

# International Security and Democracy

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*Latin America and the Caribbean  
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## Security Policies, Democratization, and Regional Integration in the Southern Cone

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### Introduction

In the last fifteen years, changes in security concepts and practices within and between states in the Southern Cone have been strongly influenced by the wave of democratization since the early 1980s. Sharing common political values and bearing similar economic challenges contributed to downgrade previous rivalries and disputes that in the past had hampered cooperative initiatives in this region. In fact, expectations held that security cooperation, together with economic integration and political coordination, would become an irreversible process. In this context, it became appropriate to make use of Kant's interdemocratic peace approach to explain cooperative enterprises in the region, particularly those initiated between Argentina and Brazil.<sup>1</sup>

Though these prospects have not suffered a complete reversal, expectations regarding the "dovish" vocations of the newborn democracies of the Southern Cone have diminished. Pessimistic predictions have suggested that democratic consolidation in this subregion could signify a movement back to a classic security dilemma environment.<sup>2</sup> To understand this sort of projection it is necessary to review the role of democratization for interstate relations in the Southern Cone. Furthermore, the new realities of intraregional relations require the consideration of other developments in this area besides the change of political regimes.

In the past, regional conflictive hypotheses were a substantial part of security doctrines that justified the expansion of military

forces in this region. In the last fifteen years, democratization has constrained the political prominence of the military in most countries and such doctrines have been gradually deactivated. The political culture behind conflictive hypotheses, though not completely eliminated, has adjusted to new domestic pressures and international circumstances. As Russett has stated, "Governments and political institutions can change rapidly after a revolution, but norms take time to develop. Laws can change faster than the practices in which norms are embedded."<sup>3</sup>

Certainly, interdemocratic peace is an ambiguous concept in the Southern Cone. To start, major intraregional negotiations in which strategic interests and territorial disputes were at stake had been concluded during periods of military rule. The most outstanding examples are the Itaipú-Corpus Treaty in 1979 and the Argentina-Chile Peace and Friendship Treaty in 1985.<sup>4</sup> Second, there has been a connection between the reduction of military expenditures and the thorough economic constraints of the eighties, which precipitated budget restrictions and downsizing state policies.<sup>5</sup> Naturally, democratic transition and consolidation have favored these cutbacks, yet the principal motive was economic. Third, the link between security cooperation and democratization cannot be understood apart from the recent developments in subregional economic integration. In the mid-eighties, security cooperation initiatives were a "spill-around" effect of closer Argentine-Brazilian economic ties.<sup>6</sup> They belonged to a comprehensive package of agreements in which managed trade and technological cooperation became part of a single strategy.<sup>7</sup> Hence, economic integration arrangements contributed to legitimize security cooperation policies. This process has been deepened even more with the Asunción Treaty (1990), which speeded economic integration by creating an automatic mechanism for the lifting of intraregional trade barriers.<sup>8</sup>

Besides aspects connected to domestic and regional developments it is also important to consider this area's strategic irrelevance in global affairs. Compared with other subregions in the world and even those of Latin America, the Southern Cone does not confront regional or extraregional security menaces. The Southern Cone occupies a marginal spot in the world strategic agenda. Fortunately, it bears none of the ethnic disputes of other recently democratized subregions—as in Eastern Europe—or the religious conflicts in many Third World areas. Also, this area has long been on the low priority list of great powers—especially that of the United States—and in all likelihood will continue to keep this position. Although strategic marginalization has brought undeniable economic costs to South American countries, it has also reduced the importance of intraregional differences on security policies.

To understand the underlying currents of Southern Cone security policies

it is important to consider shaping factors as well as shaping actors at three different dimensions: domestic, international, and regional. At a domestic level it is necessary to reflect on the different patterns of postauthoritarian civil-military relations that have taken place in the Southern Cone. At an international level, circumstances have had a major impact on foreign policy options. Finally, regional politics, though influenced by both previous dimensions, has assumed a specific dynamic, influenced by present and past intergovernmental and intersocietal relations.

### The Domestic Level

At the domestic level, the periods of transition to and consolidation of democracy are examined in light of emerging security concerns.

#### *Transition*

Civil-military relations initiated during democratic transition have had a direct impact on the changes and continuities of defense policies in the area. Despite the fact that all countries in the Southern Cone have experienced democratic transition and consolidation processes, civil-military relations have evolved differently in each case. Postauthoritarian autonomy and the political power of the armed forces in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, and Paraguay have not been uniform, either because previous military prerogatives were preserved or new internal security concepts have been enforced. The unique nature of each case is related to domestic negotiations and the nature of international pressures that took place during the democratic transition and consolidation. These differences contribute to elucidate present foreign policy distinctions, particularly those between Argentina and Brazil, and are even more important in understanding politicization trends in regional politics.

In the case of Argentina, the sudden end of an authoritarian regime, caused by the defeat of the Falklands/Malvinas War, together with a disastrous economic policy, made military politics particularly turbulent during the democratic transition period. Moreover, it delayed effective domestic negotiations regarding the role of the armed forces in a pluralistic environment. During this phase (1983–89), prior Argentine defense policy was partly preserved, though adjusted to the foreign policy premises of the Alfonsín government. Since technological autonomy was perceived as a priority for the new democratic government, the common interests shared by civil and military authorities regarding the need to maintain the weapons industry and sensitive technology programs helped to legitimize such an influence.

Nevertheless, as macroeconomic hardships increased, military armament projects were severely affected and forced to decrease production or even postpone much activity.<sup>9</sup>

Considered by many an "incomplete" transition process, the political system inaugurated with the Aylwin government in Chile (1990) was one of the less successful in the region in subordinating military power to civil authority.<sup>10</sup> In the case of Chile, the armed forces' full control of defense policy was part of a formal negotiation with the civil society as one among many preconditions to initiate democratic transition.<sup>11</sup> Strengthened by a successful macroeconomic performance, the Chilean military managed to retain a broad range of political prerogatives and economic advantages that dramatically curtailed the power of civil authorities. Chilean armed forces domination of defense policy involved the continuity of a prosperous and diversified weapons industry.

Contrary to the Argentine case, Brazil underwent the longest democratic transition in the Southern Cone. In this case, democratization proved a painless process for the armed forces as they preserved significant prerogatives regarding domestic politics and defense policy.<sup>12</sup> Stimulated by a successful export policy, the Brazilian military enhanced a significant weapons industry, which placed it among the top ten exporters in the international arms market in the mid-eighties. In the case of Brazil, the buildup of a civil-military consensus about the country's economic model survived the change of political regime. This sense of continuity helps to explain why Brazilian foreign policy changes at the time were less significant than those experienced by other Southern Cone neighbors, particularly Argentina and Uruguay.

During the Sarney government (1985–90) military submission to civil authorities increased very gradually in Brazil and a new constitution determined the limits of this subordination.<sup>13</sup> The formal presence of military authorities in the government continued untouched, while they maintained an implicit veto power. In this context, the costs for the Brazilian armed forces of the new rules of the game imposed by a democratic system were quite low. With respect to foreign policy matters, innovations were carefully negotiated between the Foreign Ministry and the military authorities.<sup>14</sup> The Brazilian armed forces also defended capably their interests in other governmental agencies. In the newly created Science and Technology Ministry, common concerns shared by the military and the scientific community regarding technological autonomy were vigorously protected.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, the military was successful in expanding its presence in the Amazon, an area that became a growing concern for the Brazilian Army.

Furthermore, the Brazilian military learned to lobby in Brazil's Congress and to identify allies within political parties when defense policies needed



legislative approval. Though Itamaraty (the name of Brazil's foreign ministry) was concerned in preserving the essence of Brazil's previous foreign policy, it assumed the role of a mediator between domestic and international pressures in the decisions concerning international security and high technology. Examples were the domestic negotiations regarding the dispute with the United States over computer hardware and software and the deepening of nuclear cooperation with Argentina.<sup>16</sup> In both cases the foreign ministry's principal aim in domestic politics was to soften the nationalistic stances defended by the Brazilian military.

Although Uruguay and Paraguay play minor roles in Southern Cone security politics, it is important to underline certain aspects regarding developments of civil-military relations within these two countries. Uruguay became the most successful case of fast and nontraumatic military adherence to democracy, as the armed forces have managed to preserve an institutional function with a very limited interference in domestic politics.<sup>17</sup> In the case of Paraguay, however, civil-military relations remained tense and uncertain since democratic values were notoriously limited when democratic transition first initiated.<sup>18</sup>

### *Consolidation*

The consolidation of democratic institutions proved to be as difficult or perhaps even more challenging than the replacement of military governments by civilian regimes.<sup>19</sup> In Argentina and Brazil, democratic consolidation was a costly political achievement that had different—but equally important—effects on the civil-military relations of these countries. In Argentina, the failed antidemocratic military rebellions contributed to deepen the armed forces' demoralization vis-à-vis civil society and offered the Menem government the political conditions to complete the process of military subordination to civil authority.<sup>20</sup> In return, a controversial amnesty law granted forgiveness to previous military authorities for past human rights abuses.

This process deepened as it became directly connected to the broad process of privatization and state downsizing policies that justified the elimination of most military technology programs that had survived during the Alfonsín government. Furthermore, President Menem's audacious military policy became a critical part of his new foreign policy. By abandoning previous military technology programs and adopting new positions on international security, Argentina was also taking important steps toward a closer relationship with the United States.

In fact, Argentina provides the most outstanding example of military sub-

ordination to civil control during democratic consolidation. This process has been benefited by a combination of three major factors: one, the positive results of a full-scale stabilization program; two, strong presidential leadership; and three, explicit support given by the United States. For certain military segments, the main consequence of these decisions has been a *de facto* renunciation of a national defense policy.

In Chile and Brazil, civil-military relations present more complex realities than in Argentina. In the case of Chile, while institutional and economic stability have not been endangered, civil-military relations have improved very slowly. Regarding domestic politics, the renunciation of previous prerogatives has been greatly resisted by the Chilean military, who vindicate the maintenance of the compromises negotiated in 1989 with the political forces. These compromises, supported by a strong rightist coalition, are perceived by the armed forces as part of a long-term agreement rather than a set of transitional conditions.

Overall the Chilean military has managed to preserve considerable political autonomy, due to two critical factors: first, the economic autonomy granted to the armed forces by the Copper Law, and second, the explicit support given by powerful segments of civil society.<sup>21</sup> During the Frei government (1994–2000), initial progress was made in reviewing past human rights abuses, but political conditions have been far from conducive to reconciliation. On the very contrary, Chilean armed forces have been deeply reluctant to support the constitutional reforms proposed by the government and have made explicit their reluctance to deal with a pluralistic political society.<sup>22</sup>

Brazil provides neither an example of dramatic change as in Argentina nor one of continuity as in the case of Chile. As a strong corporation, the Brazilian military adjusted its political practices to the current democratic rules of the game.<sup>23</sup> In doing so, the armed forces of Brazil have become a relevant shaping actor of national and foreign policies when they perceive their political or institutional interests are involved. Initially, Brazilian democratic consolidation brought about the expectation that military subordination to civil authorities would be more effective. Among the goals of the Collor de Mello government (1990–92), three plans of action would be enforced to meet such expectations: the dramatic curtailment and civil control of military technology programs, the adherence of Brazil to all international nonproliferation regimes, and the integration of the three preexisting military ministries into one Defense Ministry headed by a civil authority. These innovations aimed to improve the transparency of military technology programs vis-à-vis Brazilian civil society and to diminish Brazil's exposure to international—particularly U.S.—nonproliferation pressures. In interbureaucratic politics it was expected that the changes in Brazil's international security

would be conducted by the foreign ministry, which was expected to experience a dramatic change of its belief system. Also, like Argentina, the new Brazilian security objectives were part of a shift in political and economic policies on both domestic and international levels.

Soon Brazilian reality revealed how fragile the domestic grounds were to enforce all the changes announced by the new government. The resistance of political and economic elites to neoliberal reforms, together with a general repugnance on the part of political movements toward the power abuses of the new president and his closest collaborators, led to Collor de Mello's impeachment. As Vice President Itamar Franco assumed the presidency, Brazil faced a dramatic governability crisis dominated by general macroeconomic disorder, in which the Congress became a major political actor. Interestingly, as Brazil muddled through a serious and unpredictable institutional crisis, the armed forces kept a distance from domestic politics, acting as defendants of the continuity of the democratic order.

Once the Itamar Franco government stabilized, domestic politics in Brazil revealed a peculiar dynamic in which tendencies toward continuity and change were simultaneously set in motion. On the one side, Brazilian politics became an ambiguous setting where pre-Collor interests mixed with an invigorated civil society. On the other, economic policies initiated a phase of gradual rationalization, which sought to end recurrent high inflation rates. Although this process included an important set of neoliberal policies, it no longer involved the broad ideological commitments that would necessarily lead to major domestic and foreign policy changes. In this context, the Brazilian armed forces were granted a legitimate part in the country's democratic consolidation process, while managing to retain a significant influence on defense policy premises and practices.

Though the Cardoso government (1995-99) was not expected to implement significant changes in Brazilian civil-military relations, adjustments have occurred. The idea of creating a Defense Ministry was revived in a context of broad negotiations in which bureaucratic rationalization and the improvement of Brazil's international image became the most important motives (rather than civil-military subordination). The Brazilian armed forces also improved their leverage concerning military salaries and managed to voice their opinions and concerns in all foreign policy matters related to defense policies. The connection between international politics and security interests has been the main function of the secretary of strategic affairs, an agency that has expanded its functions in the Cardoso government.

Civil-military relations in Uruguay and Paraguay maintained more or less the same profile as in the early phase of democratization. In Uruguay, the main problem faced by the military became their limited economic resources

to consolidate an institutional mission. Since the Lacalle government (1990-95), budget restrictions seriously reduced the activities of all sectors of Uruguayan armed forces, imposing major reductions of high-rank personnel and the acquisition of new equipment.<sup>24</sup> To compensate, Uruguay's government expanded the country's participation in UN peacekeeping missions, which led to the creation in 1993 of a Peacekeeping Training Academy.<sup>25</sup> In Paraguay, little improvement was reached in curtailing the influence of previous military prerogatives and political power.<sup>26</sup> President Wasmosy (1993-98) became reluctant to accept opposition pressures to disconnect partisan politics (the Colorado Party) from military affairs, thus perpetuating the idea that the strengthening of civil power institutions could lead to a military coup. Moreover, corruption in the Paraguayan military and its growing involvement with drug trafficking remain untouched.

In all the cases described above, defense policies derived from a specific combination of civil-military relations and foreign policy. In each case, however, international politics influenced security policies differently, according to the foreign policy premises and practices that accompanied the democratization process.

### International Politics

Security policies have been directly linked to the foreign policies of Southern Cone countries. The end of the cold war has introduced major changes in this connection for Argentina and Brazil, and to a lesser degree for Chile. In Uruguay and Paraguay, though global political changes have been fully acknowledged in foreign policy premises and practices, their effect on international security policy has been less relevant for regional politics.

While the disappearance of East-West ideological constraints has been a positive trend shared by all democratization processes in the area, it has not led to an identical interpretation of the new international order. Since 1989, the change in the structure of world politics has produced differing perceptions regarding the costs and benefits of the post-cold war order, which generated a new source of tension in intraregional relations.

It proves appropriate to use the "qualitative-quantitative" distinction applied to interpret the new world order.<sup>27</sup> Argentina, and Chile to a certain degree, have changed their foreign policy based on the perception of a dramatically transformed post-cold war world and have become strong supporters of globally oriented regional governance initiatives. These initiatives, fostered in the name of multilateral institutionalism, are in fact bandwagoning demonstrations aimed to strengthen political ties with the United States. Brazil, on the other hand, recognizes but deemphasizes the importance of



could war qualitative changes and is more concerned with power distribution at global and regional levels. This position has led to a recurrent resistance to globally oriented reforms of regional institutions, particularly the Organization of American States (OAS), which could menace the classical concept of sovereignty.

Foreign policy in Argentina has followed very different premises during the periods of democratic transition and consolidation. As addressed by Escudé and Fontana, the end of a bipolar confrontation was perceived by Menem's government as an opportunity to redefine international objectives and to consider a close relationship with the United States a top priority for Argentina. Decisions regarding international security have been entirely influenced by this premise. Argentina has supported the United States by complying with its expectations in multilateral and unilateral initiatives.<sup>28</sup>

In the case of Chile, there has been an obvious division between foreign policy and international security policies that derives from the tensions in civil-military relations. While the Foreign Ministry supports all initiatives that aim to strengthen global governance regimes and institutions, military authorities defend a prudent posture vis-à-vis world politics in which autonomous projects are to be preserved. The nation-state is still, in this case, a core concept, and international security is directly connected to national defense policies. Whereas Chile has participated in regional nonproliferation regimes, it has resisted adhering to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and has barely participated in United Nations peacekeeping missions. On the other hand, Chile's foreign policy has fully embraced a globalist perception regarding nonmilitary threats, and Chilean diplomacy has been particularly active in the defense of the abandonment of the national sovereignty principle when democracy and human rights are found to be threatened.

In Brazil, foreign policy and international security concepts and practices have developed quite differently than in Argentina. Brazilian international affairs have been more the outcome of a complex interaction between external conditions and domestic interests and perceptions than the result of a straightforward political shift. Also, the Foreign Ministry (Itamaraty) has managed to preserve its influence and legitimacy as the main shaping actor of all foreign policy decisions. Itamaraty's protagonism has been sustained by a belief system that had been responsible for Brazil's foreign policy guidelines since the mid-seventies.<sup>29</sup>

During the Collor government, Itamaraty's belief system was shattered because the first steps undertaken to inaugurate a cooperative relationship with the United States included major changes in international security policies.<sup>30</sup> Under these circumstances, unprecedented nonproliferation com-

mitments were reached that had an extraordinary impact on regional politics.<sup>31</sup> At the same time, the changes put forward during the Collor government stimulated an unusual debate among Brazilian diplomats, which revealed that Itamaraty was no longer an encapsulated entity separated from domestic politics.<sup>32</sup>

During the Itamar Franco government Brazil's foreign policy went through a process of adjustment, influenced by two factors: first, the growing positive impact of economic stabilization measures on the country's internal affairs; second, a revival of the belief that continuity and consensus were essential for international credibility. Outstanding priorities in Brazilian foreign policy were active participation in the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), the creation of a South American Free Trade Area (SAFTA), close relations with other regional powers (China, India, and Russia), and a less conflictive relationship with the United States.

The Cardoso government has demonstrated its intention to maintain Itamaraty's ascendance in the formulation and implementation of Brazil's foreign policy. Furthermore, President Cardoso has added his personal leadership to Brazil's foreign affairs, aiming to strengthen its domestic and international support.

Though admitting major changes have taken place in the international system, Brazil's foreign policy practitioners have been reluctant to adhere to a globalist perception of world politics. Some Brazilian diplomats argue that this is not a global era but an era of exclusion and of concentration of power, with growing tensions between the North and the South.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless there is a relevant sector in Itamaraty that believes Brazil must replace its defensive posture with a positive offense, in which the promotion of a broad reform of the world's global institutions has become a priority. In this same direction this country has softened its official discourse about North-South tensions, meriting its role as a "consensus builder"<sup>34</sup> between both extremes in the international community. This is the platform from which Brazil has been mounting its campaign for a permanent seat at the UN Security Council. Brazilian candidacy has been based on the idea that the UN Security Council must reflect a more equitable representation of the North and the South in order to enhance its legitimacy and efficacy in world affairs.

The gradual adjustment of Brazil's foreign policy premises has involved international security policies. After having expanded its regional commitments on nonproliferation regimes, Brazil has approved a bill that controls sensitive technology exports and has adhered to the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). All these decisions followed the negotiation of the Nuclear Quadrilateral Treaty



On the domestic front, Brazil's international security policies face the pressures and interests of the military. Nationalism continues to be an important source of cohesion within the Brazilian armed forces, who strongly appraise the country's geostrategic attributes and fear the expansion of the U.S. military presence in South America. This kind of awareness has been stimulated by the increase of U.S. military operations in South America as well as U.S. antidrug activities and radar base operations in other Amazon countries. According to the Brazilian military, whereas power asymmetry and different threat perceptions have affected relations with the United States, history and tradition impose a *modus vivendi* with the "giant from the north."<sup>35</sup> With respect to global affairs, particular concern exists regarding the difficulties imposed on access to high technology by the core countries, which leads to the idea that these have created a "knowledge cartel" in world politics.<sup>36</sup> This kind of perception, however, has not kept the Brazilian armed forces from expanding their participation in UN peacekeeping missions.<sup>37</sup> The presence of Brazilian officers has become particularly important in Portuguese-speaking African countries (Angola and Mozambique) where cultural and linguistic familiarity together with a previous diplomatic presence have been relevant incentives.

In Brazilian military circles international environmental politics has become the most pressing concern in the new global security agenda. While this is an area in which Itamaraty has become particularly involved, it has also developed into a central worry for the armed forces. These tend to interpret global environmental approaches focused upon the Amazon as an attempt to curtail Brazil's sovereignty over its Amazonian territory. After an unsuccessful program (Calha Norte) installed by the armed forces in the mid-eighties in order to expand the military presence in this area, the military are setting up a huge communication and monitoring system that includes a significant number of radar devices, satellites, and aircrafts. Labeled as the SIVAM (Amazonian Watch System), this program has been considered a reaction against the idea of an "internationalization" of the Amazon. It aims to control drug trafficking and border smuggling activities, supervise the safety of indigenous populations, preserve environmental resources, and assure a more effective presence in an area of five million kilometers of open frontier.<sup>38</sup> For Itamaraty the growing importance of the Amazon area in domestic politics has been an important motivation to deepen political and economic ties with other Amazonian neighbors, particularly in the context of Brazil's increasing commercial presence in the region.

The combination of civil-military relations with foreign policy options and premises is crucial in understanding developments in Southern Cone regional security politics. Though democratization has been a shared experience in the area, it has not led to the buildup of a pluralistic security community.<sup>39</sup> Important cooperative initiatives have been carried forward, improving peace and security conditions of the region, yet these have not led to a process of security integration. In this context, regional security cooperation has become a spill-around effect of the expansion of economic ties among Southern Cone countries. Hence, intraregional integration arrangements have given place to a new chapter in regional security politics, which are part of the externalities produced by the expansion of cross-border economic relations. These are the security externalities of MERCOSUR. The differences previously mentioned regarding domestic and international politics shaped a process of politicization in which the link between power and economics has become a central issue. Though a fragmenting symptom that can bother the associative environment, this politicization cannot affect the peace and stability of conditions in the Southern Cone. In this case democratic regimes and economic regionalization together represent an element powerful enough to neutralize anarchic developments.

Whereas there has been a growing convergence among Southern Cone countries regarding economic policies, differences have persisted with respect to defense and security policies. A myriad of issues and concerns feed politicization in Southern Cone countries regarding regional security. Two kinds of matters emerge in this case; one is related to the implications of nation-state security policies, and the other to recent regional developments.

In the small Southern Cone states this calls attention to the contrasting role each one plays in regional security politics. On the one side, Paraguay has been a permanent source of concern for Argentina and Brazil. First, because of the overwhelming presence of the military in domestic politics and, second, on account of the involvement of the Paraguayan armed forces with drug-trafficking activities. On the other hand, Uruguay has offered no sort of threat to its neighbors in security matters because of its political stability and the low profile of its armed forces in domestic politics.

Argentina has been the country in the area most concerned with the need to link economic integration with regional security. Since the early nineties the idea of creating a security system for the Southern Cone has been defended in Argentine academic, military, and diplomatic circles. According to certain proposals this system would include the formation of a center re-



responsible for avoiding subregional conflicts, a strategic data center, military technical exchange, armament industry cooperation, and cooperation for civil protection.<sup>40</sup> Yet as this kind of project did not mature, concerns in Argentina increased regarding the perspectives of a growing military imbalance between this country and its neighbors. Particular apprehension existed regarding Chile, because of its continuous military acquisitions and production policy and the maintenance of an active defense policy. In the case of Brazil, it became consensual that a conflictive hypothesis no longer existed on either side and that a strategic alliance would be gradually built up. Yet this process from an Argentine perspective ought to include a balanced reduction of conventional armaments as well as a mechanism of permanent information exchange on space and missile projects. The fact that this kind of commitment did not advance on the part of the Brazilian armed forces did not keep the Argentine military from fostering the continuity of cooperative programs aimed at the consolidation of security ties with Brazil. Though the present imbalance with Brazil is recognized as a second-best situation, the motives behind Brazilian security policies are considered legitimate and are not perceived as threats *per se* to Argentina. In this context joint military operations were initiated at the Argentine-Brazilian border aiming to recreate situations similar to those faced in peace operations.

Chilean military have been quite less enthusiastic about regional integration and its spill-around effects on security affairs. The dominant perception among the military in Chile is that states have different interests that limit regional complementation and cooperation.<sup>41</sup> Accordingly, closer security relations with other neighbors will have to be subordinated to national defense policies. Paradoxically, these nation-state dogmas coexist with Chilean foreign policy stances strongly in favor of hemispheric cooperative security policies.

For Brazil, though the Southern Cone has a particular significance for this country's strategic design, this area is part of a broader regional and global security agenda. Argentina has become Brazil's most important partner for bilateral security cooperation. This cooperation has enhanced peace and stability conditions in South America and has been crucial for Brazil's credibility in the international community. Secondly, it has become increasingly important for Brazil to consolidate a peaceful environment in its southern borders even more in the face of the security predicaments developing along the northern borders of the country.<sup>42</sup> Local turbulence in the Amazon together with the concerns brought about by the new environmental global approaches have displaced Brazilian military concerns from South to North.

Notwithstanding this new reality, the implications of Argentina-Brazil foreign and security policy differences have introduced a new element of

concern within the diplomatic and military circles. The concern emanated from Argentina could be taking its policy of unilateral disarmament too far, generating an inconvenient situation of disequilibrium in the area. While it is true that Argentina's defeat in the Falklands/Malvinas War provided a motive for explicit solidarity on the part of Brazil, it was also a source of relief as it affected Argentina's general offensive capability. At the same time, Argentina's bellicosity had become a source of concern to all its neighbors in the Southern Cone. Undoubtedly the end of Argentina's militaristic and geopolitically biased policies in the region has contributed to enhance peace conditions in the area.<sup>43</sup> Yet, certain military and diplomatic sectors in Brazil are concerned about Argentina's 180-degree turn, either because of the risks of abrupt changes in security policies or of its connection with this country's strategic alliance with the United States. Neither Chileans nor Brazilians welcomed the announcement of an extra-NATO agreement negotiated between the United States and Argentina.

It can be interesting in this case to refer to an aspect of the imaginary realm of Argentina-Brazil relations. Within the Brazilian-Argentine relationship it has been recurrent that segments in the political and economic elites identify themselves with governmental or societal preferences that are more influential in the other country than in their own. Cross-border worldviews have been a historic source of intergovernmental and intersocietal interaction between both countries.<sup>44</sup> Presently, this phenomenon occurs in Argentina regarding the economic and international security options of Brazil. One reason why segments in the Argentine government and society approve closer economic relations with Brazil relates to the recognition of the importance of Brazilian industrial policies, which in turn could legitimate the same kind of policies in their country.<sup>45</sup> In security policy, one reason why political and military segments support closer relations with Brazil is linked to domestic postures that would prefer the continuity of military technology programs and would adopt a more independent international security policy vis-à-vis the United States.<sup>46</sup> In this case, security cooperation with Brazil could play an important role in diminishing the impact of the dramatic curtailment of military-technology programs.

The Brazilian military recognize that a "cautious" increase of security cooperation will be a natural and necessary consequence of regional economic integration.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, there is a perception in Brazil that foreign policy differences with Argentina must be de-dramatized and gradually replaced by a positive agenda that goes beyond economic integration initiatives. This perception is linked to Brazil's broader ambitions in international affairs, which have been driving this country to a new posture at a regional and global level.



to a certain point, the discussion of whether or not Brazil could assume the status of a regional power has become intertwined with the differences between Argentine and Brazilian foreign policy. While acknowledging its regional importance, Brazil has explicitly renounced any kind of hegemonic pretension.<sup>48</sup> Yet its expanded economic and diplomatic presence in South America, together with positive outcomes in important international negotiations—particularly that of a permanent seat at the UN Security Council—would have an inevitable repercussion for regional power politics. For Brazil, a major challenge will be to avoid a negative politicization in South America, particularly in Argentina.

As long-term planning strategies are developed in Brazil, relations with Argentina and with the United States are to become challenging subjects. In order to progress in both directions it has become important to detriangulate Argentina-Brazil-United States relations. This task has been eased by the improvement of the relations between Brazil and the United States ever since the inauguration of the Cardoso government. In the security realm, the fact that the Ministers of Defense Meeting on Hemispheric Security did not generate new obstacles in this direction became a positive development. Previous expectations of creating a hemispheric security regime and collective action commitments have gradually diminished, while confidence-building measures and cooperation initiatives will be carried forward more loosely than had been at first suggested by the U.S. government—with support from Argentina. Simultaneously, Brazil has become more cooperative in other issues of the inter-American agenda, especially those related to human rights and the betterment of social and political conditions of democracy.

### Final Remarks

Has the time become ripe in the Southern Cone for the creation of a pluralistic security community?

Though deescalation of conflictive strategies has clearly improved in the last fifteen years and intergovernmental and intersocietal interaction has reached an unprecedented level, there is still a long road ahead to achieve security integration in this area. Paved by centripetal and centrifugal forces, this will be a bumpy road depending on domestic, international, and regional developments. Democratization is an important but insufficient condition to intensify security cooperation in the Southern Cone. The different patterns of civil-military relations that have sustained democratic consolidation have contributed neither to build up a common identity nor a shared mission within the armed forces of the region. Post-cold war foreign policies have also been an element of differentiation among these countries, generat-

condition.

Yet being a "no-war" zone and a marginal strategic area in global affairs reduces the effects of foreign policy differences for regional security.<sup>49</sup> Neither the Southern Cone nor South America could remotely become a turbulent region exposed to increasing ethnic, religious, and political fragmentation. Furthermore, confidence-building measures have been enforced with the purpose of consolidating grounds for interstate peace and stability in the Southern Cone.<sup>50</sup> In particular, the Argentina-Brazil nuclear negotiations initiated in the mid-eighties have led to a cumulative process of nonproliferation negotiations nowadays considered an archetype for nuclear weapon-free zones. Democratization has enhanced the use of peaceful settlement mechanisms, strengthening the basis of this region's culture of legalism. In fact, though security cooperation and democratization have not led to security integration they have been effective in diminishing previous mistrust and animosity among Southern Cone societies and states—especially between Argentina and Brazil.

As foreign policy convergences have decreased, economic factors have become the most important source for the identification of common interests in this area. A new economic realm has built up in this region in which the combination of unilateral liberal-oriented reforms with multilateral negotiations have started a process of deep subregional integration. Shared values and common interest have intensified intraregional trade and investment flows, generating unprecedented cross-border interactions. MERCOSUR, as a free-trade area and an incomplete customs union, has expanded the economic interdependence of its member states, giving special impulse to their departure from previous defensive economic strategies. Moreover, the economic international visibility of MERCOSUR has led to a myriad of new regional and extraregional negotiations. Chile has also intensified economic linkages with all countries in this area as it has become more attracted to nearby markets. However, Chilean policy has been cautious vis-à-vis MERCOSUR and it has given less importance to negotiations with Southern Cone countries than to those with the United States, hoping to be next in line in free-trade negotiations with the United States.<sup>51</sup> In fact a parallel can be traced between the fragmenting vocations revealed by both Chilean defense and economic strategies in the region.

In Argentine and Brazilian diplomatic and military circles there is a shared consensus that bilateral political differences do not affect regional integration. Yet it does contaminate the political environment and can be manipulated by anti-integration forces generating a negative politicization when difficult bargaining situations are faced. Since MERCOSUR lacks

based on concrete disputes as in the past but rooted on the deficit of reciprocal tolerance and on a negative linkage between power and economics.

The lack of mutual tolerance could hurt the essence of interdemocratic relations and could affect the credibility of any sort of post-cold war foreign policy. Political maturity to deal with the particularism of history, culture, and domestic realities is a sine qua non condition for a successful regional integration process. Hence, since nonconvergent worldviews will probably persist, a political and strategic cooperative agenda based on positive coexistence could become in the near future a second-best solution. In this case, the security externalities of MERCOSUR could gradually move from sterile politicization to the set-up of a cooperative agenda, which in the long run would lead to a regional security community.