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EDITORIAL

In this edition we welcome a new collaborator, Mathías Valdez Duffau (PhD), who writes to us from Ecuador, and begins his participation with an article on the *Security Sector Reform*. It is a very interesting topic, which explains many of the things that have happened in our countries in terms of security cooperation and its links with development cooperation.

In addition, we are happy that our Argentine analyst Ulises León Kandiko, among so many occupations, has once again had time to write. On this occasion, he illustrates us with two articles, the first on disinformation in social networks, where he concludes that it is necessary to recover and strengthen counterintelligence services in order to face new/old threats; In his second contribution, he warns us about the use of artificial intelligence on the modern battlefield.

Haylyn Hernández, from Colombia, makes a precise list of the most important events, which account for the difficulties facing peace in that country.

In this issue, for the first time we have a reply to a previous article. Which is a great thing, because we have insisted that we are open to dialogue and high-level debate of ideas. This is a writing by Juan Pablo Pardo Retortillo, who comments/complements a previous article on the military balance between Venezuela and Colombia. Although on this occasion the one who makes the reply agrees with the other author, and instead of refuting, complements, we also want to publish dialectical confrontations that will enrich us all.

Next, Colonel (r) Blasco analyzes the last elections in Spain and the resulting balance of forces, as well as the immediate and future consequences for his country. Until now, Mr. Coronel's point of view has dominated the pages of TRIARIUS, as there are no other versions or points of view of such high argumentative quality here. This is one of the cases where it would be great to be able to read other points of view, which intellectually enrich those of us who do not live in Spain or do not fully know its reality. We invite our Spanish readers to express their thoughts on the political and geopolitical issues in Spain, especially if it is contrary to the analyzes of the esteemed Colonel (r) Blasco.

This edition continues with an article by our friend Guadi Calvo, in which he makes a detailed analysis of the internal situation of Daesh after the death of its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, at the hands of troops from the United States of America.

Colonel (r) Daniel Martínez, from Uruguay, analyzes the main conflicts involving Ethiopia. The issue of the *war over water is of great interest*, an appetizer of the great conflicts that are coming for this resource, all over the planet. It is certain that in future editions we will delve into the subject.

Guadi returns to tell us about the security situation in Tajikistan, a country that we know little about in the West, but which is a key player in the fight against terrorism.

Then, Colonel (r) Blasco introduces us to the subject of Historical Memory and the complications that this subject has had in his country, as well as its implications in the framework of the European Union. This is a topic of great relevance and scope for Spain.

We end this installment with a review that addresses the naval operational context of the Republic of Colombia, a country that faces complex problems and dangerous current and potential threats.

Know to win!

Douglas Hernandez
Editor

This newsletter has a Spanish version.

TRIARIUS 062

Content:

TRIARIUS

Latin America is facing a historical moment of tremendous social upheaval. There is a fracture in the relationship of the different governments with their people, the masses are demonstrating and expressing discontent, in many cases by violent means. Have governments stopped representing popular interests and aspirations? Has the polarization between right and left fueled the problem? What is the role of the media and social networks in this complex scenario? As a "wild card", right-wing governments facing social discontent and massive popular protests allege that behind all this is the São Paulo Forum, the international left, infiltrated in these demonstrations in order to destabilize democracies. Latin American. While acknowledging that it is possible that this is so, it cannot be ignored that there are acute social, political, economic, cultural, ethical problems, and of all kinds within the different countries, and that as a whole they are reason enough for the discontent and protest.

At the time of writing these lines, violence continues in the streets of Chile and Bolivia, although for different reasons. Chile, the "oasis" in the region, with a liberal democracy, is facing the product of its internal contradictions, while Bolivia, a case of successful socialism, ends with a coup d'état, and popular revolts that demand the return of the " dictator" deposed.

We have had to live in interesting times, although unstable and violent. Are you prepared for the crises that lie ahead? What will you do if your country succumbs to an economic or other debacle?

On the cover, **LAO People's Army Troops**. See more information at the end of this magazine.

TRIARIUS privileges freedom of expression, however, the responsibility for what is said in the articles is exclusive to their authors.

Linking post-Cold War security and development agendas through the new paradigm of cooperation and Security Sector Reform

By Mathías Valdez Duffau (Ecuador)

Cooperation United States - Mexico. Referential image.

Summary

Since the beginning of the post-Cold War, a redirection of both development cooperation and security agendas has been generated. This occurs to meet the demand of international donor actors to be able to provide an alternative and inclusive understanding of security issues in the field of international development assistance. In this way, this article develops its research question focused on understanding how the genesis and development of the process of interaction between security and development took place at the level of international cooperation. For which an analysis based on the available bibliographic material is carried out, taking the period from the post-Cold War, between the mid-1990s and the following decade. In this way, it is concluded that from the proposal of the new paradigm of cooperation, it is possible to legitimize the link between the requirements of cooperation programs with objectives in the field of security, giving way to the formulation of development projects focused on in the reform of security apparatuses, producing the genesis of the Security Sector Reform (SSR).

Keywords: new paradigm of cooperation, reform of security apparatuses, post-Cold War, United Nations, global South, nexus between security and development.

1. Introduction

Within the context of the Cold War, the main powers, the Soviet Union (USSR) and the United States of America (USA), at least theoretically, were not interested in "using security and assistance to development to promote democratic governance in aid-receiving countries" (Ball, 2010, p. 29). However, history indicates that during the Cold War there was a strong tendency, in practice, to provide military assistance and development

assistance to military regimes not only in Latin America but also in Africa and parts of Asia. In many respects, that trend was the result of binary political pragmatism. This is reflected in the *realpolitik* of the incipient but tacit link between governance, development and security in the different scenarios of the Cold War (Chutter, 2006).

From Ball's analysis (2005, 2006, 2010), the characterization of security assistance during the Cold War must be understood as essentially bilateral. That means between two governments and not from international organizations to a particular nation. Bilateral cooperation on security sought to protect the ruling elite and guarantee the stability of the regime and the state. This also allowed the security forces to have the freedom to act de facto and autonomously within schemes of authoritarian and military regimes. Civil society oversight and accountability, as conceived within a de jure or rule of law state, were not part of the political equation. However, the consequence of this situation also meant that the availability of resources for domestic development was reduced in favor of securing security expenses, despite the fact that said costs were inefficient.

For their part, the international non-governmental organizations (INGO), as well as the United Nations (UN) agencies, did not operate in matters that linked security with development. Development agencies used to operate close to war zones, providing humanitarian assistance or even trying to implement some development programs in countries under military regimes, regardless of political issues. His reasons were based on the fact that these international actors were governed by the principles of restriction, consent and neutrality. At the same time, emergency assistance for natural disasters was provided in aid projects and not through military cooperation channels, thus diminishing the likelihood that agencies or the military would establish a collaborative development-security nexus.

Based on the foregoing, it can be deduced that both bilateral and international government development donors did not have much of a relationship with the security sector during the Cold War. In reality, the security sector was in charge of the task not only of governing and implementing development plans, but also of combating the internal ideological enemy. This occurred at the cost of assuming human rights abuses as a necessary component for military governments to continue carrying out, in addition to government tasks, anti-subversive actions against communist groups. In this sense, Bellamy (2003) concludes that bilateral assistance in security areas is not a new concept and was a common practice during the Cold War. In those days, both superpowers offered military aid for purposes of development, governance, and thus political legitimacy. Throughout Latin America, the US was the main provider of assistance to strengthen the armed forces and make them capable of defeating the communist insurgency. The logic of this was due to the fact that the main objective was, in the first place, the strengthening of internal security, in order to later create non-communist states.

However, in practice and as a result of this process, these States ended up being neither democratic nor respectful of human rights. Putting it in perspective, the situation during the Cold War was diametrically opposed to what post-Cold War SSR programs were to propose, in that instead of donor countries advising recipients on how to develop security forces responsible and respectful of human rights, the military cooperation agenda included the transfer of the know-how of the French military in relation to its experience acquired in the anti-subversive repression against the *National Liberation Front in Algeria* . This so-called expertise was first received by the US, and was later transmitted to the military governments of Latin America under the doctrine of national security.

1.1. Methodology

Based on the above, the objective of this work is to elucidate what has been the future of the security and development fields after the end of the Cold War. This will serve to analyze the relationship that was developing between the cooperation agendas for development and those of security, first, and those of reform of security apparatuses later. In this way, this article addresses its research question focused on understanding how the genesis and development of the process of interaction between security and development took place at the level of international cooperation. To do this, it carries out a qualitative approach based on the conceptual analysis of the bibliographic material of those authors and actors who have been fundamental both in the gestation and in the formulation of the public policy process under scrutiny in this work. Regarding the temporal, the work addresses the period from the mid-1990s to the middle of the following decade.

The approach to the problem around security apparatus reform programs derives from the link between development studies and civil-military relations. The link between the two aforementioned areas begins to be articulated from political science in the American academic scene at the beginning of the Cold War. The original reason for the study of this was due to the increase in military participation in political regimes in Latin America.

However, the vertiginous development of the political events that took place in the world since the end of the Cold War in terms of security still requires further academic study from a critical perspective.

In particular, this article manages to substantiate its contribution to the academic discussion as it articulates in a concatenated way the political and conceptual evolution, from its genesis from the beginning of the post-Cold War, from the formulation of the new paradigm of cooperation. and the inclusion in this of the link between security and development until the subsequent enunciation and gradual consolidation of the *Security Sector Reform* . In this way, this article, after the introduction to the problem and the methodology, aims to understand the way in which, from the implementation of the new cooperation paradigm, the link between security and development is promoted, as well as later proposes a critical look at these issues. Next, it is possible to guide the reader towards understanding the deployment carried out by certain international actors in the formulation and characterization of the *Security Sector Reform* .

2. The new paradigm of cooperation and the nexus between security and development

Towards the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, the beginning of the tendency towards the collapse of many military and authoritarian regimes in countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia is evident. This process is a consequence of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the political liberalization of Eastern Europe. From this there is a change in the agenda and its international policy priorities. Gradually, the international and government agencies involved in development assistance began to highlight the fact that the liberal development of the post-Cold War itself was linked to two fundamental factors for the sustainability of these processes of change, and that paradoxically they had been absent during the Cold War, they were: democracy and security.

It is worth noting that, although democracy as a system of government had not been an essential feature during the Cold War, once the ideological opponent to liberal capitalism had collapsed, Western powers began to promote democracy and link it to economic development (Wirtz, 2007). It then became necessary to think about renewing the cooperation approach with the security apparatuses, in order to preserve the health of the new regimes against remnants of authoritarian power that could act as a counterproductive element to the process of systemic change (Brzoska and Krohn, 2009). In the new approach, those actors linked to the past were, depending on the case, to a greater or lesser extent labeled as sources of conflict, violent agents, or simply as exponents of past security schemes, which would have to be seen as illegitimate, as the cause of the conditions of insecurity that not only limited the consolidation of liberal democracy, but also had an influence in perpetuating underdevelopment (Huysmans, 2004). In this sense, it is interesting to question to what extent it was possible for countries in democratic transition to regain control over their security sector to ensure its reform under democratic canons, while dealing with its repressive legacy. Without the legacy of massive violations of the human rights of civilian populations being an impediment to the transition, the development cooperation agenda began to be linked to the security agenda (Cawtra and Luckham, 2003).

From this incipient interrelationship between cooperation and security, on the part of the donors and towards the beginning of the 1990s, there was clear pressure on the recipient governments to try, on the one hand, to reduce military spending in order, on the other, , increase budgets for development purposes. An example of the above can be found around 1992, when the Government of Mali and the Tuareg rebels signed a peace agreement and, two years later, a UN mission proposed a security first approach. This new perspective in practice meant that development aid was concentrated, in the case of Mali, on the demobilization of combatants, on improving police surveillance and border control. Successively, and after this first precedent in Mali, both the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) began to include the security sector in their programs, with the focus on military budgets (Cooper and Pugh, 2002). Such was the case in Sierra Leone in 1996, or in Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1999.

By the late 1990s, the concept of governance was well established in donor rhetoric when addressing discussions of the security sector and its actors (Ball, 2004, 2010). At the same time and in the context of the so-called *new defense diplomacy* , some multilateral organizations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the OECD, began to promote programs to improve civil-military relations in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, considering that the States of these regions, formerly belonging to the communist bloc, were now in a transition phase (Cawtra and Luckham, 2003). In the next phase of democratic consolidation and since the initiative of the European Union, cooperation focuses on working with reform policies

in the security apparatus, but of non-military components, such as the police, border guards and the judicial power.

Consequently, and also during the 1990s, these new agenda and policy demands generated the need to broaden and deepen security studies academically. An icon in this process was Buzan (1991a), who revolutionized the theoretical discussion by introducing his five dimensions of security: military, political, social, economic and environmental. His analysis helped deepen understanding of two issues (Bellamy, 2003). The first, around the fact that more people in the world are being threatened by their own security forces, instead of being threatened by other people; and second, that military threats to security are only one of the causes of human insecurity, with other threats in the other four dimensions postulated by Buzan (1991a, 1991b).

Likewise, it was to be expected that the expansion of safety studies would have implications for the formulation and practical application of development programs. In the first place, there was an impact on these by linking them with missions of international entities composed of a strong military component for post-conflict reconstruction (Brinkerhoff, 2007; Colletta and Muggah, 2009). This took place in different parts of the world, such as Cambodia, Kosovo, Aceh, Papua New Guinea, East Timor, the Solomon Islands, etc., where peacekeeping operations, launched in the 1990s, were later associated with post-conflict socio-economic and governmental reconstruction components. Based on these experiences, the security agenda began to be related to actions of *force reduction* or reduction of the military force. In other words, when reconstruction missions were carried out in post-war settings, the various actors and forces of the local security sector came to be considered a threat to the stability of the reconstruction process.

Secondly, and from the point of view of international organizations, the provision of assistance in insecure environments was seen as potentially ineffective in the long term, due to the high probability that the factor of insecurity could become a cause to lengthen the culmination of the post-conflict stage. To this is added the change of perspective of the agencies that were already involved in peacebuilding actions, which understood that investment in conflict prevention was also financially less costly than spending on post-conflict recovery programs.

Now, within the rise of security studies, a phenomenon is produced that, in some way, tries to unify the two fields, that of development and that of security, to generate an articulation link that provides justification, from the theoretical plane, to the pragmatic aspect in the implementation of programs. This new and emerging concept was called *humans security* , and had its genesis from the initiative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in the mid-1990s (UNDP, 1994). This emerging paradigm for understanding global vulnerabilities challenged the traditional notion of national security by arguing that the main referent for security should be centered on the individual rather than the state on the grounds that, conceptually, human security highlights the need for a vision of people-centered security as a fundamental axis for national, regional and global stability (McDonald, 2002). His argument distinguished between *freedom from want*, freedom to want, and *freedom from fear* , freedom from fear, as the best ways to address the problem of insecurity and global development. According to Cooper and Pugh (2002), from the reconfiguration proposed by the contribution of the human security approach, the next phase in the conformation of the nexus between security and development was produced, since it produces a greater narrowing, an almost fusion between security and development, through the new paradigm of cooperation for development.

3. The nexus between security and development and the construction of liberal peace: the contribution of the World Bank

As of the following decade, with the arrival of the new millennium and hand in hand with the notion of human security, *peacebuilding operations* were vehicles for the proliferation and consolidation, depending on the case, of projects of the so-called *liberal peace* or liberal peace. As Donais (2009) explains from a liberal peace perspective, peacebuilding is about democratization, economic liberalization, the development of values and institutions, such as human rights and the rule of law. All this supported in turn from the plane of ideological neoliberalism, this perspective being widely supported by Western donors who envision the construction of liberal peace as the commitment to the transformation of scenarios devastated by conflicts and wars, into thriving liberal democracies in functioning, in which the liberal democratic framework is conceived not only as the baseline and golden rule for the development of good governance practices, but also as the guarantee of success in ensuring sustainable peace (Hänggi, 2005).

From the academic point of view, Richmond (2007) provides some conceptual support through his *liberal peacebuilding* , understanding that development programs centered on the notion of human security allow the evolution of emancipatory processes for the construction of liberal values. . From this point of view, the transition towards liberal peace (*liberal peace transition*) in a post-conflict scenario is a phased process that requires both *peace-building programs, peace-building* , and *state-building* , State-building (Richmond and Franks, 2010), and may also result in hybrid forms of peace (Richmond and Mitchell, 2012). In this regard, Paris (1997, 2002) refers to the fact that, from a liberal peace platform, its consolidation consists in ensuring that the States affected by the war comply with international standards so that they prevail over national preferences of government in transition, which questions the extent to which local populations end up benefiting from *liberal peacebuilding programs* (Tadjbakhsh, 2011).

To understand what the *new aid paradigm* or the new cooperation paradigm is all about, the formulation, by the World Bank, of a thought scheme around the vicious circle in which poverty, fragility and conflict they are intimately related. From this point of view, in the reality of post-conflict or transition countries, poverty, fragility and conflict are, in many countries, elements of a "vicious circle" in which violence and fragility happen to reinforce each other mutually. various ways (World Bank, 2009a, 2009b). The explanation would seem to arise from a simple logic, in which the cost of conflict is high and not only undermines and slows down the pace of development, but also deepens poverty and represents a threat to neighboring countries since, across borders conflict creates internally displaced persons, refugees, criminality, spread of disease, drug abuse and extremist violence. Therefore, from this plane of approach, a humanitarian and even ethical pseudo-legitimation is thus exercised, since it is better that donor institutions commit themselves a priori and preventively to prevent institutional fragility from degenerating into conflict, all of which, if not avoided, it would produce instability, a highly counterproductive element, from this point of view, for neoliberal economic development. In other words, and understanding then that fragility, violence and development are interrelated, security becomes a key aspect in the development agenda of donors.

In a certain sense, the World Bank finds some conceptual support to support the role of this *new aid paradigm* in the work of Collier, who tries to connect underdevelopment with the conflict based on his hypothesis to explain the causes why 1 billion people of the world's poorest countries fail to break out of the cycle of poverty by arguing that the least developed countries are trapped in what he calls "conflict traps." Conflict traps can be caused by civil wars, coups and actors who seek to control natural resources through violence. On the other hand, and despite the fact that the provision of security is an essential public service for any government, in the case of the world's poorest countries this is not always the case. Because these regimes have small economies, they cannot afford to provide effective security for their populations, as large-scale rich economies can. The governments of the poorest 1 billion face the dilemma of whether or not to finance military equipment, for example, because this would strengthen the power of the state against possible conventional threats or internal rebellions, on the one hand, but, on the other hand, it would also could increase the threat of a coup (Collier, 2008).

From another point of view, while having a weak security apparatus reduces the ability to carry out a successful coup, it does not guarantee effectiveness when dealing with an armed insurgency, for example (World Bank, 2009a). To help elucidate this dilemma, Collier (2008) justifies that external military intervention has an important place in helping the societies of the poorest billion, since the military forces of these countries are part of the problem rather than a guarantee. against external threats and forces. Using this logic, the cost-benefit analysis of development assistance from the perspective of security in post-conflict scenarios is essential, given that the main concern for donors is precisely the high risk due to the volatility of the environment. This would seem to prove that the higher the risk, the deeper the conflict trap in which the country may find itself trapped.

To keep the risk down while the economy develops, local governments could indeed benefit from some military force to keep the peace during this initial post-conflict period. In practice, this is conceptualized as the need for *securing development, thus becoming* one of the basic arguments of SSR. However, Collier (2008) points out that, in a post-conflict situation, if local security forces could exacerbate the problem, it would be preferable for an external military force to take action to provide security for development. In these cases, peacekeeping operations once again become an effective option to provide security and reduce the level of risk. In economic terms, maintaining peace operations is expensive, but the cost of conflict is much higher (World Bank, 2009a, 2009b). Because of this, the security benefits alone appear to be more than enough to justify a large amount of development assistance in post-conflict settings. The theoretical framework of conflict traps provides broad support for what the World Bank understands as crucial when it comes to ensuring the development process and also ends up favoring the interest of donor actors in security matters.

To summarize the central ideas, the new development cooperation paradigm is based on the premise that, in a violent or post-conflict context, it is not possible to achieve lasting peace without experiencing a successful development process economically, and that for this to happen in a sustainable way it is essential to strengthen the security components. The above would also mean that no development is sustainable if there is an ongoing conflict. Therefore, the connection between development and security through the implementation of SSR programs is shown as a necessary link to guarantee the effectiveness of the security sectors in order to ensure stability and thus reduce the risk of conflict, paving the way on the path to sustainable development.

4. Criticism of the new paradigm of cooperation and the security-development nexus: the contributions of Duffield and Chandler

From a critical point of view, Duffield (2001) interprets the new paradigm of cooperation as the result of the fusion of two concepts: security and development. This is produced from the positioning of *human security* , which, although it lacks a conceptually precise scope, represents human security as the latest version of the interdependence between development and security. In fact, human security consolidates a liberal and individual-centered vision of the security problem in which the term human corresponds to the capacity of people for self-management and self-sufficiency, while security focuses on threats, risks and dangers derived from underdevelopment. In short, human security encompasses a liberal people-centered security issue. It reflects the optimism of sustainable development with its promise of freedom and rights, while drawing attention to the risks of uncertainty and instability.

This criticism is transferred to the level of international security. It happens that under the breadth of the conceptual umbrella of human security, sustainable development is linked to international security and priority is given, at least theoretically, to the security of people over that of States. In this framework of analysis, international security seems to be threatened, no longer by an external military hypothesis, but by population contexts mired in underdevelopment. Under this logic, States are distinguished between effective and ineffective, weak or failed. Within this paradigm, the State continues to be the core of development analysis, but now it has the right and responsibility to protect humans from underdevelopment according to the doctrine of *responsibility to* protect. In this sense, the concept of human security can be interpreted as a tool that allows a better positioning of the geopolitical interests of the countries of the global North. In this sense, terrorism and insurgency in the populations of the global South go beyond national security policies to join, like transnational criminal networks and population flows from failed countries, international security agendas, being considered as a threat to the world order (Pearce and McGee, 2011; Duffield, 2007).

Also from a critical perspective, Chandler (2008) warns that, during the 1990s, concepts such as *peacebuilding* and *state-building* , although associated with the conception of a world order based on liberal values, helped shape a new change in the world stage, since they legitimized the intervention of international actors in post-conflict countries. As a consequence of this change, and while in the discursive it is represented that international intervention is necessary to strengthen the weak sovereignty of post-conflict or failed States, a praxis of interventionism is enabled to undermine the sovereignty of non-Western States, those that pass to be cast in binary terms as either a threat or a potential partner or ally in need of support and assistance; in which case, they are subject to transformation "through the liberal political economy of international intervention" (Chandler, 2008, p. 338).

In order to guarantee the success of this interventionist and questionable transformation in terms of affecting the sovereignty of the recipient nations, donor actors channel their assistance through *peacebuilding* and *state-building programs*, first, and *capacity building* , later. In reality, the redefinition of sovereignty is essential for the insertion and implementation of *state-building programs* since this also contributes to blurring the borders from which international institutions manage to intervene without having to debate whether or not they are affecting sovereignty. of the receiving country. In this way, international donors, by acting through the sponsorship of these peace and governance programs, guided by a scheme of democratic and liberal market values, can also distance themselves from the negative consequences that such policies could cause (Valdez Duffau, 2011).

Likewise, from the global expansion of the *war on terror* or war against terror that began after the 9/11 episodes, it contributed to reinforcing the global security component of the concept of human security. This occurred in a sense from which the era of absolute and exclusive sovereignty, with regard to post-conflict, failed or weak States, had come to an end. From that point on, the logic of the development-security nexus was also used to pave the way for a new and emerging interventionism in the name of the war on terror. Following this

critical logic, a campaign against insurgency on a global scale could be one of the main implicit reasons for development cooperation agencies to commit to combating poverty and consolidating democratic governance under the theoretical umbrella of human security. If that were the case, then the hypothesis that the fusion of development and security would have contributed to forming a strategic tool of what Duffield (2007) characterizes as the endless war against underdevelopment would be confirmed.

5. The nexus between security and development and the role of international actors in the formulation of the *Security Sector Reform*

First of all, it is necessary to point out that it was the UK Department for International Development that initially introduced the term *Security Sector Reform*, in early 1999. This was based on a policy report on poverty and the security sector, which noted that "the link between security and development has been increasingly recognized in recent years, particularly since the end of the Cold War" (DFID, 1997, p. 1). Second, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), particularly the DAC, was developing guidelines on conflict, peace and development cooperation. In this way, development programs began to focus on addressing the root causes of the conflict. Not only that, but they also began to link their work with the promotion of good democratic governance practices, with the strengthening of the rule of law, the improvement of public security and access to justice (OECD, 2000).

In practical terms, in its early days, the SSR focused on the defense sector, but after a few years it became clear to the UK Government that the SSR needed to be broader in scope, so that it could include other areas (Hendrickson, 2009). In this sense and by 2003, the security sector was also being defined, taking into account other organizations that deal with the legitimate use of the State's monopoly of force. This broad understanding now included not only the armed forces, police, and paramilitary units, but also judicial and prison services, prosecutors, defenders, human rights commissions, etc.

Being its creator, he also turned out to be its main promoter. The UK first introduced SSR through the Department for International Development (DFID, 2003, 2007, 2009), and then strategically introduced it, first in the OECD DAC and in the 2000s within the United Nations system. For his part, Ball (2010, p. 34) states that "the United Kingdom frequently works through multilateral forums to promote its policy objective. The DIL decided to promote its SSR agenda internationally by helping the DAC to develop donor thinking on SSR". In this way, SRH gradually became part of the donors' agenda (Evans, 2002).

Consequently, in 2004, the DAC members issued a report called "the reform of the security and governance system: policies and good practices", in which it is explained that the SSR seeks to increase the capacity of the partner countries to comply with the range of their security needs within their societies, while being consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of governance, transparency and the rule of law (OECD, 2004), while SSR adopts a more inclusive approach that does not remain only in the traditional spheres of security and defense, such as the armed forces, the police and gendarmerie, the intelligence services, as well as the judicial, penal and civil authorities responsible for the control and supervision of security and defense (OECD, 2005a). The same policy brief identifies three main challenges that all States would face when considering reforms of their security sectors:

The development of an institutional framework that integrates security and development policy and includes all relevant actors and focuses on the most vulnerable, such as women, children and minority groups; Strengthening the governance and supervision of security institutions; The creation of professional, effective security forces, accountable to civil authorities and open to dialogue with civil society organizations (OECD, 2004, p. 2).

Continuing to promote SSR, the OECD published in 2005 the OECD/DAC Manual on Security System Reform (SSR): Supporting Security and Justice, which deepens and broadens the nexus between security and the develop. The OECD expresses how essential the link between cooperation and security is, given that:

Security is essential for people's livelihoods, for reducing poverty and for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It is related to personal and state security, access to social services and political processes. It is a central responsibility of government, necessary for economic and social development and vital for the protection of human rights. Security is important for the poor and other vulnerable groups, especially women and children, because when there is poor policing, weak justice, and corrupt criminal and military systems; it means that these groups suffer disproportionately from crime, insecurity and fear. Consequently, it becomes less likely

for them to access government services, to be able to invest in improving their own futures, and thus escape poverty (OECD, 2005b, p. 13).

Now, it is time to address the background of the UN's actions in relation to the SSR. Ebo and Powell (2010, p. 45) state that the SSR "is not a new activity for the UN" and that, by 1989, the UN was already helping the Government of Namibia to create a new national army. Since then, the UN has been involved in a variety of SSR-related efforts in different regions of the world. This also includes the peacekeeping actions in Angola, Mozambique and Rwanda in the 1990s, in which the UN participated in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations of ex-combatants (DDR) and training of the armed forces (UNSG, 2008, paragraph 23). However, it was not until the mid-2000s that a reference to it was made.

Only in October 2004, the term "security sector reform" or in English for its acronym SSR is explicitly mentioned in the Security Council "as a general concept for the reform of the police and defense, as well as for the DDR" (Hanggi and Scherrer, 2007, p. 6). In January 2008, the Secretary-General released a report to the General Assembly entitled "Securing Peace and Development: The Role of the United Nations in Supporting Security Sector Reform", which sets out that the main task of the United Nations is to support national actors to achieve their security and peace. To that end, the development of effective and accountable security institutions based on non-discrimination, as well as full respect for human rights and the rule of law, is essential, recognizing that "despite this extensive experience, support Security sector reform has largely remained an *ad hoc undertaking*" (UNSG, 2008, p. 1). It goes on to specify that the main objective of the United Nations related to SSR is "to support States and societies in the development of effective, inclusive and responsible security institutions to contribute to international peace and security, sustainable development and the enjoyment of of human rights" (UNSG, 2008, para. 45). Finally, from the UN's point of view, SSR is defined in the following terms:

Security sector reform outlines a process of assessment, review and implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation led by national authorities, which aims to enhance effective and accountable security for the state and its peoples without discrimination and with full respect of human rights and the rule of law. As noted by the Security Council, security sector reform "must be a nationally owned process that is based on the particular needs and conditions of the country in question" (UNSG, 2008: para. 17). Security sector reform underlines that effectiveness, accountability and democratic governance are mutually reinforcing elements of security. Therefore, security sector reform offers a framework to help national actors, the United Nations and other international partners to implement a shared vision of security (UNSG, 2008, para. 18).

Now, the question arises about which are the international actors that, according to the UN, have that shared vision of security that the Secretary General mentioned in the preceding paragraph. First, there are a variety of UN agencies that have been involved in SSR, such as the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Peacebuilding Support Office, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (Unifem), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), etc.

Likewise, there are also the so-called national partners that have also been participating with the UN in relation to SSR, such as the United Kingdom with its participation in Sierra Leone in the post-conflict, the efforts of Angola, South Africa and other African nations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi; and the security cooperation of Latin American states in Haiti. Added to this are other examples of bilateral partners such as the US in Liberia, France in Lebanon and Australia in the South Pacific region. The report goes on to highlight that some regional and multilateral organizations are also involved in SSR efforts, such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the European Union, the OECD, the World Bank, as well as the United Nations Treaty Organization. North Atlantic (NATO) (UNSG, 2008, section IV).

6. The Security Sector Reform: from theory to praxis

Before addressing the question of the implementation of the SSR, it is relevant to indicate that the contribution from the academic level was essential to provide a conceptual scaffolding to the incipient SSR (Greene, 2003; Hänggi, 2003, 2004; Wulf, 2004; Andersen, 2006). . In this sense, the contribution of Brzoska (2007) was important, who maintains that SRH processes are made up of three main objectives and are developed in three stages. The first of the objectives is to ensure the provision of security both in terms of protection and prevention of political violence by state and non-state actors. To this end, the provision of physical security involves mainly the police and the army, but also the courts and the prison system. The second objective of SSR is to address security governance within the rule of law, the key aspects being transparency and accountability. The third

objective of the SSR is to address the efficiency and effectiveness of the performance of the actors in the security sector. In post-war scenarios this includes demilitarization, the correct dimensioning of forces and their budget, etc. At the operational level, and following Brzoska (2007), the implementation of the SSR consists of three stages:

1. The disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and transformation of all types of armed forces, as well as the prosecution of illegally armed non-state actors to re-establish a state monopoly on the use of legitimate force;
2. Creating new security sector institutions in areas where they do not exist, or preventing the re-emergence of repressive state security institutions to intervene in politics, the economy and society;
3. The long-term goals of creating security forces that are accountable, efficient, effective, and respectful of human rights and the rule of law.

To this, Bellamy (2003) and Edmunds (2004) clarify that the SSR is promising in terms of trying to help the process of building democratic peace by promoting armed forces that reflect and promote liberal values, as well as by improving conditions of human security, democratization and development programs. For their part, Cooper and Pugh (2002) indicate that a broader and more innovative understanding of a true transformation of the security sector is needed to outline the true role that transformative strategies can play in conflict prevention and the promotion of construction. of peace in the post-conflict.

Partially critical of SSR, Chutter (2006) expresses interesting aspects about the lack of perspective of security professionals in this matter. This author argues that the written material on SSR is typically composed of theoretical models developed by political science scholars who are limited in their understanding of how the security sector works in practice and how it differs greatly from country to country. The reason for this is the lack of personal experience of academics writing about SRH, he argues. It concludes that the merging of security with development policies has broadened the concept of security and created some degree of confusion about what SSR is really about.

However, Ball (2010, p. 36) refers that among the current confusion there is a certain agreement on two problems: the ineffective provision of security and justice, because the providers can also be part of the problem, as well as the lack of responsibility and oversight of the security sector by civil society. On a theoretical level, it adds that the "objective is to promote the effective and efficient provision of security and justice for people, communities and the States in which they live within a framework of democratic governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights. ", although at the level of praxis it suggests caution, indicating that SSR should be taken with caution, "as a work in progress".

Now, it is important to approach SSR from the perspective of practical implementation. For this, the contribution made by Luckham (2007, 2009) is illuminating, who expands on both the conceptual elements of SSR and its challenges in praxis. Regarding the conceptualization of SSR, he indicates that the nexus between security and development has emerged as a new orthodoxy among donors and international NGOs, linked to the increasingly interventionist promotion of economic and political liberalization and good governance. , being both the SSR and the DDR the new mechanisms of donor policy to rebuild military and security institutions in order to provide democratic oversight of the security sector, all of which contribute, in theory, to the rule of law .

However, Luckham (2007, 2009) also warns that in practice, SRH policies present challenges and can cause risks in their implementation. To a large extent, this may be due, at an early stage, to the lack of shared goals, interests and procedures by donors and other local stakeholders, which tends to be aggravated as the post-conflict reconstruction process is carried out in a highly contested political arena, in which donor objectives may be mutually inconsistent, and in conflict with local interests. In essence, SSR and DDR can be seen as challenging the control of force by contending elites, and thus can be either resisted, half-implemented, or co-opted by the elites themselves. If this is not the case, there is still the ever-present risk that humanitarian and development agendas could be co-opted to serve the security objectives and economic interests of powerful states and global corporations. It so happens that, according to Luckam (2007, 2009), concepts such as development, human rights, humanitarianism, democracy, etc., tend to be discursively represented as ideological building blocks for a hegemonic conception of global liberal governance. This is precisely why the presence of powerful political and market forces can subvert the peace-building process, in which case it would be concluded that, in practice, potentially discreditable consequences occur that, contrary to their ideals and objectives, negatively indicate the perpetuation of conflicts.

From what has been outlined above, it can be deduced that the SSR is presented, first of all, without much debate or criticism from the academic community, and even less so from the donor community. Second, a certain conceptual imprecision arises (GFNSSR, 2007), although the variety of definitions and understandings may suggest that, in the implementation of SSR programs, it is neither the receiving States, nor expert professionals, nor academics. versed in the matter, who define what the security sector is and what its needs are, but this is delineated by the strategy and interests of the donors themselves (Keane and Bryden, 2009). Proof of this is the interest that SSR arouses in a multiplicity of actors linked to development cooperation.

In this way, not only the UK government, the OECD and the United Nations (UNSC, 2013) support SRH programs around the world, as it was initially. Even lacking a common approach, other countries have also included SRH in their development agendas; This is the case with a variety of donor countries, such as Canada, France, the Netherlands, Norway, South Africa and the US, as well as international or regional organizations such as the African Union, the European Union, NATO, the OECD, agencies of the United Nations system and the World Bank. To this is added that the SSR is not only being implemented by national or international actors, but also has the participation of corporations from the global security industry through private military and security companies or PMSC, for its acronym in English.

As far as the implementation of SRH projects is concerned, it is feasible to find places throughout the global South. In the case of post-conflict scenarios such as Afghanistan, Cambodia, Iraq and Timor-Leste (Doyle and Suntharalingam, 1994; Ball, 2002; Hernández, 2005; Springer, 2009; Uesagi, 2011; Arugay, 2012 and Valdez Duffau, 2013), in the case of Asia, and Angola, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan, if we talk about some examples from Africa (UNDPKO, 2006) or from Haiti and Colombia in America (Sosso , 2005; Wildriks, 2009). But also in the post-Soviet transition nations of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, such as Bulgaria, Romania, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Bosnia, and Kosovo (Ball, 2004; Hansen, 2006; Stahn, 2001; Wulf, 2004).

Currently, SSR is a product within the international public policy market (Sedra, 2010), associated with a wide range of by-products offered by donor cooperation actors and private consulting companies. In practice, the spectrum linked to SSR ranges from demining and DDR efforts by ex-combatants (Yasutomi, 2008), including child and female soldiers, to combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW, for its acronym in English), transitional justice, the strengthening of human rights and the rule of law, as well as with the fight against trafficking, arms and drug trafficking, and even good practices for civil control of the sector of security.

7. Conclusions

This article attempts to understand how the genesis and development of the process of interaction between security and development took place at the level of international cooperation. From what has been exposed in this article, it can be deduced that, since the end of the Cold War, the policies of aid donors began a significant change. There was a movement from a narrow and bipolar conception of the Cold War to a broader understanding of security. Within this political redirection, it is first necessary to link the development agendas with those of security. For this, it was necessary to develop a new approach that would serve to provide theoretical support and justification. In this sense, both the appearance of the *new aid paradigm* , first, and the concept of human security allow the nexus between security and development to be shaped, and thus open the way towards a new modality of humanitarian and developmentalist interventionism, but no less interested in get involved with the areas of security, defense and justice.

Of course, this redirection opens a much broader field of action, so it would be essential to have a common conceptual terminology for a better procedure in the relationship between donors and recipients. From the hand of actors with an active participation in *peacebuilding* and *state-building tasks* on a global scale, SSR is promoted as a development policy tool, although with a strong content in the security factor. Being, precisely, the field of security one of the most sensitive elements in the construction of any State, as well as a pillar in guaranteeing its sovereignty, the SSR can also be understood as an instrument of intervention in a variety of scenarios, from failed or weak to violent or post-conflict. Time will have to show the results of the SSR processes implemented by a wide multiplicity of products and participating actors in various environments and countries, to understand if they have served to guarantee the safety of civilian populations or to protect political and economic interests. of donor actors.

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Disinformation : nothing new under the sun

By Ulises León Kandiko (Argentina)

In the 21st century we talk about Disinformation and *Fake News* as if it were something innovative or recently created and certainly nothing is more distant from reality than that. In the world of Intelligence and clearly that of Counterintelligence, disinformation has been and is a daily issue, it is true that Counterintelligence activities have declined throughout the West after the end of the Cold War and particularly in the countries of Central America and from the South, but the same has not happened with Disinformation and now *Fake News* .

Although it is true that with all that the use of social networks entails and the immediacy that the network provides, disinformation processes have not undergone many changes in terms of their modus operandi and concepts; Let's look at an example that the *New York Times* brought to light about a year ago in a disinformation case study that consisted of the effort carried out by the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the early 1980s to spreading lies about the origin of the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), this disinformation operation "Operation Infektion" obviously did not enjoy the facilities that social networks provide today, however, like any successful disinformation operation, of that time, previous At that moment and certainly after that moment, it was based on 7 key elements:

- Identify social, cultural, economic, and political cracks in a society that can be used to increase and exacerbate conflict.
- Create propaganda, such as one false story or several contradictory false stories. It must be a big lie, something so outrageous that no one will believe it's made up.
- Anchor propaganda in elements of truth (disinformation is more successful when it has a bit of truth).
- Disguise the origin of the propaganda.
- Finding and exploiting the "useful idiot", someone who would unknowingly send your message to a wider audience and thus spread lies.
- Deny everything when the truth is revealed.
- Prioritize long-term strategic progress over short-term victories.

Finding and exploiting differences within pluralistic societies, carefully calibrating disinformation messages for target audiences, wrapping false statements around a kernel of truth, amplifying narratives through both willing and unsuspecting voices: these are the main features. of the disinformation campaigns of the Kremlin; those that have been and are highly effective .

Although the Kremlin's methods may be old in many ways, its tools are up to the current circumstances. Whereas in its day the Soviet Committee for State Security (KGB) had to rely on obscure newspapers, today the Kremlin has a media empire at its disposal. Its flagship television channel RT (formerly *Russia Today*) wants global audiences to "ask more questions" 24 hours a day in six languages. It is also fully funded by the Russian government and receives weekly briefings from the Kremlin. Then there is Sputnik, established by a Presidential Decree to "report on Russia's state policy abroad", with "reports" so deliberately misleading that it led French President Emmanuel Macron to call Sputnik along with RT as "influence and propaganda agencies, lying propaganda, no more, no less." On top of that, there are ubiquitous online sites in the Kremlin's arsenal, intentionally hiding their links to Russia. Among them, the infamous Internet Research Agency (also known as the St. Petersburg "troll factory"), which was at the center of Russian attempts to influence public opinion on social media ahead of the 2016 presidential election in the United States of America (USA)).

Meanwhile, and continuing with the axis of the East, according to a report that was presented at the beginning of the year by the cyber security research firm *Recorded Future*, China is a sleeping giant not so asleep, in which it makes a comparison between the operations of Russian and Chinese disinformation. The report highlights that up to 18% of social media posts in China are government propaganda directed at its own citizens. A valid question would be how many people are operating in that job, but before answering it's worth remembering that the Internet Research Agency, the Russian troll farm that tried to influence American voters before and after the 2016 election, employed more than 600 people. Estimates of the size of the China operation vary, according to research from different academic institutions cited by the *Recorded Future report*, one study putting the figure at more than half a million people.

But this saturation attack on its own people is not necessarily how Beijing tries to influence the West. Priscilla Moriuchi, a researcher at Recorded Future, said the Chinese government's near-total control over an Internet space allows "techniques that are relatively unique to their own national information environment." They don't use those techniques when they go to the West, the targets they have to attack are different."

At least right now, the goal of Beijing's social media influence operations is to paint China as a positive player on the world stage and to advocate for Chinese interests in broader political discussions, such as trade. That sounds like the kind of thing many countries do. But Moriuchi draws a distinction between Chinese information activity and simple marketing. "Influence is distorted news and information...it is strategically designed to change opinion in the Western world and in the US in particular."

She says "a classic example is how they profile China's Xinjiang province" where the government is cracking down on Muslims. "If you read Chinese content on social media, Uyghurs are happy." Chinese government activity has largely gone unnoticed by Americans because its primary goal is to shape perceptions of China.

So what would happen if Beijing ordered its troll workforce to influence the citizens of a Western country, for example, if tensions rise between the US and China? It's not hard to imagine that it could undermine American politics or even the American government.

Are Western social media companies ready to defend themselves against aggressive foreign influence efforts? The topic was hotly discussed at the RSA cyber security conference at the time and to Moriuchi's frank look he said he would give them a POOR rating.

When asked about how the Department of Homeland Security was tracking non-Russian social networks, Christopher Krebs, director of the Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, replied: "It's an active space and it's only going to become more active".

Closing Ideas

With time-tested methods and extensive modern tools, both States and Non-State Actors and Terrorist groups relentlessly follow the "divide and rule" strategy: break alliances, turn individuals, social groups and countries against each other and weaken the opponent in a classic zero-sum game approach.

Indeed, many governments and Non-State Actors have learned key disinformation tactics from Terrorist Groups. In 2014, ISIS had its Blitzkrieg moment in Mosul. Cleverly deploying bots, Twitter accounts, hashtags and smartphone apps, the terrorist group deceived and defeated the US-trained Iraqi security forces. The violent campaign went viral in unprecedented ways, recruiting and galvanizing jihad groups around the world. Many American social media users saw a faked screenshot purporting to show an ISIS sniper on a rooftop in Colorado. Today,

ISIS's social media output has dwindled as the group works to cope with the loss of its so-called physical caliphate in Iraq and Syria, but its use of weapons on social media has deeply impressed adversaries and rivals of USES.

These developments suggest a future in which States and Non-State Actors will compete with States through online disinformation campaigns, even as more traditional global power competition tied to geography continues.

It is not yet clear what government agencies can do, but an example of interest at the highest level of International Relations is given by the Center for Global Engagement of the US Department of State, which has the job of counteracting foreign influence, but they are a fraction of the size of even the Russian troll operation, much less the Chinese one, and are limited in what they can do in the US by law.

However, a traditional tool that must inexorably take flight again is Counterintelligence, for a long time the focus of the activity was to safeguard secret information from Governments and particularly to frustrate the efforts of the opponent to recruit possible agents and steal information. . But it is also worth remembering that Counterintelligence activity also refers to avoiding the opponent's efforts to divide and weaken us. No need to create mega structures, just dust off and upgrade Counter Intelligence areas.

Counterintelligence must move to more proactive action to expose disinformation actions. Today's influence operations target citizens who are polarized (the rift effect) and are likely to believe what confirms their predispositions. It is necessary to have an Intelligence community that, in key aspects, works a lot in the open, identifying disinformation spread by foreign adversaries and quickly discrediting it before it can "go viral" and take hold in the minds of the social collective. Social media, then, can be a powerful double-edged sword: a place where misinformation begins to spread but is quickly identified and refuted. "*What was it before? The same as it will be. what do what has been done? The same thing that will be done; and there is nothing new under the sun.*" (Ecclesiastes 1:9)

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Colombia: The challenges in the process of implementing the Agreement

By Haylyn Andrea Hernández Fernández (Colombia)

Ivan Duque, President of Colombia

According to the High Commissioner for Peace, after more than five decades of internal armed conflict, Colombia is faced with the possibility of building a territorial peace, for which "at least a 15-year transition phase is needed, which will take place from differentiated manner in each territory" (Office of the High Commissioner for Peace, 2016). Two years have already passed since the signing of the Agreement, so it follows that, as stipulated by the High Commissioner, there is still a long way to go, however, the latest news regarding decisions taken in the framework of the implementation of the Agreement have caused apparent political and institutional instability, according to some experts, since controversy has been generated by decisions of control bodies and the transitional justice component of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition (SIVJRNR), known as the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP).

Precisely on this point, it is necessary to begin to analyze to have a general panorama, since peace has marked the country's agenda since 2012, also going through two presidential campaigns (2014 and 2018),

for which it has undoubtedly been the epicenter of attention. . The then candidate for the Democratic Center, Iván Duque, was perhaps the candidate of the party that had a more conciliatory tone regarding the polarization that emerged from the time of the peace negotiations between the Government of Juan Manuel Santos and the Revolutionary Armed Forces. from Colombia – People's Army (FARC-EP); "focus on what unites us and not on what divides us", was one of the most representative slogans, however, it emphasized that it was not about tearing the agreements to shreds, but about making important modifications, referring to the JEP, since he described it as "(...) a mechanism of impunity that allows the political eligibility of criminals against humanity" (Manetto, 2018), as president his position on the matter was maintained and went further. On February 11, he received the text of the project of the Statutory Law of the JEP for presidential sanction, once the project was analyzed, he decided to present objections to six of the 159 articles of the Law to Congress, based on the attributions of article 166 of the Constitution, hoping that, in his words, "a peace

that genuinely guarantees the truth, justice, reparation and non-repetition" would be achieved, also announcing a constitutional reform to modify Legislative Act 01 of 2017, through the which the SIVJRNR was created.

The articles that he objected to for reasons of inconvenience were: (i) No. 7, reparation for victims (regarding the main obligation of the perpetrators to fully compensate the victims), (ii) No. 63, scope (considering that it weakens the powers of the High Commissioner), (iii) No. 79, abstentions (there is no precision of the judicial proceedings that the Prosecutor's Office must refrain from carrying out), (iv) No. 19, waiver of criminal action (against crimes against humanity, genocide or war crimes in relation to those who are not most responsible, (v) No. 150, post-agreement conduct (related to extradition) and (vi) No. 153, extradition (considering that it conditions the extradition of other persons to the offering of the truth) (El Heraldo, 2019).

From then on, different voices spoke out for and against, which predicted a confrontation of public powers, which actually happened, were a few tense months in which the debate was the order of the day. Finally, the objections to the JEP did not prosper, so the Constitutional Court, arguing that the two chambers of Congress managed to sink the presidential aspiration with a vote greater than or equal to half plus one, ordered the president to sanction immediately the Law (Semana, 2019a) fact that occurred on June 6.

It should be noted that two of the objections had a direct impact and substantive changes in the extradition process, a fact that generated even more controversy under the latest events related to the former commander of the FARC-EP guerrilla group, Zeuxis Pausias Hernández Solarte, better known as 'Jesus Santrich'. The ex-combatant was arrested by the Prosecutor's Office on April 9, 2018 at his residence, following an arrest warrant that was issued by Interpol after a New York court made an accusation of drug trafficking, according to the then Attorney General, Néstor Humberto Martínez, there was various evidence that involved 'Santrich' with an agreement to export 10 tons of cocaine to the United States with a local market price of 320 million dollars. According to the evidence, 'Santrich' has been committing crimes since June 2017, the date is key since only those who avail themselves of this jurisprudence for crimes committed before December 1, 2016 (Special Jurisdiction for Peace, 2019). Subsequently, the JEP was in charge of analyzing the documentation to conclude whether the crime was committed before or after the signing of the

Agreement and thus determine whether the case was judged through the special jurisdiction or remitted to ordinary justice (Marcos, 2018).

The Review Section of the Tribunal for Peace, through a majority decision approved on May 15, decided to apply the guarantee of non-extradition in favor of 'Santrich' because the conduct could not be evaluated to determine the precise date of its execution and the failure to forward the evidence requested to the United States Department of Justice. In this way, the Attorney General of the Nation was ordered to order the immediate release of the former commander (Special Jurisdiction for Peace, 2019).

As expected, this fact generated an institutional uproar and the reactions were radical. President Duque stated that, despite respecting the Constitution and the separation of powers, he shares what he considers to be the outrage of the Colombian people at the decision of the JEP and supports the decision of the Attorney General, Fernando Carrillo, to appeal the release of 'Santrich'; Said appeal was filed on May 24. On the other hand, under the theory of a challenge to the legal order and the affront to international judicial cooperation, the Attorney General, Néstor Humberto Martínez, presented his irrevocable resignation from office.

Despite the Prosecutor's decision, the entity continued to be involved in the process and ruled on the matter, indicating that "as a product of international cooperation, (...) new evidence and elements of proof have been incorporated that account for the circumstances of time, manner and place of the alleged conspiracy to commit a crime for drug trafficking purposes attributed to Hernández Solarte" for which a new arrest warrant was issued on May 17 (Fiscalía General de la Nación, 2019).

In the media the news of the day was "the freedom of 'Santrich' and his subsequent recapture", which was motivated by a new video that was released and the statements in the United States by Marlon Marín, nephew of ex-combatant Luciano Marín Arango, better known as Iván Márquez, who was also involved in the case and was apparently the promoter of the drug trafficking business in which 'Santrich' was involved. Although this fact generated a stir, there were again moves by those who supported the decision of the Prosecutor's Office and those who considered it an outrage since the decision of the JEP was not being respected and, in addition, speculations were generated as to why until that moment. more evidence was being revealed that was not provided at the time to the Review Section of the JEP. From a critical and analytical perspective of the situation, it can be inferred that the underlying problem lies in an

overlapping of powers and competencies that affects the credibility of the institutional framework and the handling of complex cases such as 'Santrich', since there are an apparent disarticulation that prevents having the cards on the table when making decisions that mark the course of this phase of implementation.

Days after this back and forth of decisions, the Council of State ratified the investiture of Hernández Solarte as a congressman, for which the Supreme Court of Justice ordered the release of the former guerrilla leader and clarified that the case would be processed before the Investigation Chamber of that court. , because with that condition he is constitutionally qualified and must be criminally prosecuted by that Corporation (Supreme Court of Justice, 2019) and not an ordinary judge, that is, the Prosecutor's Office loses the power to charge him and accuse him of drug trafficking crimes.

The Investigation Chamber, through a rogatory letter, requested evidence from the United States Department of Justice and the Prosecutor's Office, since they point out that the video that was revealed after the JEP's decision, although it was very controversial, does not exist procedurally, " Neither the Prosecutor's Office nor the United States contributed it to the JEP after almost a year of repeated requests. Hence, it is suspected that it is illegal" (Semana, 2019b). It should be noted that previously, the United States Department of Justice responded to a letter to the Ministry of Justice in which it stated that new evidence would not be sent to the JEP since, as they maintain, it is contrary to their conventional practice, and they also consider that providing more evidence is unnecessary since it rests in the Prosecutor's file. What they did make clear through the statement was that the crimes for which 'Santrich' was requested in extradition did occur after December 1, 2016, for which his extradition should not be the subject of discussion (Las 2 Orillas, 2019).

It should be taken into account that despite the release order and the surprise inauguration of 'Jesús Santrich' in Congress on June 11, there are still three processes under way: (i) conspiracy to commit crimes and drug trafficking by the Court Supreme Court, (ii) kidnapping, under the jurisdiction of the JEP Recognition Chamber and (iii) request for extradition to the United States for drug trafficking, filed by the JEP Appeals Section. The interference of the United States would continue present for the first and last point. This means that the Supreme Court has the

focus of attention since its decision depends on whether or not it can maintain its seat.

In this regard, President Duque maintained that he hopes that the Attorney General's Office "suspends that person from exercising that position," alluding to the inauguration of 'Santrich', but not before calling him a "mafioso" and affirmed that he hopes that the justice condemns him for drug trafficking. For his part, the recently inaugurated has denied his participation in the events for which he is accused and calls on the president to respect the presumption of innocence and the division of state power. Regarding the testimonies of Marlon Marín, he assures that they are false and induced, ultimately, 'Santrich' points out that it is a setup against him.

Now, the first appearance of 'Santrich' as a congressman in the House of Representatives was marked by controversy, to the point that the session was adjourned, this fact is an appetizer of what seems to be an impediment to carrying out legislative work, influenced clearly for political positions regarding the possession of the ex-combatant. However, the "opportunity", to call it in some way, under this situation, lies in defeating the representative politically, democratically and through debate within the institutional framework, without affecting the parallel investigation process that must be carried out in the Court. Supreme Court about the accusations against him to decide whether or not there is an insurance measure after the respective investigation. For this purpose, the existing evidence must be considered to have a starting point that does not dismiss relevant and decisive facts that contribute to clarifying the truth, that is, the investigation carried out by the Prosecutor's Office in cooperation with the DEA.

Under the current context, a political and legal debate will arise again regarding what happens to that seat under the hypothesis that an insurance measure is issued, since by constitutional mandate, under the figure of the Agreement, it was determined that the party (Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Comun) FARC is entitled to five seats, so the party would appeal for a replacement, while article 134 of the Constitution determines that the seat could not be replaced because it is a drug trafficking investigation, so apply what is known as "empty chair". It remains to wait for such a scenario to be reached to see what course this complex situation will take, which has strongly influenced the work of Colombian politics and the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

Editor's Note: This article is prior to Santrich's going underground, and his reappearance along with other former guerrilla chiefs, announcing through a widely distributed video his return to the armed struggle.

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Fast and Deadly Artificial Intelligence: On the Battlefield of the 21st Century

By Ulises León Kandiko (Argentina)

There is no doubt that the world as we know it today is not the same as it was a century ago, and battlefields are certainly no exception. We went from C2 (Command and Control) to the C4ISTAREW (Command, Control, Communications, Computing, Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition, Reconnaissance and Electronic Warfare) extravaganza, clearly the concepts of operations that Sergeant "Chip" Saunders used in the *Combat* TV series do not apply in this environment, where the immediacy, speed and forcefulness sought are measured in nano seconds.

The thinkers and why not the creative dreamers of great military strategies outline and describe the future of Artificial Intelligence (AI) applied to the Armed Forces, seeing from this imagined future to the needs of the present on the battlefield.

This is a world where AI is so fluid and ubiquitous that it takes into account everything from rifle sights to logistics management. It's a future where every soldier is a node covered in sensors, and every access point to that network is under constant threat from enemies moving invisibly through the 5th combat domain. It is a future in which weapons alone can interpret the world, position themselves within it, chart a course of action, and then, in the most extreme situations, move on.

A dour and pessimistic look reveals this scenario as a world of rich data on the battlefield, hyper-fast machines and extremely vulnerable humans, a scenario worthy of *Skynet* , for some of those pessimistic visionaries it is inevitable. According to Brigadier General Marrrhew Easley, Director of the US Army AI Task Force "We need AI for the speed at which we think we will fight future wars", he is certainly one of those thinkers and strategists who give AI a leading role in future military actions.

The past of the future of data

Before the US Army can build the AI it needs, it must collect the data that will feed and train its machines. In the shortest terms, that means the task

force's first areas of focus will include preventative maintenance and talent management, where the US Army is collecting a lot of data. Processing what has already been collected has the potential to have an outsized impact on the logistics and administration side.

For an AI to have relevance and make an impact on the battlefield itself, its user, whatever the military, must build a database of the sensor-readable events that occur in battle, and then refine that data to provide useful information to soldiers. To achieve this materially, necessarily involves turning each infantryman into a walking sensor. A clear example of this symbiosis is the use of *HoloLens* , continuing with Easley's sayings "the lethality of soldiers is being improved with Integrated Visual Augmentation Systems (IVAS), which each of our infantrymen will use. In the short term, we are analyzing almost 200,000 of these systems", it is worth remembering that this has been in the works for a long time and that at the time it generated some acrimony with Microsoft employees, you can see more details and a variety of info in my article " Artificial Intelligence and Killer Robots – myths and realities of 2019 –".

In the macro ideas of IVAS usage, there is a scenario where IVAS sensors map fields of fire for each soldier in a Platoon, through a Company and beyond. In Easley's vision, there is the fact that when a Battalion Commander arrives on the battlefield, he can tell where his dead zones are in front of the defensive line. They'll know what their soldiers can touch right now, and they'll know what they can't touch right now, giving them a significant advantage on the battlefield.

It is possible to project that the installation of sensors in infantry, vehicles or drones can help build the data that any Armed Force needs to drive AI. Another route involves the creation of synthetic data. While the US Army has largely fought the same type of enemy for the past 18 years, preparing for the future means designing systems that can handle the full range of vehicles and weapons of a professional military.

Since insurgents are unlikely to field tanks or attack helicopters on a large scale any time soon, the Army may need to generate synthetic data to train an AI to fight a nearby adversary.

Faster, stronger, better, more autonomous

In an environment closer to that of less developed countries or like the super powers, the idea goes for the "Good, Nice and Cheap", that is to say when it comes to owning weapons and being equipped, cyber weapons are one more option than Interesting for emerging countries that cannot count on Nuclear Submarines and much less Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) batteries, I recommend you take a look at "Cyber Weapons: Military Power and Diplomacy for Emerging Countries and Small States". Returning to the premise of "faster, stronger…." Powers like the United States of America (USA) want the kind of capability to be provided by AI to start from the perspective of a tank turret, to say "turn on the target search switch, find targets, classify targets , is it a Fiat Uno, a Ford Mustang, a Russian Armored Personnel Carrier (BTR) or is it a Tank, also that determines if a target is a threat or not. The Mustang is not a threat, the BTR is probably a threat, the Tank is a threat and prioritizes them. The Tank is probably more dangerous than the BTR. And then you classify what's an imminent threat, if it's pointing at you, if it's moving away, that kind of thing, and then you do a shoot fix at the target, which one will shoot first, then you have all the fixes and shoot, just no.

For the US Assistant Secretary for Acquisition, Logistics and Defense Technologies, Bruce Jette, the ideal end state for the use of AI is: an armed machine that perceives the world around it, interprets that data, plots a course of action and then fires a gun. It is the cycle of *observe-orient-decide-act* without a human in the circuit. Clearly, this position is in short circuit with Directive 3000.09 of the Department of Defense (DoD), which refers to the autonomy of weapons systems and states that the human factor must have the power of veto, something that, like any rule, may be subject to be removed or modified.

In Jette's interpretation of that fear in society of an AI apocalypse, he defines the vehicle's AI as being designed to be fully lethal and autonomous, and then safety features are added later. : a precautionary stop, a deliberately soft intrusion into an already complete system.

Closing Ideas

Autonomous death decisions, with or without humans in the circuit, are a subject of deep legal interest and ethical concern at an international level, still debated. That probably means that the experiment tank Jette has in her mind is part of a more distant future than a host of other weapons. However, the existence of small and cheap battlefield robots means we are likely to see AI used against drones for the foreseeable future.

Before robots fight people, robots will fight robots. Before then, AI will primarily handle spreadsheets and maintenance requests.

However, at present we find that there are systems that can bring down a Drone fairly quickly with little collateral damage, there are also autonomous systems designed to counteract other fast and autonomous systems without people on board. Aptly named *Counter Rocket, Artillery and Mortar* , or C-RAM systems, use sensors and react autonomously to specifically destroy projectiles aimed at human targets. Iterating AI will mean finding a new space of what is an acceptable risk for machines sent into combat.

To the extent that we depend more on the use of technology on the battlefield, we are more exposed to cyber weapons, which is why a new arms race is generated, where a value to be generated is that of cyber-warriors, it is true that in many countries are already working on it, but not only from the point of view of having computer specialists or hackers, but also of creating a military career, as well as the cavalry, infantry or artillery, adding the specialty of cyber warfare and projecting a career professional both for Officers and Junior Staff, certainly an unavoidable need to forge a firm and stable path.

This future where the AI takes control of decisions on the battlefield is far away in time but not as far as one would like to believe, human wills are rational and tend to be charitable, but that only in peacetime, otherwise I would tell them Remember Hiroshima.

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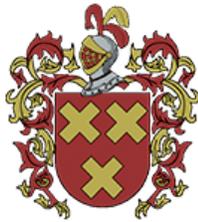
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1,802 ↗ **+14,7%**
expositores
de 63 países
65,9% son internationales

65 startups en Eurosatory LAB

98,721
Asistencia total
(expositores, visitantes,
prensa, organizadores)

227
Delegaciones oficiales
de 94 países
y 4 organizaciones
(en representación de 760 delegados)

696
periodistas
de 44 países

75 Conferencias
2 102 Reuniones de negocios realizadas

2018 Cifras clave

Interfere to win. Brief analysis of the military balance with Venezuela (and II, reinforcement options)

By Juan Pablo Pardo Retortillo (Spain)

Venezuela has important armored means and experience in its operation.

Introduction

I have just read with great pleasure and attention the article that, on the comparison of the military power between Colombia and Venezuela, the possible result of a dispute between the two, and the possible preventive measures to be taken by Colombia to increase its chances of victory, has been published our editor Douglas Hernández, in which he demonstrates his profound knowledge of the weapons of our time and their effects in combat. With this response to your article, I intend to contribute my grain of sand to the intellectual debate, reviewing other possible war solutions available to Colombia that can be offered, especially from the point of view of military logistics, the field of my specialty.

Douglas has been very successful in pointing out that the main aspect to take into account when making this comparison between armies is the different development and evolution, by necessity, of the same: the Colombian army specialized in weapons and irregular warfare tactics to confront a war of communist guerrillas and drug warlords, against the Venezuelan army, which, imbued with the Bolivarian leftist doctrine, has developed a powerful regular and revolutionary army to be able to confront, in an asymmetric manner, any attempt by the very powerful US army for overthrowing him and/or controlling his enormous wealth and natural reserves.

The military balance made by Douglas is overwhelmingly favorable to a victory for the Venezuelan arms, both on land, sea and in the air. Faced with this, the author synthesizes a response for Colombia that must meet three requirements:

1. An acceptable cost-benefit ratio, in order not to exponentially increase military spending, given that the country has other urgent humanitarian priorities.
2. In relation to the above, a good acceptance by Colombian society, and

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3. The possibility of taking over, or "nationalizing", one's own defense, eschewing fragile and fickle military alliances.

To meet these three requirements we will focus our contribution to the study of the different responses that the Colombian armed forces can choose.

Colombia: time to make fundamental decisions

The first decision of profound importance that the General Staff and the Colombian government must face is to choose the type of war that should be waged in the face of a threat of conflict with Venezuela, that is, to make the basic decision of choosing between an offensive type of war or defensive.

It is obvious that, given the previous military balance made by Douglas, as well as the three requirements that the decision to make must meet, Colombia must focus its growth as an army towards an asymmetric and eminently defensive type of conflict. The final objective will be to reach such a volume and level of war power that it dissuades Venezuela from getting involved in a conflict that would cause such a high wear and tear that it would make little or nothing advisable to start it (and more so, bearing in mind that they must always reserve part of their potential to be able to repel any US attack).

The foregoing was clearly seen by the German Marshal Erwin Rommel during the last years of the 2nd World War, when he alerted Hitler numerous times that, since Germany was already clearly retreating on all fronts, it was completely wrong to continue manufacturing a weapon typical (and extremely expensive) of offensive warfare such as tanks. On the contrary, it was necessary to bet on the manufacture of typically defensive (and cheaper) weapons such as artillery, in order to have a large number of them that would favor a saturation of the battlefield and allow allied offensives to be neutralized (this This aspect is already mentioned by Douglas in his article when mentioning the multiple rocket launcher systems that Venezuela has and which Colombia completely lacks).

A ratification of what has been said, taken from a modern and relatively recent war, we have in the Malvinas War and in the composition and "the comparison of the British marine infantry and artillery 'commando' units with the Argentine ones, which they show the qualitative and quantitative superiority of technical means of fire, communications, electronic technical support, the possibility of operating at night and combat autonomy. The artillery exceeded in range about 7 km. to the OTO Melara of the Argentine groups. The heavy and light machine guns outnumbered and outperformed the FAPs of the Argentine rifle groups (Fire Teams vs. Rifle Groups). It can be said that the British firepower was truly overwhelming,…"

Finally, and to definitively establish our military development decision, we must have the professional criteria of military logistics, which establishes that we can classify the needs of military means, according to the volume required and its cost, into four groups:

1. Large orders for items with a low unit price. Typical examples are items consumed during the provision of military service: individual soldier's weapons, personal equipment items, food preserves, regulatory ammunition, etc.; or those required for the normal operation of units and organizations: kitchenware, office supplies, furniture, etc.
2. Industrially considerable series of elements with a medium cost. Among them we can mention: buses for transporting personnel, militarized communications equipment, parachutes, light vehicles, etc...
3. Limited series of items with a high value. As a sample we will cite: planes, ships, armored vehicles, etc...
4. Unique items meant to cover specific missions. Representative cases are: the communications system of a combat operations center, an aircraft flight simulator, an automatic test bench for aircraft maintenance or a tactical radar.

Likewise, the greatest possible participation of the national industry must be achieved in obtaining the objectives of the force and the means of support (specifically, total autonomy must be achieved in the technologies applicable to the materials of the first two groups, stimulating and empowering the industries in this achievement), that is, trying to achieve maximum logistical independence both in resources and in the war industry, with which the third criterion established by Douglas for the best solution for Colombia will also be met.

Our proposals for the Colombian armed forces will be based on standardizing and producing weapons belonging to economic group 2, by the national industry, and in such a number that it allows us both economies of scale and achieve with its use a saturation of fire in the field of battle that annuls the Venezuelan superiority in other means.

Options for the Colombian Armed Forces

We can therefore summarize the main Colombian war development options that meet the three requirements set by Douglas and the military logistics doctrine in the following:

For the war on land:
- Increase the anti-tank firepower of Colombian infantry units, with self-supporting anti-tank missiles or those installed on off-road vehicles, as well as multiple rocket launcher systems, which allow their rapid concentration in vital areas of the battlefield, in order to achieve saturation of fire that destroys the Venezuelan war potential. It is worth remembering that during the Falklands War, the British used their MILAN anti-tank missiles as field artillery against fixed Argentine positions, to great effect.
- Strengthen the war of mines in the steps required by the Colombian orography.
- Promote the strategy of extreme resistance in urban areas, Stalingrad type, develop the tactics of Rattenkrieg or asymmetric "rat war" that would nullify the offensive potential of the Venezuelan army, leaving it stagnant and forcing it to fight a type of war on a plane of greater equality.
- Infiltration of guerrillas in the Venezuelan lines as their forces penetrated Colombian territory, taking advantage of the greater Colombian preparation and experience in this type of war.

For war at sea:
- Promote a Navy model with a maximum of two types of ships (in order to seek cost savings through "extreme standardization"), one of which would be a submarine and the other a small, fast, cheap and heavily armed ship with misilistica (missile boats), capable of confronting the Venezuelan naval power. The Colombian military naval industry has already demonstrated its effectiveness in the construction of boats or small ships adapted to river warfare, it would be a matter of transferring its know-how to coastal warfare in the Caribbean environment. In addition, these means would also be very useful in the war against the drug warlords to intercept their logistics routes.

For war in the air:
- Strengthen an air force with a single model of helicopter and one aircraft: an air superiority fighter or dogfight, a pure interceptor, acquired in sufficient numbers to optimize its cost and generate economies of scale, and that are in a position to confront with possibilities of success to the modern Venezuelan Sukhoi.
- Develop and equip Colombian infantry units with modern and precise anti-aircraft weapons (Group 2), in sufficient quantity and quality to counteract Venezuelan air power.

Other economic measures of logistical warfare, low cost and highly effective deterrent:
- Make sure to constantly maintain an optimal balance of forces, so that the Venezuelan enemy does not find a period of time in which the Colombian forces are not mobilized in a previously set security percentage (correctly plan maintenance, etc...).
- Always have sufficient logistical reserves of weapons and fuel to enable a campaign to be carried out or to respond to aggression quickly and effectively (this in itself will constitute a factor of deterrence and pacification).
- Implement and maintain a Strategic Security system for logistics means or factors of production, and continuously improve its effectiveness, in such a way as to guarantee the maximum invulnerability of the fundamental core of the nation's economic-industrial infrastructure, through effective decentralization, dispersion and concealment of basic war industries that makes it difficult for the enemy to destroy the entire industrial fabric (underground protection of essential power plants, etc…). The security of the strategic mobilization reserves and those others that are determined to be essential must

also be planned. This point is especially important given the Venezuelan air superiority and the impunity with which they could destroy the Colombian industrial fabric.

- During peacetime, the country must develop civil logistics (Bases, Transportation, Communication Lines, Organization, Industry, Economy and Mobilization), thinking of a possible change to war logistics. This is why the development of a strategic means of transportation such as the railway in the territories and communication routes with Venezuela must be avoided (and also ensure that it is built with a gauge different from that of the enemy), which will deprive a hypothetical invader of the best tool to supply his troops.
- The more prepared the country is to carry out the change from civil to military logistics in the shortest possible time, the more chances it will have of winning the war (or avoiding it), since the speed of reaction of a nation is measured by its speed of mobilization and , if this data is efficient and the enemy knows it, it is the best dissuasive weapon (along with existing armed reaction forces, proportional and prepared to repel strategically estimated threats) that a nation has to avoid coups and conflicts planned by the enemy to achieve initial successes and entrust a final positive result for its interests in a policy of faits accomplis, at the same time that peace talks with the international community begin (confident that we will not be able to respond in time and we will prefer cost of a peace with losses and without honor, than the cost of a longer war that requires time, resources, foresight and determination).

And finally, because of the tremendous importance of the moral factor in a nation's ability to resist (greater than logistics), a high level of morale, will to win, effort, and ability to resist must be established, implemented, and maintained. both in the civilian population and in the personnel of the armies, and both in the combat troops and in the logistics services troops (the so-called "labor army"), and continuously improve their effectiveness, so that they feel involved in the struggle of the nation and understand their important role in achieving the victory of the "army of arms".

Image source:
www.militaryforces.org

Juan Pablo Pardo Retortillo
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We don't learn

By Francisco Javier Blasco Robledo, Colonel (r) (Spain)

It is precisely these occasions and situations by which we demonstrate our capacity for disaster and self-centeredness in which the phrase attributed to Bismark, about the resistance and solidity of Spain, despite the efforts of the Spanish to destroy it, takes much more value, and which I copy to then, in case someone at this point has not yet heard or read it in their life *"Spain is the strongest country in the world: the Spanish have been trying to destroy it for centuries and have not succeeded."*

We have spent four years in a constant electoral process, twice won by Rajoy and twice by Sánchez and neither with a sufficient majority to be able to form a stable government with the votes of the party itself and only in one of all of them did Rajoy manage to form a government unicolor although with the dangerous support of the unstable Rivera, because of whom this happened to him. An Albert Rivera, father and origin of all intrigue and political sauce, who has just submitted his resignation for his disastrous management after having been very close to leading the opposition.

Movement, person and party to which I do not want to dedicate many lines of this work, because they have never been saints of my devotion. False, changeable and ambushed; always willing to trip up the supporter himself and plague the negotiation fields with all kinds of mines, squeamishness and objections, to make himself interesting, handsome, successful and finally get all the possible income for his bag and position.

I'm glad that, finally, in this case, we Spaniards have been able to give it the deserved treatment and I hope that soon - next time - the same thing happens to them that they provoked with UPyD with that bear hug; as well as Rajoy for favoring and paving the way for his motion of censure, in which no one, except them, thought and came out. Although as a result of his bad head, it was Sánchez who took advantage and since then we have been suffering an ordeal almost worse than Jesus Christ himself suffered before being crucified.

Sánchez picked up that Jewish decoy and found himself promoted to the presidency of the government based on that idea and a lazy phrase cast in a rigged, illegal and despicable sentence. Written by a judge disapproved for that in the National High Court -a year later- and that served to start a long road of lies, plagiarism, decoys, excessive expenses, crazy intentions and unruly passions with which to divide, again, the Spanish and capable of producing immense local and international embarrassment.

Although he won the last elections, his pyrrhic victory did not give him enough to govern with full freedom as he wanted and he remained at odds with Iglesias (Coletas) for giving way to the government to

him, his partner or someone else; until he realized that, according to his own words, it would cause him a terrible insomnia that would not let him live in peace.

His head adviser, the terrible Iván Redondo (bounced from advising several peperos), seeing that they weren't getting anywhere, invented a master move; but as usually happens in this matter of taking things out of his sleeve, he went too far and sucked his head off before the summer when he advised him to calm down and let the cup pass; that Sánchez and his Doña go to the Doñana preserve to rest and sunbathe, while the Spaniards and Podemitas cooked in their sauce -although for different reasons- and thus nothing was going to fix what they could wield as a preserve for their intention to rule

If he continued with his cunning and advice, he promised him many seats and the facility to govern alone if he called elections again. He did so and we were all summoned to put our votes back in the polls for the fourth time in four years.

A situation that promised a very happy outcome, if it were seasoned with stories and facts that we will soon describe based on all kinds of firecrackers, fireworks, juggling, top hat pigeons and the shameless and miserable reports of a certain Tezanos, who have ruined all the demographic work that the *Center for Sociological Research* (CIS) has presented for many years, whose prestige and seriousness will never be able to recover or in many years.

Against all previous, balanced, serious and good criteria, he unearthed Franco for which he had to twist several times the disastrous *Law of Historical Memory* of which "Its objective is to control the political discourse of history and the past. Create a history of oppression, being victims, the discourse of victimhood. It means presenting the story with only one face, without freedom of expression, of criticism, canceling the investigation, except for the one that supposedly serves those purposes with all kinds of illegalities." He forced the "legal support" of the Supreme Court and prohibited the bereaved from reburying their remains where they pleased or wished according to Canon Law and the Electoral Law itself and presented us with such a bungling as the greatest success of democracy; unparalleled fallacy and the greatest of those that can be invented.

After years and months of peaking with the Catalan separatists, independence supporters and coup plotters, when the situation of pressure on the government was already overloaded, due to the number and size of the cessions and privileges, of impossible legal fit, requested by them; he was officially forced to "cut off", not to "break" his relationship as comparsa, thug and friendship, leaving

it on hold waiting for better times or a new and pressing need.

It influenced the so-called trial of the Procés in such a crude way that, in the pure style of the sewers of the State, it forced the Advocacy of the same name to change its criteria for which it did not even notice resounding resignations due to abuse and lack of consistency with what really It happened in Catalonia. Initially misunderstood movement, but, on the other hand, served for the Supreme Court to have a handle and stirrup where to get on and sit on the horse of the change of criteria. Argucia devised by some diabolical mind of those that roam and fly over the government cabinet.

Argument, nothing harmless since, despite what was said and proven during the investigation and the trial itself, finally the court unanimously understood that all that ruckus was just a *daydream* and therefore they were only sentenced for Sedition and not Rebellion, although accompanied in some cases, by a not very large embezzlement. The resulting penalties were in their least quantification and despite all this bodrio and great farce or many swallowers, depending on the version; the puppies of the prisoners were launched to occupy the streets, highways, train stations and airports of Catalonia with the precision and effectiveness of a more than organized terrorist criminal gang putting the region on a war footing, while the government looked the other way, for not disturbing his yellow interlocutor.

Despite everything that has happened for days, in which live and directly we saw the hooded anger act where, when and until the moment they wanted or decided; the socialist government in office, with Sánchez at the head and at the hands of another great national disappointment of the same and disastrous government, Minister Marlaska -once a judge of solvency and prestige in the National Court- agreed to describe such excesses as mere problems of public order, without more.

They looked the other way, they allowed themselves to be mercilessly beaten by the Mossos and the National Police, while elite units of the Civil Guard were kept in barracks and, to make matters worse, it has been allowed that the first agitator of the revolution and the CDRs; Mr. Torra, not only did not fulfill his duty and laughed at the Constitutional Court; but also, be willing to purge and penalize the policemen who, in his opinion, got out of hand while the terrorist hordes, set on fire and brutalized, tried to kill them for real.

Lastly, and not a negligible problem, in Brussels the sketches and messages of budgetary intentions are not swallowed; They put many obstacles on us for

being unrealizable or very fattening, out of the wave or plausible and they bet on other macro figures that are much less favorable for our immediate future in the face of a more than possible recession.

With all this background or support in his private account, Mr. Sánchez ran for the November 10 elections, hoping to win with a sufficient majority to govern alone; to improve, for this, in enough the number of benches; cancel *Podemos by* transferring their votes to their new "friend" or friendlier and closer brand, that of the strikebreaker Iñigo Errejón who has been afraid or ashamed to call it Más España; keep a separatist party in the bedroom in case it were necessary and leave the center-right absorbed and absorbed in its own troubles and problems, divided into three irreconcilable chunks and each one thrown to its own side.

So we went yesterday to vote with arguments based on serious surveys and those already mentioned from the CIS that gave hope and illusions for neighborhoods and trends or fears and caution for others, as it finally happened. The demoscopic task and results, like any science in which one must rely on the honesty of the respondent, usually fails, although in many cases, the result is quite well refined and despite some scattered or anomalous shots, such as that of Citizens, the rest is more or less adjusted to what was expected after the serious and rigorous analysis of thousands of respondents.

Despite the fact that some serious opinion polls - which, by the way, are the ones that have adjusted the most to the final result- warned of what was going to happen; We Spaniards erre que erre continued in our thirteen and except for those who have already tired - thank God - of Rivera and comparsa for their fickle, changing and disoriented movements and thoughts; the majority continued to spin the same roulette wheel, like the animals -generally horses- drawing water from the well tied to a waterwheel without stopping stepping on the same path or path over and over again.

It was known that Sánchez was going to lose strength, votes and seats, that Casado and his semi-new PP were in a position to approach 90-100 seats, that Vox was going to double, UP was resisting, that Errejón would be residual and that CS was it was going to collapse; but it was also known that with this panorama NOTHING COULD BE FIXED. Only the concentration of the entire Center-right vote in the party with the most guarantees of real success could take away Sánchez's hand and evict him from Moncloa. He announced, explained, begged, and said actively and passively that this was going to happen; Many of us even screamed, but people didn't care.

The night of the voting, except for separatists, philo-terrorists, regionalists and certainly strange parties, who celebrated like a Lottery fat man, which was not surprising; only a few were really happy or satisfied. In the PSOE his anger was clearly seen for what it took for Sánchez to go out on the stage with a forced joy (I still don't know what he was laughing at) to celebrate having "won" with 120 seats even though he lost three and many hundreds of thousands of votes with compared to the previous elections. Casado's PP, reached 88, did not reach the minimally desired 90, although recovering a little more than 20 since the last disaster and only in six months; but they seem somewhat choked by considering that it is not enough. In Unidos Podemos, the fear still reached their bodies, when the pigtails came out, with a distressed and hoarse voice, to give the "good news" that once again, they had not lost as much as expected and that now Sánchez yes or yes , he will have to accept them in his government (including himself) if they ever intend to govern.

Those of Vox repeatedly sang *Viva España* , while flags of glory waved in the wind and the National Anthem played in the background. They were content, like children, for having more than doubled their previous legacy and reached 52 seats, thus being able to directly appeal the Laws that they do not like or convince before the Constitutional Court and for having passed, in less than a year, from nothing to being the third political force in the entire State. But his joy may be short-lived, as the clever Abascal himself already announced, putting on the bandage before the patch.

The only clear and obvious truth is that after so much real or false euphoria, we have nothing on our hands that could indicate to us that the route to a consistent and necessary deal or coalition is possible to put order once and for all in Spain and in many of the its laws that, adapted, in its day, to past situations and demands, have led us to this hell, starting with the Electoral Law.

Of Sánchez's sparing statements on Ferraz Street before a squalid and forced fan and those of his stock boy - family comes to profession - Ábalos, this morning, much more calm and thoughtful; no possible solution is extracted, except for the amalgamation (Frankenstein government) of revanchist, nationalist, communist, socialist and regionalist parties, who are looking not only for embers, but also for their own sardines, so making everyone happy is going to cost us a real pasture . I don't want to mention it; but this situation begins to remind me of sad and bloody moments lived in Spain because of socialists, communists and Republican Left of Catalonia in 1934

and, by the way, not included in the Historical Memory Law.

We will see how Europe reacts after this excessive and unfounded "euphoria" of all those who do not seek the best for Spain or for the sake of its Unity, but an accommodation for its "wonders" a way of living from the story and put all possible obstacles to the progress of national development.

In Brussels, our accounts were no longer believed before the elections, nor were the stories we sent them to try to deceive them. They know us and they know that whenever we are in the hands of the socialists, we go headlong to perdition, we do not stop reaching into the drawer and willing to leave our coffers cleaner than the bone of a good ham. It doesn't matter if it's Pata Negra or Serrano, it's always good and that's why it was soon eaten.

We have left a much more fragmented Hemicycle (16 parties represented); full of groups and languages like the Tower of Babel and the perfect situation for what should be the Senate, with Bildu forming a separate Group and even the CUP itself sitting in a room where it should never have been allowed to enter not even to pay a visit and then to March.

And, now, after such a mess and mess, I wonder, who is to blame for all this? What happened? What will be the way from tomorrow? And if we can fix it?

Many easy-to-answer questions; the blame lies halfway between the egotistical Sánchez who believed what Iván Redondo and the perverse Ávalos whispered in his ear last summer in search of his personal accommodation and for the benefit of his party and, on the other hand, the unserious and nothing trained Spaniards, who continue to vote for him no matter how much he says and does against Spain, frightens locals and strangers alike and plunders his own pockets. But in this distribution of blame, we must not forget, far from it, those who, having voted for the PP for years, after a bad time and a fearful and unwise president, have fallen off their horse and have mounted another , which, as has already happened to the UCD, UPyD and Ciudadanos, will have its dazzling brilliance and splendor; but really, time shows sooner or later that they are stars that soon lose their light and vigor. The votes thrown away for voting for Cs or Vox are the ones that, once again, have given Sánchez the possibility of continuing where he is, continuing to deceive and grow and even do much worse. What a difference it would have made had he done so.

Nobody wants to realize the reality of how much and seriously announced and until today they do not see before their eyes, and not all of them because some have gone totally blind, the true result. Everyone is so happy and tomorrow, like years ago, they will come back crying.

The road to follow will be one of blood, sweat and tears for those who will inevitably lose their jobs, their homes or the ability to lend they enjoy and for the many who will surely have to return to their origins - the house of their parents- to find shelter, sustenance, light and a seat by the fire.

We will not fix it, until we do not pay attention to those who know about this, those who have studied everything and we stop voting with our hearts without taking into account what our head says and dictates, which is what really governs and calculates the needs of the whole body and the environment around us. If we continue in this effort, we will not leave until, as on previous occasions, the water reaches our necks and we are on the verge of a harsh and undaunted European kidnapping. At the time

Image Source:
http://www.carve850.com.uy/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/espa%C3%B1aelecciones.jpg

Francisco Javier Blasco Robledo
(Spain) Colonel of the Army, retired. For two years, as Colonel-in-Chief, he commanded the Isabel la Católica Airborne Infantry Regiment No. 29, was Deputy Director of the Armed Forces Intelligence Center (CIFAS) and Head of the Proliferation Department; Defense Attaché in the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic; 2nd Chief of the Spanish-Italian Brigade in the Western Region (KFOR) in Kosovo; Principal professor of the Army at the Higher School of the Armed Forces (ESFAS) of CESEDEN, among other positions of great importance.

The Caliph is dead, long live the Caliph

By Guadi Calvo (Argentina)
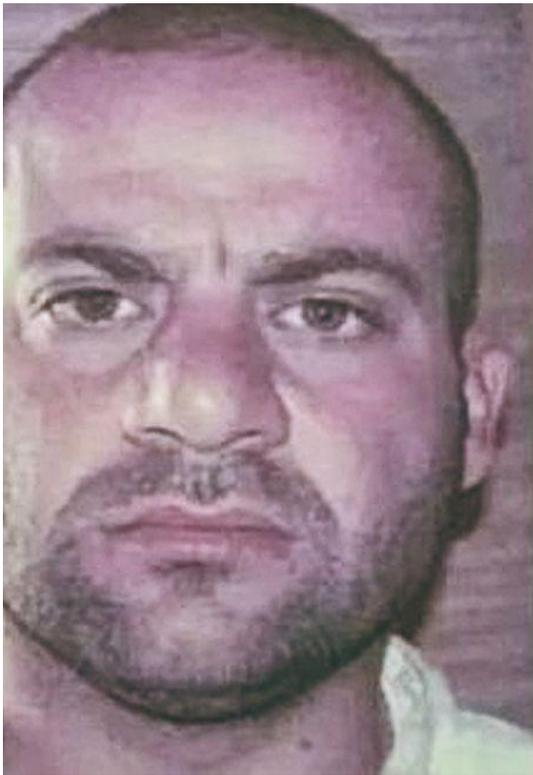
According to the newspaper La Razón, from Spain, this would be the photograph of Abu Ibrahim al-Hashemi al-Qurashi

In the same statement in which Daesh acknowledges the death of its founder, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, also known as Caliph Ibrahim, (See: Al-Baghdadi, the opportune dead), the shura or council of the fundamentalist organization asks the groups that make it up take the bay'ah or oath of allegiance to the new "leader of the believers": Abu Ibrahim al-Hashemi al-Qurashi, elected last Thursday, October 31, and who will have to fight against the strong image of his charismatic predecessor, who has left an imprint among his men, who bordered on devotion.

The statement also reported the death of Abu al Hasan al-Muhajir - the organization's spokesman - who was designated as the natural successor of al-Baghdadi, who, according to the Pentagon, had been executed in another operation a few hours after the attack that ended the Caliph's life.

Nothing is known about the true identity of al-Qurashi, nor have images of the new leader emerged. But the surname al-Qurashi, indicates his belonging to the Qurashi tribe, originally from Saudi Arabia, to which the prophet Mohammed belonged, a fundamental condition to be able to aspire to be

anointed Caliph, together with the condition of religious scholar, so If the shura had chosen someone who did not come from the Prophet's tribe, it would have formally recognized that the Caliphate had ceased to exist.

It has transpired that the new emir of the believers is a combat veteran who has fought against the Americans and knows how to fight them. According to some al-Qurashi reports, he would be a former officer of Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard and would have belonged to the organization since before he broke with al-Qaeda, at the end of 2013.

No one can think that the death of al-Baghdadi could lead to the end of the organization, which still has between 14 and 18,000 militiamen in Syria, according to US intelligence, to which 3,000 foreigners should be added.

The recent detection of the older sister of the murdered leader may be marking a critical moment in the organization's internal security. On Tuesday, November 5, it was learned that Turkish forces arrested Rasmiya Awad, 65, in a raid near Azaz, a small Syrian town thirty kilometers north of Aleppo.

The 65-year-old woman was arrested along with her husband and a daughter-in-law, who could give important information about the organization. Therefore, the spokesman for Turkish President Recep Erdogan, Fahrettin Altun, when reporting these arrests, said that "for the intelligence of his country these arrests represented a gold mine in the fight against terrorism."

The terrorists' new spokesman Abu Hamza al-Qurashi warned that the fighting would continue. In his first message he said: *"Let the United States not rejoice over the death of Sheikh al-Baghdadi. Doesn't the United States know that Daesh is today at the gates of Europe and in Central Africa?*

A timely attack on the Indelimane military base, in the Menaka region of northwestern Mali, seems to validate Abu Hamza's statement. Daesh, for the great Sahara (ISGS) claimed responsibility for the operation on Saturday, November 2, against the barracks in which 54 deaths were recorded, according to official figures, although the mujahideen claim to have killed at least 70 troops , in addition to having destroyed several artillery vehicles and capturing a significant amount of weapons and communication equipment. After occupying the barracks for several hours, the mujahideen withdrew towards the border with Niger, without having suffered any casualties.

The north of Mali, since April 2012, has become one of the most unstable regions in the world, in which French, American and United Nations troops operate, trying with little success to control not only the ISGS, but also the *Jama 'a Nusrat ul Islam wa al Muslimin* (JNIM, Support Front for Islam and Muslims) which answers to al-Qaeda. It is a conglomerate of rigorist groups that came together in March 2017, which also has a significant presence in most of the Sahel.

With the assumption of al-Qurashi, the intelligence services will have to probe how inclined the new Caliph is to approach Ayman al-Zawahirí, the emir of al-Qaeda, whom al-Baghdadi had repudiated at the end of 2013, and today in a serious problem of survival, both organizations could seek an alliance.

Props to the new leader

In the Daesh statement announcing the election of the new leader, the more than a dozen armed organizations that range from Nigeria with Boko Haram to the Philippines with Abu Sayyaf, through the Daesh-Khorasan group in Afghanistan to perform their bay'ah and honor the new caliph.

This opens a moment of great tension within the organization at a global level, since the leaders of each of them will need more information about the new Caliph, and how the financial support for each of these khatibas or organizations will continue, since that some operate under his orders thousands of kilometers from the central command.

One of the first known bay'ah was the one carried out by the Wilāyat Sinai, which operates on the Egyptian peninsula and which since February 2017 has endured the siege of the Sinai 2018 operation, in which significant numbers of the armed forces participate. Egyptians, which beyond having almost infinite resources, have not been able to break the organization that has between 700 and 1,500 mujahideen. Three photographs from the Wilāyat show some 25 masked militiamen with weapons raised, apparently cheering on the new leader, with a caption saying they were pledging allegiance to Abu Ibrahim al-Hashemi al-Qurashi. Photographs of the same tone were also known, from Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, the Syrian province of Daraa and Bangladesh.

The Daesh for the Great Sahara (ISGS), which practically announced its loyalty with the attack on the Indelimane base, is a strong supporter for al-Qurashi, since this khatiba has a force of about 4,000 men with an epicenter in Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso.

A significant number of photographs have already become known in which members of Daesh-Khorasan, perhaps the branch most reluctant to obey foreign commands and that after the significant number of casualties they suffered after being attacked by the United States in April 2017 with the GBU-43, the most powerful non-nuclear bomb that North Americans have, they have recovered and today has a strength of between 4 and 5 thousand troops, which makes it one of the most important organizations associated with Daesh and which operate very frequently particularly in Nangarhar province.

The reaction that the most important group in Africa, Boko Haram, will have is not yet known, since its unpredictable leader, Abubakr Shekau, could even be considered the most suitable successor to al-Baghdadi, and wounded in his self-esteem, he could resign from Daesh , and return under the wing of Ayman al-Zawahirí, the leader of al-Qaeda, after the death of Osama bin Laden, whom he repudiated in March 2015. Of the organizations that operate in Africa, the reaction of the groups that continue to fight in Libya, where Daesh had a second capital of the Caliphate in Sirte, the hometown of Colonel Gadaffi.

It is also unknown what attitude they will be able to take with this change, the last organizations that emerged in the Daesh world, in the northeast of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mozambique.

And the organizations of Southeast Asia, such as the Philippine Abu Sayyaf, are today in full recovery after the severe blow received in Marawi. (See Philippines: Return to Marawi). Those who could shout at any moment: "The Caliph is dead, long live the Caliph!"

Image Source:
https://www.larazon.es/internacional/20191117/2oqnor3l5zhg7dhgo5ubkvhh2u.html

Guadi Calvo
(Argentina) Argentine writer and journalist. International Analyst specialized in Africa, Middle East and Central Asia.

Conflicts in Ethiopia

By Daniel Martínez, Colonel (r) (Uruguay)

Frente de Liberación de Oromo

Partido Demócrata Oromo

In Ethiopia there are 3 major conflicts.

  A. A.- By water: Renacimiento (Guba) and Gibe III (Gilgel) dams
  B. B.- The Oromo Liberation Front
  C. C.- Terrorist groups

A.- By water: Renacimiento (Guba) and Gibe III (Gilgel) dams

Hostilities over the Great Nile Dam threaten to develop into a regional crisis. Ethiopia concludes one of the most ambitious infrastructures in Africa, which Egypt contests for potential economic damage.

The conflict over the waters of the Nile has been highlighted by the demographic increase in both countries and the basic needs that come with it.

Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. Characteristics:

  - Height: 145 meters,
  - Length: 1,800 meters
  - Dam: 247 km $^{2\ lake}$,
  - Storage: 67,000 million cubic meters.

Egypt has 100 million inhabitants, but plans to double this figure in 2060, requires that the rate of filling the dam be slowed down so that the impact is less and that the river maintains its "natural flow". Ethiopia intends to amortize the expense as quickly as possible , "we provide 86% of the water that reaches Egypt, telling us to use zero cubic meters is not a fair deal."

Historically, black populations were excluded from the benefits of the river passing through their territory. The 1902 treaty signed between Great Britain, which controlled Egypt and Sudan, and Ethiopia, prevented this sovereign country from carrying out any works that affected the watercourse. These pacts, which the Egyptians demand as "historical rights", are described as "colonial" by the Ethiopian authorities, who do not recognize them.

Ethiopia and Kenya are also united by the War on Terrorism (Al Shabab) and divided by the War for Water (Lake Turkana).

In East Africa, Lake Turkana or the Jade Sea (because of the color and brightness of its waters), located almost entirely in Kenya, is in a dry area and is considered the largest desert lake in the world (6,405 km^2). Their existence depends on the arrival of water from higher and wetter areas, the highlands of Kenya to the south and especially the mountainous areas of Ethiopia from the north. The waters of the Ethiopian massif reach the lake basin through the Omo River and its intricate course full of meanders. Both the river and the lake are World Heritage Sites because they are unique ecosystems in the world, which are home to human cultures of great anthropological value.

Lake Turkana is home to three national parks and accumulates an enormous wealth of aquatic animals (Nile crocodiles) and land animals (lions, giraffes), as well as being a transit area for migratory birds, which have a stopping place in the middle of the desert . Traditional livestock, agricultural and fishing activities support more than half a million inhabitants in these two ecosystems. However, the Ethiopian government built a huge dam, Gibe III in Gilgel, which allows to produce electricity and irrigate more than 300,000 hectares, the majority of sugar cane for export, a crop that requires a lot of water. The effects are destructive on the ecology and the populations of the area that depend on the flooding of the river, because after retiring they cultivate and graze cattle. With the dam, the floods do not take place, but the consequences on Lake Turkana will be worse, which with an average depth of 30 meters and a maximum of 109 meters, would largely disappear before 2030.
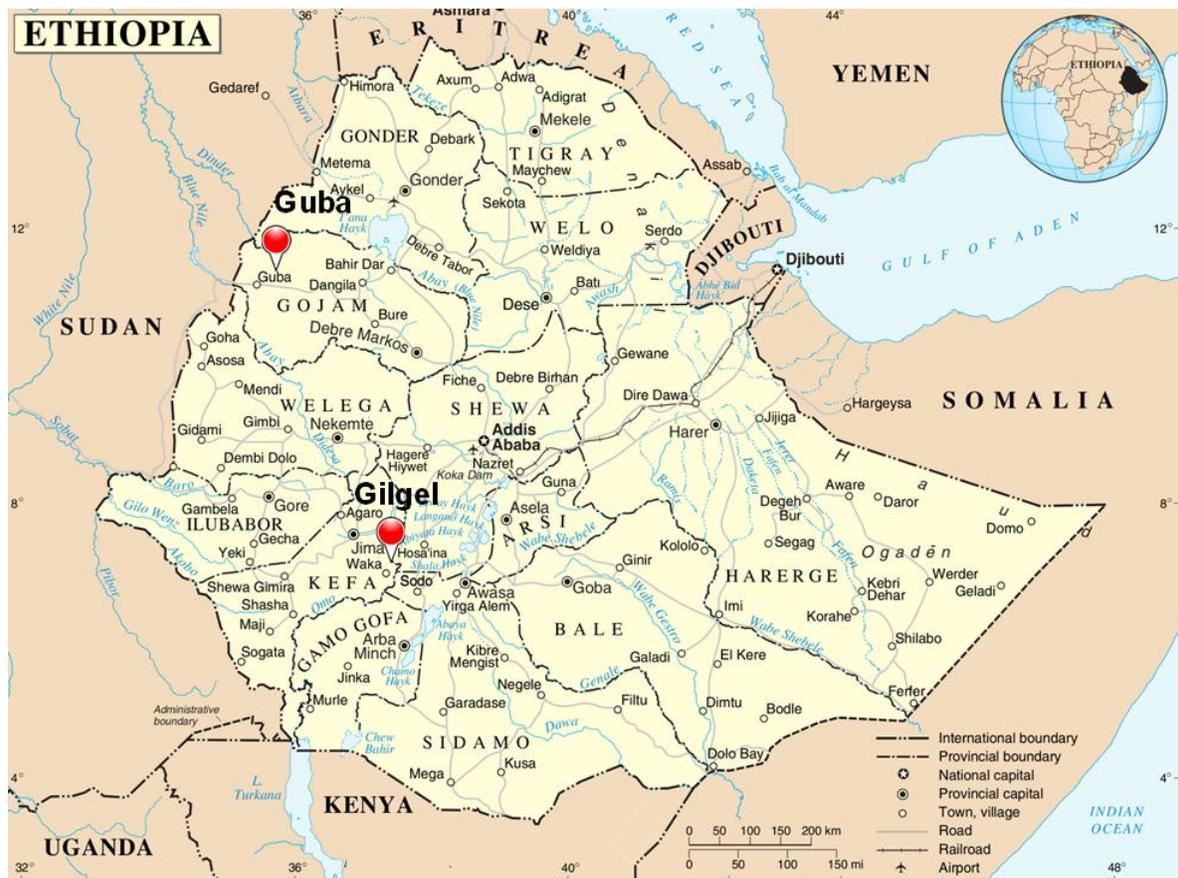
B.- The Oromo Liberation Front

Oromo is an ethnic group in south-central Ethiopia, northern Kenya, and parts of Somalia. The structure of the insurgent movement is made up of the State Government: ODPO (Oromo People's Democratic Organization) and the Oromo Liberation Unitary Front. Resistance: OLF (Oromia Liberation Front) and (IFLO- supported by Saudi Arabia (Islamic Oromia Liberation Front) Opposition: OPLO/IBSO (Oromo People's Liberation Organization) and UOPLF (United People's Front for the Liberation of Oromo).

19MAR2019: 5 dead miners (two foreigners from India and Japan). Armed attack by the OLF (Oromo Liberation Front), in Dejdo, Nejo district.

27SET2017: Hundreds of dead in ethnic fighting. Conflict between the Oromo and Somali ethnic groups, who dispute the right to cultivate fertile land in the south.

02OCT2016: 100 dead in Bishoftu, 40 km south of Addis Ababa. Annual rite of the Oromo, the largest ethnic group. Police used tear gas grenades and warning shots to disperse anti-government protesters demanding "justice and freedom", causing a panic movement.

08JAN2016: 140 civilians and soldiers killed since NOV2015, in clashes over the expropriation of land (logging of forests for investment in Ginchi and the Oromía region). The government says the protesters were given assignments by foreign terrorist groups. Biggest crisis since the 2005 election campaign

C.- Terrorist groups

1.- *Ginbot 7* ("May 15"), date of the general elections in Ethiopia and protests for the alleged fraud (200 dead).
2010: Ginbot 7 allied with the Afar People's Party and the Ethiopian Movement for Unity and Justice to create the ALEJE coalition "Alliance for Freedom, Equality and Justice in Ethiopia"

APR2014: 3 journalists and 6 cyber activists arrested in Addis Ababa, accused of terrorism, for being in contact with dissident groups and planning explosive attacks. Journalists and activists, belonging to the digital platform "Zone 9", in collusion with the terrorist organization "Ginbot 7".

2.- *Al Qaeda and Al Shabab* : Ethiopia has soldiers deployed in Somalia within the framework of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which supports the Army in its fight against Al Shabab, a militia linked to Al Qaeda.

MAY 18, 2017: Court sentences 23 people to prison for planning attacks, stealing and killing for Al Qaeda and Al Shabaab.

3.- *Dissident and ethnic groups:*

JUN 22, 2019: Ethiopian Prime Minister Abhid Ahmed announces a failed coup on state television. The government dismantles a coup attempt in the state of Amhara led by the region's security chief, General Asamnew Tsige.

DEC 19, 2018: 10 civilians killed and one injured. A bomb hit a minibus, in Tongo Gore, Benishangul Gumuz region. The police blamed the attack on the Oromo Liberation Front.

JUN 23, 2018: 1 dead and 156 injured (10 serious). Grenade attack, against the first demonstration of the new Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in the capital, Addis Ababa, which was attended by tens of thousands of people.

15MAR2017: A group of armed men from the Murle Tribe, coming from South Sudan, crossed the border of Ethiopia and killed 28 people, in addition to kidnapping 43 children.

Conclusions

1.- The war for the control of water opens in several conflict regions: China and Vietnam, Burma and neighbors, Bolivia and Chile, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Egypt uses the Nile River to its advantage. Ethiopia consumes 3% of its water and tries to review the international agreement that regulates the Nile basin. Ethiopia plans to redirect the waters of the Nile basin to the Awash river (it has no outlet to the sea) to build a dam and produce electricity . This course of action threatens the Egyptian economy, which has depended since ancient times on the river cycle.

2.- The disappearance of Lake Turkana threatens the lives of thousands of people.

3.- The main threats to Ethiopia would be a terrorist attack on the dams and seismic activities in the region .

4.- Ethiopia is an ally of the US and a bulwark against terrorist Islam in the region. Ethiopian troops have been fighting Al Qaeda and Al Shabaab in Somalia since 2011, as part of the African Union Peace Mission.

5.- In the Oromia region, the violent activities of the Oromo Liberation Front, with the support of jihadists, may increase, taking into account that 47.5% belong to Sunni Islam, 30.5% Orthodox Christians, 17.7% Protestants, 3.3% traditional Christians.

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Tajikistan: Welcome to the Caliph

By Guadi Calvo (Argentina)

The attack on November 6 against a border post in the town of Ishkobod, in the Rudaki region, Tajikistan, a few kilometers from the border with Uzbekistan and 60 from Dushanbe, the Tajik capital, would have left, according to official sources, 17 dead, three soldiers and 14 attackers. Of the attackers, who included at least one woman, and would have arrived at the border post in four vehicles, it was known that another five would have been detained near the scene of the events. After learning of the attack, all roads were closed and major security measures were taken in Dushanbe and other nearby cities.

Daesh was quickly awarded the operation, which becomes the most important suffered by that country, which, despite sharing a 1,200-kilometer border with Afghanistan, the incursions of the mujahideen operating in that country are zero.

The last similar action in Tajikistan had occurred, at the end of July 2018, when four foreign tourists died (2 Americans, 1 Swiss and 1 Dutch) and another 2 were injured, after being rammed, when they were traveling on bicycles, by the Danghara-Dushanbe route. Local authorities attributed that attack to the terrorist organization *Party of the Islamic Renaissance of Tajikistan* (PRIT). Whose leaders Saidumar Hussaini and Mahmadali Hayit, arrested in September 2015, were sentenced in 2016 to life imprisonment.

On May 20, a riot in the high-security prison in the city of Vakhdat, 17 kilometers east of Dushanbe, which houses some 1,500 prisoners, many of them suspected of belonging to a terrorist organization, left around thirty dead prisoners along with three prison guards. Investigations confirmed that it was Daesh militiamen who started the fights, followed by fires, after which they killed the guards and other prisoners, some of them members of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT), before freeing their " brothers and sisters". That was the second riot that occurred in a Tajik prison, in less than a year, linked to Daesh inmates, the previous one occurred in November 2018, in Khujand, a city of 700,000 people in the northeast of the country, in which killed 26 other inmates.

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Regarding the operation of last Wednesday the 6th, the Tajik authorities have not yet revealed the identity of the dead terrorists, although according *to the Border Guard Service statement* , "20 people would have crossed on the third day, from the Qala- e Zal, in the Afghan province of Khunduz, to the Tajik district of Qubodiyon in the province of Khatlon". This statement draws attention since Daesh Khorassan has no presence in Khunduz and could be considered a Taliban sanctuary, which on very specific occasions has operated outside Afghan borders. If the excuse for the attack, as some media argued, was to steal weapons from the Ishkobod border post, it sounds quite absurd, since it is precisely in Afghanistan that supplying yourself with weapons is a very simple matter. Although later the authorities recognized that all the attackers killed are of Tajik nationality, residents of Isfara, a town in the province of the northern province of Sughd, near the border with Kyrgyzstan.

This attack, regardless of where it came from, puts not only Tajikistan on alert, but also the rest of the neighboring countries such as Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan and also Russia, which has endured countless attacks, perpetrated by militants from that region of Central Asia. and it is always a goal longed for by fundamentalist organizations, which operate inside the country as well as abroad.

Through the *Collective Security Treaty Organization* (CSTO), of which Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan along with Russia are signatories, among other European and Asian countries, Moscow has repeatedly warned of the growing activity of Daesh in the north of Afghanistan, while criticizing nations like Turkmenistan for not cooperating with regional security.

Coincidentally, on November 6, while in Tajikistan the 25 years of the Tajik Constitution and the first election of President Emomali Rahmon, who continues to govern until today, are commemorated; In Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, a meeting was held in which officials from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) led by Russia and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) participated, in which the problem of terrorism and his combat. For its part, China, as a member of the SCO, collaborates with Tajikistan in reinforcing security, particularly in its sparsely inhabited eastern mountainous regions, to prevent mujahideen from Afghanistan from crossing into Tajikistan and entering China, where they operate. frequently the *Islamic Movement of Eastern Turkestan* (MITO), which has committed major terrorist attacks in the province of Xinjiang, where the Uyghur ethnic group with a Muslim

majority is based, which has already managed to attack in Beijing.

The plans of the Caliphate

Beyond the death of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and the assumption of the new leader Abu Ibrahim al-Hashemi al-Qurashi, Daesh's plans seem not to have stopped, since the beginning of its actions in January 2014, the Caliphate has tried since then to open a beachhead in territories of the former Soviet Union, particularly in Central Asia, trying to establish alliances with *Jamaat Ansarullah* , a group with Wahhabi characteristics that operates in Tajikistan and the Islamic Movement of Eastern Turkestan. According to Russian intelligence, about 5,000 Central Asian citizens traveled to Iraq and Syria to join both Daesh and the Syrian branch of al-Qaeda, who have now returned to continue the "jihad."

This was confirmed by former general Alexandre Bortnikov, and head of Russian intelligence (FSB), at the meeting of the heads of the security services of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in Tashkent, on the last day six: "The objective of Daesh, is the creation of a solid base to organize an expansion through the CIS, from the base that it has managed to establish in Afghanistan".

The emir in charge of directing Daesh's operations in Central Asia is Sayvaly Shafiev, whose *nom de guerre* is Mauaviya or Jalolobodi, a 31-year-old Tajik, originally from the town of Mirzo Rizo in the Hisor district, west of Dushanbe , which would handle a crew of 300 militiamen, originally from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries, who joined the Caliphate in Afghanistan, where they form part of the shura or leadership council.

Between 2011 or 2012, like many young people, they traveled to Pakistan to study religion in one of the thousands of madrassas financed by Saudi Arabia, where their steps would be lost, although later they would be detected in Turkey, trying to reach Syria, where Already 1,900 Tajik citizens were fighting under the command of the legendary Gulmurod Halimov, a former commander of the special forces of the Tajikistan Ministry of Internal Affairs (OMON), who joined al-Baghdadi in Sira in 2014.

He was implicated in February 2018, when the National Security Committee detained 14 people, accused of plotting to attack several major targets in Dushanbe, including foreign embassies, a Russian military base and government buildings. The foiled attacks were to be carried out in March 2018 during the Norouz festivities, the Persian New Year. During the trial, one of the leaders of the failed operation, Mahmudjon Azamov, 26, testified that he had been in

contact with Sayvaly Shafiev since November 2015. Azamov acknowledged that he had returned to Tajikistan, on Shafiev's orders, to join the Tajik Daesh sleeper cell awaiting orders to organize and execute the foiled attacks in 2018.

The new caliph, Abu Ibrahim al-Qurashi, has an important possibility in Central Asia to increase his actions, so the events of the past six days can be taken as a welcome that will be repeated more frequently in the region beyond what what happens in Afghanistan.

Image Source:
http://blokprotiislamizaci.cz/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/tajikistan-administrative-map.jpg

Historical Memories and Simple Memories

By Francisco Javier Blasco Robledo, Colonel (r) (Spain)

Dictators in World War II Europe

We Spaniards should never forget one of the worst presidents of the government we have ever had, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero; a person whom we have suffered and suffered for almost two full mandates, until as a result of his bad head, disastrous strategies, and having left us submerged in one of the worst economic crises of the modern era, the Spanish sent León to count clouds, as he personally stated, by losing the elections and being forced to leave all his positions.

Two other lies of his to include in his long personal list, since he did not go to León, where he came from one day, nor has he dedicated a single minute to counting clouds, but rather to other outrages across the seas, leaving very few friends of true for those lands; but that is another matter that we will leave parked for another more appropriate day.

ZP, nickname by which he was known and that he was even happy to use in election campaigns, was a very famous person for his nonsense, bragging, spite, ridicule and bad head. Full of dichotomies in himself and in his deep thoughts or out loud, and famous for many phrases and things of his, almost none good; Of which, apart from what has been mentioned, I want to highlight five: its inability to define the (disputed and debatable) concept of nation; having brought up again the sui generis concept of *"nation of nations"* still not defined concretely; force a new and disastrous Catalan Statute, the application of the famous Plan E and the birth without anesthesia of the Law of Historical Memory.

Law, of which once its author and inducer was defenestrated; his successor in office, Mariano Rajoy Rey, the man with the most complexes and full of fears that I have suffered in my life, knowing that he was a

mess, tremendously unfair for being biased and revengeful and even having an absolute majority, did not repeal it or touch a line, lest they call him a facha or worse for that.

As well; This Law, moldable like many, very easy to stretch and transform according to the interests of the executive and also to concatenate efforts and support between the benches of the Legislative Power (Parliament), for that of not being marked as heirs of the most rancid Francoism, has been the most precious toy in the hands of our current president, the illustrious Pedro Sánchez and his cabinet. Thus, it has been crookedly groped to change it and adapt it as many times as it has been necessary to, among other niceties: remove the remains of Franco from the Valley of the Fallen; bury him where the government wanted; change hundreds of names of streets, squares and parks throughout Spain because their previous denominations -although it was not true, according to the true story- sounded like characters close to Franco during the civil war and the post-war years; tear down monuments, statues and plaques related to characters and moments of the time; disparage the victims of the right-wing camp; exalt and elevate those of the left; reopen old or almost non-existent wounds; further divide the Spanish; recovering and extolling new-old grudges and not digging up anyone of all those remains that are assured still lie in the gutters and whose number is so large that -according to the biggest illiterate liar in recent history, our Vice President Calvo- they grant Spain the dark title of being "the second country with the most disappeared in the world" ignoring by such statement, many countries that in their own right precede us in such a macabre list and, therefore, the

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aforementioned lady has been the subject of ridicule these days. What will she know about history and realities with statements so unfounded and far from complete.

It is a Law that, for months and months, has been repeated to us daily by all the media, talk shows and newspapers that are committed to the government and that, knowing that he is lying or that what he says is not very clear, needs to be repeated many times to create the necessary ground in order to unite the minds prone to the subject and open those who, not seeing it, from repeating it so much, will take it as something precise and necessary.

I must admit that this campaign of agitation and propaganda, known for years as AGITPROP and very typical of the purest totalitarian regimes of a communist or Nazi nature, has borne fruit in Spain on this occasion. So much so, that we are still going round and round the subject of the Law of Memory and Franco's unearthing (October 24), although it would do no more than mobilize the family and a few nostalgics. Meanwhile, only a few were aware of a European Parliament Resolution that, a little over a month before, was approved and that represents a great advance for the Historical and Collective Memory of Europeans.

Hidden and hidden by all the official media and only slightly mentioned by some free or right-wing media with little influence, on September 19, the aforementioned Parliament approved a Resolution on the importance of European historical memory for the future of Europe (2019/2819(RSP)).

Resolution that I encourage you to know because of its short and easy reading; as well as, for its importance and for what it can mean for all the Member States of the Union, including Spain for directly attacking the exaltation, worship and expansion of totalitarianism, with special mention of Nazism and Communism, their symbols, ideas and historical figures and, among other measures, specifically requests the EU countries to adopt measures so that monuments and names of streets, squares and gardens that exalt or remember the main actors of those "feats" disappear and worship is prohibited those who had something to do with its implementation and expansion.

Thus, it can be affirmed without fear of exaggeration that in Spain a lot of emphasis, determination and tenacity has been placed on imposing, transforming and enforcing "our" Historical Memory Law, although contrary to what it seemed to pretend, it attacks Francoism quite viciously and all its attributed fascist aura, while, on the other hand, it ignores the abuses of the other party of clear national

socialist and communist court. And also, that there has been so much action and pressure from the government, left-wing political parties and most of the media, that a high percentage of Spaniards, out of conviction or fatigue, have accepted its existence and application to a greater or lesser degree.

But now, knowing the aforementioned Resolution, I am assailed by a great doubt, although I am very much afraid of its answer. Knowing that the Resolutions of the European Parliament are not mandatory international laws, but rather recommendations for good governance and relations in the EU; If our Law was so necessary due to the abuses and aberrations of the accused party, I imagine that for those who believe so much in a fair Law and in international support, the transformation and implementation will be equally and exactly necessary - without delay and with enthusiasm - of the aforementioned Resolution that puts a boundary similar to Communism alongside Nazism and for this reason, let us get down to business soon so that our streets, parks and squares are free of names and facts that separate and offend and, at the same time, let us stop worship those symbols and actors that we voluntarily and deliberately ignored or did not want to include in our Law.

We'll see if now, the government and its facilitators put so much effort into making this so simple that I expose, become a reality and that the courts, who so promptly lent themselves to the support and legal interpretation of the Spanish Law, do not object to its development to comply with and apply the new European Resolution when anyone, based on it, requests it in claiming the application of an international agreement.

Another doubt that assails me and saddens me even more is that, in the middle of the electoral campaign, no Center or Right party was seen to wield or mention this norm, include its development in its program or ask the government for action immediately in that sense. The abandonment of responsibilities, after so much time of cowardly silences in the face of manifest imbalances and looking the other way, is not something unimportant. I am very afraid that in view of what has happened in the Madrid City Council with the involvement of all the parties, my two great doubts are already answered.

In any case, and without having to think about the subject a lot or having to publish a new Law in this regard with the problems, discussions, paperwork and necessary agreements that this entails; simply analyzing seriously and with good will the existing Memory Law in Spain, its motives, content and principles, it would be enough for us to discover that,

when carefully reading the conclusions of the Constitutional Commission of Congress of November 20, 2002 , cited in the Statement of Motives, we find that they make explicit reference to the delegitimization of all totalitarian regimes contrary to freedom, among which, today, no one can have any doubts, much less after the aforementioned EU Resolution, which both Communism and Nazism are paradigm.

Therefore, it is very easy to deduce that thanks to the content, form and literal background of the aforementioned Exposition, transcribed below, it is possible to directly relate the fit of the decision embodied in the Resolution of the European Parliament with our Historical Memory Law. Therefore, said Law could be easily instrumentalized, without the need for any change in its official motivation, to include in it, without insurmountable problems, the totalitarian aspects referred to in said Resolution.

"For this reason, this Law responds to what was stated by the Constitutional Commission of the Congress of Deputies that on November 20, 2002 unanimously approved a Non-Law Proposal in which the citizen representative body reiterated that "nobody can feel legitimized, as happened in the past, to use violence in order to impose their political convictions and establish totalitarian regimes contrary to the freedom and dignity of all citizens, which deserves the condemnation and rejection of our democratic society»".

At this point and time, I have the feeling that the development, application and even compliance with national and international laws and regulations -in some cases- can become a double-edged sword. From so much fine-tuning and trying to leave the subject well tied and without fissures, they can become something contrary to the original and hidden ideas or interests of the very legislators who advocated them by opposing or being forced to apply it, by the Law itself, originally , as refined and guaranteed or others of equal or higher rank. This could be the case.

Image Source
https://www.createwebquest.com/sites/default/files/images/Dictators_0.png

Colombia: synthesis of the naval operational context

By Douglas Hernandez (Colombia)
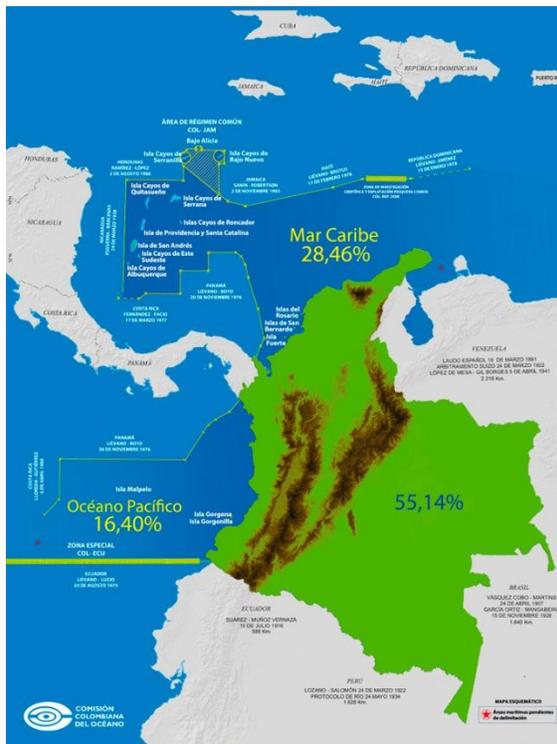
Colombian territory

Colombia is located in the northwestern corner of South America. It has a continental area of 1,141,748 km² and a maritime area of 928,660 km². According to these figures, it is the twenty-sixth largest country in the world and the fourth in South America, after Brazil, Argentina and Peru. Colombia has sovereignty over the Caribbean Sea, the Pacific Ocean, the Amazon Rainforest, the Orinoco basin, and the Andes. The country is administratively divided into departments and municipalities.

In the strategic context, there are two border problems that reveal the Colombian Foreign Ministry, one with Venezuela, due to the non-delimitation of marine and submarine waters in the Gulf of Venezuela, and another with Nicaragua due to the claim that that country makes of waters in around the Colombian archipelago of San Andrés and Providencia -before it even claimed the same archipelago-. Both Venezuela and Nicaragua have leftist governments, they are aligned with Russia and China, countries from which they acquire weapons and with which they have cooperation agreements. Both Nicaragua and Venezuela represent hypotheses of conflict for Colombia.

Nicaragua filed a lawsuit against Colombia before the International Court of Justice, claiming maritime and insular territories over which Colombia had been exercising sovereignty. The Court's ruling was partially favorable to him, since it recognized Colombia's sovereignty over the islands and keys of the archipelago, however granting Nicaragua maritime territories that Colombia assumed as its own. Faced with this ruling, Colombia has objections for what to date has not abandoned the patrolling of the waters that it still considers jurisdictional. Meanwhile, Nicaragua - lacking a navy - limits itself to continually protesting the immediate non-compliance with the ruling.

In relation to Venezuela, the situation is somewhat the reverse. In the Gulf of Venezuela (which does not belong to them by name) the waters have not been delimited, and there is a significant difference in the interpretation of what the border should look like. There have been several attempts to solve the problem, but all have been sabotaged by different actors, opposed to giving in to the adversary. In this case, it is Venezuela that exercises sovereignty over the disputed waters. When Colombia has tried to send ships to the area, international crises have been generated that have brought the two countries to the brink of war. The last case occurred in 1987, when the ARC Corvette "Caldas" entered the Gulf, off the Colombian coast, a place where it would have the right to be according to international law, however, the Venezuelan Navy - much more powerful in that moment - exerted pressure to achieve the expulsion of the Colombian ship from the zone. Although the story is longer and more complex, in summary, we will say that the corvette Caldas finally left there, and since then no other Colombian ship has returned to patrol, due to the aggressive and non-conciliatory attitude of the Venezuelan authorities, who prefer to perpetuate the problem, rather than negotiate and establish clear limits to prevent this type of incident.

In that area there are large oil reserves, but due to the lack of delimitation, neither of the two countries can exploit it, which ultimately benefits no one.

The great Colombian maritime extension allows and in some cases facilitates crimes to be committed there. The most important of which -at least for the international community, and Colombia's allies-, is drug trafficking, which in the naval scenario is presented in three modalities: arrival of drug trafficking supplies to Colombia, export of illicit drugs, and arrival

in Colombia of income from drug trafficking (in physical form, cash or species). In addition to this, there is the problem of illegal fishing, which preys on the country's aquatic ecosystems, in some cases creating irretrievable devastation, there is also the smuggling of people, merchandise and exotic species, maritime piracy, and any kind of crime imaginable. in the context. It cannot be forgotten that there is a war in Colombia and that this war requires weapons, ammunition and explosives. It is necessary to stop the flow of these elements in order to weaken the illegal armed actors.

The Military Forces are deployed throughout the national territory. The Army has eight (08) Divisions that share the continental territory, over which they have responsibilities. There they deploy their Brigades, and these to their different Battalions. The coastal strip, both in the Caribbean and in the Pacific Ocean, is the jurisdiction of the National Navy, as well as the rivers and insular territories (islands), where the Marine Corps troops provide security. The National Air Space is protected by the Colombian Air Force, an institution that is also responsible for a couple of municipalities and a section of the Magdalena River, which is adjacent to an Air Base. The National Police of Colombia, also has responsibility throughout the territory, which has been divided into Police Regions that group several departments, in these regions operate the Police Regionals that depend on the General Directorate of the National Police.

The Police perform functions different from those of the Military Forces, therefore it is not a problem that their jurisdictions overlap. The doctrine of joint, coordinated and interagency operations with which it operates in Colombia, allows it to be effective and efficient without conflicts of competence or damage from friendly fire.

In this context, it is also necessary to protect the Territorial Sea, the Exclusive Economic Zone and the Continental Shelf, territories that are constitutionally under the responsibility of the Colombian National Navy. To fulfill this responsibility, it has been endowed with an outstanding human resource, as well as land, air, river, surface and submarine units, which allow it to have a presence in such vast territories.

Among the main surface units, the Colombian National Navy has 4 FS-1500 Light Frigates acquired in 1983, which are the spearhead of the fleet, and 1 Donghae-class corvette, received in 2014, which lacks missiles. The rest of the units with some offensive capacity are Ocean Patrollers and Coastal Patrollers, equipped with light weapons, most of them having been in service for several years. Hence, acquiring new and more efficient OPVs and CPVs is a priority for the National Navy.

Image Source:
http://agendadelmar.com/agenda_2016/assets/uploads/files/1485292899_MapaCCO.jpg

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T-72B1 tanks, belonging to the Lao People's Army.

LAOS
Lao People's Armed Forces

Lao People's Armed Forces (LPAF), is the name of the Armed Forces of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, being the institution of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party, in charge of protecting the country.

Lao history

According to the latest archaeological discoveries, we know that humans inhabited the mountainous area of northern Laos more than 46,000 years ago, also that the agricultural society developed during the fourth millennium BC and that iron began to be forged in 700 BC, a time in which the settlers increased their contacts with the Chinese culture and the Indian civilizations.

Muang , developed along the Mekong River . By the thirteenth century, the Tai began their migration to what is now Laos, creating new states, where the Mon, the kingdom of Dvaravati and the Khmer stood out.

From the few ancient writings found, it appears that the Lao and their society already existed in the 9th century, before adopting Buddhism, as the most recent discoveries show. Until now it was accepted that in the 16th century King Photisarath established Buddhism as the predominant religion of the country.

In the 18th century, Siam (present-day Thailand) established its control over what is now Laos, dividing the region into three dependent states: Luang Prabang in the north, Vientiane in the center, and Champassak in the south. The Vientiane region revolted against the central power in 1828, but they were defeated, and the area

was incorporated into Siam. After the occupation of Vietnam at the end of the 19th century by France, Laos was included in the so-called *French Indochina* through treaties with Siam in 1893 and 1904.

During World War II, Japan occupied French Indochina. After their surrender in 1945, the nationalists of Laos declared their independence, but the following year the French troops returned with the intention of recovering their colonial domains.

During the First Indochina War, the Indochina Communist Party formed the *Pathet Lao* , a resistance organization. Laos gained full independence on October 22, 1953.

In 1955 the first elections were held, which were won by Prince Souvanna Phouma, who formed a government in 1957, but was overthrown in 1960 in a coup by Captain Kong Le, Souvanna Phouma returned to power months later.

Between 1958 and 1959 there is an invasion of the country by North Vietnamese troops. The neutrality of Laos in the conflict in Southeast Asia was endorsed in the Geneva agreement of 1962, but this did not prevent Laos from suffering the ravages of war for more than 10 years, being the constant target of US bombing that sought to destroy the routes of Vietnamese supplies and also suffering the attacks of the North Vietnamese army and its communist allies of the Pathet Lao movement.

After the fall of South Vietnam to communist forces in April 1975, the Pathet Lao - supported by North Vietnam - took control of Laos. On December 2, 1975, the king abdicated, and the People's Democratic Republic of Laos was established, assuming the Kaysone Phomvihane government.

Laos relied heavily on Soviet aid channeled through Vietnam until the Soviet collapse in 1991. Kaysone Phomvihane died in 1992, being succeeded by Nouhak Phoumsavanh, who ruled until his death in 1998, who in turn was succeeded in the position by Khamtai Siphandon who ruled until 2006 being replaced by Choummaly Sayasone, who in turn was succeeded on April 20, 2016 by Bounnhang Vorachith, current ruler of Laos.

Laos T34 tanks, fully operational. In 2019, 30 of them were donated to Russia, a country that will use them for ceremonial purposes, remembering the Great Patriotic War (SGM).

Defending

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the armed forces were re-equipped with new military equipment, including MiG fighter jets from the Soviet Union. However, despite the influx of new equipment, the country's bleak economic situation prevented the allocation of a military budget large enough for a modern fighting force. In the absence of military support from the former Soviet Union and with limited purchases of equipment from China and Vietnam, the Lao People's Army had to resort to ingenious strategies to sustain itself.

In the early 1990s, aging equipment and lack of funds prevented further modernization. Dependence on direct foreign military aid ended with the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops and Soviet and Vietnamese military advisers in the mid to late 1980s. However, a mutual security treaty with Vietnam, signed in 1977, was preserved.

In the early 1990s, due to a lack of real external threats, the armed forces were largely responsible for internal security and support against dissidents, while border patrols faced incursions by based resistance elements. in Thailand. The Lao People's Army also played an important role in fighting the Laotian armed resistance movement, especially the troops stationed along the Thai border. In 1987-88 there was a border conflict with Thailand.

In mid-1994, the Lao People's Army (LPA) had approximately 33,000 men, deployed in 4 military regions. The LPA headquarters in Vientiane controlled the 4 military regions, which in turn are responsible for the LPA elements in the provinces. Military *Region One* is headquartered in Louangphrabang, Louangphrabang Province; Military *Region Two* , in Muang Phônsavan, Xiangkhoang province; Military *Region Three* , in Xénô, Savannakhét province; and *Military Region Four* , in Pakxé, province of Champasak.

By 2010, the LPA had changed names to the Lao People's Armed Forces (LPAF), although the basic structure remained the same. The ground component retained its name as the Lao People's Army. The active strength of the LPAF was confirmed to be approximately 30,000 soldiers, divided between the 3 services deployed in the 4 military regions of the country.

Lao People's Army

army vehicles
- X T-72B1 tanks modernized to "White Eagle" (acquired from December 2018).
- 30 MBT T-54/55 assault tanks
- 25 MBT PT-76 amphibious light assault tanks
- 130 BTR-60P APC armored personnel carriers
- 30 BTR-152 APC armored troop transports
- 25 M8 Greyhound armored vehicles
- 10 ZSU-23-4 self-propelled anti-aircraft systems

Towed Artillery and Mortars
- 10 x M114 155mm howitzers
- 16 M1954 (M-46) 130 mm howitzers
- 48 2A18 (D-30) 122mm howitzers
- 40 M-30 122 mm howitzers
- 25 M101 105mm howitzers
- 10 x M116 75mm howitzers
- M1938 120mm mortars
- M-43 120mm mortars
- 81mm and 82mm mortars.

SHORAD WZ-551 Yi-Tian anti-aircraft system of the Lao People's Army

anti-aircraft systems
- X SHORAD WZ-551 Yi-Tian anti-aircraft systems
- 120 man-portable anti-aircraft missile launchers MANPADS Strela 2
- 18 x 57mm S-60 anti-aircraft guns
- 18 x 37mm M1939 (61-K) anti-aircraft guns
- 48 ZU-23-2 23mm anti-aircraft guns
- 100 14.5mm ZPU anti-aircraft machine guns

light armament
- Assault rifle: AKM
- Machine guns: PKM, RPD

Lao People's Army Air Force

The air arm of Laos reports directly to the army, and operates from 5 bases:
- Luang Prabang, headquarters of a helicopter regiment
- Pakse, headquarters of a helicopter regiment
- Savannakhet, headquarters of a helicopter regiment
- Vientiane, headquarters of the transport squadron and one of helicopters
- Xiengkhouang, headquarters of the fighter regiment.

fighter planes
10 Yak-130 light combat and training aircraft (received as of 2019).

Yak-130 of the air component of the Lao People's Army.

training aircraft
3 + 21 Ilyushin Il-103 two-seater trainers

transport aircraft
10 Antonov An-2 light transports
1 Antonov An-26/Y-7 tactical transport
2 Antonov An-74TK100/300 tactical/VIP transports
4 Xian MA60 passenger transports

helicopters
1 Mil Mi 26 heavy transport helicopter
7 Mil Mi-8 transport helicopters
9 Mil Mi-17V1 transport helicopters
4 Harbin Z-9 transport helicopters
4 Bell UH-1H Iroquois transport helicopters

Lao People's Navy
In 1975, the Lao People's Navy (LPN) was established with remnants of the Royal Lao Navy. The Lao People's Navy operates boats on the Mekong River, an important feature of the country's geography. Because the Mekong makes up a sizeable portion of Laos' border, the Navy is significantly involved in border control work. The navy in the mid-1990s had a personnel strength of around 500 and around fifty river patrol boats. It currently has approximately 10 River Patrol Boats, 44 Landing Craft, and between 20 and 30 River Boats.
Almost all officers in the Lao People's Navy were trained at the Vietnam Naval Academy.

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