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Overlapping regional security institutions in South America: The case of OAS and UNASUR

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Brigitte Weiffen
Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Konstanz, Germany

Leslie Wehner
GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Germany

Detlef Nolte
GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Germany

Abstract

The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) has positioned itself as a regional security organization aimed at reducing the influence of the Organization of American States (OAS) in South America. At the same time, the OAS paradoxically serves as a model for UNASUR because of its operational capacity and its legitimacy as a regional organization. This article analyzes the seemingly contradictory tendencies of replication and dissociation that UNASUR exhibits towards the OAS in terms of security conceptions and practices. In the first part of the paper, we will draw on recent debates on international regime complexity to develop a framework to study institutional overlap. The second part analyzes to what extent and in which respects UNASUR, and particularly its Defense Council, overlaps with the OAS in terms of security conceptions and practices, while the third part examines the causes of the emergence of a "competitor" for the OAS in South America.

Keywords

Organization of American States, regime complexity, regional security organization, South America, Union of South American Nations

Introduction

The Organization of American States (OAS) used to be the prime institution in the Western hemisphere to deliver security. It was founded in the wake of the Second World War when the region

Corresponding author:
Brigitte Weiffen, Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Konstanz, Universitätsstr. 10, Box 89, 78457 Konstanz, Germany.
Email: brigitte.weiffen@uni-konstanz.de

under the hegemony of the United States was united in its determination to defend against external threats and facilitate peaceful settlement of disputes between member states, and it was revitalized after the end of the Cold War as an instrument to address non-traditional security threats and protect democracy. Today, the OAS is no longer seen as the unique arena to discuss regional problems in the Western hemisphere. This is evidenced by the decay of the Summit of the Americas, which at its inception in 1994 symbolized the shift to multilateralism in the Americas. At the most recent Sixth Summit of the Americas in Cartagena, Colombia (14–15 April 2012), no final declaration was adopted, reflecting the divergence of foreign policy orientations and the decline in US influence in the region, especially in South America.

Most of the problems are now framed by the states as sub-regional rather than hemispheric ones. During the past decade, a number of new international institutions have been founded to strengthen Latin American cooperation and exclude the United States from regional affairs. Among the new entities are the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA), the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the Pacific Alliance. With the creation of its Defense Council, UNASUR established itself as a platform for South American states to deal with traditional and non-traditional security challenges. Hence, institutional overlap between OAS and UNASUR not only exists in terms of membership, but increasingly seems to extend to the organizational mandate.

While some authors frame the proliferation of regional organizations as fragmentation (Malamud and Gardini, 2012), we analyze this process from the perspective of regime complexity. Regime complexity is a puzzling phenomenon, as it is not intuitively clear why states should found new institutions in issue areas that are already covered by an established institution. This is even more so on the regional level where regular and intense interaction, geographical proximity, cultural affinities or shared "security externalities" have led many scholars to expect a desire for a common institutional framework (Kelly, 2007). Previous work has concentrated on the attempts of established international organizations such as the European Union, NATO or the World Trade Organization to occupy the same policy domain, and the positive and negative effects of regime complexity on the respective policy field. In turn, this article intends to account for the dynamics of recent institutional developments in non-Western regions by examining a situation where regime complexity results from the creation of an entirely new organization.

Latin America lends itself as an example of an environment where regional governance is currently in flux. So far, the debate on the proliferation of regional and sub-regional organizations has focused on economic integration, and characterizations of the emerging regional architecture range from post-liberal regionalism (Sanahuja, 2012; Serbin et al., 2012) or post-hegemonic regionalism (Riggirozzi, 2012; Riggirozzi and Tussie, 2012) to segmented regionalism, decentralized sub-regionalisms and hemispheric disintegration (Malamud and Gardini, 2012). In turn, little attention has been devoted to the overlap of regional bodies that aim not at integration but at regional cooperation, and that cover policy fields other than trade. In the following, we will hence examine the attributes and driving forces of regime complexity in regional security in Latin America by exploring to what extent the relationship between OAS and UNASUR constitutes an instance of institutional overlap and why this particular configuration of overlap was created. In the first part, we will develop a framework to assess the causes and the configuration of regime complexity. The second part of the paper will apply this analytical framework to the case of OAS and UNASUR. As will be shown, OAS and UNASUR overlap regarding both their security conceptions and their security practices, owing to the fact that the architects of UNASUR have drawn to a significant extent on conceptions and practices established by the OAS, while at the same time explicitly promoting UNASUR as a sub-regional alternative to the OAS.

Conceptualizing regime complexity

Regime complexity: a new topic in international relations

A range of international issues, such as trade, intellectual property rights, refugee politics, human rights protection and, last but not least, security and defense are covered by various international or bilateral agreements. Some time ago, scholars started to think about institutional linkages and institutional bargaining as a consequence of the growing density of issue-specific regimes (Aggarwal, 1998a; Young, 1996). International relations scholars have coined the concepts of "regime complexity" (Alter and Meunier, 2009; Gehring and Faude, 2013; Raustiala and Victor, 2004), "overlapping and nested institutions" (Aggarwal, 1998b; Alter and Meunier, 2006; Hofmann, 2011), "institutional interaction" (Gehring and Oberthür, 2009) or "inter-organizational networking" (Biermann, 2008) to study the relationships between institutions that intersect with respect to their geographical domain and/or functional scope.

In his work on institutional interconnections, Oran Young (1996) focuses on what he terms embedded, nested, clustered and overlapping regimes. "Embedded" refers to regimes that draw on the broadest level of international society, while "nested" describes a situation where issue-specific regimes are folded into broader institutional frameworks that deal with the same general issue but are less detailed regarding specific problems. "Clustered" regimes exhibit a tactical combination of several arrangements into institutional packages, and "overlapping" regimes are institutions formed for different purposes and largely without reference to one another, but intersecting and influencing each other on a de facto basis. Similar to Young's work, Vinod Aggarwal's (1998b) concept of "nesting" focuses on how international regimes and institutions might be reconciled in some sort of hierarchical ordering. A second variant, initially called parallel institutions and more recently referred to as "horizontal" institutions (Aggarwal, 2005), reflects a non-hierarchical division of labor among institutions. Aggarwal also mentions the notions of "overlapping" institutions, which might potentially clash because of their similar mandates, and "independent" institutions with totally separate mandates in different issue areas (Aggarwal, 2005; Aggarwal and Koo, 2005: 201). Most other authors draw on these taxonomies and particularly look at examples of institutional nesting and overlap (Alter and Meunier, 2006, 2009; Busch 2007; Hofmann 2009, 2011).

A number of case studies explore the causes of regime complexity (Alter and Meunier, 2009: 14). The creation of overlapping or nested institutions may follow a functional logic, aiming at greater efficiency in the face of increasing international and regional interconnectedness. Agreements sometimes overlap because conversation about one topic leads to discussion about a related one, creating spillovers across issues. Some international agreements are intended as starting points only, to be followed by more specific agreements. Another motive for overlap might be the creation of "strategic ambiguity" about how to interpret any single agreement. Overlap might also help to create redundancies and fallback options, in other words, differentiated multilateral cooperation, which offers member states the opportunity to opt out of certain institutionalized policy domains and/or push for their policy preferences in another institution (Hofmann and Mérand, 2012: 134f).

Yet, the creation of international institutions also features a power dimension. International institutions might be instruments of domination when hegemonic states employ them to promote their interests through their agenda-setting capacity. The installation of a new agreement might serve the purpose to weaken a preceding agreement and to achieve deeper or different modes of cooperation. Regional governance structures can also be used by smaller states to balance and hedge against a regional power (Nolte, 2011). Overlap thus often results from initiatives by subgroups of states within an institution that create a new institution to limit the influence of an actor

within the larger institution. For instance, Hofmann (2009, 2011) argues that some EU member states pushed for the establishment of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) to develop an alternative to NATO and to restrict US leverage in European security affairs.

The consequences of regime complexity for the policy field, the actors, and the disruption or alleviation of cooperation problems between states have been explored to some extent (Alter and Meunier, 2006, 2009; Biermann, 2008; Busch, 2007; Galbreath and Gebhard, 2010; Gehring and Faude, 2013; Raustiala and Victor, 2004). According to Alter and Meunier (2009), the hitherto existing findings do not point in a single direction. Sometimes complexity favors powerful states while in other instances weaker states or non-governmental organizations gain from the overlap of institutions and rules. In some cases, complexity introduces positive feedback effects that enhance cooperation and the effectiveness of any one cooperation regime. Hofmann and Mérand (2012: 137) emphasize the potential benefits of a "variable geometry" that gives states the ability to choose among various multilateral forums to voice disagreements without endangering the institutional architecture as a whole. Looking at Latin America, Tussie and Riggirozzi argue that the emergence of a greater diversity of intersecting regional forms of cooperation is an expression of increasingly intense regional relations (Riggirozzi and Tussie, 2012; Tussie, 2009). According to Herz (2011), the plural architecture of governance "enhances the ability of countries to coordinate policies, and provides forums more flexible to the changing political reality in the region and to the different issues that require international coordination and norms" (Herz, 2011: 77).

However, others argue that complexity introduces unhelpful competition between actors, inefficiencies and transaction costs that end up compromising the objectives of international cooperation. Tavares (2010: 157–159) considers institutional overlapping to be a nuisance, leading to unaccountability, resource ineffectiveness and political competition. For the case of overlapping security regimes in Europe, ESDP and NATO, Hofmann (2009) points to the inefficiency of crisis management if mandates are largely similar and organizations fail to agree on a division of labor. Malamud and Gardini (2012) have a similarly critical view on the proliferation of regional organizations in Latin America. They argue that multiple memberships in (sub-)regional organizations create frictions between and within those organizations and hence lead to divisions instead of unity in the region (Malamud and Gardini, 2012: 130). An ambiguous consequence of overlapping institutions is the problem of forum shopping. The existence of two or more distinct institutions with overlapping mandates and memberships spurs actors to resort to the forum most favorable to their interests. This can also be a beneficial trait, as forum shopping mitigates the zero-sum logic that characterizes single organizations by offering the possibility of cooperating more formally for states who want to, while accommodating reluctant states (Hofmann and Mérand, 2012: 150–152).

The configuration and causes of regime complexity

To assess the creation of an entirely new organization, we follow Drezner's (2009) suggestion to begin with an exploration of the attributes of regime complexity. Our analytical framework therefore focuses on the genesis and rationale of regime complexity rather than on its effects, and is particularly suitable for situations where an established organization is complemented by a new one.

Figure 1 maps the dimensions that will guide our analysis.[1] The analytical dimensions covered will be the causes and the configuration of institutional complexity, assuming that these two dimensions are interlinked. The configuration of institutional complexity directly results from its causes,

|		Analytical dimensions	
		Configuration	*Causes*
Institutional	*Membership*	Spatial	Relational
dimensions	*Mandate*	Functional	Evolutionary

Figure 1. Analytical framework.

that is, the motives and intentions of the national actors who create new institutions. Thus, our approach is state-centered. While we are aware of the literature pointing to international organizations and their bureaucracies as developing a life of their own and exercising power autonomously in ways unintended and unanticipated by states at their creation (Barnett and Finnemore, 1999), we argue that institutional formation and institutional change involving the ratification of legally binding agreements continue to be driven predominantly by state actors—even more so in a region like Latin America where the principle of national sovereignty is still paramount. State actors react to opportunity structures (crisis, changing power distribution, etc.), which they can exploit (or not) to realize their strategic goals.

Complex institutional linkages in the form of overlap or nesting may exist either with respect to membership or mandate. "Membership" addresses the geographical or spatial extension of each institution. "Mandate" refers to the functional dimension of an institution, that is, the issue-areas it covers, the normative framework it adopts and the activities, mechanisms and instruments it develops to enforce those norms.

In accordance with the bulk of the literature, the term "nesting" in our understanding implies hierarchical relations between the agreements involved (see Aggarwal, 1998b, 2005; Alter and Meunier, 2006; Young, 1996). It hence refers only to institutions that are nested with respect to both membership and mandate. In turn, constellations where membership is nested, but the organizations are formally independent (i.e. not nested in terms of mandate) are defined as overlap. Depending on the configuration of membership, overlap can take two different forms: intersection and subset (see Figure 2). Constellation A with an overlap of both mandate and membership is comparable to a Venn diagram comprising overlapping circles. One group of states belongs to one organization only, another group of states to a second organization, and an intersection of states to both organizations. In turn, constellation B is comparable to a Euler diagram depicting the relation between a set and a subset. It captures an overlapping mandate with nested membership, where all members of a smaller organization are part of a larger organization, but both organizations are autonomous and independent of each other.

Turning to the causes of institutional overlap at the regional level, membership, and more specifically the relations between members, are of crucial importance. Examples of this relational dimension (see Figure 1) include conflict and rivalry between individual members, problems of distributional bargaining, or the presence of a hegemonic power in the organization that outweighs all other members in terms of power resources (like the United States in the OAS). Such relational dynamics can significantly influence cooperation in an international institution. Unresolved conflicts between members lead to mistrust, which can impede, but could potentially also breed, the deepening of cooperation. As for distributional effects, actors who fare poorly have incentives to upset the institution and, if they have the capability, to push their issue of interest into an alternative, changed or newly created institution (Jupille and Snidal, 2006: 13). Thus, an important
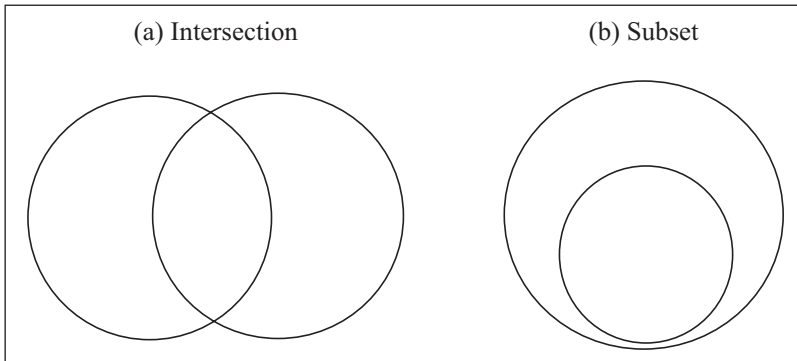
Figure 2. Variants of overlap.

driving force of overlap might be the need for an alternative arena where member states can process their conflicts in a better way than in existing ones.

Forming a new institution can also be a means to balance against or exclude a dominant power from the region. As Acharya (2007) argues, power matters for the definition of regions, but local responses to power may matter even more in the construction of regional orders. How regions resist and/or socialize powers is at least as important as how powers create and manage regions (Acharya, 2007: 643). Minor powers in a region typically initiate responses like resistance against the regional organization dominated by the powerful state, strategies of exclusion (i.e. the formation of a new regional institution without the dominant power) or strategies of socialization and binding. In turn, the presence of a regional power allows for different responses, such as normative dissent (e.g. opposition to the dominant state's diplomacy), the creation of new spheres of influence by the regional power and competition between the regional power and the existing dominant power. The creation of an alternative sphere of influence does not necessarily require open opposition to the dominant power and the international organization supported by it, but could also be accomplished by establishing an organization perceived as subsidiary. Acharya (2011) introduces the concept of "norm subsidiarity", a process whereby local actors create rules with a view to preserving their autonomy from dominance, neglect, violation or abuse by more powerful actors. At the same time, when a new institution is created, regional powers have an incentive to influence its design, as the institutional design will constrain or facilitate how a regional power can pursue and materialize its interests in the new organization.

The second major cause of overlap is the vision for the future attached to the formation of a new organization, an aspect linked to the mandate of the organization. The evolutionary dimension (see Figure 1) addresses the question whether the newer organization is designed to present a better alternative and, ultimately, replace its older counterpart, or whether they are meant to coexist. The vision for the future usually finds a discursive expression. Regional organizations are given certain meanings by strategic discourses,[2] which serve to shape a distinct (sub-)regional identity. If a newly founded organization is meant to replace another one, significant overlap will be discernible in terms of programmatic goals. At the same time, the use of discourses as a political strategy is not separable from power, because power is expressed, achieved or denied through the rhetoric the states enact to justify their actions. For the purpose of this paper, the important element is the argumentative rationality of a coalition of actors and how this coalition uses external and internal events strategically to give significance and legitimacy to the project (Hajer, 2005). The creation of

(sub-)regional governance structures constitutes and consolidates a (sub-)region, inasmuch as they give the region an identity (or "actorness") as a social construct.

While the relational and evolutionary dimensions are separated for analytical clarity, they are in practice intertwined with each other and with a third driving force that has been dealt with in previous studies on the causes of regime complexity and is tacit in our analysis: the functional aim of establishing a new arena in order to find more adequate and efficient solutions for regional problems. The following empirical sections are based on an analysis of the key official documents of OAS and UNASUR and on expert interviews with policy-makers from Latin America. We will first explore the configuration of overlap, looking at its spatial and functional dimensions, and subsequently delve into the causes of institutional overlap, focusing on the relational and the evolutionary dimensions (see Figure 1).

OAS and UNASUR: the configuration of overlap

OAS and UNASUR are part of the existing regional security governance structure in the Americas, which is dense and shows a tendency to shift from regionalization to sub-regionalization (Costa Vaz and Jácome, 2009). As Klepak (2010: 17) argues, "sub-regional advances in cooperation have become not the exception but the rule", and "less and less centrality is given to hemispheric security matters". Hemispheric cooperation was challenged in the 2000s as a result of both the external shock of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the "pink tide" in Latin America. As George W. Bush's War on Terror gained ground, the United States lost interest in regional cooperation, but at the same time renewed its military presence in Latin America to address selected topics such as illegal migration, drug-trafficking and terrorist threats. In the economic sphere, US ambitions to spearhead a continent-wide Free Trade Area of the Americas increasingly met with resistance. The powerful wave of leftist, anti-US, populist, sovereignty movements which has swept the region led to a repudiation of the Washington Consensus and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (Tussie, 2009), and the year 2004 saw the launch of ALBA, initiated by Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez, and UNASUR's forerunner, the South American Community of Nations.

Spatial dimension

The OAS is the world's oldest regional organization. It dates back to a series of conferences of American states initiated in the late nineteenth century. The Charter of the OAS was signed in 1948. Currently, the OAS encompasses all 35 independent states in the Western hemisphere (counting Cuba, which, however, has been suspended from participation in the inter-American system since 1962).[3] Already in the 1990s, Brazil envisioned a free trade area focusing exclusively on South America, but the first summit of South American presidents took place only in 2000 in Brasilia. The South American Community of Nations was founded in 2004 during the third presidential summit in Cuzco, Peru. In 2007 the organization was renamed Union of South American Nations. One year later, on 23 May 2008, the member states—all 12 independent South American states, including Guyana and Suriname—signed UNASUR's Constitutive Treaty, which has since then been ratified by the parliaments of all member states (Briceño-Ruiz, 2010; Nolte and Wehner, 2013).

Although all the members of UNASUR as the smaller organization are also members of the OAS, UNASUR is an independent institution and hence not nested in the sense of being a South American pillar inside the OAS. According to our classification, therefore, OAS and UNASUR are examples of the subset constellation. The literature on regime complexity has hardly dealt with this

variant of an organization nested in terms of membership, but formally independent in terms of mandate. Most overlap constellations fit the intersection model. In Latin America, an example of intersection would be UNASUR and ALBA: while Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia are members of both organizations, ALBA and UNASUR each have a number of members that are not part of the other organization.

Functional dimension

In its original conception, UNASUR was a project focusing on sector cooperation, especially in the area of infrastructure and physical integration. Security did not figure prominently among the objectives listed in its Constitutive Treaty. The proposal of creating the South American Defense Council (*Consejo de Defensa Suramericano*) was made in 2008 as part of a new Brazilian foreign policy strategy under the Lula administration (Villa and Viana, 2010) and in the face of the conflict between Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela when Colombia attacked a FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) camp on Ecuadorian territory (Battaglino, 2012). As a young organization that is still delineating its security conceptions, UNASUR defies the OAS as a consolidated institution that has developed an institutionality to deal with the existing security challenges since its foundation in 1948.

In the following, the overlap in mandate in the area of security and defense will be analyzed in more detail. We compare both organizations with respect to key security conceptions and practices, focusing on the current institutional design in the case of the OAS.[4] Following Aris and Wenger (2013), security conceptions address the stated security aims of an organization, the definition of security threat, the prioritization of different security threats and the question whether the focus is predominantly traditional or non-traditional in nature. Security practices denote the way the regional organization plays out its security conceptions: their specification and concretization as well as their active implementation through various mechanisms and instruments. Apart from formal practices derived from the security conception, informal and ad hoc practices are under scrutiny here, as well as the types of actors involved.

Security conceptions I: collective and cooperative security. Regional security institutions manage security challenges within the region and also develop and articulate common interests with regard to actors outside of the region. Depending on whether the main security challenges are perceived to be inside or outside of the domain of the organization, and depending on the type of security challenge states are facing, three variants of security coalitions can be distinguished (Wallander and Keohane, 1999). The first variant is collective defense. Collective defense arrangements or alliances deter and defend against threats from extra-regional actors and/or processes. The second variant, collective security arrangements, primarily maintains order among member states, contains and integrates potential aggressors into the institution's system of norms and rules, and punishes noncompliance. The scope of applicable measures for conflict resolution among members ranges from peaceful dispute settlement to collective enforcement. While those two types of security coalitions address manifest threats, the third variant, cooperative security arrangements (also termed security management institutions), emerges when states are instead facing risks inside or outside the coalition.[5] Cooperative security arrangements aim at the promotion of peaceful change based on the construction of shared norms, rules and procedures and rely on information exchange, transparency, communication and socialization.

The three security conceptions are not mutually exclusive; institutions might combine a variety of instruments in line with either of them. The OAS originally defined itself as a system of

collective security and envisioned the creation of means for the pacific settlement of disputes in both its Charter (OAS, 1948: chapters V and VI) and the American Treaty on Pacific Settlement, or Pact of Bogotá, signed in 1948 along with the Charter. With the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty), signed in 1947, it also featured a collective defense component to deal with military aggression originating from outside the region. Following the end of the Cold War, the emphasis of the OAS security conception moved away from collective defense and toward cooperative security (Weiffen, 2012).

Like the OAS, UNASUR deals with collective and cooperative security. The South American Defense Council (SDC) seeks to consolidate South America as a zone of peace, to make gradual progress in the analysis and discussion of a common view on defense matters, and to generate consensus to strengthen regional cooperation. Specifically, it attempts to contribute to the articulation of regional joint positions in multilateral defense forums, to strengthen the adoption of confidence and security-building measures (CSBM), and to encourage the exchange of information on military education and training, among the most important matters (UNASUR, 2008b). Thus, some of the SDC's principles, such as arms control and the promotion of peaceful dispute settlement (UNASUR, 2008b: article 3) are in line with the concept of collective security. At the same time, it is designed as an "agency for consultancy, cooperation and coordination in defense matters" (UNASUR, 2008b: article 1), which resembles the definition of a cooperative security institution.

In order to deal with latent and manifest tensions between member states, OAS and UNASUR both promote CSBM. In collective security arrangements whose aim is to limit the means for waging war, CSBM are reciprocated measures that enhance mutual understanding, convey non-hostile intentions, define acceptable norms and behavior and hence diminish the potential for military surprise. Cooperative security arrangements, which aim to reduce or, ideally, eliminate uncertainty and develop a shared security vision, tend to use CSBM of a higher intensity than those employed by collective security organizations. In particular, the emulation of its cooperative security functions by UNASUR presents a challenge to the OAS, as confidence-building is not amenable to forum-shopping; it cannot simultaneously be done with two different communities. If South American states chose to give priority to cooperation in the UNASUR framework, the OAS would eventually be displaced.

Security conceptions II: security challenges. In response to the wide range of security challenges, both OAS and UNASUR adopted a multidimensional concept of security within which traditional and non-traditional security issues converge. The OAS Declaration on Security in the Americas includes traditional security threats, like territorial and boundary disputes, but also presents an enumeration of non-traditional challenges, such as terrorism, drug trafficking, arms trade and contraband, migration and natural disasters, as well as public safety and social problems like poverty and diseases (OAS, 2003: article 4, section m). Governments increasingly realize the transnational scope and impact of those non-traditional challenges, as well as the involvement of non-state actors (Tulchin 2005: 101–104). The terrorist attacks of 9/11 brought about a strong focus on terrorism and a reassertion of US dominance when the United States initiated the War on Terror and urged OAS member states to partake in this mission (Cepik, 2009: 246; Weiffen, 2012: 372–376).

UNASUR's approach takes into account both the specific needs of its member countries and the discussion within the OAS on concepts of security. UNASUR's multidimensional security priorities, which were set by the member states in its Constitutive Treaty, are "the fight against corruption, the global drug problem, trafficking in persons, trafficking in small and light weapons; terrorism; transnational organized crime and other threats as well as disarmament, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction and elimination of landmines";

"the exchange of information and experiences in matters of defense"; and "cooperation for the strengthening of citizen security" (UNASUR, 2008a: article 3, sections rr, tt and uu).

To sum up, both organizations overlap to a large extent in their security conceptions. UNASUR emulates and builds on many innovations in the area of cooperative security and the definition of security challenges that were introduced by the OAS after the end of the Cold War. The adoption of ideas from another institution has been described before in the literature on regime complexity. Biermann (2008: 171) calls this phenomenon "emulation", while Gehring and Oberthür (2009: 132–135) term it "cognitive interaction". Apparently, rules already in force channel and constrain the content of new institutions.

Security practices I: security institutions. Regional organizations develop a particular institutional framework to put their security conceptions into practice. In the early 1990s, the OAS's most significant institutional improvement in the direction of regional security management was the establishment of the Committee on Hemispheric Security (CHS), which is currently the primary forum for discussion of both traditional and non-traditional security challenges. In the course of a restructuring in 2005, the OAS General Secretariat created the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security as one of its subunits. While it initially concentrated on public security and coordinated the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, the set-up of a Department on Defense and Hemispheric Security was planned in 2011. The oldest mechanism for security cooperation that the OAS disposes of is the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB). It dates back to 1942, but in March 2006 a formal institutional link to the OAS was established that put the IADB in charge of technical advisory services such as mine clearing, reporting on CSBM, and the development of educational programs on defense.

UNASUR is a new organization and in many respects still functions like a program organization,[6] delineating programmatic goals and setting the norms and rules that will guide the behavior of the member states. UNASUR's main security institution is the SDC, established during UNASUR's extraordinary summit in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil (16–17 December 2008). The SDC was first and foremost a Brazilian project related to the changes in Brazilian foreign and defense policy. It is mentioned in Brazil's National Defense Strategy of 2008, which states as one of its objectives the closer cooperation in defense matters in South America (Brazilian Ministry of Defense, 2008: 17). For the future development of UNASUR's security conceptions and practices, the Center for Strategic Defense Studies (*Centro de Estudios Estratégicos de Defensa*—CEED) of the SDC, inaugurated in Buenos Aires in May 2011, will be of utmost importance. It resembles the OAS Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies, a civilian counterpart to the Inter-American Defense Board, whose mission is to train civilians for positions in defense ministries and parliamentary defense commissions.

Security practices II: instruments addressing particular security challenges. In the area of collective security, the OAS created legal instruments for arms control after the end of the Cold War: the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials (1997) and the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisition (1999). Confidence-building measures became an important topic in the OAS during the 1990s. A series of expert meetings and conferences took place in Buenos Aires (1994), Santiago (1995), San Salvador (1998) and Miami (2003), and the CHS started to convene as Forum on Confidence- and Security-Building in April 2005 with subsequent meetings in 2006, 2008, 2010 and February 2013. The CHS is in charge of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of all types of CSBM, puts together a roster of experts and

explores new variants, such as CSBM between internal security forces in order to cope with transnational security challenges. Additionally, the new IADB statutes mandate the Board to offer consultative services on CSBM of a military nature and to keep an inventory.

As for UNASUR, several mechanisms in the areas of arms control and confidence-building are currently under construction (Nolte and Wehner, 2013). The SDC's annual action plans include specific cooperative security measures such as the development of mutual trust through increased transparency of defense expenditures, the planning of joint military exercises for peacekeeping, and the creation of a database listing all courses and educational institutions on defense for civilians in South America.[7] Hence, SDC's activities reflect the long-term goal of developing new cooperation practices to reduce uncertainty and enhance a peaceful environment.

The OAS also addresses non-traditional security challenges. Drug trafficking is the most persistent one, and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission was created as early as 1986. In the 1990s, provisions regarding money laundering were issued. Terrorism figured on the hemispheric security agenda after the bomb attacks on the Israeli Embassy and a Jewish community center in Buenos Aires in 1992 and 1994, respectively. A Special Conference on Terrorism took place in 1996, and a follow-up meeting created the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism, which was set up in 2001. In addition, regular meetings and working groups of the Committee on Hemispheric Security deal with public security, transnational organized crime, the problem of criminal gangs and natural disaster reduction and risk management.[8]

In the case of UNASUR, the multidimensional security concept finds its expression in core suborgans (Serbin, 2010): the South American Council Against Drug Trafficking; the South American Health Council, which coordinates the fight of pandemics; the South American Social Development Council, which facilitates the exchange of national practices to reduce poverty; and especially the SDC.[9] The multidimensionality of security is also expressed in the SDC's action plans—for example, through the preparation of coordinated responses to natural disasters.

Security practices III: Crisis response activities. Throughout its history, the OAS has had some success in preventing the escalation of conflicts. The mediation of the dispute between El Salvador and Honduras in 1969, known as the "Soccer War", is considered the clearest expression of the organization's conflict-resolution capacities (Herz, 2011; Shaw, 2004).[10] Following the Cuban Revolution, however, Latin America turned into a battleground in the fight against communism, as the United States considered the installation of left-leaning regimes to be utterly intolerable. In this period, the OAS could do little to restrain unilateral interventions by the United States and the de facto instrumentalization of the organization as an extension of US foreign policy. Only after the Cold War ended did the OAS once again become more active in conflict resolution, and it established the Fund for Peace in 2000 to address territorial disputes between member states. Between 1999 and 2003, the Fund brokered agreements between Belize and Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, and El Salvador and Honduras. The first OAS peacekeeping mission, consisting of a staff of more than 100 civilian experts, was established in 2004 to support the peace process in Colombia. After the incursion of Colombian military forces and police personnel into the territory of Ecuador in 2008, a good offices mission was undertaken. The two most recent Meetings of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs also addressed disputes between member states: the Colombian–Ecuadorian border crisis (2008) and the situation in the border area between Costa Rica and Nicaragua (2010).

Although crisis response activities did not rank high on its original agenda, UNASUR has successfully developed informal ad hoc practices for crisis management—be they crises of intra- or inter-state origin (see Flemes et al., 2011: 118–122; Nolte and Wehner, 2013). UNASUR took

action to prevent democratic breakdowns in Bolivia (2008) and Ecuador (2010), as well as to reduce border tensions between Colombia and Venezuela (2010). During the Bolivian crisis, when calls for secession from the resource-rich eastern departments escalated into violence, the UNASUR mission proved to be more effective than the measures proposed by the OAS. In the case of the police mutiny in Ecuador, Brazil called for coordinated action on the part of UNASUR, the OAS and MERCOSUR in order to maintain democratic stability, and external support for the challenged president came from both the OAS and UNASUR. Yet, UNASUR played a more visible role than the OAS: the South American presidents convened in Argentina on the very day of the Ecuadorian crisis. In the dispute between Colombia and Venezuela, President Chávez called for an emergency meeting of UNASUR's foreign ministers to discuss the situation and declared that he would only accept mediation by UNASUR. From his point of view, the OAS had no jurisdiction to intervene. Moreover, UNASUR helped to establish dialogue between Colombia and the other South American countries—in particular Venezuela, Brazil and Ecuador—concerning Colombia's decision to permit the United States to locate military bases on its territory (2009).

These developments can be interpreted as significant steps in the UNASUR endeavor to exclude the United States from regional affairs by supplanting the OAS with regard to crisis response in South America. In view of expectations that those crises would threaten the newly assertive leftist movements in the region, there was considerable surprise at how effective UNASUR was in stabilizing the situations. UNASUR interventions embraced the widely shared perception among South American countries that the resolution of domestic political crises works better in a sub-regional forum. The same holds true for the settlement of border disputes and tensions between states—especially when the United States is clearly biased toward one conflict party, like in the case of Colombia vs Venezuela.

To sum up, although UNASUR security practices are still under construction, it emulates the OAS to a large extent regarding specific security institutions and instruments. This is particularly visible in the area of cooperative security, where both organizations exhibit very similar cooperation practices to reduce uncertainty and to counter non-traditional security challenges. As these activities are unrelated to immediate conflict situations and have a long-term perspective, this is the area where an intentional emulation—and apparently, displacement—of the OAS is most clearly discernible. Owing to ad hoc action taken by UNASUR, an increasing overlap also takes place in the area of crisis response. In the face of acute regional crises, UNASUR's presidential summit diplomacy seems to be a faster mode of decision-making than the institutionalized processes of diplomatic negotiations preferred by the OAS.

OAS and UNASUR: the causes of overlap

This section examines the motives for building a new organization whose goals and functions are already addressed by an existent organization in the region. The rationale of forming a new organization can be phrased as relational on the one hand and evolutionary on the other (see Figure 1). The relational dimension refers to the actor constellation—power distribution, national interests and conflicts—which serves as key trigger for the emergence of an overlapping institution. In turn, the evolutionary dimension addresses the objectives of the newcomer and asks whether it is conceptualized as alternative or complementary to the pre-existing institution.

Relational dimension

The OAS exhibits a specific power constellation: the presence of a regional hegemon that is at the same time a superpower with global reach. With the memory of frequent unilateral interventions

still fresh in Latin America, the United States is viewed with distrust. For a long time, Latin America's response was a strategy of socialization and binding, although there were already some instances of resistance during the Cold War, for example when the Contadora (later, Rio) Group, was formed as an ad hoc coalition to deal with civil wars in Central America instead of resorting to the OAS.

The 1990s were a period of multilateralism and convergence of Latin American and US foreign policy preferences. Regional actors unanimously pushed for the renewal of the inter-American system, a revision of the concept of security toward a more cooperative version, and a commitment to defending democracy. After the turn of the millennium, the reassertion of US unilateral projects (like the War on Terror) and the emergence of regional powers in South America made hemispheric cooperation more difficult again and led to an increasing South American disaffection with hemispheric institutions.

Most South American countries perceive the United States as a potential threat to their national security interests as they suspect that the US desires their natural resources, and hence react negatively to the presence of US troops in South America, particularly in Colombia. The Brazilian National Defense Strategy tacitly refers to the United States when stating that "While developing the Hypotheses of Employment, the Military Strategy of Defense shall include the employment of the Armed Forces considering the following aspects, among others: … the threat of far superior military forces in the Amazon region" (Brazilian Ministry of Defense, 2008: 48). Venezuela is more explicit in naming the United States as a security threat. Hugo Chávez promoted a NATO-style military alliance in South America in order to protect Venezuela from a possible US invasion via Colombian territory, and the South American Defense Council can be considered a step in that direction (Cardozo, 2006: 22; Jácome, 2008: 9).

Increased independence from the United States is supported—to different degrees—by all South American countries. This explains the willingness and pro-activeness of these countries to create (sub-)regional organizations that exclude the United States (Nolte, 2011). In this sense, the creation of UNASUR is a way to tackle the problem of US membership in the OAS and to prevent US interference (Gratius, 2008). The establishment of the SDC reflects the interest of South American governments in developing a regional defense agenda, inasmuch the OAS is considered an outdated organization unable to provide solutions to the current threats in South America (Cepik, 2009: 230). The SDC has been formed not only to face regional instability emerging from latent inter-state conflict, democratic instability and transnational issues like drug-trafficking and organized crime, but also to control and limit external pressure and intervention (Battaglino, 2012). Hence, the creation of UNASUR and the SDC as an alternative to the OAS and the Rio Treaty can be interpreted as a reaction to the asymmetry of power in the Americas, a strategy of institutional balancing against the United States in order to curb its influence, and a means of guaranteeing South American autonomy and self-organization of defense (Battaglino 2012; Brands, 2010; Nolte and Wehner, 2013).

Whereas the reference to external threats explains part of the motives to create and institutionalize UNASUR, the sub-regionalization process also serves to structure intra-regional relations. Emerging regional powers play a prominent role in the creation of UNASUR, as they intend to delimit their (potential) areas of influence. In particular, Brazil and Venezuela have pursued the strategy to initiate new regional organizations that offer them a more cooperative environment and a more favorable platform for international projection than the previously existing institutional structures. UNASUR provides the means for exerting leadership in South America and is hence a supply-driven enterprise to promote relevant states' interests within their geographic region (Tussie, 2009). However, to put their regional projects into practice, regional leaders need regional followers

whom they must convince that the new organization is useful for them (Malamud, 2011; Schirm, 2010). For Brazil, UNASUR is part of its "grand strategy" to use regional integration as the key-stone of "consensual hegemony" (Brands, 2010; Burges, 2008), and to strengthen its influence in global affairs, whereas for Venezuela it serves to disseminate its Bolivarian and anti-imperialist ideas. In turn, from the perspective of regional intermediate powers such as Argentina, Chile and Colombia, UNASUR facilitates a platform for regional power projection by using soft power, and offers the possibility to soft-balance and bind Brazil in order to prevent the unfolding of a new hegemonic project.

It has been argued above that the relational dimension influences cooperation within an international institution. Although UNASUR mitigates the problem of extreme power asymmetry, it is not devoid of latent and potential inter-state conflicts. While the Southern Cone can be considered a "loosely coupled, if still imperfect, security community" (Flemes, 2005; Hurrell, 1998), the same label does not apply to the situation in the Andean region—Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela, in particular—or to the bilateral relations between Chile and its neighbors Bolivia and Peru. These latent tensions hamper closer cooperation in the sensitive policy fields of security and defense.

Evolutionary dimension

The creation of regional governance structures is accompanied by strategic discourses that frame a region and create a distinct regional identity. As the former Brazilian foreign mister Celso Amorim stated, UNASUR has given South America a face (Amorim, 2010: 229–230). Although OAS and UNASUR overlap in membership and the latter has replicated security conceptions and practices of the former, UNASUR and its member states use a differentiation process between the Self (UNASUR) and the Other (the OAS and the United States).

The purpose of UNASUR is rhetorically expressed in the foundational documents of the organization and its sub-organs. Delimiting who is "in and out" of UNASUR is part of its declaration of principles. In the Constitutive Treaty, UNASUR member states assure "their determination to build a South American identity and citizenship and to develop an integrated regional space in the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, energy and infrastructure dimensions, for the strengthening of Latin America and Caribbean unity" (UNASUR, 2008a: Preamble). The principle of excluding the United States and eventually displacing the OAS is present in the Constitutive Treaty's regulations concerning associated states and new member states. The Treaty refers to Latin American and Caribbean states as potential candidates and as parts of a broader region whose main axis lies in South America (UNASUR, 2008a: article 19).

The process of delimitating a South American region is also reflected in the creation of the SDC. Its Statute formulates the general objective of developing "a South American identity in defense issues" (UNASUR, 2008b: article 4). The idea of a South American defense identity has become a security practice when the CEED was set up, whose main task is to build convergence and to form a South American strategic way of thinking in order to address existing security challenges (Nolte and Wehner, 2013). The Statute of the CEED defines its mission as "to promote the construction of a shared vision that enables joint handling of issues of regional defense and security, of the challenges, threats and risk factors, opportunities and previously identified scenarios" and "to contribute to the identification of conceptual approaches and common basic guidelines that enable the establishment of policies in the area of defense and regional security" (UNASUR, 2010: article 3, sections b and c). The differentiation process between UNASUR and something that is outside this regional organization becomes a reason for its existence.

At the same time, taking advantage of opportunity structures, UNASUR's security practices, in particular the reactions to regional crises, have given purpose and meaning to the existence of the region vis-à-vis the OAS. Critics of the OAS argue that it cannot provide a balanced framework for security cooperation in the Americas, and South America in particular, as it lacks focus on the main problems as perceived by South American governments and citizens (Cepik, 2009). The dynamics between OAS and UNASUR are an instance of what Biermann (2008: 169–171) calls "positioning": a rivalry for a better position, in this case for primacy in South American security. In this vein, UNASUR is built with the purpose of competing with and eventually displacing the OAS in South America. The opportunity to act as a mediator in the domestic crises of Bolivia and Ecuador, of the American bases in Colombia, and between Colombia and Venezuela consolidated the regional project of UNASUR and its SDC. These situations have substantiated the claim that UNASUR should take the lead and look for South American solutions to South American problems in order to block the eventual interference of the OAS, and with it, the United States, in crises that take place in South America (Flemes et al., 2011: 118–122; Garay Vera, 2009: 18).

The most recent example of competition and divergence between OAS and UNASUR is their reaction to the Paraguayan democratic crisis of 2012. While UNASUR along with MERCOSUR interpreted the express impeachment procedure of President Fernando Lugo as a rupture of the democratic order and suspended Paraguay's membership, the OAS could not find a consistent position as to whether basic democratic principles and the Paraguayan constitution had been disregarded and therefore did not invoke the Inter-American Democratic Charter. Justified or not, the rapid decision taken by MERCOSUR and UNASUR forced other actors to respond not only to the situation in Paraguay, but also to the South American organizations' definition of the situation. Once again, UNASUR proved its interpretative dominance over the OAS when it comes to political developments in South America.

Conclusions

This article analyzes the genesis and rationale of regional regime complexity in a constellation where a new institution has recently been installed. We have shown that OAS and UNASUR exhibit a significant overlap in mandate with respect to their security conceptions and practices. The development of UNASUR reflects instances of institutional replication of security conceptions and practices. In this process, UNASUR members act as a transmission belt given their dual membership and thus knowledge about OAS institutional development in security matters. They have adapted, reinterpreted and modified norms and institutions from the OAS as the hemispheric organization.

Consequently, the analysis of the causes of overlap shows that UNASUR's creation is driven by relational considerations such as excluding the United States from South America, and Brazil's— and to a lesser extent Venezuela's—intentions to use UNASUR as a vehicle to expand and consolidate their influence in the region. Evidence concerning the evolutionary dimension, as expressed in UNASUR discourse, suggests that overlap is an intentional political act and as such it was consciously included as part of UNASUR's program by its architects.

The differentiation process between UNASUR and something that is outside this regional organization becomes a reason for its existence only when it is analyzed in a complementary way with the power-driven rationales of the major South American states. Therefore, the aspirations of South American states to create an alternative to the OAS as well as the factual exclusion of the OAS and the United States from sub-regional affairs are discernible in the security conceptions and practices that UNASUR has developed so far. These only make sense within the type(s) of

institutional design that UNASUR has created and has paradoxically emulated from its different and competitive other: the OAS.

Although the proliferation of regional organizations in Latin America in recent years is quite unique, our framework for analyzing the configuration and causes of overlap could guide the analysis of institutional development in other world regions like Africa or Asia and could be applied to other policy fields such as free trade agreements or regional democracy clauses.

Concerning the consequences of overlap, given that UNASUR and the SDC are still under construction, it is too early to assess whether their coexistence with the OAS is beneficial or detrimental for regional security. Among observers of the region, it is contested whether the time has come to replace hemispheric cooperation and the inter-American system by sub-regional solutions, or whether hemispheric and sub-regional organizations might usefully complement or even reinforce each other (FOCAL, 2010; Malamud and Gardini, 2012; Riggirozzi and Tussie, 2012).

A first intuition is that the consequences might vary across different types of security functions. The area of crisis management seems to exhibit the best prospects for a division of labor. Regime complexes in other policy fields provide examples of cooperation among organizations operating at different levels. If South American leaders can resolve South American conflicts on a sub-regional level, the OAS would dispose of more time and resources to focus on those issues that impact the entire hemisphere. Thus, rather than viewing the emergence of UNASUR as a threat to hemispheric unity, the OAS could benefit from having other cooperative mechanisms in place, as they could make regional cooperation more effective. At the same time, the formation of UNASUR might provide added impetus to the United States and Canada to revitalize and reform the OAS.

In contrast to this, it has been shown above that the formation of UNASUR has been to a large extent an antagonistic process with the ultimate aim to weaken the OAS influence on South American affairs. Especially if it manages to consolidate its efforts in security management and the construction of a shared defense identity and thus turns into South America's principal forum for socialization and uncertainty reduction, UNASUR is a severe challenge to the OAS. Owing to their divergent positions on the issue, the question whether the majority of UNASUR member states will stick to the objective of creating a better alternative to the OAS or will engage with the vision of a multi-level security architecture will form an agenda for future research.

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Notes

1. The four dimensions we single out are inspired by Adler et al.'s work on security governance, which explores the coexistence, overlap and interplay of the two logics of balance of power and security community in political discourse and practice, as well as the emergence of "constellations of practices" (Adler and Greve, 2009; Adler and Pouliot, 2011). Four ways of approaching overlap are identified: spatial, functional, relational and temporal/evolutionary (Adler and Greve, 2009: 72–80). Although Adler and Greve refer to mechanisms of security governance as systems of rule, their reflections are partly

applicable to overlapping regional security institutions.

2. Discourses are understood here as a strategy to frame political events—be these of social or material nature. This understanding of discourse involves attributing meanings to the political phenomena, which are produced and reproduced in discursive practices (Hajer, 2005: 300).

3. On 3 June 2009, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Americas decided that the 1962 resolution, which excluded the government of Cuba from participation, ceases to have effect, but so far Cuba has not yet resumed its activities in the OAS. For a list of OAS member states, see http://www.oas.org/en/member_states/default.asp.

4. For elaborations on the historical trajectory of OAS security conceptions and practices, see Shaw (2004), Herz (2011) and Weiffen (2012).

5. A threat exists if a state or group of states perceives another state as having contradictory interests or as an adversarial actor that has a bellicose intention, that is, is carrying out plans to attack, and that possesses the means, that is, military capability, to inflict considerable damage, whereas a risk is the probability of a future loss or damage that can be influenced by current action. In other words, a risk is an incomplete threat with respect to one or two of the factors defining a threat (Daase, 2007; Wallander and Keohane, 1999: 25). Risks might result from inter-state tensions owing to ideological divergence, the treatment of ethnic minorities or dissidents, unresolved border disputes or control over resources. In addition, issues of domestic origin with potential transnational impact, such as domestic political instability, guerrillas and insurgencies, organized crime, drug traffic, illegal migration and natural and manmade disasters are considered risks.

6. Program organizations "deal primarily with programme formulation, that is, the setting of behavioural and distributive norms and rules" (Rittberger and Zangl, 2006: 10).

7. The action plans are available on the SDC website: http://www.unasurcds.org/

8. See the work plans and calendars which are available on the website of the Committee of Hemispheric Security: http://www.oas.org/csh/english/workplan.asp

9. For information on UNASUR's goals and sub-organizations, see http://www.unasursg.org

10. However, the conflict resolution mechanisms outlined by the Pact of Bogotá (1948) were never applied; dispute settlement took place invoking either the OAS Charter or the Rio Treaty (Shaw, 2004).

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