Security dilemmas in the Amazon Trapezoid

An analysis on the non-State armed groups in the face of the international and national security dilemmas vis-à-vis the revision of the architecture of the United Nations system of States

Raphael Gonçalves Marretto¹

Abstract: The evolvement or de-escalation of non-State armed groups remains vehemently important to reconsider the processes of cycles of armed violence perpetrated by myriad armed actors, denominated as the non-State armed groups (NSAG) in the Amazon trapezoid region. Accordingly, interventions policies for the re-ordering of the States´ apparatuses are considered based upon additional related themes such as cohesion and norms, identities, power politics, balance of power systems, perceptions, needs and interests of actors as per the local and international scenarios and frameworks by aiming at addressing the security dilemmas hindering citizens – also within the realm of both the State and non-State sovereignty and legitimacy gaps - for an objected more coherent local and consequently global order in the face of the on-going revision on the architecture of the UN system of States.

¹ Master of Arts on Peace and Conflict Studies - Uppsala University, Sweden / Uppsala Alumnus; Associate researcher at The Brazilian Association of Defence Studies (ABED); Expert at the Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS) / http://acuns.org/marretto-raphael/
Keywords: States / NSAG / Legitimacy

I - Introduction

An armed conflict is defined as an incompatibility that considers one government and/or a territory where the use of armed force between the two parties, out of which at least one and the government of a State, and results in at least 25 casualties related to the armed conflict and at least to one dyad in a given period of time, which is generally one year. In the realm of intra-State armed conflicts, a dyad means one government versus one non-State armed group, at least. In this regard, it is necessary to notice that in this triple frontier sub-region a significant rise and predominance of conflictive dyads – also in terms of a network into other sub-regions and regions across various Federal States in Brazil, as an example, of associated members to these conflictive actors - since the early 2000s has been increasingly observed and registered. In some regions and sub-regions it has been well-noticed a vicious circle of fragmentation and re-composition of non-State armed groups (NSAG) and also presented as organized criminal groups (OCG) within scenarios even presenting temporary absences non-State leaderships due to internal disputes, meaning highly problematic volatile power politics and dysfunctional balance of power systems, plus lasting occasional problematic crises of legitimacy and sovereignty at the State level too, mainly

1 The definition was published in the Appendix 2, in Wallensteen, Peter & Margareta Sollenberg, 2001. “Armed Conflict 1989–2000’, Journal of Peace Research 38 (5): 629–644.”, in ed. Journal of Peace Research 1993–2001 - Sweden. The separate elements of the definition are operationalized as follows: (1) Use of armed force: use of arms in order to promote the parties’ general position in the conflict, resulting in deaths. Arms: any material means, e.g. manufactured weapons but also sticks, stones, fire, water, etc.; (2) 25 deaths: a minimum of 25 battle-related deaths per year and per incompatibility. (3) Party: a government of a state or any opposition organization or alliance of opposition organizations. (3.1) Government: the party controlling the capital of the state. (3.2) Opposition organization: any non-governmental group of people having announced a name for their group and using armed force. (4) State: a state is (4.1) an internationally recognized sovereign government controlling a specified territory, or (4.2) an internationally unrecognized government controlling a specified territory whose sovereignty is not disputed by another internationally recognized sovereign government previously controlling the same territory. (5) Incompatibility concerning government and/or territory the incompatibility, as stated by the parties, must concern government and/or territory. (5.1) Incompatibility: the stated generally incompatible positions. (5.2) Incompatibility concerning government: incompatibility concerning type of political system, the replacement of the central government or the change of its composition. (5.3) Incompatibility concerning territory: incompatibility concerning the status of a territory, e.g. the change of the state in control of a certain territory (interstate conflict), secession or autonomy (intrastate conflict).

though not exclusively at all, what in fact does open a single window of opportunities for national and international interventions’ policies, unilaterally and multilaterally, which does need to become addressed in a very timely manner from local national and international levels alike.

II – The Objective

An armed conflict mitigation process is conceived as a process in constant consolidation that is focused in conducting specifically the design of strategies and policies in which the main objective is to conduct the parties in conflict towards an end of cycles of armed violence and the establishment of a certain equilibrium and order favourable to the States and respective citizens. In this sense the conflict mitigation process needs to reconsider the central problem over the incompatibility on the crises of State legitimacy and sovereignty in this region in addition to the co-related key themes such as identity, power politics and security dilemmas. However as per this triple frontier’s security dilemmas, the analyses include three national States which object and are required to meeting the needs on converging short, medium and long-term efforts in order to regain their respective legitimacy and sovereignty gaps in this region by focusing on the both State and non-State sides and respective challenges presented, which have been continuously occurring to date with absolutely no speculations or perspectives on best practices for multi-dimensional interventions for diminishing the conflictive dyads, what is a matter of concern to the national interest of all States facing this complicate increase on the cycles of armed violence and association of criminal members throughout vast parts of transnational territories within these territories.

The research objectives to manage, finalize or transform significantly violent cycles of armed conflicts as well as to solve certain problems through a sequentially logic of military, economic, social, and political inclusive constructivist policies, namely through intra and inter-State consultations and negotiations in addition to the respective strategy agreements to become viable to address properly the challenges presented once this region vehemently pose both national hence international security dilemmas which require not only national public policies but an international architecture revision within the United Nations system of States´ realm likewise.

Accordingly, the role the NSAGs and OCGs vis-à-vis the hindered attempts of the States and the international community’s policies in solving cycles of armed conflicts by re-ordering the social fabrics’ order structures are essential items on this research, which does also requires to be additionally related, as previously written, to other themes, such as cohesion and norms, identities, power, perceptions, needs and interests of actors (units and sub-units) plus their respective (voluntary or not) bases of social support by focusing on their case-per-case roles on the local and regional scenarios experiencing hindering State sovereignty and legitimacy gaps in the triple frontier between Brazil, Colombia and Peru, exclusively denominated as the Amazon trapezoid.

The process of objecting on re-structuring these actors within States’ apparatuses are considered the core outcome objective as being utterly essential for researches and policy makers alike to determine how these crises of legitimacy and sovereignty were and are still made possible from both the local and regional scenarios but highlighting the somehow still available possibilities at the local, national, regional and hence international structures through due prevention and intervention public processes.

In this regard the most, according to the security dilemma theories that can vehemently be resorted to this inter-section region at both national and international levels (HERZ; JERVIS; MEARSHEIMER; CHRISTENSEN; SNYDER) the State’s interventions policies are objected to become implemented in order to address the NSAGs and OCGs de facto but once their occasionally temporary legitimacies are implemented through specific interventions the most the intensity and counter activities of NSAGs and OCGs are presented as a result within their territories (among their partner and / or rivals) where they are operational considering that the State does also object to regain and become more and more legitimate and sovereign. However then the denominated legitimacy gaps on both sides come to become more and more consolidated, what complicates even more the challenges within the scenarios analysed.

In this realm in order to analyse the scenarios, within a power politics and highly unstable balance of power system the theoretic frameworks denominated as the security dilemma and rational choice are resorted for a minimum comprehension over the local, regional and international levels considering the equations presented to date namely due to these relatively micro but actually vehemently vast national and international regions that in fact do lack the presence of the Westphalia (United Nations system of States) State model per se and where myriad non-State armed actors continue to arise through highly
volatile competing territories and respective scenarios making this research paper to be exclusively based on analyses on the roles of the NSAGs and OCGs in relation to the revision of the architecture of UN system of States. Thus, the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) and the Peace-building Report (PBR) are considered the core support IGOs reports on addressing the on-going synergies regarding the architecture revision of the UN system of States, namely the States experiencing State (re) building processes.

As per the UN, the HIPPO submitted its report (A/70/95–S/2015/446) to the UNSG basing itself on core themes: (a) the primacy of politics through a flexible use of the PKOs; and (b) stronger partnerships and a field-focused UN Secretariat through what is also denominated as a people-oriented PKOs concept. The UNSG’s reactions to the HIPPO’s recommendations was the implementation Report basically highlighting three main pillars: (a) a renewed focus on prevention and mediation; (b) stronger regional-global partnerships; and (c) new ways of planning and conducting UN PKOs more timely responsive and more accountable to the needs of countries and respective peoples in conflict-like scenarios. In fact these review processes led to similar conclusions on issues and challenges such as the need to focus on prevention and political solutions, the importance of a denominated people-centred approach and community engagement with a strong gender dimension, the need to develop more well-designed converging responses based on the analysis of requirements - realities and possibilities - in the field rather than the mere application of frameworks, by also focusing on the need for a greater coherence within the UN and the increasingly uttermost importance of regional and local partnerships per se⁴. The Advisory

⁴ The peace-building architecture and the 2015 review is simply associated to the evolution on the UN and its system of States: The so-called United Nations Peace-building Architecture was created in 2005, at which time the Peace-building Commission, the Peace-building Support Office and the Peace-building Fund were established. The trifecta was created to respond to the concern of former Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, that there was a gaping hole in the United Nations institutional machinery: no part of the United Nations system effectively addresses the challenge of helping countries with the transition from war to lasting peace. Ten years later, a review of the United Nations Peace-building Architecture offered an opportunity to assess the original vision and purpose and its effectiveness in conjunction with the rest of the UN system with a view to strengthening it. A report by a seven-member Advisory Group of Experts (AGE) was delivered late June 2015. In: https://un-peacebuilding.tumblr.com/post/143481735645/un-general-assembly-and-security-council-adopt
Group of Experts (AGE) was set itself also basically for the Review of the UN Peace-building architecture by proposing an agenda that converges into the PBR\textsuperscript{5}.

In this regard in today's scenarios there is myriad dysfunctional balance of power systems operational where the regional and respective local society political systems and respective sub-systems, continuing to be not adequately addressed within the UN reformulation agenda for their very own restructuring processes themselves and cooperation frameworks with other major IGOs in this same region, which do change significantly in almost every six months and/or year in this specific sub-regions and mainly at the regional and national levels due to NSAGs and OCGs alliances formations and shifts vi-à-vis the Federal and respective National States after their unilateral – in most cases – intervention policies, what does make both more interventions an endless highly volatile challenge according to the local disorder mainly and specifically based on security dilemmas between the State and the non-State spheres.

III - The Amazon trapezoid

Considering the research objects, it should be noticed that these academic and field-applied analyses are based upon the highly and challenging volatile security dilemmas in this region of this triple border, aiming not only at the national interest of three States, but also at the restructuring of State apparatuses through current challenges through public policy interventions as per the UN system of States. The main cities of analysis points and their sub-regions and countries are: Tabatinga (Brazil, where the Federal State of Amazonas itself only with has its 3,209 km of border with Peru and Colombia), Letícia (Colombia) and Santa Rosa (also known as Yavari, in Peru).

Accordingly in the Amazon trapezoid this research proposes to analyse mainly public order and security sector reforms (SSR) issues presented to the Brazilian government and the other two neighbouring

\textsuperscript{5} The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was established in 2005 at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly, the so-called World Summit (A/RES/60/1, of 24 October 2005). The decision to create this intergovernmental advisory body followed the identification of a number of deficiencies in the United Nations institutional capacities to effectively respond to the challenges of building peace in post-conflict societies. Some of the weaknesses associated with the arrangements for UN peacekeeping were already pointed out in 2000 by the Brahimi Report.
countries, as presented in the following general division of NSAGs and OCGs that now operate in constant and volatile cooperation and / or in competition for territories and related topics:

(1) **Família do Norte (F.D.N.)** - it was initiated / registered in 2007 in the North region and is the largest organized criminal group operating today not only in its original State of Amazonas. According to the Brazilian Federal Police it does present a complex and high number of “combatants” at circa 200,000

---

6 Transnational organized crime manifests in many forms, including as trafficking in drugs, firearms and even persons. At the same time, organized crime groups exploit human mobility to smuggle migrants and undermine financial systems through money laundering. Organized crime has diversified, gone global and reached macro-economic proportions: illicit goods may be sourced from one continent, trafficked across another, and marketed in a third. Transnational organized crime can permeate government agencies and institutions, fuelling corruption, infiltrating business and politics, and hindering economic and social development and it is undermining governance and democracy by empowering those who operate outside the law. The transnational nature of organized crime means that criminal networks forge bonds across borders as well as overcome cultural and linguistic differences in the commission of their crime. Organized crime is not stagnant, but adapts as new crimes emerge and as relationships between criminal networks become both more flexible, and more sophisticated, with ever-greater reach around the globe. In short, transnational organized crime transcends cultural, social, linguistic and geographical borders and must be met with a concerted response. UNODC is the guardian of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Organized Crime Convention) and the three Protocols - on Trafficking in Persons, Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking of Firearms - that supplement it. The Organized Crime Convention offers States parties a framework for preventing and combating organized crime, and a platform for cooperating in doing so. States parties to the Convention have committed to establishing the criminal offences of participating in an organized crime group, money laundering, corruption and obstruction of justice in their national legislation. By becoming parties to the UNTOC, States also have access to a new framework for mutual legal assistance and extradition, as well as a platform for strengthening law enforcement cooperation. States parties have also committed to promoting training and technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of national authorities to address organized crime. What is transnational organized crime? The UNTOC does not contain a precise definition of ‘transnational organized crime’. Nor does it list the kinds of crimes that might constitute it. This lack of definition was intended to allow for a broader applicability of the Organized Crime Convention to new types of crime that emerge constantly as global, regional and local conditions change over time. The Convention does contain a definition of ‘organized criminal group’. In Article 2 (a): a group of three or more persons that was not randomly formed; (b) existing for a period of time; (c) acting in concert with the aim of committing at least one crime punishable by at least four years' incarceration; and (d) in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit. Since most ‘groups’ of any sort contain three or more people working in concert and most exist for a period of time, the true defining characteristics of organized crime groups under the Convention are their profit-driven nature and the seriousness of the offences they commit. The UNTOC covers only crimes that are ‘transnational’, a term cast broadly. The term covers not only offences committed in more than one State, but also those that take place in one State but are planned or controlled in another. Also included are crimes in one State committed by groups that operate in more than one State, and crimes committed in one State that has substantial effects in another State. The implied definition 'transnational organized crime' then encompasses virtually all profit-motivated serious criminal activities with international implications. This broad definition takes account of the global complexity of the issue and allows cooperation on the widest possible range of common concerns”. In UNODC: [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/organized-crime/index.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/organized-crime/index.html).
denominated associated drug traffickers operating in the same region, including the North and Northeast regions throughout the Federal States of Amazonas, Acre, Pará, Rondônia, Roraima, Maranhão, Piauí and Ceará, on several international and national routes. Its main modus operandi is reported to be conducted through selective killings, assaults through myriad types, drug trafficking, extortion of civilians and local authorities and also rebellions. Although arms and other trafficking are not officially recorded in the databases analysed it should be noted that this organized criminal group is currently the greatest ally of the OCG denominated as the Comando Vermelho (C.V.), which for its turn originated but operating not only, though mainly based in the Federal State of Rio de Janeiro as well as all over the Southeast regions in Brazil.

(2) Guardiões do Estado (G.D.E.) – according to various sources it was registered in between 2008 and 2012 when it became consolidated as one of the major OCG in the Northeast region presenting over a not very concrete well-grounded information sources but an estimated number of circa 2,000 associated drug traffickers with its basis in Fortaleza, the capital of the Federal State of Ceará, operating in cooperation with the OCG denominated as the Primeiro Comando da Capital (P.C.C.) whilst in rivalry to the OCG Comando Vermelho (C.V.) and throughout the Federal States of Amazonas, Acre, Pará, Ceará, Rondônia and Rio Grande do Norte as well. Its main modus operandi is reported to be conducted through selective killings, assaults through myriad types, drug trafficking, extortion of civilians and local authorities and also rebellions. Although arms and other trafficking are not officially recorded in the databases analysed it should be noted that this organized criminal group is currently the greatest ally of the OCG denominated as the Comando Vermelho (C.V.), which for its turn originated but operating not only, though mainly based in the Federal State of Rio de Janeiro as well as all over the Southeast regions in Brazil.

7 The FDN is designated by the Federal Police as the third largest faction in Brazil - behind only the PCC and the CV. The criminal organization appeared in 2006 after the union of two great Amazonian traffickers who served their sentences in federal prisons. Gelson Lima Carnaubá, Mano G, and José Roberto Fernandes Barbosa, Pertuba, left the federal prison system headed for Amazonas "determined or oriented", according to the Federal Police, to structure a criminal faction in the mold of the PCC and CV. In Estadão (2017) in: http://brasil.estadao.com.br/noticias/geral,fornecedor-de-droga-da-familia-do-norte-e-ligado-as-farc-diz-mpf,1000098157.

8 “In Tabatinga itself, a city of 62,000 inhabitants on the triple border with Peru and Colombia, police and judicial authorities admit that the FDN commands both the prison and the flow of drugs to Brazil, a business that moves R $ 5.7 billion per year, according to the government of Amazonas. The strong presence of the NDF in Tabatinga has been operational for nearly four decades of drug trafficking in the region, during which time it became the main economic activity of the border. The story began in the early 1980s, when the so-called Trapeze region of the Amazon became an important corridor of Peruvian cocaine to Colombia (the Pablo Escobar era) for refining and shipping to the United States. In the mid-2000s there were major changes. Colombia, with US funding, was able to regain control of most of the territory, as in the border region, and reduce violence. On the Peruvian side, a new technology allowed the cultivation and processing of coca taking advantage of the Amazonian moisture from 2006. And Brazil before marginal importance became the main destination of the drug produced and transported in the region of the triple border. In Folha de São Paulo (2017) in: http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/cotidiano/2017/03/1865768-fronteira-amazonica-vira-passagem-livre-de-drogas-com-presenca-de-faccio.shtml
killings, robberies, drug trafficking, extortions and rebellions, mainly coordinated to its main cell within the prisons where most of its leaders are based but mainly directed to its “combatants” throughout these regions⁸.

(3) Primeiro Comando da Capital (P.C.C.) – this OCG that was created in the early 1990s but that came out openly in the early 2000s has been constantly reported to be associated to transnational armed actors as well, being considered the strongest one in today’s Brazil, despite the lack of precisely accurate number of “associated” or “combatants” operational throughout in Paraguay, Bolivia and Colombia. It was reportedly observed in 2006 after several terror assaults throughout São Paulo city but also operational in most of Brazil’s territory (namely in 22 out of its 27 Federal States), including a focus on this research mainly over the Federal States of Acre, Amazonas, Rondônia, Roraima, Maranhão, Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte, Alagoas, and Sergipe.

(4) Comando Vermelho (C.V.) – it was created and established within a prison complex, in 1977, in the Federal State of Rio de Janeiro and since its onset it continues to gain ground and bases of support all over vast regions in the country, namely and most recently, in the last decades, into this triple frontier dynamics too, namely also throughout the Federal States of Acre, Amazonas, Rondônia, Roraima, Maranhão, Ceará, Alagoas. This organized armed group has a well-grounded wide array of partner armed actors at the national and international levels as well.

(5) The Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (F.A.R.C.-E.P.) - this non-State armed group that has been operational for more than five decades in Colombia is based upon myriad factors throughout its long history at the international level not restricted to South America solely⁹.

---


⁹ “Massacre in Brazilian prisons sprinkles on the Colombian mafia and the dissent of the FARC-EP and the Gulf cartel, among cocaine providers whose dispute sparked mass slaughter are national and transnational factors as well. Some of the men who ended up quartered or cremated in the early morning of January 2 in the Manaus prison (Brazil) were known by the Colombian mafia. According to monitoring carried out by DIJIN intelligence officers, the trigger of the massacre - which was repeated four days later in the Roraima prison - was the
According to the UN there is a considerable challenge to reintegrate of circa 14,000 combatants who laid down about 7,000/8,000 weapons despite some allegation that their assets are still in the verification process to undergo through the UN DPA Mission to Colombia\textsuperscript{10}.

(6) The F.A.R.C.-E.P. dissidents – prior to the signature of the peace agreement with the Colombian government, the FARC.-E.P.’s 1\textsuperscript{st} Front pronounced itself as a dissident Front. Since then, this rebel unit has been reportedly acting as a “beacon” for elements in the Eastern Plains region, who for their turn, were actually never interested in peace agreements once they were compelled into the process and became disillusioned or simply wanted to return to what they knew as combatants. The F.A.R.C.-E.P. dissidents are reported to now encompass elements of about ten different Fronts denominating themselves as the Bloque Oriental after the F.A.R.C.-E.P.’s most significant fighting division in these last years. In fact they have been analysed now at circa 600 combatants I addition to an additional similar number of militia or “collaborators”, what equals to about 1,200 approximately. In contrast to the clear hierarchies of the F.A.R.C.-E.P., the dissidents operate more as a federation, with the various dissident commanders disputes for drug suppliers in several countries, including four powerful Colombian mafia structures: cartel of the Gulf’, the dissidence of the FARC-EP, the’ office of Envigado ’and’ the Caquetéños’. The latter deal with the Northern Family (NDF) and the rest with the First Command of the Capital (PCC) the two powerful factions that clashed in the overcrowded Brazilian prisons. The band ‘Los Caquetéños’, says the Colombian Police, controls with the NDF the drug traffic along the land and river frontier between Brazil, Peru and Colombia.” In El Tiempo (2017), in: \texttt{http://www.eltiempo.com/justicia/cortes/mafias-de-brasil-en-conflicto-por-proveedores-de-coca-44352}.

\textsuperscript{10} “The United Nations Mission in Colombia is set to register some 7,000 weapons this weekend, but the search for other caches of weapons hidden by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People’s Army (FARC-EP) continues, the Mission’s chief has said. Jean Arnault, the head of the Mission, said yesterday: “As for registration, we are at 85 percent of the weapons in the camps. This weekend we will reach a figure of approximately 7,000 registered weapons. On these weapons there are concerns: many are new and are short and long weapons, high calibre. It is a record that covers the range of FARC-EP weapons.” The weapons hand over has been in place since the beginning of the month and the UN hopes to possess 60 per cent of all FARC-EP arms by April 1. However, in a press conference on the topic yesterday, Mr. Arnault said accessing hidden and hard to reach caches could delay the process. A further 1,000 weapons are set to be received from FARC-EP members participating in peace promotion or, pedagogia de paz, bringing the number of arms collected by the UN to 8,000. It was also reported at the press conference that commitments made at the Cartagena meeting of the Follow up, Promotion and Implementation Commission (CSIVI) to make progress on preparation of registration zones and camps, security and legal guarantees and provision of health services would further accelerate the laydown of arms process.” In UNDPA (2018) in “Colombia: UN receives 7,000 weapons from FARC-EP as hunt for hidden caches continues”, UNDPA in: \texttt{http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56468#.WN7ymGnyvIU} / In UNDPA (2018) in “Colombia: UN receives 7,000 weapons from FARC-EP as hunt for hidden caches continues” in: \texttt{http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56468#.WN7ymGnyvIU}.
coordinating in the interests of business rather than working as one coherent insurgent force. These groups have expanded to control critical drug trafficking arteries into Venezuela and Brazil, and now combine to form a network that offers a complete cocaine service from production to trafficking across Colombia’s borders. They maintain a tight hold over key strategic territories and a significant military capacity\(^{11}\).

(7) Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común – F.A.R.C. - when the official disarmament and demobilization of the F.A.R.C.-E.P. was completed with almost circa 9,000 arms handed over the then new political party denominated as the Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común – F.A.R.C. was officially formed. Accordingly a census conducted in 2017 presented over 10,000 former F.A.R.C.-E.P. members who had participated in this process, 55% of which were guerrilla fighters, 29% were members of the F.A.R.C.’s militia networks and 16% were released prisoners. However, other thousands more either rejected the peace process or simply did not participate in it all, at all, and it is from beyond the scenes UN-led & the government of Colombia operations that the ex-F.A.R.C.-E.P now denominated also as a mafia was established. By estimations, the then ex-F.A.R.C. mafia currently presents, at least, 2,500 former F.A.R.C.-E.P. members, who have established a presence in over half the country’s Departments. These new criminal groups have taken several different forms, some more related to their combatants’ predecessors than others. By and large all of them have already made themselves as key actors in the Colombian cocaine illegal trade economy promptly. Due to their military experience, knowledge of the drug trafficking trade and roots expertise in rural communities, the ex-F.A.R.C.-E.P. mafia networks, in fact, do present the real potential to actually become the most powerful territorial actors in the Colombian scenario for a generation to come\(^{12}\);

(8) The FARC-RIM - the demobilization of the F.A.R.C.-E.P. has also opened ways for a new generation of criminal groups comprised of ex-F.A.R.C.-E.P. combatants who did not declare themselves


dissidents but simply did not take part into the peace process but still working on their domains as per their usual activities. These criminalized ex-F.A.R.C.-E.P. elements have been enabled to form other new groups that are taking over the criminal economies formerly run by the demobilized sectors / Fronts of the former F.A.R.C.-E-P.’s networks. Thus, the FARC-PRIM do significantly vary in size, ranging from small cells of a handful of former combatants to more upscale powerful structures with hundreds of members and associated others. For instance, among the members of the FARC-PRIM there are not only former combatants and militia members but also increasing youth gangs and other ordinary criminals that the F.A.R.C.-E.P. had used somehow as sub-contracted criminal labour force but then were isolated during the implementation of the peace process. Moreover even former paramilitaries groups have been reportedly working with their former enemies in the field. Worth noticing that, unlike the denominated dissidents, these OCGs have not made attempts to establish even a denominated facade over the continuation alongside the F.A.R.C.’s political struggle or social role within the National Congress. Rather than that they simply opted to focus immediately over the cocaine trade supply chain plus respective networks and possible additional partners upon their own criteria and convenience. Their presence has been registered evidently in the southwest regions of the country. As a result these OCGs have become considered the main perpetrators of armed violence mainly for territorial disputes with rival armed actors, such as the E.L.N. (Ejercito de Liberación Nacional) and the Urabeños, as well. To finalize over them they have been reportedly acting differently once cooperating units and sub-units is not their strong point once they do fight each other over drug trafficking interests and respective routes and benefits.

(9) The denominated ‘Hidden’ F.A.R.C. – it was curiously formed in 2000 after the foundation of the F.A.R.C.’s Bolivarian Movement itself when the combatants were also supported by militias through logistics and intelligence, finance networks through illegal economies within due penetration sectors of the State and continued on the political front by acting somehow as a reserve force that kept as civilians but also kept lived committing armed attacks. According to both State and non-State sources for every uniformed element there were at least three militiamen, what means that if around 5,500 F.A.R.C.-E.P. fighters demobilized then there should have been at least other 15,000 militia members and many more if

---

one estimates including the combatants who actually never demobilized, at all. As a matter of fact, nonetheless, under circa 3,000 militiamen did take part in this process. As for the remaining ones where they have always been literally “hidden” among the civilians in F.A.R.C.-E.P. areas of influence, and in most cases they do continue to drive the same criminal economies they have always done in the long run before this then highly elusive peace process. The presence of the denominated Hidden F.A.R.C. is most evident in areas where the F.A.R.C.-E.P. were based and now where there are no room for dissidents or FARCRIM elements present but there has been not that considerably key for a major shift to the drug trafficking trade, like the ones witnessed to date in Caquetá and in Putumayo, for instance. The key fact is that this trade economy continues nonstop basically highlighting it is all because the same combatants are running it all, namely the denominated former F.A.R.C.-E.P. elements

(10) Bandas Armadas Criminales (BACRIM) – they are operational illegally and throughout the whole country with transnational networks presenting its origin since the DDR and SSR conducted within the Government of Colombia, the paramilitary groups under the supervision of the O.A.S. (Organization of American States) Peace Support Mission to Colombia, in the middle and late 2000s (2006 precisely) when the OCG denominated as the A.A.N.N. (Águilas Negras) was solely operational in the frontier with Venezuela and the number of combatants did not outnumber about 200 narcotics-traffickers and respectively combatants in a few cities in the Department of Norte de Santander;

(11) Los Caqueteños - according to the Colombian Police (DIJIN), this is an increasingly emerging OCG, “which controls, along with the F.D.N., drug trafficking across the land and river frontier between Brazil, Peru and Colombia.” As per the source itself: "We estimate that every 20 days, about 600 kilograms of drugs are delivered to the F.D.N., which gives us about 11 tons of cocaine a year," an official from DIJIN, the Colombian Federal Police, said. After being processed, the drug is sent to Brazil via the Putumayo and Amazonas rivers. In addition to a partner of the Brazilian OCGs it owns the narcotics trafficking markets in the Departments of Caqueta, Hila, Putumayo and Amazonia. For the Police itself this OCG is a potential recipient of F.A.R.C.-E.P. dissidents. The cities of Manaus, Brazil,

Tarapacá and Leticia, in Colombia, are the main storage centre for the Caqueteños shipments, and from there the F.D.N. becomes the partner OCG in charge of shipping them, mainly to Europe.”

(12) Family clans (such as the “Los Champas” in 2017) – they remain continuously operational in the State of Loreto (Province de Mariscal Ramón Castilla), Peru, in association with local authorities in one of the most volatile hence most challenging scenarios for SSR intervention policies due to the simple denomination of “gangs” rather than basically structured organized criminal groups, which have been reportedly regularly dismantled and thereafter resurfing through other denominations as well as through other family and authorities’ ties at this local levels in approximately every six months and / or per year, what makes it even more difficult to meet and address their modus operandi as well as their local bases of support, also in coordination with other more less volatile but relatively well-identified but not clearly well-spotted OCGs and NSAGs alike, namely operational both in Brazil and Colombia;

IV – Conclusion

Competing and / or in-cooperation / in-coordination NSAGs and OCGs have been multiplying all over these countries and respective regions and sub regions, their bases of support remain questionable and also changing considerably from regions to regions, and in some cases their strategies remain majorly at the early but also strategic phases of military strategies of accumulation of resources and maximization of benefits and territorial gains and respective bases of support, whereas in some other cases their status quo,


16 “Indica la nota de contrainteligencia que su padre habría pertenecido a una banda criminal que operaba con armas de guerra tipo AKM en el ámbito de la ciudad de Iquitos y en la zona de frontera con Colombia y Brasil, en el trapecio amazónico, denominada los “Champas”, liderado por un ex miembro de la Guardia Republicana, cuyos integrantes ejecutaban asaltos a mano armada a las embarcaciones fluviales que navegaban por los ríos Amazonas y el Putumayo; asimismo, a nivel macro transportaban droga y dinero procedente de organizaciones criminales dedicadas, al acopio, transporte y comercialización de estupefacientes, así como también, despojaban y asesinaban a sus rivales con el propósito de apoderarse de sus “mercancías”. In Diario Judicial de Loreto (2017) in Delincuentes vinculados al crimen organizado estarían infiltrando a sus hijos a la Policía Nacional de Iquitos”, La Region de Loreto, Peru, in: https://diariolaregion.com/web/delincuentes-vinculados-al-crimen-organizado-estarian-infiltrando-a-sus-hijos-a-la-policia-nacional-de-iquitos/

despite more military and socially advanced in terms of bases of identity, power, norms and cohesion, they remain more as what might be described as only NSAGs and OCGs. In the face of those States and also non-State legitimacy gaps it is of paramount importance to analyse myriad players but mainly to focus on the evolvement and genealogy / modus operandi of the NSAGs and OCGs who in fact outnumber enormously local State authorities, then continuing to be the major perpetrators of the cycles of armed violence presented to date, not exclusively to this micro region but also through a vast transnational network but not be addressed on this research paper.

According to the sectors and sub-sectors and temporal divisions it is necessary to pragmatically assume that the actors and respective relations are parts of a process that is even wider than one might expect and that is notoriously also internationally structured (WALTZ) as well as socially constituted from a local / grassroots level to the national, regional and international top levels (WENDT), what has been eventually constituted simultaneously as a major challenge to date.

In this specific regard the core problems over crises of identity and power, State sovereignty and legitimacy as well as the relations of power politics do vehemently arise in the face of central problems on the fundamental issues on identity and power that are related to the same problems in the realm of State sovereignty and legitimacy which can then be based on the following analysis that the NSAGs and OCGs are considered the local options hence somehow transitory and volatile new unitary structures within an international system of States or then classified as only unitary transitory structures in transitory scenarios of a certain order and disorder of an intra-State and respectively of an international scenario too. In this sense identity and power are related to the respective re-structuring that are key elements in analysing the transitory - or non-transitory – features in processes of intra-State and transnational cycles of armed violence. According to PHILPOTT (2001) the denominated revolutions in sovereignty create new international constitutions, new orders that legitimize even new ideologies and notions of justice even though it hardly determines that ideas and philosophies enable highly questionable social and political revolutionary armed violent orders in due problematic evolvements18.

At a vital domestic level of analysis – through the State and government authority levels – the first role of ideas over enabling States to regain their legitimacy and sovereignty relies on fostering and converging individuals to new types of leaderships leading them to new State-centred political ends. The second role of ideas is to regain social power by fostering heads of States to conduct new revised inclusive policies and fostering guidelines to overcome the armed actors out of the States apparatuses.

In this sense constructivism could also be considered at the micro-levels as per their units and sub-units by the national interest of States to make these citizens become more and more influenced from a domestic perspective rather than from an exclusive inter-State relation intervention framework and then a proposal that focus on constituting the origin of such influence on social, political and economic disorders on sovereignties and legitimacies alike towards bringing the State back in these scenarios.\(^\text{19}\)

Accordingly, to the realist theories anarchy is not constant and it is constant only in case it generates a relative permanent scarceness, which is most of times transitory. However, in this triple frontier the transition factor does not cease to evolve erroneously and off control of States’ authorities, what deserves an international attention in this article, to say the least, so that the de-escalation of the NSAGs and OCGs do come to become a reality in the medium and long term rather than a status quo dysfunctional scenario for all these three countries involved.

Therefore the so-called phenomenon about the emergence, increase, diminution, fragmentation and regrouping of NSAG is the central problem of this research that analyses from themes such as local prevention to the themes of transnational public policies interventions and in some worrisome isolated States’ self-defence cases even extremes cases of registered armed interventions as well. In this context of the international policies on the debate directed to the academic research applied to the field, denominated bases for the crises of power and identities and the respective crises of legitimacy and State sovereignty deserve prompt due attention and meticulous further thoroughly conducted research. The analysis on the securitization of a UN Mission structure, such as the on-going one in Colombia for example, deserves proper attention not exclusively for the illegal triangulation of weaponry during the D.D.R. process but

also as per the development of a construction process on the common understanding about a particular scenario / region that should be considered both individually and collectively as a real or potential threat by several other public and private actors as well, namely posed to the whole international community alike, in the end.

Consequently, in short this research in international politics over the on-going revisions of the architecture of the UN system of States has been considered as an inherent problem of transnational security dilemmas and challenges posed to these States there located that must vehemently include prevention, mediation, dialogue, resolution, mitigation and all respective possible correlated mechanisms through multi-dimensional public intervention policies

Challenges

* Difficulties in collecting minimum secondary data from the local levels does remain absurdly appalling, what myriad factors and variables;

* National policies for public security are unfortunately a new concept and government strategy in Brazil when it comes to address organized criminal groups. There is not even an centralized Federal database - Sistema Único da Segurança Pública (S.U.S.P.) - for analysis for interventions, to date;

20 “Taking note of the report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (A/70/95-S/2015/446) and the report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations of 17 June 2015 (A/70/357-S/2015/682) and the report of the Secretary-General of 17 September 2015 (S/2015/716) submitting the results of the Global Study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and encouraging coherence, synergies, and complementarities in taking them forward. Reaffirming the primary responsibility of national governments and authorities in identifying, driving and directing priorities, strategies and activities for sustaining peace, and in this regard, emphasizing that inclusivity is key to advancing national peace building processes and objectives in order to ensure that the needs of all segments of society are taken into account. Stressing that civil society can play an important role in advancing efforts to sustain peace. Recalling General Assembly resolution A/70/1, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets. Calls for a further comprehensive review of United Nations peace building at its seventy-fourth session”
* The State authorities are not legitimate nor sovereign in vast portions of this region once it does lack capabilities not only to monitor but to address the increasing bases of local support to this actors;

* There is a problematic issue of non-compliance, fear and lack of information and commitment provided by the local authorities to the State authorities both at the grassroots and top levels, what may suggest that the levels of possibly forced obligation to these actors and even myriad cases of corruption schemes have become established and beyond de facto official speculation;

* There is no proper structuration of SSR intervention policies hindered also by lack of financial resources directed to the challenges presented;

* There is an unfortunate (in all these three countries) presentation of not properly equipped Police to implement the interventions policies that are not exclusively military anyhow but also to be focused on civilian issues too;

* There is a need to work out better centralization versus de-centralization operations considering the on-going mistrust from both levels. Accordingly public order and SSR does also rely on finances, which are nearly divided into cities´ and States´ budgets (States themselves are the responsible Units if our Federation for the functioning of both civilian and military Policies alike);

* There is an increasingly lack of interest and safety for local regional and international enterprises to establish their companies there in order to provide alternatives to local populations for being properly integrated in legal economies;

* There are efforts but no proper convergence of an international (triple) long-term task SSR force to meet and address the problematic presented. The international cooperation task forces have been very punctual, through extremely short-term periods and in most cases isolated within each countries´ territories to date, what in fact does not suffice addressing the root causes nor interrupting this illicit trade of myriad goods (and even humans) at all;

* There is a core need to address the weaponry issue. In 2017, the State and the Federal Police seized precisely 119,484 firearms, which is equivalent to 327 per day. The key fact is that about 94.9% of these seizures were not registered in the Federal Police system (S.I.N.A.R.M.), what makes it very difficult to
investigate the origin of the weaponry. In sum, out of its total, approximately 13,782 weapons that were seized went out of the legal market and ended up "lost" or even "stolen", having then as final destination the members of the NSAGs OCGs;

Solutions

* Address the power vacuum created by the temporary withdrawals of NSAGs and OCGs – namely the non-State legitimacy gaps – versus the limited capacities of the UN Missions, IGOs and local partners alike to take control through the establishment of a proper socially constructed political community’s legitimacy and sovereignty within a State apparatus;

* Address the phases of cycles of armed violence such as the escalation of other armed confrontation in territory disputes simultaneously with more and more asymmetric warfare modus operandi and local population massive arrivals and lack of infrastructure, the presence of mines, bombs, IEDs and other armaments that also require to be addressed, met and hence cleared;

* Address the effective stabilization requires positive relationships between the peace builders and the local population at all levels;

* Build capable, legitimate, and inclusive national security forces - also - through inclusive DDR and SSR reformulations;

* Address the strategic alignment among the UNSC, the Secretariat and TCC / PCCs, as well as some of the Council’s working methods that frame (and limit) the Council’s authorisation, design and oversight of peace operations in a very timely manner;

* Address the volatile budget contributions by converging local, regional and international efforts alike;

* Address the mounting hostility by several host governments (in this case the sole operational UN DPA Mission is still operational in Colombia but already highly-doomed to its overall failure at the national level) is testing the UNSC’s will and capability to support politically the operations it has authorised;

* Address the limitations of the revision in respect to realities in the field once the NSAGs and OCGs are not operated case per case but included in a large scale denominations, sometimes even being represented
by the major NSAGs and OCGs whereas there are myriad other armed actors not being even registered nor properly analysed to be basically addressed to date;

* Address the need of the constant revisions of the Reports simply due to and vis-à-vis the highly rapid changing realities in the field for the reasons already above highlighted, even and also mainly at the language level per se;

* Focus on financial resources to the Intelligence (in all 03 countries) to avoid the continuing dependence over international Intelligence and a posteriori unification of data;

* Focus on the interventions over disarticulations on the finances of all these actors involved in the Amazon trapezoid;

* The States cannot be dis associated anyhow from its citizens. State-centred and people-centred approaches are concepts adopted by the UN and its State Members that in fact does not generate inclusiveness but it creates an erroneous segregation once people do constitute the State and vice and verse. Citizenship must be re conceptualized otherwise in such regions citizens will continue to feel not included within State apparatuses and hence these armed actors will gain more and more ground through their integration, namely bases of support, into their illegal activities whereas the States themselves will become increasingly less legitimate hence less sovereigns;

* There is a core need to address the intelligence and anti-corruption strategies over the weaponry issue via the S.I.N.A.R.M., as an example, in 2017, the State and the Federal Police seized 119,484 firearms, which is equivalent to 327 per day. The key fact is that about 94.9% of these seizures were not registered in the Federal Police system (S.I.N.A.R.M.) makes it difficult to investigate the origin of the weaponry. In sum, of the total, approximately 13,782 weapons that were seized went out of the legal market and ended up "lost" or even "stolen", having then as final destination the members of the NSAGs and OCGs;

* Raise uninterrupted public awareness campaigns whilst attempting to empower strategic industries and commercial services whenever that shall be regarded as possible in order to put an end to the also key factor of the already long-lasting and very well-grounded vicious circle of the illicit economy trade and respective markets chains operational for decades to date;
* Address local conflict resolution and mediation methodologies once when the rule of law is not properly operational (customary laws do vary considerably and there is not even proper analyses on addressing this issue) it is key to analyse beyond traditional law enforcement (also denominated s customary law rather than the traditional de jure laws´ system);

* Develop a coordinated transnational response considering that Operations of such a large scale are not the norm for myriad reasons and facts. However smaller-scale efforts coordinated through Interpol, as an example, could frequently provide very important regular results;

* Address money laundering and tracking illicit financial flows to disrupt their (NSAGs´ and OCGs´) activities. Financial data on money laundering related to the NSAGs and OCGs are key for pragmatic investigations that does come to also rely heavily on victims´ testimonies. Moreover, apart from also focusing investigations over national authorities over their possible suspicious transactions perpetrated by their officers, the financial institutions do actually need to start to strive more and more to tackle and hence eliminate the vicious circle from their clients´ supply chains by making the provision of financial services contingent on the same clients´ compliance with anti-illegal trade economy consolidated for decades to date.

V – References


Christensen, T.J. and Snyder, J. (1990), in "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity”, International Organization, vol. 4, no. 2 (Published by the World Peace Foundation and MIT);


