



Robert Schuman

*Problems of Latin American Security  
and its Implications for Europe: A German Perspective*

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These monographic papers address issues relevant to the ongoing European Convention which concluded in the Summer of 2003. The purpose of this Convention was to submit proposals for a new framework and process of restructuring the European Union. While the European Union has been successful in many areas of integration for over fifty years, the European Union must take more modern challenges and concerns into consideration in an effort to continue to meet its objectives at home and abroad. The main issues of this Convention were Europe's role in the international community, the concerns of the European citizens, and the impending enlargement process. In order for efficiency and progress to prevail, the institutions and decision-making processes must be revamped without jeopardizing the founding principles of this organization. As the member states negotiate the details of the draft constitutional treaty, the Jean Monnet/Robert Schuman Papers will attempt to provide not only concrete information on current Convention issues but also analyze various aspects of and actors involved in this unprecedented event.

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10. The failure of a necessary partnership? Do the United States and the European Union necessarily have to understand each other? Under what conditions?
11. Is it possible to conceive a strategic partnership between the United States, the European Union and Russia?
12. Russia: a member of the European Union? Who would be interested in this association?

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**Problems of Latin American Security and its Implications for Europe:  
A German Perspective**

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**Detlef Nolte\***

**The Jean Monnet Chair  
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## **Problems of Latin American Security and its Implications for Europe: A German Perspective<sup>1</sup>**

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During the annual Munich Conference on Security Policy in the first week of February 2004, when representatives of the security communities of Europe, the United States and other parts of the world met in the Bavarian capital, Latin America was not a topic at all. A week after this event - as part of his 2004 European goodwill tour - Colombian president Uribe made a visit to Germany asking for more support for his fight against political violence and narcotics trafficking in his country. He received a mixed response, including protests and critics in the European Parliament<sup>2</sup>; the meeting with the Italian premier Berlusconi was cancelled<sup>3</sup>. In Germany the reception was more benign – including talks with the federal minister of the interior, the federal minister of economic cooperation and development, the leader of the opposition, the president of the German parliament, the federal minister of foreign affairs, Joschka Fischer, and with Chancellor Gerhard Schröder; the results, however, were modest.<sup>4</sup> As Uribe is a particularly close ally of the U.S. government not only in international affairs, but also in his approach to fight the guerrillas and drug trafficking in his country, the rather cool reception he encountered in Europe could also be a hint at some old or new fissures on Latin American politics between the United States and Europe.

On the other side of the Atlantic – also in February – Secretary of State Powell announced a reduction of foreign aid to Latin America for the fiscal year 2005, because Latin America is not a top priority in U.S. foreign policy<sup>5</sup>. Some Democrats in the House of Representatives criticized this proposal, but it was not a topic that entered media headlines. This reduction in foreign aid came only four months after the *OAS Special Conference on Security* in October 2003<sup>6</sup>, where the OAS member states had reached a consensus on the fact that extreme poverty and social exclusion of broad sectors of the population affect political stability and democracy in the Western Hemisphere, because they erode social cohesion and undermine security.

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<sup>1</sup> The present paper is based on an analysis of official and semi-official policy-papers of the German government and other institutions with special interests in Latin America, as well as of documents of the German government and development assistance agencies and EU documents. In addition, numerous interviews with Latin American diplomats in Berlin, German MPs, members of the staff of the Federal Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defense, members of the staff of the German political foundations, and other experts on German-Latin American Relations have been conducted in February and March 2004. However, the paper reflects only the personal opinion of the author and does not represent any official German position on the issues discussed.

<sup>2</sup> The Colombian President Alvaro Uribe appeared before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the EP on the 12/2/2004 following his address to a formal session of the European Parliament's plenary assembly the same day, in which nearly half of the MPs did not attend the session or left in protest. He found himself facing strong criticism over his country's current security policy and breaches of human rights by the MPs of ELDR, EUL/NGL, and the Greens, and scepticism from the PES (*EP-News Report* 11-02-2004).

<sup>3</sup> Shortly after Uribe's European tour, the Spanish premier Aznar – his most important ally in Europe - made a visit to Colombia to show support for Uribe's policies, especially for his fight against terrorism.

<sup>4</sup> Germany's potential contributions to support a peaceful settlement of the Colombian conflict seem quite limited. However, German political and civil society actors may have a role to play as an "honest broker", helping to mediate between different Colombian actors and to encourage the discussion on a common post-conflict perspective. See Sabine Kurtenbach, *Gewalteindämmendes Engagement externer Akteure in Kolumbien*. Studie im Rahmen eines vom Auswärtigen Amt finanzierten Drittmittelprojekts, Hamburg: Institut für Iberoamerika-Kunde, Januar 2004.

<sup>5</sup> See the commentary by Andres Oppenheimer "It's official: Latin America not a top priority", in: *The Miami Herald*, February 15, 2004.

([http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/columnists/andres\\_oppenheimer/7957764.htm](http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/columnists/andres_oppenheimer/7957764.htm))

<sup>6</sup> On the Conference and its results see the OAS

website:<http://www.oas.org/main/main.asp?sLang=E&sLink=http://www.oas.org/csh/english>

In principle the European Union and Germany could be extra-hemispheric partners contributing additional funds to Latin America, which could match the United States efforts in the region. But such a move would depend on the availability of additional funds as well as on the convergence of foreign policy interests and approaches in the Western Hemisphere. In the past, the countries of the European Union have been Latin America's most important partner regarding development aid and cooperation, transferring higher funds than the United States.<sup>7</sup>

In this general context the present paper will ask the following questions:

- What are the central positions of German foreign policy regarding Latin America, and what importance is given to Latin America in German foreign policy? Are there any particular security concerns?
- Are there substantial differences in the perception of security threats in the Western Hemisphere between the German government and Latin American governments or the United States administration?
- Are there differences in the instruments and strategies chosen to confront these security threats?
- Is there a common European foreign policy towards Latin America, and if so, can particular German interests or contributions be found in it?

Let us begin with the last question: As of today, there does not exist any special German position in security issues on Latin America. The German Latin America policy is part of the European common foreign and security policy. This fact is interpreted positively by German politicians. Many in the foreign policy community argue that German interests in Latin America are better represented as part of a common European Latin America policy than individually. Others argue that this could be the way to get rid of a minor topic in foreign relations in order to save time for more serious foreign policy matters. If one takes a look at the hot spots in Latin America – for instance, Colombia, Venezuela, Cuba, and currently Haiti – and analyzes the official German statements, nearly all of them include a reference to common EU positions. Therefore much of what will be said about German Latin American policy may also be valid for other European countries or the European Union as a whole.

### **German Interests in Latin America**

Latin America is more like a hobby or a matter of special interest than a central topic in German foreign policy. There are less than a dozen MPs who articulate strong interest in Latin American affairs, while some thirty show a more general interest<sup>8</sup>. Plenary debates on Latin America take place at late hours with low political attendance and little public resonance. When the German parliament (Bundestag) in February (12/2/2004) debated a resolution of the CDU opposition party on Venezuela, it was the last point on the agenda (following a discussion on promoting bike tourism in Germany) and the plenary session ended after 9.00 p.m.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> For statistical data see Susanne Gratius, Spielt Europa in Lateinamerika noch eine Rolle?, in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B 38-38/2003, p.38-46.

<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, formally the number of MPs with a general interest in the region is higher. There are 76 MPs in the German-South American parliamentary group, 47 in the German-Brazilian parliamentary group, 22 in the German-Mexican parliamentary group and 61 in the German-Central American parliamentary group. This interest, however, generally is of rather low profile and does not include sustained involvement in foreign policy formulation regarding the region.

<sup>9</sup> See protocol of the 91st Plenary Session February 12, 2004  
<http://www.bundestag.de/plenargeschehen/pp/91/index.html>

While this is not good, it could be worse. In Germany, there is possibly still more interest in Latin American affairs than in most other European countries, with the exception, of course, of Spain and Portugal. Analyzing the debates in the Bundestag and the questions of the MPs directed towards the government<sup>10</sup> in the first two years of Schröder's second term, it must be conceded that all major topics concerning Latin America indeed have been tackled. There have been questions or debates on the human rights situation in Guatemala, the conflict in Colombia, the crisis in Venezuela, the youth gangs and children of the streets in Honduras, the report of the Truth Commission in Peru, the political and social turmoil in Bolivia and the economic breakdown and its fallout in Argentina. If one takes a look at the debates, the MPs in general demonstrated a reasonably good understanding of the problems of the region, but only a few MPs attended the plenary sessions.

Latin America has never been a top priority in German foreign policy, nor have there been any special traditional security concerns. Taking into account the geographical distance, the lack of any significant past as a colonial power in the region, and the uneven levels of economic development between Germany and Latin America, it would be surprising if it were otherwise. Today, as in the last 50 years, trade and investment are the core of German-Latin American relations. But in the 1990s German companies scaled down their activities in Latin America; as a result, Germany's economic position in the region, while still considerable, has been weakened. The process of reunification, the restructuring of the German economy, the appeal of the Asian markets and the growing investment opportunities in Eastern Europe, a traditional zone of influence and interest for Germany, can be seen as key factors contributing to this trend.

Today, both German investments and commercial exchange with Latin America are low. In 2003 only about 2% of German exports and imports were with Latin America. Only 4.5% (2001) of worldwide German FDI (stock) is located in Latin America – down from 6.1% ten years ago (1991)<sup>11</sup>. According to the official statistics of the German Central Bank (Deutsche Bundesbank), German FDI (stock) ranks only 7<sup>th</sup> (2002) in Latin America; however, if we include local reinvestment of German subsidiaries and investment via third countries, Germany, with an investment stock of 42 billions US-\$ (2001), still ranks third after the United States and Spain. German FDI is highly concentrated, with two thirds being located in Mexico and Brazil. The Sao Paulo region has attracted 800 subsidiaries of German companies, making it the world's greatest German industrial center outside of Germany. The value of German production in Latin America is four times higher than the value of German exports to the region.

Any serious deterioration of socioeconomic or political conditions in Latin America will influence German economic interests in the region – especially if these events happen in countries of major German economic activities. As a trading nation, Germany will always be

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<sup>10</sup> Every member of the Bundestag may submit two questions to the federal government during the so-called "Question Hour" ("Fragestunde") in each week with plenary sessions. In addition, up to four questions per month may be submitted for written reply. This right is claimed principally by the MPs of the opposition. Major interpellations ("Große Anfrage") may be submitted to the President by a parliamentary group or by at least 31 MPs. As soon as the federal government has given its reply, the issue is placed on the agenda and debated. There are also minor interpellations ("Kleine Anfragen") which also must be signed by a parliamentary group or by at least 31 MPs. The minor interpellations are considered dealt with once the Federal Government has replied in writing.

<sup>11</sup> Information based on data of the German Central Bank (Deutsche Bundesbank) and the Ibero-Amerika Verein (Ibero-America Association) in Hamburg, see: Peter Rösler, "Ausländische Direktinvestitionen in Lateinamerika", *Brennpunkt Lateinamerika* 16-2003, Hamburg.  
([http://www.duei.de/iik/shop/csc\\_articles.php?saSearch\[category\]=Brennpunkt%20Lateinamerika](http://www.duei.de/iik/shop/csc_articles.php?saSearch[category]=Brennpunkt%20Lateinamerika))

interested in stable economic and political conditions as well as in economic growth in its partner countries in Latin America.

German economic relations with Latin America are in line with those of most EU countries. Latin America participates only with around 5 to 6 % in the foreign trade of the EU countries and in the 1990s the European Union has lost terrain in Latin America to the United States. A comment made by the EU External Relations Commissioner, Christopher Patten, highlights the limited importance that trade with Latin American countries has for the European Union: “Brazil is the number one trade partner for the European Union in Latin America, but globally it is only our trade partner number fourteen. The European Union trades more with Vietnam than with Venezuela, more with Kazakhstan than with Colombia, more with Bangladesh than with Peru, more with Mauritius than with Ecuador, and more with Aruba than with Bolivia. The picture improves if you take the regional blocks together: Mercosur is our eleventh largest trading partner and the Andean Community our twenty-ninth.”<sup>12</sup>

Some commentators, for instance Andres Oppenheimer<sup>13</sup>, expect a further deterioration of economic relations between the European Union and Latin America as a result of the EU’s enlargement in 2004. The next EU-Latin American Summit in Mexico in May 2004 could give some indication as to the future relations between the two regions. However, there still is some potential for reversing the negative trends. The Free Trade Agreements between the European Union and Mexico and between the European Union and Chile have been pushing both countries’ exports to Europe.<sup>14</sup> A successful conclusion of the negotiations on a free trade agreement between the European Union and Mercosur and between the European Union and the Andean Community could provide a similar stimulus. In addition, an enlarged European market could attract more exports from Latin America.

Latin America’s declining economic relevance has repercussions for the political cooperation between Latin America and the EU/Germany. The German unification process, the changes in Eastern Europe, the security problems in the Balkans, the EU’s enlargement, the challenges of the post-September 11 world, and the conflicts in the Near East have all contributed to Latin America stepping further down on the agenda of European foreign politics. In comparison with other world regions Latin America produces few headlines in the newspapers or spotlights in TV programs. Many German and European politicians perceive Latin America as a region, which is located far away, poses few security risks, and is part of the United States’ zone of influence. They also expect that the U.S. government should take care of security-related issues in the region. If the Europeans do have to confront Latin American topics, quite often a quasi-natural division of labor comes into play: the Spanish take the lead, while other European countries concentrate their efforts in their specific zones of influence or interests. This attitude, however, has been contested by other political, social and economic actors within the different European countries, which are in favor of a more active Latin American policy.

A decade ago, in the middle of the 1990s, the German government elaborated its first so-called “Lateinamerikakonzzept” as an official point of reference on Latin American foreign policy. This programmatic statement also had some influence on the definition of European Latin

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<sup>12</sup> See *Canning House Lecture: EU-Latin America Relations*, London 04/02/04;

[http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/news/patten/speech04\\_61.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/news/patten/speech04_61.htm)

<sup>13</sup> See Andres Oppenheimer, EU’s expansion may hurt Latin America, in: *The Miami Herald* February 1, 2004.

<sup>14</sup> Chilean exports to Europe grew by 18% in the first year (2003) of the free trade agreement with the EU, from 2000 to 2002 the annual growth rate has been 1% (Gobierno de Chile, *Dirección General de Relaciones Económicas Internacionales, Aspectos destacadas del primer año de vigencia del Acuerdo de Asociación Chile-Unión Europea*, Santiago, 30 de enero 2004).

American policy.<sup>15</sup> However, this path was not continued and the official German policy framework towards Latin America was not updated. There has been some work in the Federal Foreign Office on five more extensive and multifaceted sub-regional concepts for Latin America<sup>16</sup> (as well as for other world regions), but these efforts stopped half way because of bureaucratic problems and a certain work overload in the ministry. Indications are that in the future the German government will return to a more general and more condensed definition of its priorities regarding Latin America, giving a more prominent role to the programs of the different ministries with particular interests in the region.

Today only the federal ministry for economic cooperation and development has an updated strategy paper on Latin American policy (dated February 15, 2000, substituting the 1992 version)<sup>17</sup>. This could be interpreted as a downgrading of the region in German foreign policy<sup>18</sup> or as an indicator that most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are now perceived first of all as part of the development cooperation agenda. But it could also be interpreted as indicating a change in the security definition and threat perception by the German government. There are arguments to support both interpretations:

- Few Latin American countries are of major economic interest for Germany (Mexico, Brazil, and, with some distance, Argentina).
- Latin America is perceived as a zone of peace in international relations, because nearly all border conflicts have been settled through negotiations. The Latin American countries are part of most of the relevant international regimes for the control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In these foreign policy issues Latin America is regarded more as an ally than as a problem, therefore receiving less attention by the German federal foreign office.
- The federal ministry for economic cooperation and development (BMZ) is now defining *development cooperation* as part of a modern security policy and as an important asset in

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<sup>15</sup> See Klaus Bodemer and Detlef Nolte, Auf dem Weg zu einem transatlantischen Dreieck? Neue Akzentsetzungen in der deutschen, europäischen und US-amerikanischen Lateinamerikapolitik in den 90er Jahren, in: *Lateinamerika. Analysen-Daten-Dokumentation* 13 (1997), p.18-19.

<sup>16</sup> These sub-regional concepts have focused on the Andean Region, the Mercosur and Chile, Brazil, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. See the declaration of the Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office, Ludger Vollmer on Latin America before the Bundestag, May 16, 2002; and the lecture of the Head of the Latin America Desk (Beauftragter für Lateinamerika) of the Federal Foreign Office, Georg Boomgarden, before the Deutsch-Ibero-Amerikanische Gesellschaft in Frankfurt on May 8, 2001 on “Deutsche Lateinamerikapolitik unter Bedingungen der Globalisierung”

[http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/de/archiv\\_print?archiv\\_id=3158](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/de/archiv_print?archiv_id=3158)

<http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/de/infoservice/download/pdf/reden/2001/r010508a.pdf>

On the Andean region concept see Helmut Schöps, Das Andenländerkonzept der Bundesregierung und die europäische Andenländerpolitik, in: Sabine Kurtenbach, Mechthild Minkner-Bünjer, and Andreas Steinhilf (eds.), *Die Andenregion – Neuer Krisenbogen in Lateinamerika*, Frankfurt/M. 2004, p.401-412.

<sup>17</sup> See “Konzept für die entwicklungspolitische Zusammenarbeit mit den Ländern Lateinamerikas“, February 15, 2000.

<http://www.bmz.de/themen/ArbeitRegionen/Lateinamerika-Konzept.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> It's remarkable that there has also been a diminishing academic interest in German Latin American politics. In the mid-nineties there was a short “boom” of publications on German Latin American Politics, see Wolf Grabendorff, Germany and Latin America: A Complex Relationship, in: *Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs* 35 (1993-94) 4, p.43-100; Heinrich-W. Krumwiede and Detlef Nolte, Perspektiven einer Lateinamerikapolitik Deutschlands als Handelsstaat und Zivilmacht, in: *Lateinamerika Jahrbuch 1994*, Frankfurt/M. 1994, p.9-44; Manfred Mols and Christoph Wagner (eds.), *Deutschland – Lateinamerika*, Frankfurt/M. 1994. Afterwards there have been no substantial academic investigations on this topic.

crisis prevention.<sup>19</sup> In this way the BMZ, which in the German coalition governments has functioned as a “secondary” foreign ministry<sup>20</sup>, is trying to claim stakes in Germany’s foreign policy.<sup>21</sup> In the past the federal foreign office had tended to relegate the BMZ to countries of minor strategic or economic importance (this included many Latin American countries, but it excluded the most important ones). Today, however, the BMZ has developed some special competence in the area of new security threats<sup>22</sup> and a certain formal or informal division of labor and tasks has been established (with many inter-ministerial quarrels).<sup>23</sup>

The BMZ has defined three main areas (“Schwerpunkte”) in its Latin American policy: the fight against poverty; the protection of the environment and the natural resources; and the modernization of state and society. Activities in the last area are perceived and defined as a contribution to preventing future social and political crisis and as part of an active policy of securing peace.<sup>24</sup> These activities particularly focused on the protection of human rights, on reforms in the judicial sector, and on the promotion of political decentralization. The policy orientation of the BMZ is reflected in the programs of the German agency for development cooperation, GTZ<sup>25</sup>, and the work of the political parties’ foundations<sup>26</sup>, which in most of their international programs is financed by the BMZ.

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<sup>19</sup> See the presentations of the State Secretaries at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Uschi Eid and Erich Strather, before the Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik (BAKS) (Federal Academy on Security Policy), 30/5/2002 and 26/05/2003 (<http://www.bmz.de/presse/redeneid/rede200205301.html>; <http://www.bmz.de/presse/redenstather/rede20030526.html>). See Heidemarie Wiczorek-Zeul (Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development), Rede anlässlich des Aktuellen Forums zur Sicherheitspolitik für Chefredakteure und Ressortleiter am 27. January 2004 in Berlin zum Thema: "Keine Sicherheit ohne Gerechtigkeit - Entwicklungspolitik ist Friedenspolitik" <http://www.bmz.de/presse/reden/rede20040127.html>

<sup>20</sup> During the Kohl administration, based on a coalition of the Christian Democrats (CDU) with the Liberals (FDP), the foreign ministry was headed by a Liberal, while the ministry of economic cooperation and development was headed by a member of the Bavarian section of the Christian Democrats (CSU). The Schröder administration, which is based on a coalition of the Social Democrats (SPD) with the Greens, a similar division is made, with the Green party heading the ministry of foreign affairs and the Social Democrats the ministry of economic cooperation and development. Last but not least the chancellor himself is a strong actor in foreign relations. This reflects the globalization process, which influences many domestic policy areas, as much as the new security threats after September 11. As a result, today it is much more difficult (and at the same time more necessary!) for the foreign ministry to develop a coherent and comprehensive strategy for Latin America.

<sup>21</sup> On the issue of development policy in the Schröder government see Peter Molt, Rot-grüne Entwicklungspolitik seit 1989, in: Hanns Maull, Sebastian Harnisch, and Constantin Grund (eds.), *Deutschland im Abseits? Rot-grüne Außenpolitik 1998-2003*, Baden-Baden 2003, p.163-175

<sup>22</sup> The BMZ now forms part of the Federal Security Council (Bundessicherheitsrat) which is constituted by the chancellor, the secretary of the Bundeskanzleramt, the ministers of foreign affairs, defence, finance, economy, interior, justice and, since the Schröder government, the minister of economic cooperation and development. The Bundessicherheitsrat coordinates the security policy of the German government, including decisions on arms exports. Its meetings are non-public.

<sup>23</sup> For example, the Federal Foreign Office has supported the creation of the Centre for Peace-keeping Operations (ZIF = Zentrum für Internationale Friedenseinsätze) <http://www.zif-berlin.org/de/index.html> while the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development coordinates the Civil Peace Service (ZFD = Zentraler Friedensdienst) <http://www.bmz.de/themen/Handlungsfelder/friedenssicherung/friedensdienst/index.html>

<sup>24</sup> Securing Peace (Friedenssicherung) is defined as a central policy focus (Handlungsfeld) of the BMZ <http://www.bmz.de/themen/Handlungsfelder/friedenssicherung/index.html>

<sup>25</sup> The GTZ offers programs on political reforms (including the rule of law and the fight against corruption) but also a more general program on crisis prevention and conflict transformation with several areas, including reforms of the security sector. On the GTZ programs see <http://www.gtz.de/themen/english/index.html>.

<sup>26</sup> The christian democratic Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung, the socialdemocratic Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung of the Green Party, and the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung of the Liberal Party (FDP).

The BMZ has concentrated the development cooperation in a number of so-called “focus countries” (Schwerpunktländer)<sup>27</sup>, while reducing the cooperation with the more developed countries in Latin America. This programmatic decision tends to create some contradiction between the BMZ involvement and what would be the political engagement more adequately reflecting Germany’s strategic interests in Latin America. As a consequence, this discrimination against the more developed countries has repeatedly been criticized by the political opposition (for instance this was the case after the economic and social breakdown in Argentina).

In spite of the BMZ’s new activities, diplomats from Latin America do not perceive a growing influence of the Ministry in Germany’s Latin American policy. One reason is the reduction of funds for Latin America<sup>28</sup>, which is now competing with Eastern Europe and the Near East. Moreover, there are many topics – as the summits between the European Union<sup>29</sup> and Latin America or the free trade agreements with Latin American countries - where the BMZ only has a very limited influence. Most Latin American governments (especially the important ones) are more interested in “the real thing” - that is, trade and investment - than in the “side-dishes” offered by development cooperation.

Because of the limited importance of the region in German foreign policy there is little partisan conflict on Latin American issues - and if any conflict arises, it has little political importance and implications. There has been some nostalgic romanticism on Cuba amongst some in the governing social democratic party; on Venezuela, the Christian democratic opposition tends to call for a more critical approach to the government of Hugo Chávez.<sup>30</sup> On Colombia, the Christian Democrats show more support for the policies of the Uribe administration than the Schröder government. On all these issues, however, the differences are of degree and not of substance.

Some politicians, lobbyists from exporting companies and academics with a special interest in Latin America are claiming that Latin America deserves more attention in German politics. In fact, the attention deficit is a recurring topic in German-Latin American relations<sup>31</sup> as it is in U.S.-Latin American relations.<sup>32</sup> In the end, one has to accept that the “good old days” in German-Latin American relations will not come back. Instead, one has to look at the real bases for the current and future relations with the region, including security issues.

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<sup>27</sup> In Latin America these countries are Bolivia, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru. A more reduced development cooperation is maintained with Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Paraguay.

<sup>28</sup> In the fiscal years 1998-2000 Latin American countries on average received 12,8% of German bilateral foreign aid (ODA). In 2000 the bilateral net transfers of development aid to Latin America amounted to 375 Mio Euro (BMZ, *Medienhandbuch Entwicklungszusammenarbeit 2002*, Bonn 2003, p.362).

<sup>29</sup> The abolition of the European Council on Development Policy in 2002 has reduced the influence of the BMZ on the European level, see Molt, p. 165.

<sup>30</sup> See for example the draft of a resolution by some MPs of the CDU “Demokratie und Rechtsstaatlichkeit unterstützen – Freiheit der Medien und wirtschaftliche Prosperität wiederherstellen” from January 27, 2004 (*Bundestagsdrucksache 15/2389*)

<http://dip.bundestag.de/btd/15/023/1502389.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> See for example, from 20 years ago: ADLAF, *Die Beziehungen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zu Lateinamerika: Bestandsaufnahme und Empfehlungen*, Bonn 1983.

<sup>32</sup> See Mark Falcoff, The Return of the U.S. Attention Deficit toward Latin America, *Latin American Outlook*, March 2003; Andrés Oppenheimer, U.S. attention to Latin American sinks to new lows, in: *The Miami Herald* June 1, 2003.

## Consensus in the Diagnosis on Security Threats in Latin America

If we look at the security threats and challenges mentioned in the *Declaration on Security in the Americas* adopted at the *OAS Special Conference on Security* (October 27-28, 2003)<sup>33</sup> there are no differences between the perceptions in Germany or Europe and in the Western Hemisphere.<sup>34</sup> In the document the following issues are mentioned with special emphasis: terrorism, transnational organized crime, the global drug problem, corruption, asset laundering, illicit trafficking in weapons, and the connections among them; trafficking in persons; attacks to cyber security; the possibility of access, possession, and use of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery by terrorists.

Most European Governments can also agree with the proposed *Commitments and Cooperation Measures* of the *OAS Special Conference*. The Europeans also coincide with their Latin American counterparts on more topics than the U.S. administration, which dissented on the support of the Ottawa Convention and on the goal of turning the Hemisphere into a zone free of anti-personnel landmines. The U.S. government also objected to the Latin American position that the global climate change could constitute a threat or challenge for the security of the states of the Hemisphere. The Bush administration refused a commitment to work in coordination with the purpose to mitigate the adverse effects that changes in the global climate could have on the states in the region and to develop cooperation mechanisms in accordance with the international efforts in this field.

If we take a look at the *Latin America Regional Strategy Document* of the *European Commission* from April 2002<sup>35</sup> we find the following sketch of problems in the region: “political systems are still fragile, particularly in the Andean region but also in Central America. ... Drug trafficking, combined with corruption and violence, is a factor of political, economic and social instability as is terrorism. Resolving these problems in the context of support for the peace processes and the fight against drugs and small arms trafficking is one of the priorities of international aid.” (p.9) “Exclusion and social marginalization are factors that aggravate insecurity, violence and rising crime levels that affect these societies”. (p.10) The threat perceptions are not so different from the OAS perspective, but the suggestions and strategies for cooperation with Latin America are quite sketchy and do not include security-related topics.<sup>36</sup> The priorities for the years 2002-2006 are: strengthening the partnership of civil society networks; reducing social inequalities by identifying actions targeted at disadvantaged groups; and strengthening natural disaster prevention.

German politicians coincide with most of the Latin American threat perceptions in the region. They coincide also with the United States, but diverge on the apocalyptic mood expressed by the policy papers of some influential U.S. think tanks and in reports of institutes for

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<sup>33</sup> OEA/Ser.K/XXXVIII CES/DEC.1/03 rev. 1 October 2003

[http://www.oas.org/main/main.asp?sLang=E&sLink=http://www.oas.org/key\\_issues/eng](http://www.oas.org/main/main.asp?sLang=E&sLink=http://www.oas.org/key_issues/eng)

<sup>34</sup> It has been argued that the list of possible security threats is so exhaustive that all American Countries (including the United States) could subscribe it, see Gabriel Marcella, Comentario sobre la Declaración de Seguridad en las Américas”, in: *Newsletter RESDAL* No.13 (noviembre/diciembre 2003), p.9. If this is so, it should not be difficult to find support from the Europeans, too.

<sup>35</sup> See [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/la/rsp/02\\_06\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/la/rsp/02_06_en.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> The suggestions and projects are more specific in the country strategy papers and the regional strategy papers of the EU, see

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/sp/index.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/sp/index.htm)

strategic studies of the U.S. armed forces<sup>37</sup>. In a Heritage Foundation background paper on South America from February 2004<sup>38</sup> we find a wild mix of all types of security threats, including criminals, illegal armies, terrorist groups influenced by Islamic fundamentalism and biological attacks from the South because of scant disaster prevention and poor health infrastructure. These threat scenarios follow the known script of overselling the threat in order to oversell the remedy. Maybe the U.S. Southern Command (and some of its allies in different think tanks) is dramatizing the threat scenarios in order to justify its own budget and *raison d'être*.

On which issues does the German government coincide with the Latin American threat perceptions?

- The German government perceives a persistent and growing threat from the drug problem in Colombia and the neighboring countries, Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador. Nearly all worldwide consumed cocaine is produced in these countries. Other Latin American countries, especially Venezuela, Ecuador, Brazil and a number of Caribbean islands, are important transit countries to Europe. In a German and European vision, drug trafficking is defined primarily as a problem which should be confronted by civil police forces. The German government certainly would not accept an argument stating that drugs, because of the high death toll resulting from their use, can be seen as equivalent to weapons of mass destruction, as has been argued recently by the Commander of the U.S. Southern Command.<sup>39</sup> But the Europeans do accept that drug trafficking is a serious problem. In the past only about 20% of the Latin American cocaine production entered the European market, now the percentage is up to 50%. According to estimates of IKPO-Interpol, each year between 150 and 170 metric tons of cocaine are smuggled into the European Union<sup>40</sup>. The principal countries of entry are Spain and the Netherlands, but also for this type of product, there exists a common European market. To monitor and combat the narco-traffickers, the German federal criminal police office (Bundeskriminalamt) has personnel in six Latin American embassies (Bogotá, Brasilia, Buenos Aires, Caracas, Lima and Mexico City)<sup>41</sup>. The German government supports bilateral and multilateral programs for the eradication of coca plantations via substitution through other crops. It favors trade liberalization measures for the countries that implement programs of drug substitution. However, Europeans tend to be very skeptical regarding the spraying of coca-plants with herbicides from the air because of its potential negative effects on people's health and on the affected flora and fauna. Anyway the spraying solution does not create an alternative source of income for the coca planters. One should mention that the European drug problem is only in part a Latin American problem. Heroin comes from Asia (Afghanistan) and synthetic drugs are primarily produced in Eastern Europe, the Netherlands and Belgium.

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<sup>37</sup> As an example see the "Preface" by General James T. Hill, Commander of the U.S. Southern Command, in: Max G. Manwaring, Wendy Fontenela, and Mary Grizzard/Dennis Rempe, *Buildings Regional Security Cooperation in the Western Hemisphere: Issues and Recommendations*, SSI U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, October 2003: "Today the threat to the countries of the region is not the military force of the adjacent neighbor or some invading foreign power. Today's foe is the terrorist, the narco-trafficker, the arms trafficker, the document forger, the international crime boss, and the money launderer. This threat is a weed that is planted, grown, and nurtured in the fertile ground of ungoverned spaces such as coastlines, rivers, and unpopulated border areas. This threat is watered and fertilized with money from drugs, illegal arms sales, and human trafficking. This threat respects neither geographical nor moral boundaries." (p.v)

<sup>38</sup> See James Jay Carafano and Stephen Johnson, *Strengthening America's Southern Flank Requires a Better Effort*, *Heritage Foundation Background Paper* No.1727, February 20, 2004  
<http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/bg1727.cfm>

<sup>39</sup> See "Preface" by General James T. Hill, Commander of the U.S. Southern Command, in: Manwaring/Fontenela/Grizzard/Rempe, p.vi

<sup>40</sup> See Bundeskriminalamt, *Rauschgiftjahresbericht 2002*, Wiesbaden 2003, p.105

<sup>41</sup> See Bundeskriminalamt, p.84

- Poverty is perceived as a destabilizing factor for Latin American democracies. It could be a breeding ground for criminal activities and political violence. Growing crime certainly is a factor which negatively influences the investment climate for German and European companies in Latin America. The fight against poverty is one of the main focuses of German and European development cooperation.
- Increasing concern focuses on the risks of expanding lawless areas in weak states of the region, which could serve as havens for transnational organized crime and terrorist networks. Therefore the German government supports the strategic task of regaining control of lawless territories and enforcing the rule of law all over the country. German development cooperation focuses on the reform and modernization of the state, which, as we have noted, includes decentralization, the reform of the courts and the judiciary system. Some official cooperation takes place with police forces of Latin American countries (especially in the combat against drug trafficking)<sup>42</sup>. In the future there could be more German and European cooperation on the reform of the Latin American police forces and the judiciary system.
- There is concern about activities (e.g. fund-raising) of members or sympathizers of the Al Qaeda network and other fundamentalist Islamic groups in Latin America<sup>43</sup>, but as of now the German government does not hold information on strategic alliances between Islamic terrorist groups and Latin American guerrilla organizations.<sup>44</sup>
- Illegal migration from Latin America for the moment is still predominantly a Spanish problem, but after entering in the territory of the European Union the illegal migration will not be restricted to this country. Concerns are growing in Europe that the increased restrictions on access to the United States after September 11 could lead to a greater flow of Latin American immigrants to Europe. Quite a lot of Latin Americans – especially in Argentina - are in possession of EU passports and could enter the European Union without problems. Still, at present the issue of immigration from Latin America to Europe is of minor concern in comparison to the immigration from other regions and countries.<sup>45</sup>
- The Latin American ecosystem is of great importance for the global climate.<sup>46</sup> The sustainable management and conservation of the natural resources in the region are perceived as a common task in German development co-operation with Latin American countries.

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<sup>42</sup> For the general topic of cooperation in the security sector see BMZ Spezial N° 56, *Reform des Sicherheitssektors in Entwicklungsländern*, Bonn 2002.

(<http://www.bmz.de/infothek/fachinformationen/spezial/spezial056/index.html>)

The German agency for development cooperation GTZ has recently stepped up its expertise in this field, also publishing a strategy paper on this topic: *Security-Sector Reform in Developing Countries*, Eschborn October 2000 ([http://www.gtz.de/security-sector/download/GTZ\\_SSR\\_Engl.pdf](http://www.gtz.de/security-sector/download/GTZ_SSR_Engl.pdf)).

<sup>43</sup> See Library of Congress. Federal Research Division, *Terrorist and Organized Crime Groups in the Tri-Border Area (TBA) of South America*, Washington D.C. July 2003.

<sup>44</sup> See the written answer of the minister of state at the Federal Foreign Office, Hans Martin Bury, to the Bundestag from November 24, 2003 (*Bundestsagsdrucksache* 15/2107, p.6).

<sup>45</sup> In a national survey from November 2003 of the Institut für Demoskopie in Allensbach on behalf of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung only 20.5 % of the respondents perceived refugees as a serious threat in foreign policy, while 68.8 % listed international terrorism as a serious threat, see Viola Neu, *Die Deutschen und die Außen- und Europapolitik. Eine Umfrage der Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung*, Berlin, Februar 2004.

([http://www.kas.de/db\\_files/dokumente/7\\_dokument\\_dok\\_pdf\\_4205\\_1.pdf](http://www.kas.de/db_files/dokumente/7_dokument_dok_pdf_4205_1.pdf))

<sup>46</sup> In the same study of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 27.2 % of the respondents perceived climate change and pollution of the environment as a serious security threat.

## Differences in the Therapy: The United States and Germany

If in the diagnosis of the Latin American security threats we find a great consensus between the United States and Germany/Europe, there are significant differences in the proposed therapies. From a European perspective it looks as if the United States had a certain preference for surgical operations, whilst the Europeans prefer less bloody treatments (“pills and homeopathic stuff”), insisting on complex approaches that involve actors and stake-holders on different levels of society. But at times the European approach seems closer to wishful thinking than to a real therapy. Recently, in some cases (e.g. Colombia), a kind of middle ground has been emerging, which accepts a minimum of surgery, if it is accompanied by a set of more comprehensive and sustainable measures. Without this kind of integral approach, the surgeon risks that the disease will return - or that the patient might die from losing too much blood during the operation.

European and German perspectives tend to show concern that the participation of military personnel in police tasks could be counterproductive and aggravate the human rights situation – we already mentioned this as a central point of dissent during the visit of the Colombian president Uribe in Europe. A certain risk persists that the United States - in the framework of the fight against international terrorism - will promote closer ties between the police and the armed forces in Latin America<sup>47</sup>. For a specialist on Latin American affairs, the claim for a more integrated and comprehensive security strategy (including civil and military personnel<sup>48</sup> and focusing on civil and military action) against an enemy that is difficult to locate<sup>49</sup>, sounds reminiscent of the old counterinsurgency concepts of the 1960s and 70s.<sup>50</sup> The United States is also favoring a more active role of the Latin American military in civil action programs (road construction, medical care etc.). A militarization of social, economic or political problems could aggravate the situation in the region, instead of ameliorating it.<sup>51</sup> In a constellation of weak civilian institutions, growing social protest, a deteriorating security situation and inefficient

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<sup>47</sup> See Carafona and Johnson, p.7, 10; “Because terrorist groups and transnational criminal organizations have characteristics of both military organizations and domestic criminals, cooperation between military and civilian law enforcement agencies at the various levels is key. While the United States has spent 20 years encouraging the separation of military and police functions in Latin America, it should rethink how it will work with each country’s unique security architecture.” For an interpretation of the new U.S. policy in Latin American military affairs by German scholars see Detlef Nolte and Anika Oettler, *Lateinamerika: Der vergessene Hinterhof der USA?*, in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B 38-39/2003, September 15, 2003, p. 20-29.

<sup>48</sup>See “Preface” by General James T. Hill, Commander of the U.S. Southern Command, in: Manwaring/Fontenela/Grizzard/Rempe, p.viii: “Armed forces must, within their constitutional and legal constraints, support and cooperate with law enforcement agencies in combating drugs and other transnational threats. Where the legal boundaries do not make sense, given current threats, they should engage in a honest dialogue with their democratically elected leaders to determine if laws and restrictions need revision.”

<sup>49</sup> The following description of the enemy is quite vague leaving ample room for all kinds of interpretation: “At base, the enemy now becomes the individual political actor that plans and implements the kind of violence which threatens national well-being and exploits the root causes of instability.” Max G. Manwaring, *Security in the Americas: Neither Evolution Nor Devolution – Impasse*, Special Series: Shaping the Regional Security Environment In Latin America, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, March 2004, p.5.

<sup>50</sup> It certainly is no coincidence, that the paper by Manwarin/Fontela/Grizzard/Rempe contains a lot of references to these counterinsurgency experiences.

<sup>51</sup> Many Latin American authors share this concern about a “militarización“ or “securitización” of social and political problems; see Marcela Donadio, *Comentarios sobre la Conferencia Especial sobre Seguridad*, *Newsletter REDAL* Nr.13 (November/December 2003), p.7; Francisco Rojas Aravena, *La CES del hemisferio americano. La difícil construcción de consensus*, in: *Foreign Affairs En Español* 3 (2003) 4, p.172-179 ; Pedro Villagra Delgado, *Un nuevo paradigma de seguridad hemisférica*, in: *Foreign Affairs En Español* 3 (2003) 4, p.130-143; Pedro Villagra Delgado, Luis Bitencourt, and Henry Medina Uribe, *Perspectives From Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia*, Special Series: Shaping the Regional Security Environment In Latin America, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, July 2003.

police forces we could be on the way back to the 1970s with the military intervening in politics. With the fight against crime and terrorism, the risk is that human rights standards in the region will be watered down and the rule of law will be undermined. It would be pernicious if, in the name of fighting the new terrorist threats, the Latin American military would take up this stimulus to return to their strategies of the 60s and 70s.

Europeans accept that hemispheric security in the more traditional and military sense is a U.S. task. The European countries do not have the military capabilities nor the political will to enter in this area, nor would the United States accept this. This does not exclude a certain level of arms trade with the region (sometimes in competition with the United States) and of training programs with Latin American military staff in Europe, but this is done on a modest scale in comparison with similar programs in the United States. In Germany, there seems to be a limited but constant interest in military training and cooperation with Latin America, although this cooperation is often hampered by the quite limited military capabilities of many of the Latin American armed forces.<sup>52</sup>

The U.S. government has a certain communication problem with Europe in its Latin America security policies. It would be easier if the European partners (and also some Latin American partners) could be integrated in a common approach to confront the region's security risks. In effect, the goals are very much compatible; but the prospective partners would prefer to be informed and consulted in time and not only invited *ex-post* to play their part in policy decisions and strategies pre-fabricated in Washington D.C. The United States should come to accept the idea that it could be in its own strategic interest if its friends and partners across the Atlantic are invited to enter in its geographic neighborhood and to form a political joint venture operation aiming to raise the standard of living, to improve the infrastructure and to increase security in Latin America. As in real life, sometimes the far away relative has better access and is more welcome than the rich neighbor.

At the same time, in Europe as in the United States we also have some homework assignments pending. Drug trafficking and money laundering are not only Latin American problems. In fact, more drug money is circulating and being laundered in the developed countries than in Latin America. Moreover, the financial safe havens normally are not protected by Latin American drug traffickers but by economic interests in the United States and Europe. Drug trafficking is a multilateral problem, and we cannot demand that the Latin American countries are to bear the major burden in the fight against drug production. Europe and the United States should offer more economic compensation. If the U.S. government demands more cooperation in security issues which are of high importance in its own agenda, it should also accept the security priorities and threat perceptions of the Latin American and European countries.

Irrespective of some communication deficits, in recent times Europe (including Germany) and the United States appeared to be more in tune than in the past in a number of crisis situations in Latin America in Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia or Haiti. Cuba currently has lost much of its potential for conflict between the U.S. government and Europe, thanks to a lot of

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<sup>52</sup> Since 1990, some 70 officers (including 21 since 2000) from Latin American militaries participated in the international course of the German Armed Forces Military Academy (Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr) in Hamburg. There are special cooperation programs with Argentina, Chile and Brazil, including training programs for members of the general staff and regular (annual or biennial) bi-national meetings between members of the general staffs of the Bundeswehr and their Latin American counterparts. The German government has military attachés in their embassies in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru and Mexico, but in none of the two hotspots in Latin America, Colombia and Venezuela. Since 1980, Venezuela sent 22 officers to the Bundeswehr training programs in Hamburg. There has been no participant from Colombia.

help by Fidel Castro himself. On the one hand, the U.S. government and the U.S. Congress have shown some flexibility in the application of the embargo, notably regarding medicine and food. As a result the United States has become an important source of Cuban imports since 2000. On the other hand, the relations between Cuba and the European Union for quite some time an issue of conflict between the United States and the European Union - I will mention only the Helms-Burton-Act - turned sour in 2003, with the EU countries today taking a much tougher stand towards the Castro regime and human rights violations in Cuba.<sup>53</sup> This tougher approach has always been advocated by the Scandinavian countries as well as by Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom. EU policy towards the island is based on the Common Position (CP) on Cuba from 1996, which stated that the objective of the European Union in its relation with Cuba is to encourage a process of peaceful transition to pluralist democracy and respect for human rights and civil liberties.

The divisive issue between Cuba and the European Union was the arrest of Cuban dissidents in March 2003 and the execution of the hijackers of a ferry. In the same month the European Union had opened an official representation in Havana. Afterwards, the European Union first suspended the negotiations on Cuba's admission to the Contonou-Agreement with the APC countries. In June and July 2003 the European Union decided to give a low profile to its relations with Cuba, to limit the bilateral high-level governmental visits, to reduce the profile of Member States' participation in cultural events, to invite Cuban dissidents to the celebration of national holidays in the embassies on the Island and to proceed in the re-evaluation of the EU common position. In reaction the Cuban government renounced on European economic aid. It is possible that in the future Castro will try some other policy switches in the EU-USA-Cuba triangle as he has done in the past<sup>54</sup> to obtain advantages in his quest for securing his rule. Nevertheless, today a less conflictive and more coordinated Cuba policy from the European Union and the United States would be possible, if both sides don't miss the opportunity.

In Germany there is still some discussion about the best political approach to Cuba. The present government, based on a coalition of Social Democrats and Greens, had decided in 1999 to enter in negotiations with the Cuban government in order to open the path for bilateral development cooperation, but these negotiations have been discontinued. Therefore, the cooperation still excludes state agencies and focuses on actors of civil society (with all the problems involved in identifying such actors). In 2000 the minister of economic cooperation made a visit to Cuba. In the following year (2001), the minister of economy and the president of the German Bundestag also visited the island and the Cuban vice-president Carlos Lage returned the visits in 2000 and 2002. In parts of the social democratic party, which in government is condemned to pragmatism and the gradual reduction of the welfare state, Cuba has evoked some nostalgia. The federal minister for economic cooperation and development, Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, in May 2003 still argued against canceling development cooperation with Cuba pointing to the potential to influence events in Cuba through cooperation with civil society actors<sup>55</sup> ("change through development"). Nevertheless, the German government complied – and in some aspects overacted – with the EU policies and suspended nearly all cooperation projects with Cuba, including academic interchange. Only NGOs and the foundations of the political parties can continue their projects, but these projects have to support economic reforms or

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<sup>53</sup> See Susanne Grätius, *Annäherung der amerikanischen und europäischen Kuba-Politik*, SWP-Aktuell 42, November 2003.

<sup>54</sup> See Susanne Grätius, *Kuba unter Castro – Das Dilemma der dreifachen Blockade. Die kontraproduktive Politik der ‚Demokratieförderung‘ seitens der USA und der EU*, Opladen 2003.

<sup>55</sup> Look at the article by the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, "Wandel durch Zusammenarbeit. Ein Ende der Entwicklungshilfe für Kuba verhindert weitere Reformen" in: *Financial Times* German edition from 2.5.2003 (<http://www.bmz.de/presse/reden/rede20030502.html>).

promote a democratic opening. After the invitation of Cuban dissidents to the reception in the German embassy in Havana on the German national holiday (3rd of October) in 2003, the Cuban government cut down on its contacts with the German embassy and the German government.

The relations between most of the European countries (including Germany) with Colombia are quite complicated. In the German and other European governments a certain disillusion was felt after the failure of the peace talks between the Pastrana government and the guerilla movements<sup>56</sup>. While there is some acceptance for the Uribe government putting pressure on the guerrillas, few politicians in Europe believe that the Colombian government can win the war with military instruments. The Colombian government had limited success in explaining its position to the European governments, but it seems as if there was no success with German and European NGOs, which keep criticizing the Colombian government's approach. Many Europeans – in the governments and in the NGOs - are arguing that the security measures adopted by the Uribe administration are violating human rights. A focus of this criticism is the new anti-terrorism legislation, which grants powers of arrest and interrogation to the Colombian armed forces with limited judicial control. Particular concern is expressed to the double standard used by the Uribe government in the treatment of the right-wing paramilitaries (which are negotiating impunity) and the treatment of the left-wing guerilla movement. The European Union officially criticizes some measures in Uribe's fight against drug production such as the fumigation from air, because of their potential collateral damages on the ecosystem and the people living in these areas.<sup>57</sup>

The German government and its European partners favor a policy of drug substitution through other crops – but it is not clear who will pay for this program. The German government, as the other European governments, expects that the Colombian government will comply with the recommendations of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights<sup>58</sup> which are also mentioned in the Declaration of the London Meeting on International Support for Colombia (July 10, 2003)<sup>59</sup>. The Colombian government, in turn, demands that the European Union put not only the FARC but also the ELN on its blacklist of terrorist organizations. There has been no reaction from the European Union in this matter and, when asked about its position on the issue, the German government refers to the European Union<sup>60</sup> (but it seems that the Schröder government will now support such a move). The Colombian government also wants to renew existing trade preferences with Europe as a means to support alternative crops and exports (not drugs). Regarding Colombia, it seems that the German opposition shows a little more sympathy for the efforts of the Uribe government than the German government, but this could be a result of the different functions of government and opposition.

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<sup>56</sup> For some German opinions on the Colombian conflict – including a personal commentary by the representative for Latin America in the Foreign Ministry – at the end of the Pastrana administration and during the Uribe administration, see Sabine Kurtenbach (ed.), *Kolumbien zwischen Gewalteskalation und Friedenssuche. Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Einflussnahme externer Akteure*, Frankfurt/M. 2001. About the EU policy in the Andean region and Colombia, see Christian Frères, *Die Europäische Union und die Krise der Andenländer: Zwischen Status quo und strategischer Vermittlung*, in: Kurtenbach, Minkner-Bünjer, and Steinhauf, p. 383-400; Joaquín Roy, *La Unión Europea ante Cuba y Colombia: de buenas intenciones y altas esperanzas a notables contradicciones y grandes frustraciones*, in: *América Latina Hoy* Vol.31, agosto 2002, p.33-61.

<sup>57</sup> See the answer from the State Secretary at the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Erich Strather, to the Bundestag from January 6, 2002 (*Bundestagsdrucksache* 15/288, p.75).

<sup>58</sup> See United Nations High Commission for Human Rights. Office Colombia, *Recommendations for Colombia 2003*, Bogotá, March 2003; *Recomendaciones para Colombia 2004*, marzo 2004 (<http://www.hchr.org.co/>)

<sup>59</sup> London Meeting on International Support for Colombia, July 10, 2003, *London Declaration*. <http://www.ciponline.org/colombia/030710dono2.htm>

<sup>60</sup> See the answer from the State Secretary of the Federal Foreign Office, Jürgen Chrobog, September 17, 2003 (*Bundestagsdrucksache* 15/1556, p.6).

The same is true with respect to the positions towards the Chávez government in Venezuela. All agree that the political situation is very complicated and the economy is a mess, but the CDU takes a more critical stand. They see the risk that Chávez could attack the opposition media and suspend the plebiscite on his revocation. In contrast, the government parties see the Venezuelan opposition (including the press) as part of the problems of the country rather than as its solution, and therefore they favor a more cautious approach. The OAS, and other institutions such as the Carter Center, should be supported in their efforts to find a peaceful settlement for the Venezuelan crisis.

The social and political crisis in Bolivia is perceived as a serious challenge for development cooperation with Latin America since Bolivia had been one of the darlings of German and international development cooperation. A failure in this country could put in question all our development strategies and become a negative example for the entire region. Bolivia is one of the select groups of official “focus countries” (Schwerpunktländer) of German development cooperation. Since 2000, the German government has allocated more than 60 Million Euros in development cooperation with Bolivia. Actually Germany is the third partner in importance of foreign aid to Bolivia (after Japan and the United States). In the framework of the HIPC II-Initiative (Highly Indebted Poor Countries), the German government has condoned Bolivian debts with a total value of 361 Millions of Euro.

The Argentinean crisis has faded, but the fundamental problems of the country persist. Germany has shown mixed attitudes towards the country. On the one hand, the German government had to defend the interests of German investors and bond holders; therefore it had to prevent the Argentinean default from being copied by other debtor nations. On the other hand, the German government had an interest in stabilizing the Argentinean economy and democracy and to prevent a contagion to other Latin American countries. Last but not least, the Argentinean crisis was perceived as part of the general debate on the need for reforming the international financial system. In Germany, discussions have been taking place between the opposition and the ministry of economic cooperation and development in order to find out whether it would be wise to drop Argentina from the list of countries that receive German cooperation funds. In this case, national per capita income could be a bad indicator of the real necessities of the country in question; and narrow cooperation criteria of the BMZ could contradict more important national interests.

In Haiti, the most recent hotspot in the Western Hemisphere, the United States and Europe are cooperating. France is actively participating with troops, the European Union will contribute funds. Because of the refugee problem, Haiti is of much more concern for the United States than for Europe. Exceptions are France, because of historical ties to its former colony, and to a minor degree the other European countries with special interests in the Caribbean. Germany never had committed much development funds to this country; in the academic field, Germany has barely a handful of experts on Haiti.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> For a German commentary on the Haitian crisis see Astrid Nissen, Haiti nach Aristide: Die Konturen der Krise, in: *Brennpunkt Lateinamerika* 4-2004; Susanne Gratius and Ronja Kempin, Wer rettet Haiti? *SWP Aktuell* 9, März 2004  
[http://www.swp-berlin.org/common/get\\_document.php?id=792&PHPSESSID=32c67472ae315f6bbf3a191664a6560d](http://www.swp-berlin.org/common/get_document.php?id=792&PHPSESSID=32c67472ae315f6bbf3a191664a6560d)

## Latin American-European Partnership

Europe and Latin America have clear preferences for multilateralism in international relations. Both sides are in favor of regional integration to confront the challenges of globalization and global governance. The Europeans would prefer to have strong Latin American partners for cooperation not only in economic but also in security-related issues. The existing discussion forums between the regions, like the meetings of the Rio Group with the European Union or the European-Latin American Summits, at present cannot substitute national actors with their own power resources.

There is consensus on both sides of the Atlantic that Brazil is a pivotal actor in South America.<sup>62</sup> The United States would like to cultivate Brazil as a hemispheric sub-regional hegemonic power, which acts in their interest and helps to stabilize the region. The Europeans support this position, but they prefer a more independent posture of Brazil, which is perceived as a potential ally in international affairs (including some transatlantic conflicts) and as a counterbalance to total U.S. predominance in the Western Hemisphere. In 1995, Chancellor Kohl and President Cardoso launched the idea of a German-Brazilian Strategic Partnership.<sup>63</sup> The Schröder government and President Lula have continued this special relationship between Germany and Brazil.<sup>64</sup> Both governments see themselves as motors in the bi-regional relations.

There are few other partners for security cooperation. Mexico is too close to the United States and Mexican security problems, in a certain way, are also U.S. security problems. Chile is a politically stable and economically successful country, however it is small, and, in the perception of some neighbors, an overachiever. But the country recently demonstrated its specific military capabilities when – as the only Latin American nation<sup>65</sup> - it mustered the political will and the operational capacity to dispatch troops on short notice to Haiti, where Chilean military will serve together with Canadian, French and U.S. forces. Argentina is still in a complicated economic situation and vulnerable to pressure by foreign governments and international lenders. Because of the lack of funds and the deterioration of its equipment, the Argentine military has quite limited capabilities.

Some years ago, there have been some fears of growing economic competition between Europe and the United States in Latin America. Stimulated by some geo-economic writings<sup>66</sup> and as a reaction to the common market in Europe, the United States seemed to embark on a strategy of consolidating its own exclusive zone of influence in Latin America (creating NAFTA, pushing for FTAA). But the European Union reacted by entering in free trade negotiations with Mexico, Chile and the Mercosur. Two princes courted the Latin American Cinderella.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Brazil's role in South America and in international relations are discussed from a German-Brazilian perspective in Gilberto Calcagnotto and Detlef Nolte (eds.), *Südamerika zwischen US-amerikanischer Hegemonie und brasilianischem Führungsanspruch*, Frankfurt/M 2002; Susanne Gratius, *Die Außenpolitik der Regierung Lula. Brasiliens Aufstieg von einer diskreten Regional- zu einer kooperativen Führungsmacht*, SWP-Studie 7, Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, März 2004 Wilhelm Hofmeister, Lateinamerika und die neuen Dimensionen internationaler Sicherheit. Aufgaben für Brasilien, in: *KAS-Auslandsinformationen* 4/2001, p.4-28 [http://www.kas.de/db\\_files/dokumente/auslandsinformationen/7\\_dokument\\_dok\\_pdf\\_289\\_1.pdf](http://www.kas.de/db_files/dokumente/auslandsinformationen/7_dokument_dok_pdf_289_1.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> Germany and Brazil support each other in their quest for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

<sup>64</sup> See the speech by State Secretary of the Federal Foreign Office, Jürgen Chrobog in Rio de Janeiro (October 27, 2003), The Future of the German-Brazilian Strategic Partnership <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/en/aussepolitik/regionaslkonzepte/lateinamerika>

<sup>65</sup> Brazil and Argentina have committed troops for a later phase of peace-keeping in Haiti.

<sup>66</sup> See C. Fred Bergsten, The Primacy of Economics, in: *Foreign Policy* Nr.87, summer 1992, p.3-24.

<sup>67</sup> See Detlef Nolte, Kontinent der Zukunft? Geoökonomische Interessen der USA und Europas in Lateinamerika, in: *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* 6/1995, p.728-737; Klaus Bodemer and Detlef Nolte, Auf dem Weg

Times have changed. The passion for Latin America has cooled down, pragmatism dominates the day. On the one hand, in the last years Latin America has lost much of its economic sex appeal, in many regions and countries U.S. preponderance is a fact. On the other hand, Mexico and Chile have demonstrated that it is possible to enter in free trade agreements with the European Union and the United States at the same time. In Europe the fear of FTAA has faded. As for the moment the FTAA project will come into being only as a “FTAA light” it will leave a great margin of action to all involved. European economic and trade efforts in Latin America now are perceived not as adverse but as complementary – as is the German position – to U.S. interests and trade policies.

## Conclusions

The post-September 11 world is characterized by a growing involvement of German and European armed forces in many hotspots around the world (Afghanistan, Iraq etc.). We have observed some serious problems in the transatlantic relations between the “Old Europeans” – especially France, Germany and Belgium – and the U.S. administration in the run-up to the Iraq conflict. In this context there can be no doubt that Latin America is of minor concern for the European countries. For the moment there is no risk of an U.S.-European confrontation on Latin American topics. Nevertheless Europe and Germany could be valuable partners of the United States and the Latin American countries in confronting the security threats in the Western Hemisphere. Currently French military is participating in a joint action with Canadian, Chilean and U.S. armed forces in Haiti. But military “hard power” is not the most important contribution Europe can make to dealing with the security problems of Latin America.

Not only Latin American and European governments, but also the U.S. administration agree on most of the threat perceptions and security challenges in the region, while differences subsist in the ranking of problems and with regard to the proposed solutions. For the United States, international terrorism and drug trafficking are the first priority, whereas the Latin Americans attach more importance to poverty, crime and political instability. The Europeans and the Germans take a middle stand, but are closer to the Latin American position. The same could be said with regard to the remedies. The U.S. administration shows a certain preference for military solutions; the European and the Latin American governments focus on reforms in state and society as a means to tackle many security-related problems in the region at their roots. The EU External Relations Commissioner, Christopher Patten, emphasized in a speech on U.S.-European relations that the European Union cannot match the United States in military “hard power” but that it can offer a lot of “soft power” (development assistance and so on)<sup>68</sup>. The same applies to Germany, which in the post-WW II-era has been characterized as a “civilian power” (Zivilmacht) in international relations. Most experts on German foreign policy agree that this concept is still valid for present-day Germany.<sup>69</sup>

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zu einem transatlantischen Dreieck? Neue Akzentsetzung in der deutschen, europäischen und US-amerikanischen Lateinamerikapolitik in den 90er Jahren, in: *Lateinamerika. Analysen-Daten-Dokumentation* Nr.33 (1997), p.7-34.

<sup>68</sup> Christopher Patten, Europe and America – has the transatlantic relationship run out of road? Speech at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, February 13, 2004.

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/news/patten/sp04\\_77.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/news/patten/sp04_77.htm)

<sup>69</sup> The concept of “civilian power” today includes an emphasis on the promotion of democracy and state building. It also includes the development of strong links between democratic governments all over the world as a contribution for civilizing international relations; see Hanns W. Maull, “Normalisierung” oder Auszehrung? Deutsche Außenpolitik im Wandel, in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B 11, 8. März 2004, p.17-23 (22-23)

<http://www.das-parlament.de/2004/11/Beilage/003.html>

The greater part of Latin America's security problems could be dealt with "soft power"<sup>70</sup>, which includes economic cooperation measures, political dialogue or persuasion and development assistance. Some of the harder topics in Latin America should be confronted by police forces rather than by the military. This type of "hardware" could also be available from European sources.

Latin America is still a region characterized by political instability and severe security problems. In the near future the U.S. government may be compelled to direct more attention and more resources towards its Southern neighbors. For that reason it should be in the strategic interest of the United States that the Europeans, including Germany, collaborate in coping with the security problems in Latin America. The European countries and Germany have built up some particular "soft powers" in development assistance and related topics which could be useful for Latin America; however, from time to time one should ask whether the results always validate past expenditures. It is important to note that between Europe and Latin America more cultural and political affinities exist than with the Islamic world or the Asian countries. This could be a great advantage for cooperation in security-related issues. Some issues for development assistance between the European Union and Latin America could be the reform of the state, the stabilization of democratic institutions and the reform and the strengthening of the civilian security forces.<sup>71</sup>

The issues for cooperation in security-related issues between Europe and Latin America are almost unlimited, but we are confronted with a recurring problem in the cooperation between Germany or the European Union and Latin America: many times words do not match with deeds. Free trade is hampered by agricultural subsidies, development assistance or by the lack of funds.<sup>72</sup> Because of the growing involvement in other world regions, which have more immediate strategic importance for Germany and the European Union, the funds available for Latin America are rather limited. If the Europeans should reduce their engagement in the region and if the U.S. administration should concentrate their cooperation efforts on the military, a real risk exists that we could return to the political constellations of the 1960s and 70s. For this reason Latin America has much to gain by European cooperation in security-related topics.

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<sup>70</sup> This is also the conclusion in the Report of an Independent Commission Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations. Center for Preventive Action, *Andes 2020: A New Strategy for the Challenges of Colombia and the Region*, January 2004, p. 2: "The strategy outlined in this report is built on the widely shared belief that sustainable, peaceful democracies in the Andean region depend as much on political, legal, and socioeconomic reform – including the implementation of wide-ranging development initiatives targeted to the poor majorities and disenfranchised rural population – as on "hard" counternarcotics and counterterrorism initiatives."(<http://www.cfr.org/pdf/Andes2020.pdf>)

<sup>71</sup> Because of legal restrictions the U.S. government faces obstacles for training Latin American police forces, so that the Europeans could complement U.S. efforts in training security forces. See Carafano and Johnson, p.6

<sup>72</sup> In Germany in the 1990s the funds for international activities as a percentage of the federal budget have been reduced, see Gunther Hellmann, Von Gipfelstürmern und Gratwanderern: "Deutsche Wege" in der Außenpolitik, in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B 11 – 8.März 2004, p. 32-40 (p.35)  
<http://www.das-parlament.de/2004/11/Beilage/005p.pdf>