the actual security issues within the South American region and recommend proposals on how the region should progress in the future. The aim of this paper is to apply the Regional Security Complex Theory to security relations in South America, to analyze the security logic within the region, and finally, demonstrate how South American states are grouped in accordance with these security issues. This paper presents a tool to explain the balance of power in South America, a region that despite being relatively free of armed conflict remains instable. MERCOSUR,² the most relevant regional institution in South America, and the relations between Argentina, Brazil, and

² Southern Common Market: Treaty establishing a common market between the Argentine Republic, the Federal Republic of Brazil, the Republic of Paraguay and the Eastern Republic of Uruguay. MERCOSUR origin traces back to 1985 when President Raul Alfonsin of Argentina and President Jose Sarney of Brazil signed the Argentina-Brazil integration and economic cooperation program. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela become member on 17 June 2006. Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador y Peru currently have associate member status. Information available from www.mercosur.org.uy; Internet; accessed 19 April 2007.

Chile (the most powerful countries in the region) will be analyzed in deeper detail because these actors are the most important contributors to regional security in South America.

CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

The end of the Cold War has had a significant impact on the international balance of power. Eighteen years since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the world remains unstable because new ingredients and variables are added every day.

The authors of the Regional Security Complex Theory, Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, argue that because of decolonization movements all around the world, the levels of regional security have become more independent of one another and relevant to the future of international politics. This is one of the main reasons why this particular theory, a real “blend” of theories, applies so well to South America. South America had a natural decolonization process, different from other regions or colonies like the British African colonies, Australia, Canada or India.

The end of the Cold War accelerated the decolonization processes and increased differentiation from one region to another³. Somehow, the shift in the dynamics of the relations among the regions of the world caused regional actors to become significant players in international politics and within the international security environment. Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) suggests that threats to security diminish as distances between nation-states and those threats increase. Therefore, this theory can be used to analyze nations within a region with respect to threats, and the relationship between regions and other countries within the international system. Specifically, this theory is an ideal model to analyze the relationship between South America and the United States.

Regional Security Complex Theory is a mixture of different approaches: realist, constructivist and liberal. These different approaches can be arrayed on a continuum depending on how important social considerations are perceived across the international environment. On one end is the realism, which assumes that international structure is

³ Buzan Barry and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 3.

defined by the distribution of power (an asocial environment). On the other hand, constructivism recognizes the international reality as a social construction, driven by a collective understanding that emerges from a social interaction.⁴ The idea of social construction is the key part of the constructivist theory. The third position, liberalism, focuses on creating institutions to encourage cooperation, generating shared interests.

Regional Security Complex theorists adopt the concept of the state as the most important unit within the anarchic international system, territorial border, and power distribution from the realists. RSC theorists incorporate the constructivist approach by stressing that politicians ultimately determine which issues are considered security issues (securitization process). Finally, RSC theorists adopt the liberal approach in that the scope of security is not only related to political and military problems, but also to economic, social and ecological issues, where trans-national actors and the concept of interdependence play a main role.

Since RSC theory is a mix of theories and approaches, it is necessary to expand on each one of these theories to understand how the Regional Security Complex Theory originated and how it can be applied in the Southern Cone.

THE EVOLUTION OF SECURITY CONCEPT

The concept of security comes from the Latin *securitas / securus*, which derives as well from *sine cura* that means without cure, without preoccupations, without problems, whereas *securitas* means free of preoccupations, of problems, and of threats. Security is, in this use of the concept, a way to designate attributes to the people who find themselves safe, and also a quality of the activities that do not see as restricting their capacity of development, their freedom. Security is then an instrument of political power. Political power uses the word “security” to talk about all the social areas that are in danger, are threatened, or that the state must protect. This process is known as ‘speech act.’ In general, speech acts are acts of communication. That is important within the

⁴ Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 10.

context of RSC theory because in theory, security issues are what regional leaders say are security issues and this causes an effect. For example, if the President of the United States says that the South American economy is at risk, the effect would be that international businesses would quickly withdraw foreign investment, causing the South American economy to indeed be at risk.

Security has been defined primarily in terms of freedom from threat and freedom from fear.⁵ National security is, in this context, the priority of speech act, directly relating the concept of security with the integrity of the state.⁶ The concept of national security or security of the state is central within this scope and includes the protection of the state against any outer aggression and against any internal movement that can put it in danger.

SECURITY IN DIFFERENT SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

The first author who studied security philosophically was Thomas Hobbes.⁷ The Leviathan (Hobbes' concept of the ideal nation-state) has the task of preserving the integrity of its citizens and protects the individual citizen from the uncertainties of the world's anarchical nature. To Hobbes, security is not restricted to a physical guarantee of safety, but goes further, extending to a social stability that guarantees overall well-being. According to Hobbes, security is one of the fundamental qualities of the nation-state. In effect, the state becomes a custodian of security and protects individual security. In effect, Hobbes interpreted the establishment of the modern state as an alternative to anarchy, but he considered that this was valid for the nation-state since there was no chance that a supranational authority would settle down to govern the international agenda. Hobbes' theoretical foundation is known as the culture of enemies.

⁵ Bruce Cronin, "Creating stability in the new Europe: the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the socialization of risky states," *Security Studies, London*, Volume 12, Number 1, autumn 2002, 132.

⁶ Gabriel Orozco, "El concepto de la seguridad en la Teoría de las Relaciones Internacionales," *CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals Magazine*, Number 72, 2005, 164.

⁷ Elena Diez de la Cortina, "La filosofía de Thomas Hobbes;" available from www.cibernous.com/autores/hobbes/teoria/biografia.html; Internet; accessed 16 November 2006.

Emmanuel Kant presented an alternate theoretical model with which to analyze security. He challenged the state-centric and anarchical posture of the Hobbesian world, promoting a change in the conception of security. Kant assumed security to be an area of main competition with the State, which should be the guarantor of the citizens' inalienable rights. This idea is shared between Kant and Hobbes; nevertheless, Kant went further since he understood the security dilemma that emerged from the relation between states in accordance to moral norms and categorical considerations. Kant believed that the only way to obtain security was to create an international legal order similar of those which existed inside states. For that reason, his theory endorsed the role of international institutions as legislators who act to suppress the violent actions of states, with the aim of liberating humanity from war's flagellum. According to the Kantian vision, there are moral imperatives that limit the actions of states. However, these imperatives do not imply coexistence and cooperation between states; rather, they suggest the end of the state-centric system and its substitution by an international community. The Kantian tradition implies a link between the conduct of states and moral norms which give order to the international system and make it an established community of nations. All these are elements of the liberal school, currently known as the culture of friends.

The Grotian tradition offers another theoretical model with which to describe security. Grotius is closer to Kant in considering an international society of states and by not prescribing the state of anarchy as a given fact; however, he accepts the idea that states are the main actors in international society. The Grotian concept of international relations suggests that states follow a series of norms and behaviours in relation to the kinds of societies within which states exist. In this case, international politics is not about conflict between states, but instead resembles a game that is distributive and also productive. According to the Grotian vision, international relations as a whole do not evolve around inter-state war or trans-national conflict, but instead around trans-national interaction involving commercial and social exchanges. The Grotian understanding about state behaviour in the international arena, with respect to relations between states, respects the norms and institutions of the society in which it belongs. Unlike the Hobbesian vision, Grotian nation-states must not only meet international norms with

respect to security, but also consider morals and the rights of other nations. Grotius frames the parameters of international relations within the constitution of stability zones and mutual respect as the motivation of the actions of states. He does not exempt the international system from the chance of conflict, but he does establish a series of rules that are necessary to follow in order to maintain an order among the actors in the system.

The Hobbesian, Kantian and Grotian traditions lay the ontological foundations for the idea of security. Hobbes introduces the realist tradition in political theory. Kant creates the basis for institutional neo-liberalism, appealing to morality and the consideration for individuals. He focuses on the principles of the liberal tradition. The Grotian tradition makes an effort to impose the rule of the law, using a set of rules to establish security zones. Today, these traditions are recognized in different debates regarding security system dynamics and they are guiding concepts for understanding international relations.

SECURITY THEORIES DERIVED FROM THE PHILOSOPHICAL SCHOOLS

Having defined the concept of security at the state level, it can be extrapolated that security at the international level implies security among nations. But the concept of security at the international level is actually changing in relation to world dynamics, and it is necessary to define what security actually is as described by the different schools of thought. There are many questions. What actors does the concept of security focus on? Who defines it? What scope does it have? What are the threats that affect security? Which are the parameters to measure these threats? How the ideas about security come up? And how the processes of security at national, regional or global levels become part of any institution? These are only some of the many questions that these schools have to consider.

The realist school rejects the concept of peace as an object of study to analyze international dynamics, and proposes power as the axis of international actor's performance (restricted to the level of the nation-state) because the power of a nation allows it to maintain its position within the international system, preserving its national

interest. Stephen Walt, a well-known neo-realism theorist, has argued that the study of security has to be constrained to war, which should include threat analysis and the management of the armed forces. In opposition to the liberal school, he has maintained that "to extend in excess the scope in the study of security brings the risk that problems such as pollution, disease, child abuse or economic recession are seen as threats to security. Defining the field of study in this sense, the intellectual coherence would be destroyed and would be more difficult to find solutions to those important problems."⁸ Realists believe that security is gained through deterrence and the maintenance of the balance of power. In order to deter, nation-states must have not only a military capability, but must also demonstrate that they are willing to use it.⁹

Liberals take a more systematic approach to international relations by linking individual security with systemic stability. They argue that in an interdependent system, security is indivisible (i.e. any form of aggression is a threat to all other states).¹⁰ Liberal theory maintained that the conclusion of the East–West confrontation would eliminate any cause for war on earth and that a new just world order with shared values would arrive. Following this line of thought, international efforts would be channelled towards processes by which the states became so closely inter-related that an armed conflict or any other kind of violence between them would be ruled out. Furthermore, an international system would be constituted that could mediate and solve the remaining conflicts.¹¹ This theory also suggested that to analyze security from a single political and military standpoint was not enough to understand the dynamics of the relations among states. According to liberals, security is a multi-dimensional concept.

Both the idea of an international balance of power and the idea of a peaceful new world order are unrealistic. Given the political climate of today and present social norms,

⁸ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security A New Framework for Analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 15.

⁹ Bruce Cronin, "Creating stability in the new Europe...", 134.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 135.

¹¹ Gabriel Orozco, "El concepto de la seguridad," 162.

a new concept is needed to redefine these dynamics that are present in an ever-changing world. As Doctor Mariano Bartolomé expressed:

It is clear that security must be understood as a multidimensional concept, since the threats to the state structures may be of multiple nature and they are not necessarily carried out by third states. These two characteristics, multidimensionality and the existence of different non-state actors, constitute the keys of the non-traditional approaches to international security, by opposition to the traditional approaches of the bipolar time.¹²

Security does not only involve military security. In the last several years, the concept has evolved. New security areas now include economic, environmental, and social welfare issues. Many within the international community have ceased to concern themselves with military threats from other nation-states.¹³ In essence, the risk of a military escalation has decreased in the last several years.

This change in scope is supported by new theories like constructivism. According to constructivist theory, used here as a representative of the critical theories, national interest is only the expression of the identity of a society. This characteristic of constructivism demonstrates that the international system is not a certainty, nor is national interest absolute and independent of the interaction among actors. Constructivists maintain that the international system is the product of how state and non-state actors behave. State and non-state actors create their own identity and this identity defines their interests and their position within the system. According to this, the security of each state is reliant upon greater cooperation, and it stimulates the survival of effective institutions, dissolving potential conflicts. Therefore, constructivism, unlike neo-realism, does not start with the assumption of international anarchy, and it does not assume that priority of international policy consists on the preservation of a state's territorial integrity. Constructivism does, however, consider that because some states are like-minded, it is

¹² Mariano Bartolomé, *La seguridad Internacional en el año 10 D.G. (después de la Guerra Fría)* (Buenos Aires: Instituto de Publicaciones Navales, Colección Estrategia, 1999), 278.

¹³ Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities*, 4.

possible to create a level of collective security capable of preserving peace and at the same time serving national interests.¹⁴

Meanwhile, realists focus on the state and liberal theorists focus on both state and non-state actors. According to constructivist theory, this focus continues to the level of individual groups and institutions that during the process of their interaction develop stronger identities and commonalities.

Another radical change exists with respect to the main focus of security: human security. Human security refers to the preservation of the human-being in terms of physical security as well as the preservation of basic human rights. In the case of constructivism the concept of human security is included not as an extension of state level security (for realists the analysis level is the state, for liberals, the states plus non state actors), but instead as a separate basis for security, the human being. Some theories have called attention to the idea of securing individuals, but only as a secondary requirement to the security needs of the state. An effect of this widely held ideal, unfortunately, manifests itself in the form of human rights violations.¹⁵ Considering that security policies reflect concrete interests, and that not all interests are reflected in the policy formulation process, some socio-economic sectors can be excluded from it. Therefore, the protection and preservation of people derive not only from the state, as a political entity, but also from the individual's access to the resources necessary to provide themselves with an adequate quality of life.

Considering these points, the following table illustrates the focus of each theoretical model (See Table 1).

¹⁴ Krause Keith, "Critical Theory and Security Studies" *Occasional Paper Number 33: February 1996*; available from <http://www.yorku.ca/yciss/publications/OP33-Krause.pdf>; Internet, accessed 18 February 2007.

¹⁵ Dunne, Tim and Nicholas J. Wheeler, "We the Peoples" (Contending Discourses of Security in Human Rights Theory and Practice: *International Relations*, Vol. 8, N. 1).

Table 1: Security Focus

Focus	Contained	Thinking schools
State	Sovereignty and power Territorial integrity	Realism and Neo-realism
State Non state actors	Cooperation strength Globalization	Liberal
Collectivities or Groups	Societal identity	Constructivism
Individual	Survival, well-being	New approaches Critical Theories

Source: Gabriel Orozco, “El concepto de la seguridad en la Teoría de las Relaciones Internacionales” *CIDOB d’Afers Internacionals Magazine*, Number 72, 2005, 168.

The focus of security is not restricted to a single element (nations, regions, individuals); however, it is important to understand that any element can become a priority in accordance with a nation-state’s political agenda. For example, when a nation’s political agenda is dominated by a platform of defence from external threats (like the United States in 2001-2004) then the critical element would be the nation-state. If the individuals of a nation are consistently subjugated by human rights violations (as is the case in many African nations), the critical element will be the individual. For the purposes of this paper, the differing security focuses will be referred to as sectors.

A good indication that the focus of security has spread into several disciplines lately is the fact that issues such as sustainable economic development, environmental protection, and migration were the critical topics at a number of regional forums. The aspiration to take greater collective action on trans-national issues has been achieved to some degree. Almost all the states have ratified conventions on a wide range of issues in an effort to establish regional policies and guidelines and to articulate regional norms.¹⁶ The globalization process is a great challenge to all these levels. This implies a need for a multiple series of perspectives and proposals to solve the different problems.

¹⁶ Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Leggold, *Regional Conflict Management* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 2003), 123.

The security policies adopted to confront the security problems are commonly referred to as security models, and they are organized like conceptual and operative ideas to cover some or all sectors of security. The important concept is to define the appropriate sector in which it seems to fit each model. In fact, security becomes a multifunctional concept in international relations because in the different regions of the world it is necessary to create models that can be applied or be explained as security zones; that means, depending on the level at which a nation wants to apply security, a series of models are elaborated that allow the nation to achieve its objectives. Along these lines, in some cases, models will interconnect with each other, while in others, they will oppose each other.¹⁷

CONSTRUCTIVISM AND THE COPENHAGEN SCHOOL

Two scholars, Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, base their work on a new way to approach security studies, in an effort they made in conjunction with the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute. Their theoretical framework is consistent with the widening approach to security that has been taking place internationally. This modern theory is inspired by radical constructivism.

As far as these authors are concerned, the incoherence that emerged from the school, so criticized by Kenneth Waltz¹⁸, could neither be completely left aside, nor eliminated to return to the traditional currents. Proponents of this school have attempted to define the scope of security in order to reduce its ambiguity.¹⁹ They consider the “speech act” as a shaper of the security concept. They define the main problem as the approach by which political leaders employ the “speech act.” Wæver argues that problems identified during the use of the “speech act” must be treated or referred to as a

¹⁷ Gabriel Orozco, “El concepto de la seguridad...,” 170.

¹⁸ One of the founders of the neorealism, within the International Relations Theory; information available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenneth_Waltz; Internet; accessed 20 December 2006.

¹⁹ Gabriel Orozco, “Problemas y desafíos de la seguridad en la Globalización;” available from www.caei.com.ar; Internet; accessed 9 January 2007.

security subject.²⁰ This practice is referred to as the securitization process. Therefore, like in the liberal and critical theories, the security concept was opened to actors beyond the states.

The critical point of the speech act, according to the Copenhagen School, is not only that security must be seen like an existing problem, but that it must be confirmed. In other words, mere political interest about a subject does not convert it into a security problem. Prior to considering any subject as a security subject, it must be confirmed by the political leaders. The key point regarding the idea of the “speech act” rests in the cause that the subject has to be approved by the leaders so that it can be labelled as a security subject. In this case, it is said that the subject is securitized.²¹ Security cannot be an objective matter. For some actors, a problem can be considered a threat, but this may not be the case for other actors. It can be said that security is a self-reference practice because it is finally in that practice where a problem becomes a security subject.

Political leaders may handle the concept of security through the use of the discourse: “With voice or without voice, people can be always persuaded to do what their leaders want them to do. This is easy. All you have to do is tell them that they are under attack, and blame the pacifists for lacking patriotism.”²² This is a dangerous reality.

The majority of the population within a given nation-state must perceive a threat as real before it becomes a security issue. An isolated number of people cannot transform a threat into a security problem by simply mentioning it. It is in this way that while the Copenhagen School maintains the constructivist line in philosophical terms; it comes closer to the traditional thinking for limiting the excesses of the widening agenda. A subject is securitized only when the audience accepts it in that way.

²⁰ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security a new framework...*, 83.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 85.

²² Herman Goering, cited in Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration. Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), 94.

The mentioned philosophical schools and theories may be identified in Figure 1.

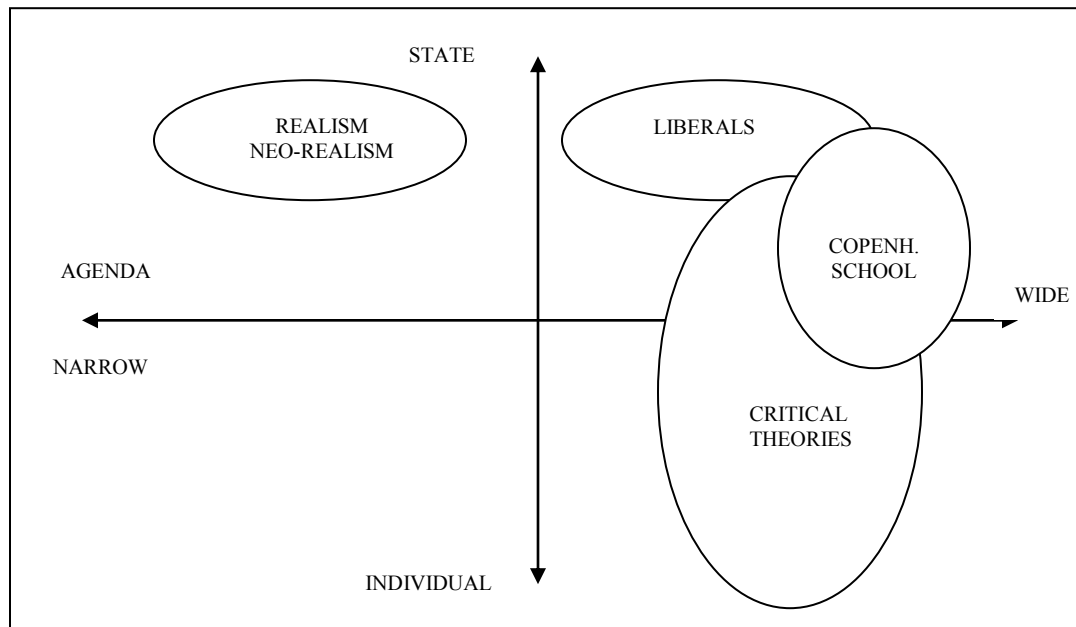


Figure 1: Post-Cold War Security Studies

Source: Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security a new framework for analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 205.

INTRODUCTION TO THE REGIONAL SECURITY COMPLEX THEORY

The Regional Security Complex Theory is a blend of approaches that approaches the problem of international security through a central position among all the thinking lines.

The start point of this theory is to undertake the study of security from the widening school standpoint, but integrating the traditional position. This means to leave the agenda open to different types of threats, building up a more radical vision of the security studies based on exploring threats in relation to the objects of reference and the securitization of those threats, military or non-military. Buzan and Wæver disagree that security is an exclusively military problem. The coherence may be achieved not confining security to the military sector but trying to take advantage of the security logic itself by seeking different ways and securitizing processes and differentiating them from the political processes. This solution offers the chance to break the existing disputes

between both theories.²³ Their intention is to build up a concept of security that implies something more specific than a single threat or the problem itself. The threat or vulnerability may appear in military or non-military areas but to be considered as security problem criteria must be defined to differentiate it from a political problem. To set it as an existential threat, it must be referred to as an object of reference by a securitized actor whom generates emergency measures.²⁴

But why does this theory approach the security issue from a regional standpoint instead from the individual or global ones?

One answer is the fact that after the end of the Cold War, the rivalry between superpowers almost disappeared and therefore there was a reduction in their global penetration into other states' interests. This means that superpowers' domestic dynamics moved them away from the military and strategic problems, leaving the developing world and their societies far away from the world-wide military problems and freer from interference from the great powers.

Having finished the Cold War era, today Russia and the United States are no longer more involved in the ideological rivalry and are less inclined to participate militarily in third areas; for that reason regional states can no longer count on medium or high level of support from one of them. Highlighting the emphasis on the regional level, Lake and Morgan argue: "efforts to cope with violent conflicts, as well as to achieve order and security, will primarily involve arrangements and actions devised and implemented at the regional level."²⁵

Analyzing the regionalist approach at the different levels of analysis is the key to the problem. A question to answer, considering that this theory serves to make

²³ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security a New Framework...*, 3.

²⁴ Ibid., 23.

²⁵ Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Leggold, *Regional Conflict Management*, 14.

predictions in different regions around the world, is about the threats that are securitized by the different actors. Are these threats located at the domestic, regional or global level? This is an important question and it is also the question that each actor answers according to its reality and position within the context of the complex, and it varies according to the historical moment that is analyzed. To help to understand why one would use the regionalist perspective to analyze international security, it is important to look at the modern history of regional security complexes.

To facilitate the analysis, it is possible to divide international relations history into three clear stages: the modern age from 1500 to 1945, the Cold War and decolonization from 1945 to 1989, and the period since 1990.²⁶ During the first era it is possible to observe a predominance of the global level. The new European states economically, military and politically became empires in most of the corners of the planet. Somehow there was regional security but it was defined by global rivalries between the European powers rather than between the local units. Therefore, Europe could be seen as a Regional Security Complex made up of great powers.

During the second period, from 1945 to 1989, the Cold War, like the decolonization process, created contradictory effects. The decolonization process created dozens of new states, starting a tendency towards interdependence at the regional security level among most new actors in Africa, the Middle East and South and Southeast Asia. The Cold War period defined much regional conflict in term of superpower interests. The new world was used by the superpowers as a “sand-table,” which means that the regional countries were scenarios used to practice new strategies at low levels of escalation probability. This way to test the opponent was applied in different regions of the world, but the tendency to exacerbate conflicts instead of mitigating them was more noticeable in Africa and in the Middle East, where the superpowers supplied arms to the political leaders. It is obvious that after the end of the Cold War there was like a de-emphasis on the global level, “and the most of the security problems confronting the contemporary

²⁶ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 14.

world will be found and addressed at the regional level.”²⁷ Buzan and Wæver argue that it is possible to associate the decolonization process with the Cold War. This means that the creation of new states pushed the creation of new security complexes but these had their liberties limited by the penetration of the great powers.²⁸

The Cold War had a dual effect on regional conflict. In one sense, it internationalized many local conflicts, and in other areas many local conflicts were subsumed within the superpower competition.²⁹ This is called penetration, and it was more obvious during the Cold War than later. With the exception of the testing areas, each superpower suppressed conflicts in their spheres of influence in order to avoid the other’s intervention.

With respect to the decolonization process, the transplant of the European system to the new states in some places like South America worked correctly; there was particular success in those regions where the colonial borders followed patterns of indigenous identity, culture and political history.

Two levels interacted during this period of decolonization. On one side was the great powers’ bipolarity and on the other the rivalries at regional level, especially in the new countries that emerged in areas like the Middle East, South and South-eastern Asian and Africa. The interaction of these two security levels in the mentioned regions was the source for the most dangerous and confused episodes of the Cold War.³⁰

In the case of the Western Hemisphere, in particular Latin America, the proximity of the end of the Cold War heralded a new set of motivations and mechanisms for regional relations. After more than a century of grounding hemispheric relations in

²⁷ Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Lepgold, *Regional Conflict Management*, 1.

²⁸ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 15.

²⁹ David Lake and Patrick Morgan, *Regional orders: building security in a New World* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 3.

³⁰ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 17.

defence against an external enemy, beginning with the Monroe Doctrine in 1823 and continuing through the war against communism, the United States and Latin America were prompted to define new terms of engagement.³¹ It was time for globalization and economic colonization.

At the end of the Cold War it is hard to ignore the domestic prism: conflicts are now regionalized, while debates over security have become internalized, severing regional relations from the old inexorable logic of superpower competition.³² As Diehl and Lepgold argued: "...with the Cold War era gone, regional conflicts are more likely to stay regional, responding to their individual circumstances and developments."³³

The third period, since 1990, called the post Cold War, has introduced the concept of "security community" that was coined by Karl Deutsch. He observed a pluralistic security community and argued that whenever states become integrated to the point that they have a sense of community they will settle their differences short of war. This concept becomes more useful and relevant in the post Cold War period in trying to explain the new more peaceful and stable international order.³⁴ This period has several aspects to be considered: the implosion of the Soviet Union and the power redistribution caused the appearance of fifteen new states and security complexes; the end of the ideological confrontation that eliminated the penetration of the global powers in the security complexes of the third world (great influence in South America); and the inclusion of non-military actors and themes in the security agenda.³⁵

The final interpretation, from the regionalist standpoint, is that the Post Cold War period continues to be open to a regional dynamic that began with the decolonization

³¹ Patrice M. Franko, *Towards a new security architecture in the Americas – The strategic implications of the FTAA* (Washington D.C.: The CSIS Press, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2000), 1.

³² Etel Solingen, *Regional orders at Century's down* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998), 5.

³³ Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Lepgold, *Regional Conflict Management*, 11.

³⁴ Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities*, 3.

³⁵ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 18.

process during the period 1945-1989 and continues in the current period. Decolonization opened spaces for the military dynamics, and the end of the Cold War allowed those dynamics to act with more generating initiatives at the regional level.

REGIONAL SECURITY COMPLEXES THEORY

The incorporation of the regional level is one of the keys points of this theory in relation to the classic visions mentioned before. The key to understanding this theory is to analyze how this level interacts with the global system so defended by neo-realists and globalists. The regionalist standpoint analyzes the regional component units, how they interact within the region, how the regions interact with each other, and how the regions are related to the global system.

Region has many different meanings. It refers to a set of countries linked by geography and one or more common traits, such as level of development, culture, or political institutions. Regional systems theories conceive of regions as patterns of interactions within a geographic area that exhibit a particular degree of regularity and intensity to the extent that a change at one point in the system affects other points. Constructivist theory treats regions as socially create identities that take importance because states perceive themselves as cohabiting a common area and sharing a common future.³⁶ Communities exist at the international level; in fact, security policies are deeply shaped by them, and those states dwelling within an international community might develop a pacific disposition. The concept of “security community,” as directly related to the regional level.

It is time to incorporate and analyze the problem of polarity. Academics continue debating the role of the United States in the international system, whether the evolution of China will lead towards a future bipolarity, or the role of the European Union, whether it should be considered as a block or a series of independent units, and the rise of Russia. It is necessary to establish a categorization to define how the different actors are seen in the international context (define the category of the states).

³⁶ David Lake and Patrick Morgan, *Regional orders:...*, 12.

According to Regional Security Complex Theory three categories of powers exist: superpowers, great powers, and regional powers.³⁷ A superpower must have a first class political and military capacity, and an economy that allows it to sustain that capacity; also it should be able to exercise military and political controls at the global level; and it should be recognized by the other actors by their conduct and by their rhetoric. Superpowers are those states that actively participate in the securitization and de-securitization processes at all levels. It is clear that after the Cold War, the United States was the only actor that fulfilled these characteristics; an example of this is the “global war on terrorism.” Great Powers need great capacities in all sectors (military, politic, economic and social) but do not necessarily take part in the securitization processes at the international level. The basic difference between a great power and a regional power is that great powers are considered as great powers by the rest of the world actors, with relation to the international power distribution, actual and in the near future. The examples for this type of power can be found in China, Russia, and the European Union. Regional powers are those which define polarity within their respective security complexes. As example, the post-Soviet Regional Security Complex is a single-pole, led by Russia; South Asia is bipolar, India and Pakistan lead; and South America is multi-polar.

This theory allows one to analyze the world power distribution and, from the regional point of view, allows one to anticipate and to explain behaviours within each region. The constructivist roots explain why the formation and dynamics of the security complexes are based on patterns of amity and enmity between the members of a complex and how those actions depend on the actors’ interpretations and not on a mechanical reflection of a *given* power distribution. It is a social construction. The regional level of security is the ideal link to interpret the relations between national and global issues.

Security complexes have to be seen from a security angle and in that context it is defined as: "a set of units whose more important processes of securitization, de-

³⁷ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 34.

securitization, or both are so interrelated that their security problems cannot be reasonably analyzed and solved in a separate way."³⁸

Security complexes are defined by patterns of amity and enmity that are durable but not permanent; they are affected by historical and geographical factors; their formation derives from the anarchical system distribution (realist concept) and the pressure generated by the geographical proximity. This is the main reason why threats travel short distances more easily than long ones.³⁹ Interaction among units are more important when they are located nearby, for the most part when questions related to military, political, social and economic sectors are analyzed.

Although geography may bind most members of a Regional Security Complex, it is not a necessary condition for a state to be a member of a complex.⁴⁰ David Lake argues that a complex results from security related externalities, important conditions related to security that are imposed on some states by developments in or actions of other states. Those externalities spill over boundaries. Security externalities are more extensive, compelling, and durable among members of a Regional Security Complex than other states.⁴¹ Nevertheless, regional states are ‘victims’ of the same problems or threats. In the case of South America, all the externalities that threaten the socio-economic development affect all states the same way.

States tend to group themselves in Regional Security Complexes knowing that some great local power can penetrate the adjacent regions and the superpower can do the same at global level. The concept of penetration is very used in the Regional Security Complex Theory to indicate when a great power or superpower aligns with the units parts of the complex in questions of security, necessity or convenience. That level of penetration changed in the different mentioned periods: “The legacy of the United States’

³⁸ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security A New...*, 201.

³⁹ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 45.

⁴⁰ David Lake and Patrick Morgan, *Regional orders:...*, 12.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 29.

history of neglect and unilateralism in Latin America is a high level of mistrust and miscommunication.”⁴² The relationship between United States and Latin America moved from periods of close relations to distant positions. The tendency is established as a distant relationship.

Therefore it is important to emphasize that Regional Security Complex Theory cannot be applied to any group of states. They must have sufficient security interdependence to establish a nexus among them and make them different from the rest of the complexes in the neighbourhood. This is a characteristic that will be seen and analyzed for the particular case of South America.

Some basic concepts need to be defined for the application of the RSCT. First, when several levels exist at the same time, preference is given to the regional level, but that does not mean that the regional level is always dominant. Depending on the region under analysis, there will be particular domestic policies, unique relations among states, a singular relation among regions and the relation of the global power within the region, all at the same time. Only one of these, however, will prevail at any given time.

The essential structure of a Regional Security Complex must contain the following elements:⁴³

1. A structure conformed by two or more units.
2. Borders, in order to separate one complex from another.
3. Polarity, to cover the power distribution among the component units.
4. A social construction to cover the patterns of amity and enmity among the units.

Having all these elements, the possible evolutions of a security complex are to follow one of these three processes: maintenance of the status quo, internal transformations (changes within the external borders of the complex as for example: regional integration, polarity or patterns of amity and enmity variations), and finally

⁴² Patrice M. Franko, *Towards a new security architecture...*, 2.

⁴³ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 53.

external transformations that can be given by changes in the component units and any essential structural change.⁴⁴

Along the same lines of Buzan and Wæver, Thompson argues that there are four necessary and sufficient conditions for the existence of regional subsystems applicable for South America:

1. The actor's pattern of relations or interactions exhibits a particular degree of regularity and intensity to the extent that a change at one point of the subsystem affects other point; this aspect is constantly increasing in South America.
2. The actors are generally proximate; a fact of reality for South America.
3. Internal and external observers and actors recognize the subsystem as a distinctive area or "theatre of operation"; MERCOSUR, as the known face, is internationally recognized.
4. The subsystem logically consists of at least two and quite probably more actors.⁴⁵

Four types of Security Complexes are defined:

1. Standards: Westphalian type distribution where polarity usually is defined by regional powers (can be from single-pole, United States in North America, to multi-polar, South America). The power within the region does not have the sufficient influence at the international level to be considered a great power. The main element of security policies is the relationship between regional powers within the region/complex.
2. Central: divided in three different forms. Super-power central: the single-pole power that governs the complex is a superpower (United States in the North American Security Complex); Great power central: the single-pole unit that governs the complex is a great power (China in Southeast Asia); and the Institutional Central, conformed by institutions more than by isolated powers (European Union).
3. Great Power Security Complexes: polarity in the region is defined by more than a great power. It was traditionally the case in Europe and today it is the case in East Asia where China and Japan are the main actors.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 53.

⁴⁵ David Lake and Patrick Morgan, *Regional orders:...*, 47.

4. Super-complexes: When the interregional relations in matters of security intensify and two or more Great Powers are in their nucleus. The examples are China and Japan with their respective complexes.⁴⁶

Following are the Regional Security Complexes established by Buzan and Wæver:

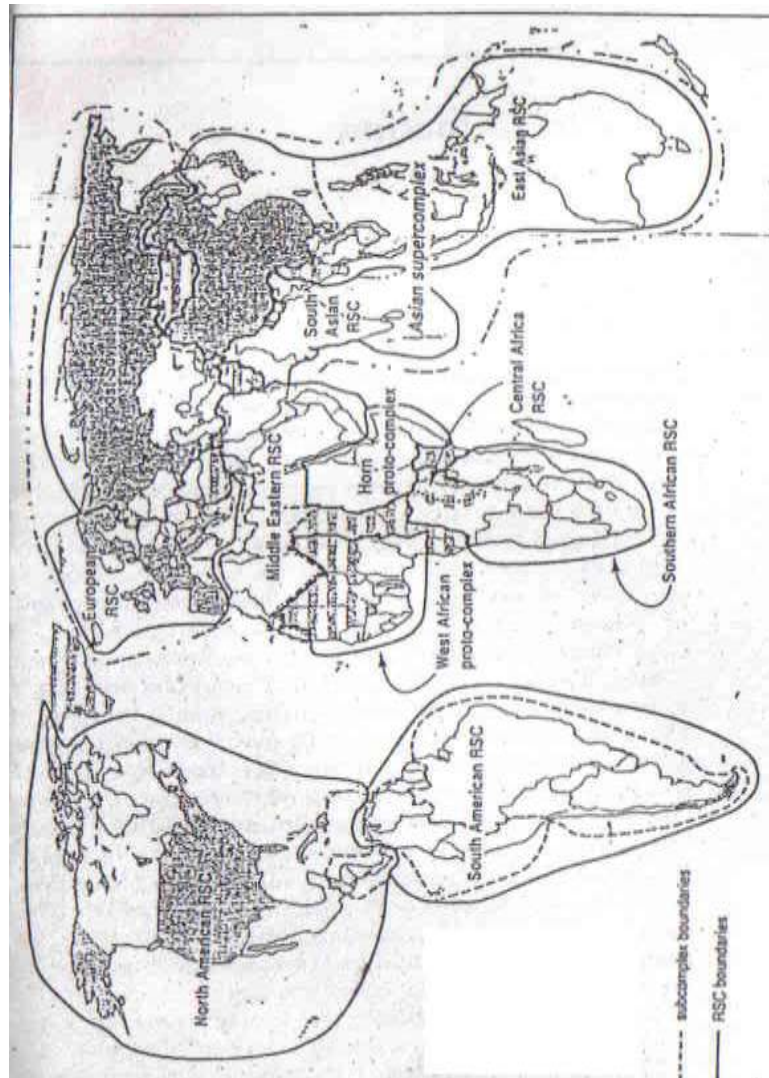


Figure 2: Patterns of Regional Security Post-Cold War.

Source: Buzan Barry and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers. The Structure of International Security* (London: Cambridge Studies in International Relations, 2003).

⁴⁶ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 60.

Regional Security Complex Theory can be used to generate scenarios, but as Buzan and Wæver argue, this is the contested part of the theory. The scenario analyses basically indicate the structure of the international system as it is, and the possible forms that it can take. It will depend on the regional policy and in the compatibility with the great world-wide powers policies how it will transform.

Focusing on the application of the Regional Security Complex Theory on the South American region, the theory can be supported and complemented by the concepts of “security communities,” explained before, and “zones of stable peace.” This last theory reflects the highest cooperative levels, both in intensity and extension across economic, security, and other domains. Although this characterization evokes the concept of a “democratic peace,” democracy is neither necessary nor sufficient for such regional orders to come about. Both ASEAN and the Southern Cone of Latin America approached this ideal type in the 1990s.⁴⁷

WHY RSCT IS THE MOST SUITABLE THEORY TO APPLY IN THE ANALYSIS OF SOUTH AMERICA?

RSCT is the most suitable theory to use for the empirical analysis because it is a blend of realism, liberalism, and constructivism, and in that way it covers their weaknesses and flawed aspects, bringing up the most complete theoretical basis to analyze all the variables. RSCT’s intention is to find a theoretical balance in order to avoid the reductionism, determinism, and pride that are common characteristics of some philosophical schools. Despite these criticisms of realism and liberalism, there also exist many theoretical contact points that contribute to the construction of a more complete and accurate conceptual framework.

For the particular case of South America, as Felix Martin states in his book *Militarist Peace in South America*,⁴⁸ realism and liberalism are not good enough theories to explain behaviours in that region. From the realist standpoint, during the 1970s and the

⁴⁷ Etel Solingen, *Regional orders at Century’s down*, 3.

⁴⁸ Felix Martin, *Militarist Peace in South America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2006).

1980s there were political conditions in the region for war or armed conflict, military dictatorial governments, boundaries conflicts, and extreme positions based on geopolitical and power distribution considerations. Despite all these ingredients, there was no war. From the liberal perspective, there were in place none of the institutions that liberals claim as peace guarantor (democracy, commercial links), even though there was peace. This is a clear example of limitation of these two theories at the moment of trying to explain that situation. The third theory, constructivism, presents as main weakness the not consideration of state as a relevant player in international relations, but it is based on the importance of a common identity and shared values, which are not actual characteristics in the South American region.

How these three theories try to explain the actual South American situation? And, where are their weak points that the RSCT reinforces?

Realism is based on anarchy of the international system and power distribution. For that theory the actual situation should be similar to a chess table. Main state actors (unique players taken in account by realism) are trying to increase their power and defending their own national interests. The creation of MERCOSUR is the result of national interest in play, the institution has no value by itself (is an end, an objective, and not a mean to increase security), and it can be seen how the states try to make their own strategic movement: Argentina trying to get closer to NATO, Brazil pursuing its permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council, and Chile signing commercial agreements with the United States. The other realist element to consider is alliances. Recently in South America, closer relations between states that followed political leader's tendencies (in particular all left tendency Presidents) usually manifested themselves through some commercial or political agreements. Realists would say that all these mechanisms are developed to cover the real national interest of the states, the main element of this traditional theory. All the detailed aspects from the realist theory are actually true for South America; but the theory does not consider some elements that today have great relevance and contribute to security conditions, as for example MERCOSUR.

Interdependence is one of the most important elements within liberal theory. Liberals explain actual situation giving major weight to regional institutions in the security achievement process. Creation and development of MERCOSUR is the main element. All security processes involve regional institutionalization. But the core of liberal theory goes further and foresees a world where borders disappear and the hypothetical existence of a world government. A liberal should argue that MERCOSUR and the interstate agreements' net will bring such a level of integration that borders will lose all relevance. This level of integration is perhaps closer in the European Union, but not so close in South America where the concepts of sovereignty and nationalism are still too important. Liberal theory is not enough to explain actual situation in the region, but at the same time, it has elements that can not be ruled out in the complete analysis.

The element that constructivism highlights as the most important is social construction. From this perspective, South America can be analyzed giving major relevance to the policy carried out by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. His rhetoric and permanent reference to the concept of a shared *Bolivarian*⁴⁹ feeling is a clear intention to build that social construction. A defender of the constructivist theory would argue that in South America exist a common Pan-American feeling, a product of the same values and needs shared by all the population and that is the most important element that contributes to the security level. Again, this concept is important, but is not enough by itself to explain international relations within the region. A theory that gives so much credence to ideologies, identities, persuasion and trans-national networks, has to be considered in trying to understand the world reality after 9/11; but at the same time, important elements from the other theories can not be dismissed.

All these examples show that each theory brings to the table important concepts, but at the same time each one is not complete enough to analyze the complex situation in South America. Power distribution, national interest, the state as the most important player, interdependence, MERCOSUR, democracies, the intention to create a common

⁴⁹ From Simon Bolivar, one of the American liberators during the nineteenth century, in particular in the north portion of South America (today, Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador).

values foundation, share of common threats, and the concept of human security through the implementation of human rights policies, are all elements that are present. But all of them are present at the same time, with different levels of importance, and must not be ignored. Regional Security Complex Theory takes all those relevant elements and combines them into a more complete conceptual framework to allow an understanding that is more faithful to security reality in South America.

CHAPTER 3 THEORY APPLICATION - IS SOUTH AMERICA A RSC?

ANALYSIS OF SOUTH AMERICA AS A REGIONAL SECURITY COMPLEX

With all the theoretical elements defined, it is now possible to begin analyzing the South American region. Within this chapter, three periods will be analyzed: the independence war years (1800-1820) until the beginning of the Cold War, the Cold War period; and the post-Cold War period. The analysis will be focused on the interactions among South American regional powers and the United States. By having a clear view of power distribution within the region (based on patterns of amity and enmity) and an understanding of the securitization process within the region (constructivist concept), it is possible to determine whether South America is a Regional Security Complex. Additionally, recent political and strategic movements will be analyzed with respect to their effect on the structure of the Regional Security Complex.

The development of relations in South America did not follow the developmental patterns that were present during the colonial times. Compared to colonies in the Caribbean and Western colonies in Asia and North Africa, the early independence of the South American states gave them time to develop their own experiences. There are two critical considerations that impacted South America after the independence wars: the great distance between South American and Europe, and the hegemonic position of the United States, a country that showed little interest in the region.

South America is a region characterized by a low number of major military conflicts. Jorge Domínguez, an Argentinean historian, raises the question: why were there so few wars in the sub-continent? But, as he argues: “the non existence of wars does not mean that there were no conflicts.”⁵⁰ During the twentieth century, military force was used or threatened to be used more than two hundred times, but in a much less violent way and to a lesser extent than during nineteenth century.⁵¹ Many of those conflicts did

⁵⁰ Jorge I. Domínguez, *Conflictos Territoriales y Democracia en América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI Editores Argentina, 2003), 21.

not become wars because of the power balance established in South America during the twentieth century, and because of the United States' dominant role in the region. The United States' strategy in the Western Hemisphere is an important factor to analyze with respect to its impact on the security situation in South America.

SOUTH AMERICA IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY (1900 – 1945)

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the United States' strategy in the region was focused on economics and security. In the face of a rising threat from imperialist nation-states in Europe, the United States expanded commercial markets into South American for geopolitical reasons. South Americans rejected the United States' vision of regional

security. From the United States perspective, they were not opened multi-lateral approach to security and economic prosperity, and they maintained their traditional position of “America for the Americans” as described in the 1823 Monroe Doctrine.⁵² United States intervention was sparse in South America. The U.S. focused more of its attention in Central America and the Caribbean. For example, there were forty interventions in these regions versus no interventions in South America.⁵³ During this period, the United States was a non-factor in South America despite the fact that the U.S. was a key economic, military, and political power both at the inter-regional and global level. Looking at this period through the lens of the Regional Security Complex Theory, the power of the United States overshadowed South America both inter-regionally and globally.

South America can be considered as a Standard Regional Security Complex during the period between the independence wars and the Cold War because of its

⁵¹ David R. Mares, *Violent peace: Militarized Interstate Bargaining in Latin America*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 38.

⁵² Monroe Doctrine: “...American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers....”; available from <http://www.ushistory.org/documents/monroe.htm>; Internet; accessed 21 March 2007.

⁵³ Luis Alberto Pons, *Claves del Siglo XXI*, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Dunken, 2000), 89.

cultural legacy, its border problems (a product of the fragile division in the nineteenth century and the resulting conflicts and alliances), the existing social tensions and political instability, the expansionist economic policies of the United Kingdom during the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, and finally, the constant penetration of the United States since the beginning of the twentieth century.

SOUTH AMERICA AS A SECURITY COMPLEX DURING THE COLD WAR

The Organization of American States Charter (OAS) was signed in 1948, a time marked by the beginning of the Cold War. The United States government, however, viewed this organization chiefly as a tool for its regional diplomacy.⁵⁴ IATRA (Inter-American Treaty for Reciprocity Assistance), which was signed in 1947, also served as a legitimizing framework for North American intervention throughout the Western Hemisphere and at the same time, as a mechanism for South American nation-states to play a larger role in United States foreign policy.

Most of the South American states were highly vulnerable to foreign influence. This was a product of weak government policies, no clearly defined political direction, and the existence of permanent social tensions. During this period, the form of government changed often in most South American states. Populist leaders, conservative governments, and military regimes alternated power during the Cold War years. This political polarization ignited conflict between states, conflicts that did not reach to war because equal power distribution in the region worked as a peace keeping mechanism. However, equal power distribution across the region did generate risk. For example, inappropriate behaviours of some political leaders who abused their power often pushed states close to war.⁵⁵ The Argentinean and Chilean military governments' in the 1970s almost engaged in a war over the Beagle Channel because of their aggrandizing ambitions.

⁵⁴ Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Lepgold, *Regional Conflict Management*, 33.

⁵⁵ Jorge I. Domínguez, *Conflictos Territoriales y...*, 29.

The most important fact during this period was the relevance the United States gave to the fight against the spread of the Communist ideology within the South American region. The United States created the School of the Americas in Panama in 1946 to pursue this aim, and to promote an ideology that scorned communism. The school also prepared the United States and its new allies in the South for a rising danger that threatened regional security in the Western Hemisphere: guerrilla warfare.

The intensity of regional conflicts dropped considerably since late 1980s because many of the existing conflicts were resolved. For example, Chile and Peru reconciled a century-old war over a Chilean port in Arica, the Argentineans and the English began economic relations shortly after the Falklands War, Brazil and Argentina reach an agreement on the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and in 1991, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Chile, and Peru all agreed to renounce all weapons of mass destruction. During the 1960s and 1970s military regimes in Argentina and Brazil were highly responsible for these behaviours and for the application of inflammatory geopolitical doctrines.⁵⁶

The security dilemma that existed between Brazil and Argentina during the Cold War is worth mentioning. While there was no conflict, the volatile relationship between Argentina and Brazil during the Cold War dominated the region, each focused on becoming the sole regional hegemony. Argentina feared Brazilian expansion, and at the same time, the main characteristic that dominated Brazilian foreign policy since it was a colony was a strategy to prevent the expansion of the Hispanic-American population which was led by Argentina. This rivalry continued with each country pursuing individual nuclear programs despite the fact that both countries ratified the Thlatelolco Treaty in 1967, establishing Latin and South America as a nuclear weapons free zone. The United States always gave preference to Brazil. During the 1970s Henry Kissinger stated during a policy presentation that “where Brazil goes, Latin America will go.”⁵⁷ The relationship between Brazil and Argentina is important for the South American region and will be discussed in more detail within the scope of the next period of analysis.

⁵⁶ Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Lepgold, *Regional Conflict Management*, 33.

⁵⁷ Luis A. Pons, *Claves del Siglo XXI*, 123.

In addition to relations between Argentina and Brazil, it is important to make note of several other South American nation-state relationships that impact security. Argentina and Chile each staked claim to the Beagle Channel which almost caused a war in 1978. The relationship between Chile and Bolivia continues to sustain poor relations during the Cold War years over a land claim that was lost in the Pacific War in 1879-1883. Chile and Peru relations were poor because of the repercussions from the Pacific War as well. Peru and Ecuador engaged in two wars over the Marañón border in 1980 and 1995. Colombia and Venezuela continued to dispute the sea border on the Coquivacoa / Venezuela Gulf and the Monjes Islands. Throughout the Cold War, Venezuela continued to lay claim to over half of Guyana territory. Argentina and Chile each lay claim to the same territory in Antarctica. Finally, Ecuador, Bolivia, Uruguay and Paraguay can be considered buffer states; all of them have lost a great percentage of their territories, and each of their nations has struggled to remain relevant and survive. Some international relations theorists even suggest that they exist only to provide a buffer between more powerful South American nation-states.⁵⁸ There is good news. After the Cold War period, the level of regional conflicts decreased and the South America's new identity seems centred around democratic governance.

From the standpoint of the Regional Security Complex Theory, it is important to analyze the logic of those conflicts and also their patterns. The South American states' idiosyncrasies and the fear they perceive among themselves, make it difficult to understand these patterns. The conflict between Argentina and Chile had to do with regional power balance. Chile always feared an alliance between Peru, Argentina and Bolivia. Argentina was afraid of a Chile – Brazil alliance. This scepticism made it very difficult to integrate and make alliances. By this period, South America was a moderately integrated Standard Regional Security Complex, maintaining the characteristics of the first period analyzed, and maintaining a relatively important independence from external power intervention. Despite the fact that South America was used to introduce the communist ideology by the Soviets during the Cold War, the impact was minimal compared to other regions of the world.

⁵⁸ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 316.

Despite the conflicts referred to above, for sociological and most important for geographical reasons (the Andean Mountains dividing east – west, and the Amazonia north – south), South America can be split into two different sub-complexes: Southern Cone and the Andean North. The Southern Cone is characterized by the rivalries between Chile, Argentina and Brazil, and also the presence of buffer states like Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay. It is the region that contains the most powerful states, the majority of whom merged into a Common Market, MERCOSUR, during the post Cold War period. The Andean North includes the nations of Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela and Guyana. These nations were also interconnected by rivalries but for a difference reason than the Southern Cone. This sub-region was threatened by trans-national threats like drug trafficking.

The cohesion level of these sub-regions was low. This was a product of their own domestic limitations and their commitment with the idea of non-intervention in other states' conflicts. Non-interventionism is totally opposed to the United States' attitude (i.e. the U.S. always took part indirectly or directly). "Latin America has a long history of support for regional norms such as state sovereignty, non-intervention, pacific settlement of disputes, consultation between states during crises, and representative democracy."⁵⁹ The collective security agenda in South America was not addressed until the creation of the OAS and the IATRA. This agenda, however, was opposed by most South American states. Additionally, there existed increased pessimism regarding the United States' intervention in regional issues. This common opinion, an actual unifying factor among governments, was a great idea, but an idea that was never practiced. Dialogue rarely evolved to anti-U.S. policy.

As in the previous period, the interregional and global levels of influence for the entire Western Hemisphere were represented by the United States because of its geographical location and its superpower status. It is important to emphasize, however, that the relations of Venezuela with OPEC members, Brazilian interest in Africa from a South Atlantic geopolitical standpoint, and the MERCOSUR relationship with the

⁵⁹ Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Lepgold, *Regional Conflict Management*, 125.

European Union all gave the South American continent more inter-regional and global credibility.

Another critical factor during the Cold War is the role of the Soviet Union and the effect of bipolarity on the international system. The United States interest in South America increased with the rise of the Soviet Union in an attempt to suppress the actions of guerrillas spreading the communist ideology. The interventions within the region were part of a securitization's process against the rise of Communism. This emphasis increased as soon as Fidel Castro took power in Cuba in 1959. The creation of integrated military exercises, like the UNITAS exercise (among all American Navies) pursued a double aim: increased security levels at sea (for many years these exercises were focused on Anti Submarine Warfare oriented to diminish the Soviet's submarine threat), and an increased training level of all Western Hemisphere armed forces for the purpose of deterring the communist threat. Facing this United States' intervention, South American states were not able to adopt and maintain a common posture, and many of their political leaders began to citing rhetoric from one extreme to the other (i.e. from the unconditional alignment to the sprouting of the third world).

Four characteristics summarize the Cold War period: the political instability within each government, the border problems between states, the fight for regional hegemony between Argentina and Brazil, and finally, the intervention of the United States.

LATIN AMERICA AS A POST COLD WAR SECURITY COMPLEX

With the end of the Cold War, regional conflicts are more likely to stay regional. The ability of the United States to intervene around the globe has not diminished during this period, but indeed, it has declined to use its vast national power to assist most South American countries.⁶⁰ The end of the Cold War has opened new possibilities for more cooperative regional orders and the development of regional institutions that will strengthen the Security Complex.

⁶⁰ David Lake and Patrick Morgan, *Regional orders:...*, 6.

While the process of greater regional interdependence between South American states began in the 1980s, the rise of democracy, the decreased influence of militaries in the political process, and neo-liberal economic reform have all contributed immensely toward creating a more cooperative environment across the South American continent.. Democracy appears to be taking hold in South America and it appears unlikely that states will begin to move away from this form of government. Political parties within these democracies, however, continue to change between radicals, conservatives, and populists. South American democracies have promoted a more positive world image and continue to serve as key integrators of the continent and other powerful regions. With respect to the United States, this integration process continues to change depending on which political party gains power in the individual South American states. For example in Argentina, there was an extreme change in relations with the United States during the government of President Alfonsín from 1983 and 1989 (marked by indifferent relations) and in contrast, during the government of President Menem from 1989 and 1999 (a period of “carnal relations”).⁶¹

The role of the armed forces is a topic of consistent debate in South America. In most nation-states, the role of this instrument of national power has change frequently dependent on the head of state and his/her government. The transition from military to civilian control in some states has caused a drastic evolution of their respective militaries as well. In these states, almost all defence budgets were drastically reduced. Military funding was diverted to diplomatic agendas, especially those oriented toward integrating the South American continent and domestic social programs. The United States, on the other hand, emerged from the Cold War as the world’s only remaining superpower, wielding a powerful and technologically advanced military. Because of these divergent directions in military policy, many South American nations were left with few choices but to establish collective security agreements with the United States. This dependency on the United States and the large impact of U.S. policies on South American relations is critical to the analysis of this time period.

⁶¹ Mariano Grondona, “Las ‘relaciones carnales’, de Bush a Chavez,” *La Nación*, Buenos Aires, 13 August 2006, 29.

In the Southern Cone, the “military problem” was solved in different ways. In Chile, the transition from a military government to a civilian government was successfully negotiated. While the Chilean military lost its political power, it was assured its position as an instrument of national defence. In Argentina, the armed forces were largely discredited because of the Falklands War, their errant economics policies, and their aversion to respecting human rights. Finally, in Brazil the military and political elite have always shared a common vision for the future.

Just after the conclusion of the Cold War South American countries in the Southern Cone oriented their defence policies in a defensive manner, while countries in the Andean North did not make this transition. This reinforces the difference between two sub-complexes in South American, the Southern Cone and the Andean North.

Discussion on regional security issues also included aspects of economic development of the region. In 1980, the international financial community recognized the limitations to import-substitution industrialization (ISI) that had been adopted in Latin America in the 1960s. The FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) became an extension of the Washington Consensus in South America, oriented toward reducing the role of the state in economic issues, allowing more participation across the private sector, and revising trade policies.⁶² The end state of the Washington Consensus happened during the post Cold-War period when most countries in the region conducted a neo-liberal reform. This neo-liberal reform was created to follow the global tendency toward opened markets. Did neo-liberal reform create more security in South America, or did it decrease security by creating greater social disparities? Social disparities did increase within the region. One of the challenges of MERCOSUR is to become an institution that protects against foreign interests in the region. The level of security in South America is going to be closely related to the future of MERCOSUR because this economic institution drives economic and social policies in the region.

⁶² Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Lepgold, *Regional Conflict Management*, 124.

Insecurity was the consequence of poor social development. Poorly controlled wealth distribution tends to increase social marginality, causing a rise in the level of "existential threats;"⁶³ As a former Foreign Affairs Brazilian Minister summarized, "the social development is the condition for the economic development, and constitutes the first line in national defence and the maintenance of sovereignty."⁶⁴ They are existential threats because any action is seen to be contradictory to present policies. Social growth of those countries seem to not follow economic development, therefore, social problems are being left aside undesirable consequences.

There are three points to consider: the challenge of market globalization and reorientation of neo-liberal economies instead of imports substitution's models, the need to look for new markets to avoid marginalization by the great commercial blocks (which shows clearly that the concept of economic securitization is effective), and the necessity to cooperate in order to mitigate political differences within the region. There is one critical question. What type of integration is ideal: sub-regional, regional or hemispheric? There is no doubt that the future of the region is closely related to the relationship between Brazil and Argentina, giving a great relevance to the sub-regional level. The tendency is to incorporate other countries in to the Southern Cone Regional Security Complex. On the other hand, hemispheric integration is difficult given the mistrust and misperception that exists between South American states and the United States. These relations will be discussed in detail after taking a look to the relationship between the United States and the states within the South American region.

United States' interests in the region depend on a series of priorities. As it was already mentioned, during the Cold War the need to control the advancement of Communism caused a great American penetration of the region. However, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and until the attack on the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11th 2001, the United States interest in the region was more about social and economic issues than about security. For example, the U.S. was largely concerned about

⁶³ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 322.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 322.

illegal immigration from Central American countries, especially Mexico, and the fight against drug trafficking in Colombia. It looked like if the focus was on Central America and the northern part of South America. This lack of focus in the southern states of South American generated cooperation in the Southern Cone. After the attacks of 9/11, the security agenda was “securitized” in the political, military, and social sectors towards the fight against terrorism. The crisis in Argentina in 2001, combined with a lack of United States’ support, improved the relationship between Argentina and Brazil.⁶⁵ Again, U.S. priorities focused on the Middle East and Europe and not on the South American continent.

REGIONAL INTEGRATION: AN URGENT NECESSITY TO INTEGRATE

The beginning of the twenty first century seems to be characterized by a violent explosion of world-wide markets and their respective neo-liberal economies. Advances in communication technology assisted in promoting the relevance of globalization.

In South America, two of the factors discussed earlier seem to go in different directions: early independence from colonial powers and the capacity to become developed countries (with two hundred years of history as independent countries, South American nation-states could not achieve this capacity). Therefore, considering the pressure exercised by the economic markets, the resolution of most of the border problems, and the reinforcement of democracies, integration appeared to be the most beneficial result for the region. It is necessary, however, to define the most suitable integration type for the region.

Integration can be achieved by several means. “Collective conflict management” is one process that involves the creation of strong institutions that focuses on improving security and contributing to general well-being. That process can be defined as a “pattern of group action, usually but not necessarily sanctioned by a global or regional body, in anticipation or in response to the outbreak of intra or inter-state crisis. It includes any

⁶⁵ Jeffrey E. Garten, “Why Bush must not lose sight of Latin America” *Business Week On Line*, 16 December 2002; available from http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/02_50/b3812029.htm; Internet; accessed 12 November 2006.

systematic effort to prevent, suppress, or reverse breaches of the peace in cases where states are acting beyond the scope of specific alliances commitments, which have been no traditional means.”⁶⁶ This process may occur at the regional level under the auspices of a formal intergovernmental organization (regional alliance, socio-economic institution, or multi purpose organization). The number of IGOs has increased in the last several years. In the case of South America, MERCOSUR is a foundational institution able to contribute positively in security issues. Apart from this, there are ad hoc coalitions or alignments among the South American countries supporting political decisions originated in friendship relations among political leaders. There is a dangerous possibility in South America. Decisions taken by leaders at defined historical moments, may affect the insertion of a particular state in the global scenario. An example may be the Argentinean approach to the Venezuelan leaders. If in the short-term Argentina attempts to reinforce regional bonds, they may end up adversely affecting its relationships with the United States or other global powerhouses. Is that approach really contributing to security, or is it creating negatives results for the whole region?

There are several factors that tie the South American region to the United States: the fight against drug trafficking, economic freedom, regional integration, and terrorism. But Brazil and Argentina concluded that their policies should not be tied directly to the United States, and looked for a sub-regional alternative. In the last decade of the twentieth century, each focused on this approach in regard to their foreign policies. In the case of Argentina, they managed to become a preferred ally in NATO (extra-NATO ally) despite Brazil’s suggestion that this move destabilized the region. Brazil feared U.S. interventionism, especially in respect to environmental initiatives in the Brazilian Amazon region.⁶⁷

Another factor relating to the integration of South America is the mutual requirement for infrastructure development in the region. The most important

⁶⁶ Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Lepgold, *Regional Conflict Management*, 12.

⁶⁷ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 334.

developmental initiative is the Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America (IIRSA). The IIRSA has the following strategic vision:

- Open Regionalism;
- Integration and Development Axes;
- Economic, social, environmental and political-institutional Sustainability;
- Increase of Production's Added Value;
- Information Technologies;
- Normative Convergence;
- Public-Private Coordination.⁶⁸

Within this initiative, the most important projects are: the Parana-Paraguay Waterway Hub, and the MERCOSUR - Chile axis which includes the Andes Railway Project, modernization of several ports, routes duplication, and construction of electrical power stations. Recently, a new project is under revision that implies the construction of an oil pipeline from Venezuela to Argentina, an idea that also connects both South American sub-regions.

Despite all these integration initiatives, there exist some threats to the process.

Carolyn M. Shaw argues:

potential threats to regional security and stability fall into three general categories: traditional strategic concerns (which include boundary disputes arms races, and extra hemispheric threats), situations that pose threats to the democratic order that member states have pledged to uphold (antidemocratic coups, tension between the civilian government and the military over governing, and domestic insurgencies), and finally, trans-national issues, especially narco-trafficking.⁶⁹

An antidemocratic coup is unlikely because South American societies are completely convinced that is the right government system. An arm race is possible. For example, when President Chavez aims to increase Venezuelan military power under the pretext of challenging United States' penetration within the region, he is at the same time

⁶⁸ Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure; available from www.iirsa.org; Internet; accessed 5 February 2007.

⁶⁹ Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Leggold, *Regional Conflict Management*, 126.

destabilizing the region because his strengthened military poses a threat to other South American states (causing a security dilemma).

SECURITY AND INTEGRATION IN THE SOUTHERN CONE

Even though the future of the region should go in the direction of creating a real “security community,” it is very difficult to reach a common vision in the Southern Cone. The permanent rivalries that exist because of leaders and commercial differences will not allow this cooperation to occur in the short or the medium term. The desired end-state is to reach a “formal merger of two or more previously independent units into a single larger unit, with some type of common government after amalgamation.”⁷⁰ To achieve this, there should be a compatibility of core values derived from common institutions. In essence, a sense of ownership should exist. This sense of ownership is very difficult to imagine at the sub-regional level in South America. It is true that there are not current conflicts in the region, but it is also the truth that there are different expectations about the future of each country.

There are three factors to consider regarding the Southern Cone when referring to it as a Sub-complex:

- 1) The first is the relationship between Argentina and Brazil which is a key point in the Sub-Complex development, especially in regard to economic cooperation within MERCOSUR. Bilateral relations in sectors like economic and military were intensified, changing the patterns of amity and enmity and fortifying the sub-complex structure.
- 2) There was a regional integration through MERCOSUR, starting with the signing of the Asuncion Treaty in 1991, involving Argentina and Brazil, and Paraguay and Uruguay. The original idea was based on the European Union experience and with the ambitious aim of becoming a common market with a single identity and free transit of services, goods, and people.
- 3) The resolution of border conflicts was another central point. Argentina and Chile solved their twenty two conflict points throughout the border. Peru and Ecuador

⁷⁰ Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities*, 6.

signed a peace treaty, and almost finished the internal conflict against Shining Path, a subversive, terrorist group. On the other hand, Bolivia continues its aspirations to obtain an exit to the Pacific Ocean that involves Peru and Chile. A solution in the short term could be found.⁷¹

These two main aspects, MERCOSUR and the most important relations in the region, Brazil - Argentina and Chile Argentina will be detailed in the following sections.

MERCOSUR

MERCOSUR originated after a long history of negative experiences (Central America Common Market, Andean Pact and several Free Trade Agreements). Each of these agreements attempted to establish a regional position against the hemispheric agreements sponsored by the United States, like Free Trade Agreement for the Americas (FTAA) and North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). It is important to emphasize the end states pursued by the regional states. They desired political-regional integration, and stronger economics policies. The strong interest in MERCOSUR by countries like Peru, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Chile proved to be the difference. They all wanted to establish an identity that distinguished the region from the rest of the world. The solid economic base on which the regional block was sustained was tested during the economic crisis on Southeast Asia in 1997, when the regional institution suffered no negative effect. Meanwhile, this economic scare increased the desire by most South American nations to become independent of the global polices of other regions.

One of the ways to measure the level of integration to contribute to create a “security community” is through transactions flows, with especial emphasis on their volume, within and among nation-states.⁷² Today MERCOSUR is rated as the world’s third biggest trade block after the European Union (EU) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The share of the intraregional trade in the entire foreign trade of the MERCOSUR has doubled between 1990 and 2000 and thus amounted

⁷¹ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 324.

⁷² Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities*, 7.

already to more than 20% in the year 2000. By the end of 2004 the intraregional trade between the MERCOSUR states formed already a quarter of their entire foreign trade, illustrating the upwards tendency.⁷³ MERCOSUR has a great importance in the creation of that security community.

MERCOSUR has been in crisis the last years. The organization seems to have recovered well, but at the same time seems to be facing new challenges. South American nations, especially Brazil and Argentina, strongly support the organization because without it, each country fears a marginalization in the global economy and possibly even a threat to democracy.⁷⁴ The long-term strategic alliance between Argentina and Brazil creates enormous potential for MERCOSUR over the medium and long-term. Regardless of the economic course that the block undertakes, the alliance Brazil – Argentina is not in question since it was the one that allowed the economic resurgence of the region during the 1990s, and the alliances importance remains significant today.

CRITICAL ALLIANCES: BRAZIL – ARGENTINA AND CHILE - ARGENTINA

The key point to consider with reference to the Regional Security Complex formation is the shared perceptions of Brazil and Argentina in terms of their foreign policies. This alliance, which is considered by many to be the most important, is very functional (i.e. each nation is receptive to the other). In addition to the political vision of their leaders, MERCOSUR was another highly visible point that encouraged this functionality. Agreements line MERCOSUR reaffirmed a common posture against foreign intentions to establish overbearing commercial relations with countries in the South American region (in particular the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)). In the same way that during the Cold War there was a political penetration to avoid the expansion of communism in America, as it was already seen, something similar happened with economic penetration during the post-Cold War period through the FTAA. Until

⁷³ Daniel Fletes, “Creating a regional security community in Southern Latin America: the institutionalization of the regional defence and security policies,” *Paper presented at the Conference of the World International Studies Committee at the Bilgi University in Istanbul*, August 24-27, 2005).

⁷⁴ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 325.

recently, this last objective was not achieved because of the maturity of the democratic political systems and because of the resolution of most of the remaining border controversies. The Brazilian ex-president Fernando Enrique Cardoso used to say that MERCOSUR is "our destiny" and the FTAA represented a "mere political option".⁷⁵ He expressed

I am Argentinean's fan. I have always been very favourable to the relation with Argentina. When I arrived to the presidency the question was about the Brazilian permanent sit in the Security Council. That was because I had been Foreign Affairs Minister. The idea caused certain rubbing. In Buenos Aires people asked to me about, and I said that by historical tradition and negotiating role, that sit corresponded to Brazil, but between the spot in the Security Council and the friendship with Argentina I chose the friendship with Argentina.⁷⁶

Over the last two decades there was a shift from a climate of rivalry to an environment of institutionalized security and economic cooperation. This shift exemplifies many elements from the constructivist approach. First, more conflicts occurred to avoid the establishment of legal and diplomatic institutions which was a product of the beliefs of past national leaders. Second, the democratic process helped to modify South American's understanding of power, autonomy, and independence which facilitated regional cooperation. Third, the change towards neo-liberal markets allowed South Americans to face the challenges of technological advances and the globalization process as a united region. Finally, some institutions created were an excellent way to stimulate cooperative approaches as demonstrated by the regional heads-of-state and the creation of new security practices.⁷⁷

Argentina and Brazil are part of a generic group of states defined by Lake and Morgan as "liberalizing orders: from converging grand strategies to the regional management of cooperation."⁷⁸ This group is generally the most intensive and extensive

⁷⁵ Brazil and Argentina patch up over Mercosur, *The economist print Edition*, 11 October 2001, 26.

⁷⁶ "La relacion Brasil Argentina," *La Nacion, Buenos Aires*, 9 August 2006.

⁷⁷ Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities*, 21.

⁷⁸ David Lake and Patrick Morgan, *Regional orders:...*, 85.

cooperative relationship between two states in the region. Argentina and Brazil are part of this group because in the early 1990s the administrations of Carlos Menem and Fernando Collor de Mello laid out a blueprint for cooperation. Their coalition endorsed effective economic liberalization, privatization, military contraction, and structural adjustment, with unprecedented commitment. The creation of MERCOSUR was a clear example of movement in this direction. Processes like these are more effective when the states are ruled by strong liberalizing coalitions (like the Carlos Menem and Fernando Collor de Mello administrations).

The relationship between Chile and Argentina is another cooperative partnership that underwent a full change in the diplomatic, economic, and social realms. Similar to reconciliation that occurred between Argentina and Brazil, the Chilean-Argentinean relationship improved because of their similar governments and their efforts to resolve long-standing border disputes. Additionally, the large investment of Chilean monies into Argentina (larger than any other South American nation) served as an integrating factor. Specifically, 69% of Chilean exports remain in South America (40% in Argentina), while only 21% goes to United States and 8% to Europe.⁷⁹ Within the military sphere, Argentina and Chile increased personnel exchanges, created the Combined Antarctic Patrol, and by the end of 2005 they signed an Act of Agreement for the creation of a Combined Peace Force.⁸⁰

The recent incorporation between Venezuela and the charter members of MERCOSUR is another example of South America's intention to integrate. In April 2006, Venezuela left the Andean Community of Nations, and in July of the same year, they became a full partner member of MERCOSUR. Several reasons were given, but there is one that is the most interesting from the security's standpoint. Venezuela remained irritated that it was unable to resolve border issues with Colombia. It is also important to highlight the political inclination of President Hugo Chavez. Chavez maintained much better relations with the Presidents of the Southern Cone nation-states

⁷⁹ Bienvenido a Chile; available from www.chile.com; Internet; accessed 20 December 2006.

⁸⁰ Armada Republica Argentina; available from www.ara.mil.ar; Internet; accessed 10 January 2007.

(Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Chile) because they shared leftist policies. Conversely, Colombian President Alvaro Uribe's government was much more conservative and shared close relations with the United States. A product of this alliance between Venezuela and the South is the potential construction of a gas pipeline from Venezuela to Argentina with the participation of Brazil and Bolivia. Investments like these demonstrate an obvious push toward a greater integration across South America.

Despite the tremendous gains brought about by the incorporation of Venezuela to MERCOSUR, border conflicts between Venezuela and Colombia and Venezuela and Guyana, and the political rhetoric of President Hugo Chavez create some doubt about whether or not Venezuela can be considered a part of the Southern Cone Regional Security Sub-Complex. This is an example of internal transformation within the complex, one of the transforming categories defined in Chapter one.

At the end of the day, the Sub-Region's future depends on Brazil, Chile and Argentina's intention to de-secure their agendas, their decision to project towards a mature integration, and their inclination to set a starting point so that other states could join a process that is already in motion.

SECURITY AND INTEGRATION IN THE ANDEAN NORTH

The Andean North, like the Southern Cone, demonstrates a series of particularities that are important to consider. The Andean Community of Nations (an agreement between Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia) exemplifies an excellent integration and economical progress' initiative. The total regional gross domestic product (GDP) is 285 billions dollars⁸¹ and there are projects created as a product of commercial agreements with countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) like Thailand. The ultimate intention of the block is for Chile to become a partner again (Chile was founding member in 1969 but left the organization in 1976, signing agreements with Venezuela to maintain commercial advantages).⁸²

⁸¹ Bolpress; available from www.bolpres.com; Internet; Accessed 10 January 2007.

Other aspects are necessary to analyze in order to define a security complex: the patterns of amity and enmity, and state relationships with the United States. The contrast with the Southern Cone is quite different. Venezuela, as it was mentioned before, maintains border differences with Colombia and Guyana; Ecuador and Peru were involved in a conflict solved in 1999; and in Colombia, there are more than 35,000 dead and 1.3 million refugees in the last decade.⁸³ The Colombian example was created by a four-sided war involving guerrillas, drugs businesses, paramilitary forces, and the state. The effect of this war (like part of the large scale terrorism securitization's phenomenon) was an open intervention by the United States with the Colombia Plan (an investment of 1.3 billions U.S. dollars) and later on through the Anti-drug Andean Initiative (AAI) with an extra billion dollars in investment. The AAI initiative also involves Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Brazil, Panama and Venezuela, even though seventy five percent of the money was invested in Colombia. The regional crisis created by Colombia's war impacted the entire Andean North because the crisis has impacted each country's economic and defence policies. The penetration conducted by United States is much more manifested in the Andean North than in the Southern Cone, and there is a greater interest from the United States to exercise a close control over their anti-drug initiatives in this region of the continent.

Venezuela deserved special attention of the United States by the speech act of President Chavez and by his connections with Fidel Castro in Cuba. Venezuelan membership in MERCOSUR created suspicion in the United States. United States believes that Hugo Chavez is a bad influence for the region.

Situation in Bolivia also deserves analysis. The elections gained by President Evo Morales caused distrust from the United States because of his populist platform, the fact that he vindicated the indigenous population in his country at the United States expense, and he nationalized power resources in Bolivia (again at the United States' expense) . In Bolivia, there exists an anti-American sentiment because the population feels that it is

⁸² Comunidad Andina; available from www.comunidadandina.org; Internet; Accessed 10 January 2007.

⁸³ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 328.

losing its identity and their economy is suffering because of the United States. From this point of view it is valid to assume that Bolivia, given its political situation, should be considered a member of the Andean North Sub-Complex and not a member of the Southern Cone.

HEMISPHERIC SECURITY AND INTEGRATION

Having considered multiple regional factors, it is easier to understand that hemispheric security and integration are difficult at the moment.

From the commercial standpoint the world is divided in three blocks: North and Central America that represent around 25% of world-wide gross product, the European Union with a 16% gross product, and finally, Asia with 23% gross product.⁸⁴ These percentages should be an incentive for South American leaders, but due to the United States status as a superpower, they are pessimistic about the possibility of integration. For that reason (in an effort to replace the FTAA), countries like Chile and Brazil have already signed Free Trade Agreements (FTA) with China and other Southeast Asian countries. The future of this integration is pending, however, since the only chance to get a successful outcome from these agreements is for the Asia Super-Complex's economy to threaten the economies of United States and its allies' in terms of production.

REFLECTIONS ABOUT THE SOUTH AMERICAN SECURITY COMPLEX

It is clear that there are two realities that are quite opposite of one another. The Andean North Sub-Complex is not easy to understand in terms of security between states, but the complicated trans-regional security links domestic with international realities. Therefore, the only way to understand this reality is at the sub-regional level.⁸⁵ The North American penetration in the northern part of the South American region opens the door for integration in the Southern Cone. From an optimistic viewpoint, it could be said that the strategic alliances between Chile, Argentina and Brazil are the departure point that

⁸⁴ Andres Oppenheimer, *Cuentos Chinos. El engaño de Washington, la mentira populista y la esperanza de América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 2005), 36.

⁸⁵ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers...*, 331.

delineates a regional security complex that can be extended to the entire sub-region. It is important to include Venezuela within the sub-region for the reasons mentioned before.

So far, it seems quite logical to think about two sub-complexes because their realities are different. Brazil is the center of the Southern Cone because of its size and population and due to the fact that it shares a border with all the Andean North's countries. It is impossible not to consider Brazilian problems that link it to the North. On one hand, there is Colombia that is characterized by a considerable number of border violations that forced military mobilizations in the region. On the other hand, there is fear of a possible North American intervention in the Amazon for environmental reasons and a level of negligence on the part of Brazil. Securitization of this potential threat produced a greater foreign presence in the region.⁸⁶ There are, however, theorists that take a different viewpoint on Brazil.

Patrice Franko when discussing the regional conditions that enable a region to become a Security Complex argues that the critical element that affects cohesion in the region is Brazil.

Brazil shares borders with nearly every country in South America, and its security concerns are more hemispheric than the sub-regional approach of neighbours' nations. Bounded by different language and cultures, communications in the region are sometimes awkward. Given divergences, South America does not qualify as a security complex. In South America, small country concerns differ significantly from those of large countries, both in the scope of problems and in the national security ambitions beyond their local neighbourhood. United States should take care of these differences in order to apply the right policies in the region.⁸⁷

Despite all these negative aspects that are real, the chance to develop a common sense or an identity, through the progress on common challenges of terrorism, counter narcotics, or social disparities, is very high. All states face similar and common threats, and share a history of almost two hundred years as independent countries, which give

⁸⁶ Ibid., 333.

⁸⁷ Patrice M. Franko, "Towards a new security architecture in the Americas...", 80.

them an ideal background to solve problems and to constitute a solid and strong regional sense that can play a main role in the international politics.

Because these threats are not likely to come to fruition in the short-term, it is best to analyze the security issues in the region by looking at the South American Security Complex as two distinct sub-complexes, the Southern Cone and the Andean North.

CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION

Using the Regional Security Complex Theory is the most accurate means of analyzing the South American security structure. The above analysis demonstrated that while the fall of the Berlin Wall was deemed a global success, many regions of the world suffered as a result. The effects of these challenging years that followed the end of the Cold War was the creation of alliances and partnerships to resist common threats, a more shared and integrated vision of South America, greater organization in terms of economic policy and domestic policy aimed at producing a better quality of life for South Americans. Traditional international relations theorists had difficulty explaining this phenomenon, causing the emergence of more contemporary theories like R Security Complex Theory.

As illustrated in Table 1 on page 12, realism and liberalism view the nation-state as the primary focus. Although their recurrent themes are different (use of force, survival, self-help vs. international cooperation), the focus is always the state. This commonality grants momentum to constructivism because it offers an alternative to these traditional theories, bringing into account the concept of identity and changing the focus to “the society.” Constructivism theory adds great value to global and regional analysis because it does not analyze systems by their structures, but instead by their political and social processes. Given these times of change in the economic, political and social processes, Constructivism deserves consideration.

The Copenhagen School merged elements of each of these theories while at the same time contributing own view on the nature of security and its consequences. This amalgamate was useful in explaining world-wide security distribution in relation to international policy. The inclusion of elements from the realist, liberalist and constructivist theories is one of the most important contributions to international security studies of modern time. This mix of visions allows for greater understanding of the different processes that each state develops to find their place in the global system.

Within the Copenhagen School of thought, the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) becomes an extremely useful tool to understand the realities of present day security concepts. It allows for regions to become the focus of study. The Regional Security Complex Theory is the most suitable to analyze the South American region because the region fills all the required characteristics for the application of the theory. As was mentioned in chapter two, any Regional Security Complex must contain four elements: a structure conformed by two or more units, borders in order to separate one complex from another, polarity to cover power distribution, and a social construction to cover patterns of amity and enmity. All four elements are relevant within the South American region: the regional structure consists of thirteen countries with different perspectives, South America has both geographical borders (oceans and the narrow territorial border between Colombia and Panama, in Central America) and social borders (social, historical, and political differences), polarity has always been a factor in the region, and finally, there exist patterns of amity and enmity (there are traditional alignments in the region, but the actual tendency is towards the incorporation of new relevant actors, like Venezuela).

Given its history in regard to race and culture (in particular after their states independence processes), South America can be considered as a security complex that has been evolving since its origin despite the changes in the patterns of amity and enmity. Adler and Barnett developed a model to classify any security community that can be applied to the concept of security complex. They identify three phases in the development of a security community: nascent, ascendant, and mature.⁸⁸ The definition of the ascendant phase means: “increasingly dense networks, new institutions and organizations that reflect tighter military coordination and cooperation, and/or decreased fear that the other represent a threat.”⁸⁹ South America fits in this definition, especially after the creation of MERCOSUR because it has more points in common in regard to security issues, than in regard to economic or commercial aspects.

⁸⁸ Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities*, 17.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 53.

In order to reinforce the complex, democracy seems to be the only valid option and remains an unequivocal base of a legitimate structure. Despite the fact that the economic processes are a departure point for integration policies, for the existence of a solid Regional Security Complex there must exist political foresight to determine common region security issues. In essence, South America should sustain democracy as its government system. South America may be defined as a “zone of peace.”⁹⁰ Democratic states do not wage war among each other, “relations between democracies therefore fit into the category of security community, in which states not only do not fight each other, they do not expect to fight each other, or significantly prepare to fight each other.”⁹¹ Democracy and socio-economic development are keys for the complex maturity process. Democracies are vulnerable of some threats. These threats include social uprisings in the form of a domestic insurgency that may threaten a democratic system.⁹² In South America, those social insurgencies may be directed by political opposition that cannot achieve power through the democratic process. South American government systems are democracies, but they are not well balanced democracies. Political leaders have an enormous amount of power and often this power originates from a populist platform. The question is “are they really democracies.” South American governments must mature.

Since the RSC theory allows for the analysis of sub-complexes, it can be seen the necessity to divide and to analyze South America into two sub-complexes, by one side the Andean North and by the other the Southern Cone. The solution of territorial controversies, the decreasing in the use of force, the strength of constitutional systems, and the vision to future of an integrated region, are key points to establish the limits of these sub-complexes. In this sense it is possible to clarify that in the division established by Buzan and Wæver, Bolivia should be part of the Andean North Complex. Some pendent aspects to confirm Bolivian position within the Southern Cone Complex are:

⁹⁰ Arie Kacowicz, *Zones of peace in the Third World: South America and West Africa in a comparative perspective*, (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2000)

⁹¹ Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities*, 12.

⁹² Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Lepgold, *Regional Conflict Management*, 128.

solve the border difference with Chile, define President Evo Morales' political position in reference to the nationalization of the power resources, and its approach to Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez.

As far as Venezuela is concerned, regardless of the distribution presented by Buzan and Wæver was previous to MERCOSUR, it is more appropriate to maintain it as part of the North Andean Security Complex until President Hugo Chavez defines their regional policy and his rhetoric in relation to the United States. There is a clear intention by President Chavez to create a Pan-American Bolivarian vision. This idea is supported by other regional political leaders as Rafael Correa (President of Ecuador). This idea is contested by Argentina and Brazil.

To further explain the South American RSC, it is necessary to consider the region's differences, its patterns of amity and enmity, and its power distribution. For the United States, the differences in Brazilian, Argentinean, Chilean, and Venezuelan political and economic agendas epitomize the multi-polarity in the region. As it was mentioned before, the possibility exists of a medium term change in the complex's structure with the incorporation of Venezuela, but that will depend on Brazilian foreign policy in respect to the South American region, and whether or not Chavez's rhetoric against the United States diminishes.

The opening of the agenda between Argentina and Brazil since the 1990's and Argentina's strategic alliance with Chile demonstrate the integration of the South American region. Similar to the European Union and the roles of France and Germany within that institution, it is not strange to think that the ABC countries (Argentina, Brazil, and Chile) are the critical nodes for South American integration. This would fulfill a dream for many people. Even though the tendency is to adhere to common policies, there exists diversity in regional foreign policy approaches, especially in bilateral relations with the United States and within the MERCOSUR community. This must be solved to allow for further maturation of South American integration. All South American nations maintain national security as its top defence priority, but the national defence policies of

each one diverge on a number of issues. While Brazil and Chile give highest priority to national challenges, Argentina centers its military capability on international concerns. This can be seen in the amount of United Nations participation to which Argentina commits. Chile has a more traditional balance, externally oriented security objectives with a great focus on internal security. Militaries are the granters of stability. Nowadays, the tendencies are moving toward cooperative and integrated military interventions in United Nations missions through the creation of an integrated deployable force with Argentina. Brazil is more focused on internal issues, such as natural disasters, crime, arms proliferation, and drug trafficking. The military plays an important role in the country's development in poor or remote areas. Despite all these differences among the three most influential states in the Southern Cone, all three agree that MERCOSUR can provide the regional counterweight to the United States' historic strategic and economic dominance. Although the primary focus of MERCOSUR to date has been economic, cooperation on strategic concerns, in particular common defence policies, are working well in the region.⁹³

Even though both sub-complexes, the Southern Cone and the Andean North, have common economic potential, they are advancing differently economically and politically. The alliance of Venezuela and Cuba, the FARC (Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces, in English) occupying part of Colombian territory, and the serious problem of drug trafficking in countries of the central and northern portion of South America, deserves the United States attention in the region. If these problems increase, it will be impossible to maintain the concept of a South American Security Complex. Both sub-complexes would transform into independent complexes. This is why it is important to analyze the importance of individual states within a region.

Most differences between individual nation-states in South America are temporary; however, each state does desire an integrated region. Social marginalization is one factor that may contribute to magnifying these differences. Inadequate wealth distribution affects the majority of the population. This is why it is critical that political

⁹³ Patrice M. Franko, "Towards a new security architecture in the Americas...", 76.

leaders clearly define to the whole population exactly what integration means to their respective countries. Populist political leaders are not the best solution, and they pose a threat to the entire region. It is impossible to construct a Regional Security Complex without the development of a harmonious internal community. The community must be included in debate and in the defence and security policy processes. Greater inclusion will directly affect the level of ownership the citizens of South America have in the integration process. These different perspectives should ultimately share a common understanding of the conditions that will generate universal well-being and support the most vital national interests.

After evaluating the relevance of Regional Security Complex Theory and applying the theory to the South American region, it is conclusive that Regional Security Complex Theory is a useful tool for the study of security patterns distribution and supports the thesis of this paper. By using a historical analysis of the region, analyzing the tendencies of the actors within the region, and by applying the Regional Security Complex Theory, this paper clarifies the actual security issues within the South American region and recommends proposals on how the region should progress in the future. As shown, the Southern Cone sub-complex was analyzed like part of the South America Security Complex but with strong aspirations to become an independent complex in the medium term.

CHAPTER 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The last political movements in South America show an increasing tendency to align left democratic governments and in some instances, create a great gap between them and the other States. It is Venezuela's intention to get closer to Brazil, Chile and Argentina through MERCOSUR. At the same time, Colombian President Alvaro Uribe Velez made public declarations marking open differences between Colombia and Venezuela. This is an indicator of the breakdown in the Andean North sub-complex, and a reinforcement of the Southern Cone. The most important threat to security within the Southern Cone Sub-complex is the spread of left tendency governments and the general mistrust that South Americans have toward the armed forces. Additionally, the spread in populist leaders supported by weak democracies which drives a wedge in between the region and the international community is also a threat to the South American RSC (Examples: Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, and in a less significant degree: Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay). This is the wrong path for the region. If the end state is to become part of the "Western Developed World" and playing a major role, then the quality of democracies is a key point to reinforce.

Democracies must serve the people and not personal interests. South America, except for certain countries, has a government history of democracies turning with military leaders. It is time to mature South American democracies to a more functional level. Some proposals have been made to create a system of monitoring democracies,⁹⁴ but with population pressure, better education, and through the consistent exercising of democratic rights, institutions in South America will grow stronger.

The development of democracies will bring more cohesion and integration at the regional level. These integration processes will allow integration in several areas, and that has to be a clear objective for the region. In military terms, that means the chance to

⁹⁴ Proposal made during the IV Summit of the Americas, President George W. Bush proposed this concept, supported by the Organization of American States, to help development of democracies in American countries.

participate in international initiatives and the possibility of a regional integrated force that pursues two goals: generation of a strong common view of the region demonstrating regional alignment; and participation in operations with a credible military force. Undoubtedly, these actions will contribute to achieving a greater sense of security in the region.

The South American region must play a part in the world. Participation in the international community is an unavoidable duty, but it is also a right. International participation will not only set the conditions for further economic and political development, it will also allow for the resolution of long-standing social problems. Argentina, Brazil, and Chile (ABC) are leaders in this movement toward globalization, and together, they have the power to realize this goal. The integration process must include the presence of the United States and the ABC nations, combining the global and inter-regional levels of influence. This will contribute to the avoidance of favouritism or other kinds of advantages that will adversely affect the regional integration process. Only the presence of strong and dedicated leadership within these nations will provide the necessary vision for the establishment of this system. Those days are coming.

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