

## **BRAZIL'S FIGHT AGAINST NARCOTRAFFIC IN THE BORDER WITH COLOMBIA. AN APPROACH TO THE RESTRAINS OF NON-TRADITIONAL THREATS OVER FOREIGN POLICY**

**Emilse Calderón**

[emilsecalderon@hotmail.com](mailto:emilsecalderon@hotmail.com)

Post-doc researcher of the Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET); teacher and researcher at the Facultad de Ciencia Política y Relaciones Internacionales de la Universidad Nacional de Rosario (Argentina). Doctorate in International Relations.

### **Abstract**

In the post-Cold War international scenario, the non-traditional nature of security threats conditions the states' foreign policies. An example of the above is the policy employed by Brazil regarding the border shared with Colombia regarding the development that narcotraffic has been having since the end of the 20th century. Therefore, this article proposes a brief analysis around the influence exercised by the non-traditional nature of the drug traffic threat over the design of Brazilian foreign policy between 1999 and 2010.

### **Keywords:**

Non-traditional threats; foreign policy; narcotraffic; Brazil; Colombian border

### **How to cite this article**

Calderón, Emilse (2014). "Brazil's fight against narcotraffic in the border with Colombia. An approach to the restrains of non-traditional threats over foreign policy". *JANUS.NET e-journal of International Relations*, Vol. 5, N.º 1, May-October 2014. Consulted [online] on date of last view, [observare.ual.pt/janus.net/en\\_vol5\\_n1\\_art1](http://observare.ual.pt/janus.net/en_vol5_n1_art1)

**Article received on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2014; accepted for publication on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2014**



## **BRAZIL'S FIGHT AGAINST NARCOTRAFFIC IN THE BORDER WITH COLOMBIA. AN APPROACH TO THE RESTRAINS OF NON-TRADITIONAL THREATS OVER FOREIGN POLICY**

**Emilse Calderón**

### **Introduction**

During the first years of the 21st century, narcotraffic consolidates its ascension in the security agenda of Latin American states and, specifically, those in South America. The inherent challenge of this threat lies in its non-traditional nature<sup>1</sup> and threatens the political and institutional stability countries from a perspective of democratic government.

The demonstration of the said non-traditional nature can be particularly seen in the states' border zones. These geographical areas are permanently made vulnerable by the development of different transnational activities connected with narcotraffic that, in turn, demonstrates the connection between public security situations of border countries through the networks of transnational crime. Thus, these patches of border are built as the symbolic territorial reference of a threat whose essence is indisputably globalized and show the circumstance that drug trafficking concretely threatens the international security and not only the national security of an individually considered State.

The Colombian-Brazilian border does not escape from this reality and even is witness to a particular situation that aggravates the security scene, configured in function of the relationship made by narcotraffic groups and the illegal players of the armed conflict in Colombia since several decades.

According to this scenario, and from an interdomestic of International Relations (Putnam, 1988), according to which foreign policy is a product of systemic influences and of domestic variations, one can state that the non-traditional characteristics acquired by the security threats, such as narcotraffic, in the internal scope of the states, condition their foreign policies.

Consequently, this article approaches the measures and actions adopted by Brazilian governments for narcotraffic fight in the border zones shared with Colombia, between 1999 and 2010. In it, we aim to expose the conditioning relation that is made between the said threat and Brazilian foreign policy regarding Colombia.

---

<sup>1</sup> The non-traditional nature of a threat to international lies in the fact that it is a non-military challenge and originates on the inside of a State, so it is brought forward by different players in it and which possess action with transnational reach.



Therefore, the article is structured in three parts. In the first one, it is performed a brief characterization of the situation in the Colombian-Brazilian border with the aim of clarifying the synergy that this geographical context establishes with narcotraffic. The second item organizes the fight measures and actions adopted by the governments of F. H. Cardoso and L. I. da Silva to detect traces of the influence that that illegal activity exerts over the design of the Brazilian foreign policy. Lastly, we reflect about the way in which the non-traditional nature of narcotraffic conditions the foreign policy that that country employs in the border zone with Colombia.

### **1. The Colombian-Brazilian border: contrasting realities and a single threat**

Immerse in an international context in which exists a kind of non-traditional conflictuality, the Latin-American region is the recipient of the impact of different threats to security. Particularly, the region is intensively affected by drug trafficking that disseminated with and accentuated virulence since the beginning of the 1990s, along with the spreading of globalization, which enlarged the reach and transcendence of traffic networks.

Thus, the conjunction of the market's globalization, the fluidity of capitals through the global financial network, the quickness and ease of transportation and the revolution in communications concocted a reality prone to the accelerated development of drug trafficking as a business that already presented itself with important profit levels (Gramunt, 2006). Furthermore, the global projection of narcotraffic annulled the international division between the consumer countries in the North and the the producers of the South, the first installing themselves as providers of laboratory or designer drugs, such as ecstasy and methamphetamines, and increasing consumption in the latter in a most notorious way.

Then, broadly speaking, narcotraffic is an illegal productive-commercial circuit of drugs prohibited by the World Health Organization, inserted in transnational organized crime as a specialized kind of traffic, shared with smuggling, money laundering, corruption and violence as instruments from illegal and criminal action (Calderón, 2008). This circuit has the capacity to condition, debilitate and erode the State and its capacity to control the population and its territory and to exert the monopoly of strength. To a certain extent, the reason for this is that narcotraffic involves several social players with different involvement and profit degrees attached to the kind of activity performed. The said circuit is operated by organizations that range from the small band, through the networks that have a bigger quantity of contacts and operate as cells, up to Cartels that determine the market's characteristics and infiltrate in international networks. On the other hand, the drug business is connected with other illegal traffics, mainly gun traffic, increasing the risks for civil societies through the generation of violence and the degradation of democratic institutions due to the penetration of corruption in political structures.

Beyond the precisions that can we made about the characteristics that narcotraffic possesses in the region and how it has evolved as a threat, the most relevant data to take into account is that the strengthening of traffic networks and the generation of violence occurs in an economic and social context that favours the reproduction of the conditions needed for the illegal business to continue its rise. This reference is



fundamental to analyse and evaluate the real range of the challenge implied by drug trafficking and the possibilities that certain public policies have to effectively confront it.

The increase of poverty and disparity and, in the end, of exclusion, are realities that explain and even internally entitle the option for illegal business. This implies the existence of a positive impact (Cockayne, 2007) of narcotraffic in the part of society, which, in a context of state absence, perceives a relative improvement of its economic situation and, furthermore, is connected to the sense of belonging generated through the inclusion of young people in criminal groups. The possibility of the occurrence and consolidation of the said positive impact is the greatest risk that threatens the State, since it affects and directly compromises government. A situation such as this challenges the materialization of the prerogatives that compose statesmanship and lead to the characterization of such threats as insidious (Williams, 1995).

Considering the described context, it is not difficult to understand why most of the Latin-American border fringes are an environment propitious to the installation of illegal traffic networks. These areas are characterised by being very underdeveloped, in many cases underpopulated and usually clad in a halo of oblivion by state action that, historically, has centred itself in rural areas rich in agricultural resources or in urban areas. A context such as this makes the reproduction of the conditions for poverty and exclusion as functional, these being necessary for drug trafficking, such as other illegal traffics, to prosper and to be perceived as a valid alternative to achieve survival.

In the specific case of the Colombian-Brazilian border, until the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the new century, the scene is completed with the danger derived from the ongoing-armed conflict that Colombia is going through the relation of guerrilla groups and the self-defences with the narcotraffic groups. The said bond is developed under the form of financing of the irregular combat activities, especially since the beginning of the 1990s, making the threat of drug trafficking especially relevant and particularly serious in the country<sup>2</sup>.

For the year 2000, the border of the Colombian side, that matches the Amazonas, Vaupés and Guainía departments, houses a population mainly concentrated in the capitals of the first two. Apart from the fact that 30% of the population is indigenous, settlers make up the border villages from the rest of the country and that are located near the borderline, at less than 500 km. These populations are the poorest of the total of the Colombian border and it is usually said that some are so poor they do not even have guerrilla (Sierra, 2003). The scarce regional economy is bond by the presence of the port in Leticia, the most relevant city and the articulation between the Vaupés and the Amazon through important rivers that can be navigated during 8 months of the year. The rest of the zone's infrastructure is very precarious and does not allow one to speak of a system that connects the region with the national territory, with very few landing strips and small piers. There is also no service of water and energy networks. On the other hand, illegal activities are centred in in the informal mining in Guainía, especially the search for gold, generating transborder population movement from Brazil. Furthermore, this is one activity that is guaranteed by the Fuerças Armadas

---

<sup>2</sup> It is also important to mention that, as the years went on, the border zones of the Andean country have been transforming themselves in the area of strategic fall-back of armed groups from the instrumentalization of the military advancements under the scope of the Plan Colombia, such as the Plan Patriota and of the Plan Victoria, in 2003 and 2006, respectively (Isacson and Poe, 2009).



Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) (El Tiempo, 23/7/2001). The cocaine plantations in Guainía and Vaupes have a very low density and are centred in the areas around the main river ways, whilst the traffic routes come from Colombia to Brazil and supplies, groceries and arms do the inverse route. The guerrilla, on its turn, also enters Brazilian territory to supply itself with all kinds of products, from groceries to chemical products from Manaus to make cocaine. Regardless, the only registered permanent present of armed groups is from the 1st and 16th FARC fronts (Rabasa, 2001). Finally, we have to say that Leticia possesses the only landing strip of average capacity, since it is the starting point of the border, in the South-North sense, concentrating the security and defence mechanism for the total of the border with Brazil, with a high concentration of troops and connected with other post only through plane. Therefore, it is the area's most important operation base, responsible for the control of the Amazon river in the Colombian territory (Fundación Seguridad & Democracia, 2009).

From the Brazilian side, one finds the Amazonas State and in the areas next to the border, the population is grouped in villages of around one-thousand people, with Tabatinga being the city with the largest demographic concentration and commercial centre. The border inhabitants are mainly indigenous people. The economy is relevant due to the river connection between villages and the most important activities are commerce, transportation through the Amazon river and low-scale agriculture and livestock breeding. The aerial infrastructure is also much superior to the Colombian side and is made up by a minimum of 6 aerodromes, an international one in Tabatinga and a national one in São Gabriel (Sierra, 2003). The energy infrastructure is incipient, but has an important generation source from different hydroelectric power plants, determining the communications great reach. The zone in which the border with Colombia is inserted is of high strategic value for Brazil due to the ecosystem's characteristics and its relevance as a hydric, mineral and wood reserve. This explains the State's will to strengthen its presence and to include this geographic area in the functioning of the rest of the country, connecting it through basic infrastructure works (El Tiempo, 10/8/2003).

As one can see, there is an accentuated contrast between the situations of both fringes of the border. From the Colombian side, this circumstance is a reflection of the state of retraction of the national government due to the clash of political violence that almost had Bogotá sieged in the year 2000. On the other hand, from the Brazilian side, the proactive behaviour from the government is based on the need to exert an effective control of the territory in the said areas, connected with two issues. One is the accomplishment of the national project that intends to physically integrate the border zone in the rest of the country due to its strategic importance. The other concerns the need that the Brazilian government has of spreading a positive image related with the state's capacity to run its own fate in a safe way for itself and its neighbours. Regardless of this difference between the actions of Colombia and Brazil, there is no doubt that the shared border zone has become a fertile environment for the development of narcotraffic. This threat open and consistently defies the states' public security, Colombian and Brazilian, in the border zone, since the said illegal activity establishes a very strong link between the domestic security situations of both countries.



Therefore, as one may see in the next section, the concepts of security and defence are no longer delimited with clarity in the border zone and to use them as a domestic and international reference, respectively, puts it in perspective and mixes it.

## **2. An approach to the measures that Brazil implements in its border with Colombia**

Since the end of the 1990s, the Brazilian government expresses its will to cooperate with Colombia to fight drug trafficking, since the border zone is one of the most important traffic routes for the exit of cocaine to the United States and Europe, through Africa. Regarding this subject, one has to remember that 60% of cocaine consumed in the United States by them came from the well-known 'white triangle', region that encompasses the border areas of Brazil, Colombia and Peru. Thus, through river and, mainly, through plane, the drug flowed without control from the Colombian territory and enjoyed from the best infrastructure capacities from the Brazilian side. In this sense, it is important to clarify that, or the year 2000, according to the annual evaluation made by Washington, Brazil was recognized as the largest drug transit country and the biggest producer of chemical precursors. Nevertheless, and although it is not considered as a significant producer of drugs beyond having disperse cannabis plantations, it signalled that it can lead to the establishment of cocaine processing, due to the volume of the traffic of precursors that go through its territory (US Department of State, 2001). Furthermore, the Foreign Affairs Minister, Celso Lafer, stated then Brazil's will to

*'... intensify the diplomatic actions and the also aid in the replacement of plantations. However, we also want to go further in the control and supervision of the air space and border movement.'* (Gosman, 18/4/2001).

However, facing the border scene presented in the previous section, the Brazilian governments immediately activate different actions and measures in agreement with the increase of the danger potential of the narcotraffic threat. The same are used regarding security and defence, as in the area concerning the economic and social border development and, in both cases, condition Brazilian foreign policy in two ways.

Firstly, the transnationality of the narcotraffic threat and its potential propitiates the action of the Brazilian Armed Forces in the border zones shared in the Andean country. The execution of the measures and actions proposed by the Brazilian government put the policy of public security in contact, in charge of the Brazilian Police, with the defence policy, embodied through the action of the Armed Forces and, furthermore, it is an integral part of the State's foreign policy scheme regarding the strategic-military plan. Secondly, the non-traditional characteristics of drug trafficking as a threat to security also help to the establishment of more fluid bonds between Brasília and Bogotá, aiming to achieve some degree of coordination in its fight.

Considering these two items as expressions of the conditioning exercised by the non-traditional nature of narcotraffic over the design of Brazil's foreign policy, we will know



present a scheme of the main measures and actions adopted by the Cardoso and da Silva governments in their respective scope.

*\* The crossing between the security policy and the defence policy in the Colombian-Brazilian border zone.*

Regarding the point signalled as the first line of conditioning over the design of the Brazilian foreign policy, it is important to mention that the action of the Armed Forces in the implantation and execution of the measures and actions planned by the Brazilian Government has a central role given the imperative logic of national contention of the insecurity floods coming from the neighbouring country. This is seen even in the measures and actions thought to be implemented in the scope of the economic and social border development.

However, we will start with scope of security and defence. Bearing in mind the quickness with which the increment in the danger of the narcotraffic threat is dealt with, in the year 2000, the government of Fernando Enrique Cardoso launched two specific policies. In June, the National Plan of Public Security and, in September, the Operation COBRA, both destined to strengthen the surveillance and control of the Brazilian frontiers through the improvement of the coercive media of the security forces and of the Armed Forces, shown in their human, technical and logistic resources. Furthermore, in that same year, Operation Tabatinga was put in place to identify and detain drug traffickers. It is also important to say that, since 1997, the Amazon Surveillance System, known by the acronym SIVAM, had been starting to be built, with radars and information collection stations destined to process satellite images (El Tiempo, 13/12/2002).

The containment logic in the measures implemented by the Cardoso government is clear and is reiterated in the actions put forwards during the Luis Inácio da Silva government, condensing a greater amount of measures for the border fight of the narcotraffic threat. In this sense, one has to underline the activities performed by the Armed Forces and, among those, the execution of several joint training operations in the geographical area corresponding to the Comando Militar da Amazônia (CMA). Namely, operation Ajuricaba in 2003 and 2005; Timbo I, II, III, and IV in 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006; Tucunaré and Jauru both in 2006; Solimões in 2007; Poraquê in 2008; and Ribeirez Amazônia and Amazonía, in 2010. To the exception of Jauru and Poraquê, those exercises had ends that can be associated with military containment of the Colombian violence through the extension and reinforcement of the Brazilian State in the border zone. It is important to underline that all operations report the need to optimize the planning and execution of combined operations; intensify the military presence on earth in the border through patrols, recognisance missions, protection of sensible installations, civic and social actions and logistic actions, to establish control and supervision in strategic points; to capacitate themselves to restore the territorial integrity in case it was affected, being able to recover installations and equipment under control of enemy sources, regular or not, in the jungle area.

As for the extension and reinforcement of the presence of the Brazilian state, one also has to mention that this is a goal that is enunciated as one of the points of the Army's Basic Structuring Plan, specifically in the north-western border, area under the CMA's responsibility, showing the need to enlarge dissuasive military capacity. Along with this,



during 2006 is made the transfer and/or transformation to such end of different military organizations contained inside the CMA and, according to the revised official reports, is achieved in the creation of Special Border Platoons, another of the ends of the Basic Plan (Verde Oliva, 2006: number 189).

Returning to joint military exercises, it is no lesser data that from the 22 made between 2000 and 2010 in the entire country (Página Informativa Ministério de Defesa do Brasil, 30/10/2010; Página Informativa Força Aérea do Brasil, 26/02/2011), 12 had as theatre of operations the Amazon region and, in the end, were under the CMA's direction. This is indication of the strategic centrality of the Amazon area and of the perception of threat that Brasília has. One has to remember that the first exercise of this kin, the operation Querai, was performed in 1999, the year in which the strategic advancement of the Colombian guerrilla and the fears that its conflict surpassed the border began. Thus, we have to highlight that the CMA is unique amongst the 7 Area Military Commands in which the Brazilian army is organized, for having under its command 60% of the national territory and for having 3 kinds of differentiated military organizations (detachment, platoons and companies) (Verde Oliva, 2009: number 200). Furthermore, the Amazon region has a particular military doctrine, Gama, a product of the recognition that, on one hand, there are differences between conflict hypothesis according to the national environment in which it takes place; on the other hand, from a more general perspective that includes the total of the conflict scenes, one recognizes the changes in the operational needs of the Army as the root of the impact of technological advancement and of the non-traditional threats in the complexity of the conflict (Verde Oliva, 2006: number 187).

Coming to the scope of the economic and social frontier development, although Brazil has the Programa Calha Norte, with national reach, lots of publicity and activities with an indisputable social impact, that plan also implies the reinforcement of the medium and the police and military capacities to fortify the presence, surveillance and military control of the State.

Created in 1985 to contribute to the occupation and the ordered development of the Amazon region, the Programa Calha Norte was relaunched in 1997 and, after being subordinated to different bodies of the national government, it was put under the wing of the Ministry of Defence, with the aim of increasing the presence of the State contributing to the national defence and aiding populations. Therefore, its execution is in charge of the Armed Forces, as '... radiating poles of sustainable social and environmentally correct development.' (Programa Calha Norte 2005) and the resources flow to it directly or through agreements subscribed by the Ministry of Defence with the States and Municipal Prefectures. The resources are directed to projects of basic infrastructure or equipment acquisition; hence, the more than considerable reach in the most inhospitable region of the national territory. Regardless, the parallel function of the Program as a tool to ensure the jurisdiction of the Brazilian State and allow for the surveillance of the strategic interests is indisputable. Thus, although civil financing, for instance, between 2005 and 2009, is more than the double of the one given to the military sector, the latter is incremented from 2007 onwards, and, furthermore, it is constantly increased indirectly by the first, since all activities developed in the civil scope, or at least its majority, have a double function (Página Informativa Ministério de Defesa do Brasil, 18/11/2010).





*\*The bilateral cooperation bonds between the governments of Brazil and Colombia.*

Continuing with the border actions made effective by the Brazilian governments, the absence of situations of raids and tension with Colombia and the Brazilian will to allow for a more fluid and close bond allow a good development of the cooperation bilateral relations in the scope of security and defence. Thus, the measures and actions taken by Brazil do not only have a containment aim, but also, furthermore, intend to establish interstate cooperation bonds to benefit a common fight against the narcotraffic threat.

That said aim is expressed in the density of international compromises acquired and the mechanisms performed with Colombia during the da Silva terms. Therefore, in 2003, there was an Understanding Memorandum between the Ministries of Defence regarding Cooperation for Defence and, in 2008, this gave way to the Agreement about Cooperation Regarding Defence at the national governments level. Also in 2003, there was an Exchange Agreement for Diplomatic Notes to Create a Bilateral Work Group for the Repression of Criminality and Terrorism, establishing the creation of a Brazil-Colombia Work Group between the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Justice Ministries for the promotion of the cooperation and exchange of information aiming at the said repression. Furthermore, there is the first Round of Conversations between the General Staff of the Brazilian Defence and the Colombian Military Forces for the exchange and update of information and the coordinated work between the military forces in the border area aiming to fight transnational infractions. Along the same line of meetings, we find the Bilateral Conferences of the Chiefs of General Staff and, in 2004, the First Bilateral Meeting of Intelligence between the Air Forces. Furthermore, in 2008, the ministers of Defence Juan Manuel Santos and Nelson Jobim, agreed the joint surveillance of the air space beyond their countries borders (El Tiempo, 11/03/2009 and 12/03/2009). However, Santos ensured there would be no flights, but only monitoring through satellites and radars, while Jobim did not exclude the chance of physically passing borders although remembering that it would always be in perfect coordination with the Colombian authorities. Furthermore, Bogotá asked Brasília for authorisation to use some of its bases as a bridge to achieve the most distant Colombian strips.

The density in the bilateral bond is also expressed through the cooperation in the area of professional knowledge of the Armed Forces, with highlight for the joint exercises COLBRA I (2005), II (2007) and III (2009), that simulate the identification, interception and interdiction procedures of illicit airships in the common border space (Página Informativa Ministério de Defesa do Brasil, 7/7/2007). Furthermore, it is convenient to underline that both countries also cooperate in the area of public security forces and, in 2005, signed an Understanding Memorandum about Police Cooperation, creating a Bilateral Work Group for Police Affairs made up by, on the Brazilian side, the Ministry of Justice and the Departamento de Polícia Federal and, in Colombia, by the Ministry of Defence and the Dirección General de Policía Nacional.

To end, regarding narcotraffic, one must say that most of the agreements achieved correspond to the 1990s, clearly showing in Brazil the need to cooperate to fight it.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Besides the Agreement for Joint Assistance for the Prevention, Control and Repression of the Use and Illegal Traffic of Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances, from 1981, we can state: the Agreement Over Judicial Cooperation as a complement to the Bilateral Agreement for the Prevention, Control and



Furthermore, the Understanding Memorandum between Colombia, Brazil and Peru to Fight Illicit Activities in the Border Rivers and/or Communes was signed in 2004<sup>4</sup> and, in 2008, the called for the first Trilateral Meeting Peru-Colombia-Brazil regarding Drugs for the second semester. Also in that year, Colombia and Brazil signed an Understanding Memorandum for the Cooperation regarding the Fight of the Manufacturing and Illicit Traffic of Firearms, Ammunition, Accessories, Explosives and other Related Materials, to combine efforts, harmonize policies and further actions aimed at the control of this scourge.

Now focusing to the scope of economic and social development in the border, the cooperation with Colombia testifies Brazil's political will to develop a more fluid and close bond. That is seen, for instance, regarding the reactivation, in 2003, of the Commission of Neighbourhood and Integration Colombia-Brazil (Understanding Memorandum between Brazil and Colombia, 26/11/1993) and with the regular and uninterrupted character of its meetings. The Commission's purpose, as well as of its sub commissions for border matters and economic and commercial matters, is to strengthen the bilateral relations in the common border zone, especially in Leticia and Tabatinga. Furthermore, these cities also have, since 2002, the Brazilian-Colombian Border Commission (Regulation of the Brazilian-Colombian Border Commission, 06/06/2002), that, presided by consuls to promote immediate solutions to border issues, has a flexible structure regarding meetings, which are scheduled according to the arising needs, with the participation of the public and private sector and with different government bodies, according to the subject matter.

Still, in 2008, Brazil and Colombia signed the Agreement for the Establishment of a Special Regime Border Zone for Leticia and Tabatinga (Colombian Senate, 19/09/2008) that is accompanied by several binational projects and programs. Finally, the Understanding Memorandum for the Establishment of the Bilateral Commission signed in 2009 (Página Informativa da Embaixada da Colômbia no Brasil, 24/11/2010), with its first meeting in June and the first Meeting of the Permanent Dialogue Mechanism for Higher Employees was held in October. Both mechanisms aim to strengthen the bilateral bond from a wider and integral point of view and through the identification of joint initiatives in several interest areas. However, beyond the steps taken to build a more fluid bilateral bond in the fringes of the border, there still are no tangible results worthy of note.

---

Repression of the Use and Illicit Traffic of Narcotics (1991); the Cooperation Agreement to Stop the Deviation of Precursors and Essential Chemical Substances (1997); the Agreement of Mutual Cooperation to Fight the Traffic of Airplanes Engaged in Transnational Illicit Activities (1997); the Agreement of Judicial Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Penal Matters (1997). There is also a Joint Commission Brazil-Colombia in Drug Matters that, in October of 2002, performed its fifth meeting, the sixth in 2003 and the ninth in 2010 (Press release from the Ministério do Exterior do Brasil 1/09/2010). Half of the agreements made by Brazil and Colombia are before the year 2000 and are about fighting drugs under different perspectives (air traffic, predecessors, judicial assistance and control of drug trafficking in general). Of the ones made on the first decade of the 21st century, two are connected to the fight against narcotraffic (river traffic and air traffic), other to gun traffic and the other two are about general defence cooperation.

<sup>4</sup> The Understanding Memorandum establishes several scopes for the cooperation: exchange of information, experiences and technical knowledge; performance of simultaneous operations and/or coordination between the river units of their Armed Forces; joint training and logistic support.



### **3. Some final reflexions about the conditioning of the non-traditional nature of narcotraffic over Brazilian foreign policy**

Along this paper, we underlined that the non-traditional characteristics of the threat to security posed by drug trafficking conditions the design of Brazilian foreign policy. That was made evident through the revision of the range of measures and actions brought forward by the governments of this country for the 1999-2010 period, regarding the scenario in the border zone shared with Colombia.

Thus, on one hand, the action of the Armed Forces in the scope of security and defence and of the economic and social development in the border attested how the country's defence policy is bound to the agenda of public security and, therefore, the design of foreign policy suffers an impact in the strategic and military area. This is shown by the presence and functions performed by the Armed Forces, attesting the threat to security faced by Brazil in its borders and the type of actions the government is willing to put forward to face those threats. Therefore, it is affecting the conditions that set the bilateral relations with Colombia as Brazil's neighbour that involuntarily houses those challenges to Brazilian security and, thus, the design of the foreign policy regarding the said bond is being conditioned.

On the other hand, the international instruments and mechanisms generated by the Brazilian and Colombian states allowed for a view on how to increment the establishment of interstate fluid relations, tending to approach as a unit the narcotraffic challenge and, again, it is evident how it conditions Brazil's foreign policy.

The revision and ordering performed of the measures and actions adopted by the Brazilian Government also show that the understanding of the non-traditional nature implied by narcotraffic as a threat to security is important in the domestic scope as well as for the international area.

Regarding this, as for measures and actions corresponding to the internal context, we may conclude that the importance that the role of the Armed Forces derives from the understanding that drug trafficking is perpetuated by non-state players, in many ways coinciding with the players of the Colombian internal armed conflict and that possess resources, economic, logistic, human and in terms of weapons that greatly increase the danger potential of their actions. Furthermore, it is understood that the type of fight that should be developed against such an enemy is irregular, as is shown by the conflict hypotheses rehearsed in military exercises. Finally, it is also understood that there is a socio-economic base in the drug issue that favours the reproduction of certain stages of the narcotraffic production and commercial circuit and, therefore, the actions developed by the Armed Forces are also performed in the social and economic development area of the border zones.

Lastly, regarding the measures and actions with international context, we were able to see that the perception that Brazilian governments have of narcotraffic includes the understanding of one of its non-traditional characteristics: transnationality. It's the deep understanding of this particular trait that is the basis for the reason that motivates and explains, in fair measure, the will to establish bonds of coordination and cooperation with Colombia in the security and defence area and in the economic and social development of the border. In agreement with this, the design of Brazilian



foreign policy is again being influenced and that occurs in a positive sense, since it is expressed in the execution of a more fluid bilateral bond between Brazil and Colombia, tending to achieve a certain level of joint work in the border area to fight narcotraffic. Thus, Brazilian governments seem to understand the complexity of the threat they face and the need to respond in a versatile way to the question that, since the 1990s, resounds in the government decision-making spaces, in the political spheres in general and in academic circles: how and with what media do we face non-traditional threats, among them, narcotraffic? As for the results obtained, that is a subject that deserves a separate investigation.

## References

### Academic articles

Calderón, Emilse (2008). "Narcotráfico. América Latina bajo la amenaza del Crimen Transnacional Organizado", *Breviario de Relaciones Internacionales*, Maestría de Relaciones Internacionales de la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina.

Cockayne, James (2007). Transnational Organized Crime: Multilateral Responses to a Rising Threat. International Peace Academy, "Coping with Crisis" Working Paper Series.

Fundación Seguridad & Democracia (2009). "Seguridad y Defensa en la frontera de Colombia con Brasil y Perú", *Coyuntura de Seguridad*, N° 23, febrero, Bogotá.

Gramunt, Julio (2006). *Amenazas Globales*, CESIM, Santiago de Chile, cap.II.

Isacson, Adam y Poe, Abigail (2009). "After Plan Colombia. Evaluating Integrated Action, the next phase of US assistance", *International Policy Report*, Centro para la Política Internacional, diciembre, Washington.

Puttnam, Robert (1988). "Diplomacy and domestic politics: the logic of two-level games", *International Organization*, Vol. 42, n° 3, summer, Cambridge.

Rabasa, Angel (2001). *Colombian Labyrinth*, Washington: ProjeT Air Force 's- FFRDC.

Sierra, Álvaro (2003). "En los confines de Colombia", informe especial del diario El Tiempo, agosto, Bogotá.

Verde Oliva (2006). *Revista Militar de Brasil*, año XXXII, número 187, enero-febrero-marzo.

Verde Oliva (2006). *Revista Militar de Brasil*, año XXXIII, número189, julio-agosto-setiembre.

Verde Oliva (2009). *Revista Militar de Brasil*, año XXXV, número 200, enero-febrero-marzo.

Williams, Phil (1995). "Transnational Criminal Organizations: Strategic Alliances", Brad Roberts (ed.): *Order and Disorder after the Cold War*, The MIT Press, Cambridge & London.



### **Documents and official websites::**

Memorándum de Entendimiento entre la República Federativa del Brasil y la República de Colombia, en [http://www2.mre.gov.br/dai/b\\_colo\\_86\\_1634.pdf](http://www2.mre.gov.br/dai/b_colo_86_1634.pdf)

Reglamento del Comité de Frontera Brasileño-Colombiano (6/6/2002), en [http://www2.mre.gov.br/dai/b\\_colo\\_93\\_5019.htm](http://www2.mre.gov.br/dai/b_colo_93_5019.htm)

Senado de Colombia (19/9/2008), Exposición de motivos del proyecto de ley por medio de la cual se aprueba el "acuerdo entre los gobiernos de la República de Colombia y de la república federativa de Brasil para el establecimiento de la zona de régimen especial fronterizo para las localidades de Tabatinga (Brasil) y Leticia (Colombia), en [http://www.senado.gov.co/portalsenado/attachments/645\\_PL\\_196\\_09\\_S\\_ACUERDOCOLOMBIA\\_BRASIL.pdf](http://www.senado.gov.co/portalsenado/attachments/645_PL_196_09_S_ACUERDOCOLOMBIA_BRASIL.pdf)

US Department of State (2001), Narcotics Control Reports 2000 INCSR, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, March 1, Washington.

Programa Calha Norte (2005), gobierno de Brasil, en [https://www.defesa.gov.br/arquivos/programa\\_calha\\_norte/livro/pcn\\_livro.pdf](https://www.defesa.gov.br/arquivos/programa_calha_norte/livro/pcn_livro.pdf)

Página Informativa de la Embajada de Colombia en Brasil (24/11/2010), Cronología general de la relación bilateral, en [http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/wps/portal/embajada\\_brasil!/ut/p/c0/04\\_SB8K8xLLM9MSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gLUzfLUH9DYwOL4BAnAyMvVyM3IyPTAGN3M\\_2CbEdFABrlcgA!/](http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/wps/portal/embajada_brasil!/ut/p/c0/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gLUzfLUH9DYwOL4BAnAyMvVyM3IyPTAGN3M_2CbEdFABrlcgA!/)

Página Informativa Fuerza Aérea de Brasil (26/2/2011), Operações Aéreas, en [http://www.fab.mil.br/portal/capa/index.php?page=operacoes\\_aereas](http://www.fab.mil.br/portal/capa/index.php?page=operacoes_aereas)

Página Informativa Ministerio de Defensa de Brasil (7/7/2007), Fuerzas Aéreas de Brasil y Colombia unidas en la frontera para combatir el narcotráfico, en [http://www.mindefensa.gov.co/irj/go/km/docs/Mindefensa/noticiasold/Noticias/2007/07/C\\_Fuerzas\\_Aereas\\_de\\_Brasil\\_y\\_Colombia\\_unidas\\_en\\_la\\_frontera\\_para\\_combatir\\_el\\_narcotrafico.html](http://www.mindefensa.gov.co/irj/go/km/docs/Mindefensa/noticiasold/Noticias/2007/07/C_Fuerzas_Aereas_de_Brasil_y_Colombia_unidas_en_la_frontera_para_combatir_el_narcotrafico.html)

Página Informativa Ministerio de Defensa Brasil (30/10/2010), en [http://www.mar.mil.br/menu\\_v/operacoes\\_navais/conjuntas.htm](http://www.mar.mil.br/menu_v/operacoes_navais/conjuntas.htm)

Página Informativa Ministerio de Defensa de Brasil (18/11/2010), en [https://www.defesa.gov.br/arquivos/programa\\_calha\\_norte/livro/pcn\\_livro.pdf](https://www.defesa.gov.br/arquivos/programa_calha_norte/livro/pcn_livro.pdf)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2012), World Drug Report 2012, Vienna.

International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (2012), US Department of State

### **Newspaper articles:**

"Brasil se blindo contra FARC" (13/12/2002), diario *El Tiempo*, Bogotá. <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1349693> (Consultado 2/2/2011)

"Das tras conexión FARC-Brasil" (23/07/2001), diario *El Tiempo*, Bogotá. <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-444732> (Consultado 7/3/2011)



Gosman, Eleonora "Brasil se involucra más en el conflicto colombiano" (18/4/2001) diario *Clarín*, Buenos Aires. <http://edant.clarin.com/diario/2001/04/18/i-02401.htm> (Consultado 19/1/2011)

"Monitoreos satelitales de hasta 60 kilómetros en territorio vecino, acuerdan Colombia y Brasil" (11/3/2009) diario *El Tiempo*, Bogotá. <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/CMS-4871726> (Consultado 8/3/2011)

"Otra Colombia, frente a Brasil" (10/08/2003), diario *El Tiempo*, Bogotá. <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1022630> (Consultado 6/3/2011)

"Vigilancia aérea no tendrá fronteras con el Brasil" (12/3/2009) <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-3356135> (Consultado 9/12/2010)