LATIN AMERICAN NETWORK FOR
SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE SECURITY

NEWSLETTER | NUMBER 11 | DECEMBER 2022

Hello! Welcome to Friedrich Ebert Stiftung's Latin American Network for Sustainable and Inclusive Security's newsletter.

Introduction

Lula da Silva's victory on October 30th and his presence at the climate change conference (COP27) in Egypt in mid-November have been big news for Latin America and the Caribbean. After Brazil lost its status as an emerging power during the years of Jair Bolsonaro's presidency, Lula's return to power and his commitments on the preservation of the Amazon are promising and an indication of a new trend, also signaled by the new president of Colombia, Gustavo Petro.

The region faces serious and pressing problems of internal security, including organized crime, weak democracies, inequality and poverty, among others. But the fact that the governments of two powerful countries in the region are expressing their concern and committing to act against climate change is very relevant.

Indeed, the connections between the environmental crisis and issues such as migration, food insecurity and armed conflicts are becoming increasingly clear in many parts of the world. This issue, in turn, is used in the "cultural wars" that the far-right wages against causes, civil society or politicians that question environmental abuses (or traditional family models), or defend gender equality and human rights.

The flipside of Lula's victory is Bolsonaro's refusal to admit defeat (following Donald Trump's example), the demonstrations led by certain sectors of Brazilian society demanding a coup d'état, and the announcements by the national and international private sector warning the president not to cross certain red lines when it comes to economic policies.

The good news, in no case easy to implement, includes processes such as the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Venezuela and Colombia, the reopening of negotiations between Petro's administration and the ELN guerrilla group in Colombia, as well as the possibility of dialogues being held between Nicolás Maduro and the opposition. The three processes are interconnected.

Some of these topics were discussed in the recently held Congress organized by this Network last October in Chile, as was the role of Latin America and the Caribbean and expectations for the region in the face of the complex international situation and the possibility that a new Cold War may be starting.

In this edition of our Newsletter we share resources regarding several security issues in a broad sense, as usual, as well as some presentations from the Congress (and the link to access the recording of said event).

Mariano Aguirre, Coordinator of the Latin American Network for Sustainable and Inclusive Security

IV Congress on Sustainable and Inclusive Security

On this past October 25th and 26th, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation held the Fourth Congress on Sustainable and Inclusive Security in Santiago de Chile, called "Security in Latin America and the Caribbean: progressive responses in times of social dissatisfaction and global crises".

Over the course of the event, geopolitical issues were discussed, particularly the impact that a new Cold War could have on Latin America and how the region can act in the current global context. In the field of domestic policy, security reform policies were analyzed, as was the space for a new security agenda and challenges of citizen security, taking Chile as a reference. The relationships between the environmental crisis and conflict were also debated, with a special focus on Colombia, Brazil and Central America. This edition contains summarized versions of the presentations given by Mariano Aguirre, coordinator of this Network, Augusto Varas, president of the Equitas Foundation (Chile) and Rut Diamint, professor at the Torcuato di Tella University (Argentina).

Augusto Varas analyzes the doctrine of integrated deterrence, part of the United States' National Security Strategy 2022, as a "national security 2.0" that must be overridden by a contemporary vision of regional peace for which opportunities exist.

Mariano Aguirre presents the reasons why we may be facing a Second Cold War and how this situation relates to Latin America and the Caribbean.

Rut Diamint describes the process of remilitarization that is taking place in Latin America, which entails securitizing social, political, economic, and even environmental and health agendas, while the role of internal security becomes more prominent, thus curtailing freedom.

Natália Pollachi, for her part, explains the role of Brazilian civil society actors in promoting changes in security institutions through external dialogues and even through internal cooperation.

The effects of global changes

Latin American dynamics are now intertwined with a complex international context, particularly due to tensions among powers and the consequences of the war in the Ukraine. Josep María Royo (ECP) describes the evolution of international conflict in recent years and how growing competition among the major powers is negatively affecting conflict situations around the world. In this podcast, Wolf Grabendorff (former director of FES Ecuador) analyzes the current situation of the EU and its main challenges.

The Climate Collateral report by the Transnational Institute (Amsterdam) shows that increases in military spending are already eating into resources and capacities intended to address the climate crisis that is affecting humanity. In this regard, Naomi Klein suggests, in Nueva Sociedad, that the war in the Ukraine is hindering progress towards a New Green Deal and asks whether it is possible to leverage for climate action or whether, instead, we are facing an oil and gas boom.

Militarization and its alternatives

Two studies by members of the Network focus on the problems of militarism in the region, from a general perspective and with a focus on the case of Mexico.

- Robledo, Marcos (2022) "Militarization, the emergency of civil militarization and the erosion of democracy in Latin America", Working Draft (forthcoming, publication planned for November/ December 2022).
- Sánchez, Lisa (2022) "Militarization and militarism in Mexico", Lisa Sánchez, Análisis Carolina forthcoming, publication planned for November 2022)

El País analyzes sustainable security and interviews Marcos Robledo, member of the Latin American Network of Sustainable and Inclusive Security, who explores the focus on conflict prevention and prosecution of abuse as an alternative to the "iron fist" policies and the militarization that have prevailed in the region.

Are traditional security policies useful?

This online gathering of the International Crisis Group (ICG) analyzes the war on gangs in El Salvador, which has imprisoned over 53,000 people in six months. This makes El Salvador the country with the highest prison population in the world. The strategy is controversial due to its abuses and human rights violations, but popular at the same time. What are its associated results and risks?

This report suggests a solution to this "prison fever", based on providing –with donor support– exit routes for gang members who want to reintegrate into society. In this US Institute of Peace conversation, three experts discuss the keys to preventing violence and explore the Los Angeles experience and its usefulness for El Salvador.

The insistence of El Salvadorian governments on "iron fist" policies that have been inefficient are, according to this article, connected to the security sector reforms contained in the peace agreements which failed to change the notion of an internal enemy which remains at the core of the conception of security. And on a deeper level, to a hybrid regime that contains elements of formal democracy as well as institutions and practices typical of authoritarianism.

The University of Las Américas – Puebla (UDLAP) has published its Global Impunity Index Mexico 2022, which shows stabilized levels of impunity, but also worrying figures in aspects such as the fight against homicide and unreported incidents, as well as a lack of institutional capacity and professionalism. In this text, Carolina Ricardo addresses the priorities for the new Brazilian presidency relating to public security, including reverting the multiple regressive measures from the past four years.

Paths to peacebuilding

It has often been the case that, in Latin America, women have been crucial in promoting the idea of sustainable peace and development and the protection of human rights and the environment. Gender Associations, with the Inter-American Commission of Women and the OEA, published a report that identifies the main issues, actors and entry points for an effective implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the region. The latest Humanas (Colombia) newsletter talks about its project Salvaguardar la Resistencia (Saving Resistence), aimed at improving the protection and care of female peace and human rights defenders in the country.

The Regional Institute on the Study and Practice of Non-violent Action in the Americas (FLACSO-PUCE-CEMPROC) has a broad research, training and dissemination program related to this topic. On the other hand, the FES office in Dominican Republic has been participating in an advisory process to the Vice ministry of Preventive Security in Vulnerable Sectors of the Ministry of the Interior and Police during the last quarter of 2022. These are preventive security processes with a focus on peacebuilding in vulnerable areas and sectors, in collaboration with other institutions. The project seeks to rescue practices that promote peaceful coexistence, effective coordination between institutions and the empowerment of grassroots organizations in the creation of new forms of citizen security.

New drug policies?

In response to Colombian president Gustavo Petro's announcement that he will prioritize a new drug policy in Colombia and defend changes in the international regulatory systems, a group of organizations have presented this Memorandum with recommendations on how to implement the new policy. In this article, Pedro Arenas explains how those ideas can help reduce the negative consequences that said initiative may entail in terms of ties with the U.S.A. For his part, Juan Tokatlián proposes five steps to expand "regulators"' role regarding drugs and consolidate a coalition in favor of a modulated regulation of the phenomenon and a change in current policies.

In line with this, the International Crisis Group points to Ecuador as the latest epicenter for drug trafficking and other violent crime in Latin America.

Over twelve Latin American countries have enforced regulations for the medicinal use of cannabis, mostly with a commercial and business focus. Paulo Pereira studies how companies from Canada, the U.S.A., U.K. and Israel are taking control of this multi-billion dollar business to the detriment of the poorest, by generating unequal and price-based access to these products, while fostering a subordinate position of Latin American countries as producers for export, while the large-scale model causes environmental harm.

Colombia and Venezuela

A report by the International Crisis Group (ICG) analyzes the Total Peace policy promoted by Petro's administration in Colombia and how a reformed military strategy will be crucial for any possibility of success. Often, military operations have not succeeded in stopping violence; sometimes, they have worsened it. That is why a strategy is proposed that takes the communities into account, rather than treating them as accomplices of the armed groups, and that rebuilds their trust. In the book *Paz Total. Insumos para la formulación de una política integral de paz* (Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogota, 2022) compiled by Carlos Medina, numerous experts analyze Total Peace, the elements it requires, its challenges and relationships with cross-cutting issues such as security and the public force, illicit drugs and the need to transform conflicts, amongst others.

The ICG also proposes a coordinated strategy led by the government and donors to improve the protection of Venezuelan refugees in Colombia that should include the already initiated reestablishment of relations between Colombia and Venezuela. In this analysis for the Carolina Foundation, Pablo Stefanoni portrays the "new normality" in Venezuela and what it entails for the future.

Environmental challenges

Celeste Cedillo, from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), argues that forced displacement and migration as a result of climate change and its effects is a serious consequence that will be impossible to address with migratory policies or without taking into account the environmental element. The best policy to curb the consequences of forced displacements and mass migrations due to climate and environmental factors is to implement more effective and fair adaptation, ecological transformation and sustainable development strategies relating to human rights.

Brazil-United States

Monica Hirst, member of the Network, analyzes the challenges that Lula da Silva's government faces in rebuilding foreign relations with the United States in the wake of Bolsonaro's administration.

Recommendations

The Red Latinoamericana de Investigación sobre Estados Unidos (Latin American Network of Research on the United States) has published its most recent Newsletter.

The magazine Política Exterior (Madrid, Spain) (November-December 2022) publishes a **monograph** about Latin America, with articles by Anna Ayuso on the EU and Latin America in 20th century geopolitics, by Jorge Heine, Carlos Fortín and Carlos Ominami on the Active Non Alignment proposal.

The Institute of Studies on Conflicts and Humanitarian Action (IECAH for its acronym in Spanish) has just published a **report** led by the Ministry of Foreign AffairsEuropean Union and Spanish Cooperation about international mediation in armed conflicts. It is a comparative study between several European countries that includes recommendations for Spain (addressing its experience and potential actions in Latin America).

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