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Establishing the Truth, Fighting the Apathy: The Truth Commission Report in Peru

Julio F. Carrión

On August 28, Peru's *Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación* (CVR, -Truth and Reconciliation Commission) issued its final report after two years of intense work. The CVR was initially appointed in June of 2000 by the caretaker government of Valentín Paniagua. It was chaired by Salomón Lerner Febres, rector of the Pontifical Catholic University, and included eleven distinguished persons. In addition, Monsignor Luis Bambarén, Bishop of Chimbote and President of Peru's Conference of Catholic Bishops, was appointed as an observer of the commission. In his speech introducing the nine-volume report, Dr. Lerner asserted that "ours is a time of shame, of truth and of justice but also of reconciliation" (CVR, *Discurso de Presentación*). In what follows, I summarize the report's findings and discuss whether the report will have an immediate political impact in Peru.

The Shameful Truths

A major finding of the report was related to the number of victims of political violence. Before the report was made public, it was widely believed that between 25,000 and 35,000 people had disappeared or been killed as a result of the conflict between 1980 and 2000. Although the CVR issued a list of 24,692 fully identified victims, it contended that "the most likely number of fatal victims in these two decades exceeds 69,000 Peruvians, dead or disappeared in the hands of subversive organizations or agents of the state" (CVR, *Informe Final*, Preface, 13). Of the total number of victims, the CVR estimated that three out of four were Quechua-speaking peasants.

For the CVR, the discrepancy between the pre-existing figures and the newly estimated number is explained by Peru's enduring division between rural and urban societies. Those residing in rural areas (the Quechua-speaking peasants) are largely excluded from the political community, whereas those living in the cities tend to enjoy the benefits of citizenship. In the words of the CVR chair, "we still live in a country in which the exclusion is so absolute that it is possible for thousands of citizens to disappear without anyone in the integrated society, the society of the non-excluded, noticing it" (CVR, *Discurso de Presentación*).

But the shameful truths do not end here. The CVR report offers a scathing criticism of the main protagonists of these past twenty years of violence, but argues that Shining Path "was the immediate and fundamental cause" of the armed conflict and "the main perpetrator" of crimes and human rights violations (CVR, *Conclusiones Generales*). The report concludes that the Peruvian Communist Party-Shining Path deliberately

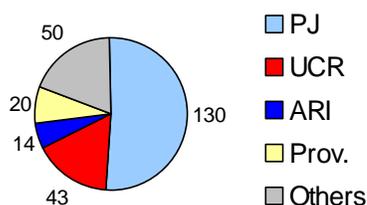
Argentina

On September 14, Argentines went, once again, to the polls to choose governors and deputies in the provinces of Buenos Aires, Chaco, Jujuy and Santa Cruz, and the city of Buenos Aires. These gubernatorial contests are part of an election period, which will last until the end of November 2003 and which will define Néstor Kirchner's ability to govern and the nature of his relationship with his patron, former-president and Peronist kingmaker Eduardo Duhalde.

The September results showed the domination of incumbent candidates – and more importantly the domination of the ruling Peronist party (PJ). In the 14 gubernatorial contests that have occurred this year, 13 were won by the incumbent governor seeking re-election or in the cases where re-election was prohibited by his designated successor (*La Nación*, 23/9/03). It is estimated that the Peronist party will have won a total of 130 seats, an absolute majority, in the Chamber of Deputies when the new Congress sits on December 10 (*La Nación*, 22/9/03). This is an important change from the current composition of the Deputies, where the PJ holds a plurality, but is reliant on the support of other parties to meet quorum requirements (an absolute majority). Therefore, the September results suggest that by December 10, 2003, the PJ will hold an absolute majority in both Deputies and the Senate, thus enabling it to rule with little regard for the opposition – a state of affairs that has not existed in post-dictatorship Argentina since 1995-1997.

Kirchner pursued a “transversal alliance” election strategy involving supporting candidates loyal to Kirchner, but outside of the mainstream of the PJ. In this respect, Kirchner has been able to arm his own PJ bloc – beginning with the symbolic victory of his preferred candidate Aníbal Ibarra over Duhalde's man in the city of Buenos Aires. Nonetheless, former-president Eduardo Duhalde can also count on his own bloc of loyal supporter in the Chamber of Deputies – estimated at 35-40 (one third of the Peronist representation). Kirchner has succeeded in strengthening his political position, but as analyst Rosando Fraga noted, as a result of the September elections, neither Duhalde nor Kirchner has total power (*La Nación*, 16/9/03).

Projected Composition: Chamber of Deputies, 10 December 2003
Source: *La Nación*, 22/9/03



adopted a strategy that included selective assassinations and the annihilation of rural communities, measures aimed at inflicting terror. The commission also finds that “at given times and places, the armed forces participated in systematic or generalized human rights violations” (CVR, *Informe Final*, Preface, 15).

In characterizing the behavior of Peru's political class during the process of violence, the CVR did not mince words. The report states that elected leaders have some serious explaining to do, arguing that the situation of violence would not have been so severe if it were not for the “indifference, passivity or plain ineptitude of those who occupied high political office at the time.” (CVR, *Informe Final*, Preface, 16)

Seeking Justice and Reconciliation

Arguing that justice is the foundation of reconciliation (CVR, *Informe Final*, Vol. 9.1, 13), the CVR made available to the Attorney General a list containing the names of those suspected of committing crimes in the fight against domestic insurgency. Moreover, the CVR identified 36 cases of human rights violations that required criminal investigations. In a rather ghastly development, the CVR made available a list of 4,644 unmarked gravesites containing the remains of those victimized by Shining Path or security forces. The report also recommended the appointment of *ad hoc* judges to investigate these crimes. To remedy the legacy of violence, the report recommended: (a) adopting institutional reforms to accomplish the rule of law and prevent violence; (b) instituting a program of reparations to the victims of violence; (c) developing a national plan of gravesites; and (d) establishing a set of mechanisms to oversee the implementation of the Commission's recommendations.

The Reactions

The report was delivered in a formal ceremony with Alejandro Toledo, President of Peru, in attendance. Toledo praised the CVR's work but offered no firm commitment to put its recommendations into effect. Leaders of the

center-left APRA party saw with satisfaction that former president Alan García (1985-1990) was not singled out for criminal investigation (“*La República*, 29/08/2003). APRA leaders were concerned that García’s role in suffocating a 1986 prison uprising that led to the extrajudicial execution of some 120 *Senderistas* might have triggered such indictment. García himself offered some criticisms of the report, saying for instance that he disagreed with the decision to liken the Armed Forces actions with those of Shining Path. He also said that it was “dangerous” to exaggerate the number of victims, rejecting the Commission’s estimate of 69,000 deaths (*El Peruano*, 30/08/03).

Lourdes Flores Nano, leader of Unidad Nacional (UN), a center-right electoral alliance that obtained the third largest vote in the 2001 election, also raised some objections to the report. In an interview with *La República* published on August 31, she declared that the report did not sufficiently acknowledge the positive role of the Armed Forces in fighting domestic insurgency during the Fujimori regime.

Others offered much more critical assessments of the report. Former president Alberto Fujimori rejected the Commission’s report and insinuated that its conclusions were probably written beforehand in 2001, “under the careful supervision of the then Minister of Justice, who was having meetings with the *Senderista* leadership” (www.fujimorialberto.org). UN Congressman Rafael Rey, and former supporter of Fujimori, declared that the report caused him “indignation and shame” for putting the Armed Forces on the same level as the “genocidal assassins who wanted to destroy us” (<http://ar.news.yahoo.com>). José Barba, also a UN congressman, stated that the report was a shame and a national disgrace (www.24horaslibre.com).

The Likely Aftermath

Although only a few weeks have elapsed since the report’s release, one senses that this report will not produce a significant change. The CVR has

already been disbanded and therefore any meaningful follow-up of its recommendations will have to come from either the presidency or Congress. At the moment, Toledo is asking Congress to grant him special powers to legislate on tax policy. It is therefore unlikely that he will act on the Commission’s recommendations until he secures such approval. Whether he will actually choose to take the initiative on the Commission’s recommendations even after obtaining such approval remains an open question. Alan García is hardly going to deliberately stir interest in a topic that may further expose his party’s failings in dealing with the insurgency. Lourdes Flores Nano is equally unenthusiastic over the report, and thus her electoral coalition will most likely not take the lead in this regard. After all, two prominent members of the coalition’s congressional representation, Rafael Rey and José Barba, are acerbic critics of the CVR and its report.

There is always the possibility that civil society groups and human rights organizations will take up the task of keeping the report an issue in the public debate. Unfortunately, these groups seem to have lost most of the dynamism they exhibited on the wake of the controversial 2000 electoral campaign. One wonders whether their actions alone can force political leaders to take the Commission’s report seriously.

The CVR report is an impressive analysis of the root causes of twenty years of political violence and human rights violations in Peru. As mentioned before, one of its major conclusions was that Peru’s political class showed an inexcusable passivity during those years. It would be terrible for the nascent Peruvian democracy if the Commission’s recommendations to remedy the legacy of violence are met with the same “indifference, passivity, or plain ineptitude” that this class showed during the years of conflict.

*The Introductory Presentation and Final Report of the Peruvian *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* can be accessed online at: <http://www.cverdad.org.pe>

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United States of America

FOCAL Hosts Assistant Secretary of State Roger Noriega on September 18, 2003

FOCAL was pleased to host Ambassador Roger Noriega for an informal and “off the record” discussion in Ottawa. Unanimously confirmed as Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs by the U.S. Senate this summer, Mr. Noriega is responsible for managing U.S. foreign policy and promoting U.S. interests in the region.

Ambassador Noriega spoke to a select audience of Canadian policymakers, business and NGO representatives about US-Canada and US-Western Hemisphere relations, and offered his reflections on the state of the region and on the outcome of the WTO ministerial meeting in Cancún (Sept. 10-14, 2003). Questions and ensuing discussion focused on the prospects for the FTAA in light of the deadlock in multilateral trade negotiations, future US policy towards Cuba, and the political situation in Colombia and Venezuela.

The Mexican Dream: Finding a Way Out

Nathalie Gravel and Jorge Patiño Hernández

It is no surprise that the United States has become more and more a Spanish-speaking country. It is even possible to pass through an American city and take a shuttle bus between airports without having to speak English. In the US, the migrant population of Latin American origin had become, by 2002, more numerous than the Afro-American population. In 2000, out of the 35.5 million people of Latin American origin living in the US, 21 million were Mexicans. This influx reflects the ongoing problems of economic underdevelopment – in particular the inability to generate much-needed jobs in sufficient numbers, the destructive consequences of intense social conflicts

Venezuela

The Venezuelan National Electoral Council (NEC) is set to unveil the rules governing a recall referendum on President Hugo Chávez's mandate. A draft copy of the rules, which will determine the procedural elements of the referendum, including timelines and the number of signatures required to initiate a vote, has met with criticism from the opposition coalition *Coordinadora Democrática* (The Democratic Coordination), which claims the proposed requirements are excessively cumbersome. Members of the five-person NEC, appointed in August 2003 by the Venezuelan Supreme Court, have stressed that they are seeking broad consensus on the rules, which they promise will be sufficiently flexible to allow a recall referendum to be held in the near future (*Globovisión*, 18/09/03).

New referendum rules were required as a result of the NEC's September 12 decision to reject the initial referendum petition presented by the opposition on August 20, 2003. This date was the mid-point in Chávez's six-year term and according to the 1999 constitution, was the point in time after which a recall referendum could legally be called. However, the NEC voted 3-0 (2 members abstained) to reject the petition signed by 3.2 million Venezuelans, arguing that the signatures were invalid because they had been collected prior to the August 20 mid-point. Opposition leaders regrouped after the defeat and announced that on October 5, 2003, they will start again to collect the minimum 2.4 million signatures required for a recall.

As the country waits for the new rules from the NCE, most analysts agree that Chávez would lose a referendum if and when it happens. Polls conducted by the opposition movement predict that Venezuelans will vote 2 to 1 against the president (*NY Times*, 13/09/03). The recall referendum is the latest manoeuvre in an ongoing political battle being waged between the opposition coalition and President Chávez, who was elected in 1998 and has already survived a coup d'état in April 2002 and a debilitating national strike earlier this year.

in Central America, the damage and dislocation from repeated natural disasters, and the development of a *migrating culture* as a means to access economic and social advancement.

Statistics for 2000 show that 300,000 Mexican migrants entered the US for the first time that year. The impoverishment of the countryside after 1995, after the Mexican government adopted liberalizing economic policies and decreased its subsidies to rural areas, generated new waves of migrants coming from non-traditional migrating regions (other than the border states). Those short-term and long-term departures gave rise to an unavoidable "*despoblamiento*" of many communities of their economically active population. In some communities of central Mexico, for example, the population that has left outnumbers those remaining, leaving women, children and senior citizens as almost the only occupants.

Among the diverse social and economic consequences of migration are the benefits resulting from the flow of remittances sent by migrant workers back to their families in Mexico. Lately, it has been observed that remittances sent to Mexico have exceeded foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows. In the first half of 2003, US\$ 6.1 billion entered Mexico as remittances and only US\$ 5.2 billion in FDI. If compared with the first half of 2002, the inflow of remittances had increased by 29.1% (*El Universal*, 28/08/03). It is estimated that 3.1% of Mexican households benefit directly from the inflow of remittances. In 1990, the money saved and sent by migrants back to their families in their home country represented 45.6% of the national income generated by the tourist industry. However, since 1999, improved means of sending money through banking and non-banking financial mechanisms and the increased number of Mexican migrants to the US have nourished a flow of remittances that have *exceeded* the income generated by the tourist industry in Mexico. By 2001, these remittances generated 36% more income than the national tourist industry. Other Latin-American countries that seem to benefit the most from this new source of income after Mexico (with a combined inflow of approximately US\$ 6 billion a year) are El Salvador and the Dominican Republic. Overall, Latin America and the

Caribbean receive a total of approximately US \$14 billion per year (Bohorquez *et al.*, 2003).

Recognizing the potential of these new sources of income that can alleviate the impact of poverty in Mexico, some development agencies (including the Mexican government and the Inter-American Development Bank) have begun to implement social programs aiming at protecting and managing those funds. With their strong potential to help families, it is hoped that these new inflows can be managed in such a way as to encourage the setting-up of small family enterprises or collective projects that have a lasting and redistributive effect on poor families and their communities.

While, most remittances are sent to alleviate the parents' workload, to spare a mother or a father from working, or to offer better living conditions for family members, little of these flows contribute to local production (agriculture, family business) or small-business development. It has been noted that the presence of on-going community projects financed by remittances is an incentive for migrants to send more money home. In the context of the steady withdrawal of the state from the countryside, individuals increasingly show little confidence in the ability of the government to meet their community-development needs. As a result, groups of individuals are increasingly ready to take some of the responsibility for bringing essential services (roads, bridges, water and electricity) to remote communities through their own actions (Bohorquez *et al.*, 2003). Some indirect benefits of these collective projects are new economic opportunities and an increased quality of life, all of which renew or generate economic dynamism at a community scale. Also, some states such as Zacatecas, Guanajuato and Jalisco have implemented social programs to encourage channelling remittances into productive projects, such as the "3 to 1" program run by the Secretariat of Social Development (SEDESOL). This 3 to 1 program is born out of a four-way alliance between the state-level government, the federal government, municipalities and NGOs. It functions as "seed capital" (*capital semilla*) for business and infrastructure projects in which the government matches funds provided by migrants (migrants 25%; federal government 25%; state and municipal governments 50%). The key argument behind these programs is that the local political climate needs to encourage migrants to become business people. Well-organized migrants' clubs in the US are another facilitating element in these programs, collecting and channelling the money at different stages of the projects. These programs, sometimes coupled with existing social assistance programs (such as *Procampo* and *Alianza para el Campo*), may include technical assistance and training as well as adult education in the English language and administrative skills, if needed (*Comunicados SEDESOL*, #95/03).

The income from migration has gradually become more and more essential to Mexican rural inhabitants since the first migrant worker programs (the US-led "braceros") began during World War II. At that time, the US sought to answer its need for an agricultural workforce during the harvest season. Those programs lasted until 1966, but the precedent continues to be felt. Meanwhile, an increasing number of migrants, (the total number of short-duration trips crossing the border have been estimated at 212 million each year plus the approximate 150,000 undocumented yearly migrants) are

experiencing poor treatment, an expensive reliance on "coyotes" (who guide migrants on illegal crossings through the desert), terror and death on the 3118 km-long border (Aguayo, 2002). As it becomes more and more difficult for the Mexican rural population to live off the land, and illegal migration flows from Mexico to the US continue unabated, an international migration agreement between the two countries needs to be reconsidered.

*Data comes from the International Seminar on Transferring and the Use of Remittances: Projects of Production and Savings held in 2001 in Zacatecas and from Bohorquez, J. G. *et al.*, 2003.■

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Contrasting Visions of Cuban Society

Ana J. Faya

On September 8, the festivities to mark the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year coincided with the celebration of the Day of the Virgin of *La Caridad del Cobre* (Our Lady of Charity), patron saint of Cuba. These parallel and popular celebrations produced public declarations, which demonstrated the dramatic divergence of opinion between Catholic Church and the Cuban state about the current situation on the island.

Although the Cuban government has always given priority to education, it was nonetheless surprising that the beginning of the school year was marked with a major demonstration in the Revolution Square, where thousands of students attended a speech by Fidel Castro. The school year had in fact begun a week earlier, and so it was significant that on the same day the Catholic Church was celebrating the Day of the Lady of Charity, Castro inaugurated the school year.

To celebrate, the Conference of Catholic Bishops released a pastoral declaration, "The Social

Presence of the Church,” and the Cardinal of Havana, Jaime Ortega officiated at a mass in the city’s cathedral. The government authorized 50 religious processions that were held throughout the country on this day as part of the concessions granted to the Church following the Pope’s visit to the island in 1998. Despite limitations and requiring permission from Cuban authorities, Catholic processions are gradually gaining back the space they had previously lost in the island’s culture. Cubans -both Catholics and non-Catholics- flocked to participate in these religious ceremonies that had been prohibited for decades following the revolution, and which, at that time, constituted impressive spectacles.

The pastoral demonstrated that the Catholic Church perceives a profound crisis in Cuban society. In contrast, Fidel Castro remarked that there is no other country in the world that has been able to demonstrate “the human capital or the moral values necessary to do what socialist Cuba has done” (Fidel Castro, *Trabajadores*, 8/9/03).

Caribbean

The long-debated creation of a Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) is about to become a reality. By the end of August 2003, eight out of ten members of the Regional Judicial and Legal Service Commission (RJLSC), which is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the system for appointing judges to the CCJ, were sworn into office. It is expected that the CCJ will be launched by November 2003.

The Caribbean Court of Justice will become the highest court of appeal for signatory Caribbean countries, and will replace the Judicial Committee of the United Kingdom Privy Council, a mechanism established under the former colonial system. The CCJ will also enforce the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, which is the origin of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and the free trade agreement of the Caribbean Single Market Economy (CSME), scheduled for completion in 2005.

The creation of the CCJ, however, faces significant opposition. Opposition parties throughout the region, such as the United National Congress (UNC) of Trinidad and Tobago and the Jamaican Labour Party (JLP) are requesting that national governments hold a referendum on the issue. Critics have suggested that appointees to the CCJ will be political appointments. It has also been suggested that the establishment of the CCJ will create a “hanging court” willing to allow the use of the death penalty in the Caribbean – something that the UK Privy Council was not (Inter Press Services, 27/08/2003). Although difficulties remain in completing the CSME, the creation of the CCJ is another step towards improving the spirit of regionalism.

In his speech at Revolution Square, Castro suggested that the respect for human rights during his regime was demonstrated by achievements in the development of culture, education and public health – for which, he said, the country would be recognized in the history books. In contrast, in the pastoral issued by the Catholic bishops, the “holistic” concept of the rights of the individual was emphasized. In addition to the right to education and medical services, the pastoral underlined the right to “the self-determination of individuals and families; and political rights to the freedom of speech, association and movement” (*La presencia social de la Iglesia*, 8/9/03).

The bishops also indicated that the ideological treatment of problems in Cuba made the media and the information it purveyed less objective and rendered the possibility of a critical dialogue increasingly difficult. They also demonstrated their concern over the constant flow of emigration from the island –the causes of which had never been openly discussed in Cuban society. Addressing the lack of hope for the future among youth, the bishops expressed their concern that “a clear regression in the openness of the economy” was depriving young people of opportunities for advancement on the island.

After lengthy negotiations between the government and the Vatican, Church authorities in Cuba have maintained a cautious position in terms of their criticism of the regime and have demonstrated reluctance to return to a time when priests were expelled from the island and people were condemned for attending places of worship. At same time, Fidel Castro has abstained from criticizing the Church in his speeches. This unofficial *accord* may explain the moderation of the pastoral, regarding the 75 dissidents sentenced in April to lengthy prison terms, a very sensitive issue for the Cuban government. On this issue, the pastoral declaration repeated the call for “clemency” made by Pope John Paul II, and asked for a better treatment of the prisoners in jail.

Cardinal Ortega has underlined the purely theological role of the Church and has made clear that the institution does not represent the political opposition in Cuba. Nevertheless, the Cuban

Catholic Church has access to a significant proportion of the population, and ever since an earlier pastoral declaration was published ten years ago in which the bishops described the social factors of the Cuban crisis, increasing numbers of Cubans -including some non-Catholics- are identifying themselves with the Church perspective on the Cuban reality. This helps explain why the Church's statements have been harshly criticized in the official media, and the government has continued to be reluctant to open that same media -and education facilities- to the Catholic institution.

The Cuban state and the Catholic Church, with their opposing visions, seem to have turned on their head, the roles that a good part of Cuban society has perceived them to play until now. One, traditionally dogmatic and reactionary in its opposition to change, has become an advocate of reforms, reflection and dialogue. The other, the government behind a revolutionary process understood to be progressive, Marxist, and dialectical, has refused to modify its model, and adheres to a dogma which has suffocated any possibility of dissent.■

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Panama

On September 23, 2003, President Mireya Moscoso confronted the first general strike of her administration. Teachers, students, administrators, social organizations and trade unions took to the streets of Panama City and the city of Colón, the country's second largest, to protest the dismissal of social security chief, Juan Jované.

Jované's dismissal early this month was highly controversial due to the fact that he had recently accused the Moscoso administration and its *Partido Arnulfista* (PA) of weakening the state-run social security fund, which provides pension and medical care for workers, by using it as collateral against a \$US 500m debt issue intended to raise funds for the PA's May 2004 presidential campaign. However, the government denies this accusation and cited ineptitude as the grounds for Jované's dismissal. Protesters are also concerned about the government's alleged plans to privatize the social security system and claim that Jované's release is a lead up to the implementation of this plan (Latin News 23/09/2003).

The Moscoso administration, thus far, has not revealed any plans to privatize social security, although references have been made regarding the need for major reforms. On September 18, President Moscoso signed an agreement with religious leaders promising not to privatize the system, but many, including protesters, do not see this gesture as a guarantee. The Moscoso administration has reneged on previous promises to fight corruption and reduce poverty. As a result, protesters are demanding the reinstatement of Juan Jované as well as a formal commitment from the government not to privatize social security.

The Bush Doctrine versus a Hemispheric Security Agenda

María Cristina Rosas

Mexico will host the upcoming Special Conference on Security being organized by the Organization of American States (OAS) on October 27 and 28, 2003. All the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in the hemisphere will gather at the conference to discuss the security challenges that the region faces in the 21st century. The event was originally programmed for May 6-8, 2003, but was postponed until October due to disagreements about the agenda, particularly the establishment of security bilateral and/or regional programs and the creation of rapid deployment forces, as well as the adverse international context at the time, namely the US-led war against Iraq. Rumours are currently circulating that this conference may once again be postponed.

Part of the problem in bringing this conference to a satisfactory conclusion lies not only in the diverse security agendas that exist in each country, but also in disagreements over how threats to security are characterized and how to deal with them. Perhaps most importantly, in contrast to the Cold War era, when there was a clearly defined threat from the Soviet Union that, either by conviction or political pressure from the US, served to articulate collective security mechanisms in the Americas. Today there is no "real threat" that justifies making common cause throughout the hemisphere.

The United States has identified terrorism as the major threat to international security. However, for the rest of the Americas, with a few exceptions, terrorism is not seen in the same light. As a result, the issue of terrorism deepens disagreement rather than being perceived as a threat around which all countries will close rank. A further complication is that security is also viewed by the US through the lens of the Bush doctrine of "preventive war." Needless to say, Washington has the necessary human and material resources to implement such doctrine, but the same cannot be said about the rest of the Americas. Other countries have limited

capacities and important vulnerabilities and for that reason prefer *preventive diplomacy*. It should also be remembered that “non-interventionism” is a legal principle that guides the international relations of Latin American and Caribbean countries and it has certainly been the source for the founding documents of the Inter-American System.

In short, the construction of a hemispheric security agenda faces the challenges of both identifying the threats and agreeing about the mechanisms needed to combat them. The divergence of opinion in the Americas about these challenges could promote the creation of *niche security agendas*, which could serve, if supported by a significant number of countries, as an alternative to the agenda of the United States. In the past, disarmament and de-nuclearization served as a “niche” agenda that led to the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean (the *Tlatelolco Treaty*). More recently, the *Ottawa Treaty* on anti-personal land mines has contributed to making the Americas (with the exception of Cuba and the United States) a land-mine free zone. The same could be said about small arms trade, already recognized as a threat to all countries within the hemisphere. These experiences demonstrate that consensus is possible.

The concept of multidimensionality is a leading idea when it comes to hemispheric security. According to this approach, security cannot be exclusively restricted to military concerns. The economic, political, social and cultural dimensions of security in combination with other factors may pose a threat to national security if they are disregarded. However, because multidimensionality is a vague concept, when it is discussed, it rarely produces concrete proposals. Mexico has endorsed the recognition of multidimensionality as a way to address the security agendas of the countries in the hemisphere. This is based on the *Bridgetown Declaration of 2002*, which states that any agenda and/or security concern endorsed by the countries of the hemisphere, is legitimate and should not be dismissed. The problem with multidimensionality, however, is that if a country endorses it, such as Mexico, it prevents that country from assuming a clear position on the future of the hemispheric security agenda. Also, by assuming that all the agendas are legitimate, it encourages others to dissent, rather than to reach consensus.

The real risk, of course, is that if consensus is not reached at the Mexico conference, the agenda and the priorities of the most powerful nation on Earth may be imposed on the rest of the hemisphere. In order to avoid this scenario, it is important to tread carefully: hemispheric security should not be re-invented at the OAS Special Conference, but instead should be based on the work already done. Recommendations made at the meetings of Ministers of Defence need to be revisited, as well as other successes on specific issues, such as terrestrial and antipersonnel mines and the traffic of small-arms, to name a few. It is also necessary to put aside the recurring complaint that the proposals made by the other countries of the hemisphere are always ignored by the US. It was recently demonstrated at the last World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial meeting in Cancún that defeatism *a priori* does not lead anywhere. It is time to make proposals and take concrete actions. For instance, a very important proposal to establish an “arms sales tax” in order to derive resources for the benefit of poor countries has reached

consensus among most Latin American and Caribbean countries, demonstrating that when political will is present, the chances of succeeding increase.■

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Editorial

After Cancún: Hope Fades for the FTAA

Donald R. Mackay, FOCAL Executive Director

The Trade Ministers who descended on the Mexican resort city of Cancun in the middle of September failed their own citizens and the world at large. Representing their governments, and there are now 148 of them, they are engaged in the midst of the ninth round of negotiations aimed at further liberalizing the global trading system. Under the aegis of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Cancun meeting marked the supposed mid-point of the Doha Round.

Developing countries, who since the abortive Seattle meeting in 1999 are conscious of their veto power, brought demands to the table that were far from outrageous. Protesting that they have received scant benefit from previous negotiating rounds, they had been promised that the Doha Round would be the “development round” in which their trade and economic growth concerns would be center stage. The faith that kept them engaged until now was always half-hearted and even that has taken a blow.

Despite important concessions prior to Cancún on the generic production and export of low cost pharmaceuticals critical to addressing the

HIV/AIDS crisis confronting many poor countries, there was little movement on the key agenda items. For the last fifty years, the international trading system has failed to adequately address the question of agricultural trade. Agricultural trade was largely excluded from meaningful discipline in the forty-plus year history of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). In the Uruguay Round there was a modest attempt at discipline, but most governments cheated when it came to implementation. The immense political power of agricultural interests in developed countries has allowed levels of government and consumer subsidies that in their totality are profane. Agricultural subsidies in the rich countries have far exceeded the meager amounts of development assistance grudgingly transferred to the poor countries. Many developed countries, including Canada with its supply management system for dairy and poultry products, are guilty. But none are as guilty as the European Union, the United States and Japan. Subsidies given to the United States' 25,000 cotton producers effectively seal the fate of

a handful of desperately poor African countries, whose more efficient production cannot compete with the treasury of the world's richest country. Japan's tariffs on rice as well as their famously insurmountable web of technical and phyto-sanitary regulations effectively close off markets in the world's second largest national economy. Agricultural interests, in developed countries, have bought and paid for their respective political (and bureaucratic) protectors and no real change should be expected for decades to come.

This depressing reality of international trade in agriculture was evident to a group of countries that the respected British publication, *The Economist*, has labeled "The New Alliance." The group of 21 was comprised of three African countries (Egypt, South Africa and Nigeria) supported by five Asian countries (China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and the Philippines) and an astounding thirteen countries from Latin America. Setting aside Cuba's membership, the participation of the remaining twelve Latin American countries carried with it critical implications for the negotiation of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The Southern Cone members included Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Paraguay. The Andean region was fully represented through the participation of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela. Costa Rica and Guatemala represented Central America and NAFTA member Mexico filled the final slot. As calculated by *The Economist*, this group represented half the world's population and two-thirds of its farmers (*Economist*, 20-26/9/03). In case anyone has not been listening, real progress in the WTO on agriculture is a precondition for a successful FTAA. In little under 60 days, FTAA Trade Ministers will gather in Miami for their eighth meeting. As we now know, at least a dozen out of the 34 Trade Ministers have concluded that the global agenda has serious problems, not least of which is the increasingly fictional negotiating deadline of 2005. If the agenda and the associated deadlines are fictional at the global level, can they be any less so at the hemispheric level? Absent any overriding consensus on the issues at the global level and with the negotiating deadlines in tatters, it also appears likely that the US Presidential election in November 2004 will cast a long shadow over the FTAA.

Costa Rica

Accusations of campaign-financing irregularities surfaced once again early this month adding pressure to President Abel Pacheco's (*Partido Unidad Social Cristiano* - PUSC) fragile administration. The leader of the opposition party, *Partido de Liberación Nacional* (PLN), Antonio Alvarez, alleged that a number of campaign contributions surpassing the \$US 30,000 individual limit were not registered with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE), as required by the electoral code. Alvarez called on President Pacheco to either name those responsible for the irregularities or hand in his resignation.

President Pacheco, who has faced these types of allegations since assuming the presidency in May 2002, continues to deny any knowledge of irregularities in the funding of his campaign. However, last October, a congressional commission was created to investigate the allegations and found that \$US 67,000 had been donated to Pacheco's campaign by Chi Kwon Li Su, a Costa Rican businessman who fled to Canada in late August 2003 after having been found guilty of tax evasion (*Latin News* 03/09/2003). Questions are also being raised about a \$US 30,000 contribution made by a Panamanian businessman, who is also under investigation in the United States.

Pacheco is claiming that he was only aware that a group of his campaign supporters had opened three private bank accounts to help raise funds. Under the electoral code, it is illegal for parties to receive foreign campaign donations, but the law does not apply to groups of "friends" who set up bank accounts to raise funds - thus the law, according to the government, has not been broken (*Latin News* 23/09/2003). In the mean time, the congressional investigation, led by the opposition, continues.

Policymaking in most countries freezes during elections, especially when the concessions necessary for trade negotiations are involved.

The prognosis for the hemisphere is not optimistic. The issues that divide outweigh the issues that bind. Political calendars mean that 2004 will largely be a waste of time as far as the FTAA is concerned. Latin America's belief in trade liberalization and economic reform is declining and the private sector, everywhere, is silent on the issue.

Maybe it's time to think about a Plan B? ■

Donald R. Mackay, Executive Director

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