

South American Intervention in Haiti*

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The aim of this paper is to present a barely explored approach within analyses of peacekeeping operations: their connection with the foreign and security policies of the countries involved. With this objective in mind, it focuses on three dimensions. First, the interpretation of the Peacekeeping Missions as emblematic forms of South American cooperation. Secondly, the domestic debates on the participation in Haiti among the different actors that influence the setting of foreign policy agendas. Third, the consequences on the subjectivity of the Armed Forces of participating in a mission that implies military presence in public security tasks. Lastly, it explores the way the actions of ABC countries (Argentina, Brazil and Chile) are evaluated in Haiti, bearing in mind the intertwining symbolic interpretations and shared identification points.

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, the literature on multilateralism and international politics has highlighted the importance of peacekeeping operations (PKOs). Identified as a second generation of operations, these missions stand out by their quantitative aspects, as well as their conceptual and practical transformations, and are considered in this new era as actions of multidimensional character¹. Another aspect of recent analyses is the link established between PKOs and the international security agenda, as an expression of a new form of interventionism. These operations are valued as an instrument to face situations of high-scale violence and conflict in different parts of the world, where intra-state predominates over inter-state confrontation². This new interventionism could only be justified – although some doubts arise – by scenarios involving humanitarian crises, genocides, or irreversible institutional collapse. The main instrument of legitimacy for these operations are the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, although there are other missions carried forward by other organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the EU or even by individual states.

One of the most visible aspects of this field of interest is the permanent increase in the number of practitioners linked to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) specializing on a wide range of issues³. This surge is stimulated by an increasing availability of funding and requests put forth by international institutions and local

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¹ Between 1945 and 1988, the UN launched 13 peacekeeping operations. Between 1988 and 2006, they amounted to 46.

² See Robert Jervis and Jack Snyder, 'Civil War and the Security Dilemma', in J. Snyder and B. Walter, *Civil Wars, Insecurity, and Intervention*, Columbia University Press, 1999, pp. 15-38.

³ Paolo Tripodi, 'Relaciones Civiles-Militares en Operaciones de Paz', Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, Political Science Institute, Defence Studies Chair, Working Paper 5, August 2003; and, José Gabriel Paz, 'La coordinación entre las ONG/OI y las Fuerzas Armadas en las operaciones de paz: salvando diferencias culturales', *Military Review*, November-December 2002.

authorities. It is mostly NGOs that provide for the demand of professionals in post-conflict reconstruction, fulfilling tasks of humanitarian aid and support in state-building. At the same time, a stronger connection has been building up between academic and field work, nourished by direct observation as to inform 'what goes on' in PKOs⁴. From a normative perspective, these reports tend to question the results of PKO's, highlighting their operational flaws and political detours. Academic interest on peacekeeping operations has also increased. Besides representing a corollary to the studies on effective multilateralism and the new roles of the UN, a new theme has been generated for field studies in international relations⁵.

This article aims to put forward an unexplored approach in the investigation of PKOs: the connections of these operations with the foreign and security policies of the countries involved. There are many foreign policy issues which do not have a military dimension, just as several defense issues lack a diplomatic component. The relationship between both policy areas represents a peculiar characteristic of peacekeeping operations, opening the door for a series of political questions. These will be explored within an analysis of the participation of South American countries – in a series of political questions: what are the motivations (*why*) and modalities (*how*) that influence some countries to participate in a UN mission. Lastly, there is the result (*impact*) of this participation on the foreign and defense policies from a regional perspective. This result varies according to the type of commitment made by each country. Even when similar motivations and results can be identified, it does not mean that a regional policy to face the new issues of the global security agenda is being formulated.

These issues will be discussed when focusing upon the participation of South American countries – in particular Argentina, Brazil and Chile – in Haiti, after the MINUSTAH has been launched. This participation coincides with a tendency to rely upon regional-oriented initiatives to face situations of institutional collapse and severe humanitarian crises. The current interventionist tendency that has expanded in world politics has stimulated new expectations with regards to regional responses to be assumed by countries that function with more stable government structures such as Argentina, Brazil and Chile. The efforts made in the last two decades by the Southern Cone countries to advance in the structuring of a regionalization process that combines economic integration, democratic rule and security cooperation peace has generated also new international capabilities.⁶ In South America, despite eventual setbacks the Southern Cone countries, South America has become an area of greater stability than the Andean Community. It is worth mentioning the participation of Argentina, Brazil and Chile three countries in multilateral arenas and initiatives, namely the UN Security Council and UN peacekeeping missions. In South America, the three countries have become more flexible regarding their anti-

⁴ For the MINUSTAH, the reports of the International Crisis Group are extremely useful. See: 'A new chance for Haiti?', Latin America/Caribbean Report N°10, 18 November 2004; 'Haiti's Transition: Hanging in the Balance', Latin America/Caribbean Report N° 7, 8 February 2005; 'Can Haiti hold Elections in 2005?', Latin America/Caribbean Briefing N° 8, 3 August 2005; 'Haiti after the Elections: Challenges for Préval's First 100 Days', Latin America/Caribbean Briefing N° 10, 11 May 2006; and, 'Haiti Security and the Reintegration of the State', Latin America/Caribbean Briefing N° 12, 30 October 2006.

⁵ See the journal *International Peacekeeping* published since 1994. Major contributions from the academia include: Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, *Making War & Building Peace: United Nations peace operations*, Princeton University Press, 2006; and William J. Durch, *UN Peacekeeping, American Policy and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990's*, The Henry J. Stimson Center, 1996.

⁶ Mónica Hirst, 'Mercosur's Complex Political Agenda' in Riordan Roett (ed.), *Mercosur Regional Integration, World Market*, London: Lynne-Rienner, 1999.

interventionist beliefs, accepting expanded political roles in Latin American affairs with the aim of containing the securitization of the regional agenda.

From a methodological perspective, this paper deals with different types of sources. In addition to media information and academic analyses,⁷ interviews were carried out in Haiti with diplomatic, military and technical personnel related to the mission, and with political actors and local intellectuals⁸.

The MINUSTAH Context

Haiti's situation of dramatic institutional collapse led Brazil, Argentina and Chile to launch in 2004 a regional initiative that combined with an UN-led multilateral action culminated in the MINUSTAH⁹. This became the fifth and most ambitious UN mission to Haiti. The purpose this time would be to re-establish institutional order in the country and ensure order and security by promoting political dialogue aimed at national reconciliation and advancing economic and social development.¹⁰ In addition to maintaining stability, the mission's mandate included a wide range of responsibilities related to electoral assistance, public security, humanitarian aid, the protection of human rights and the environment and economic development.

The outstanding participation of the ABC countries contributed to identify the mission as a sub-regional initiative, adapted to the renewed multilateral interventionism enforced in scenarios of institutional collapse. Nevertheless, the importance of other countries in this operation, from South America or other regions, is not to be forgotten¹¹. It is worth mentioning the presence of Uruguayan troops that are senior

⁷ Among the academic sources to be mentioned: Megan Burke, 'Recovering From Armed Conflict: Lessons Learned and Next Steps for Improved International Assistance', *FRIDE*, Working Paper N° 22, April 2006; Luis Peral, 'Las amenazas a la seguridad humana y el problema de los medios de acción', *FRIDE*, Working Paper N° 15, October 2005; Martin Doornbos et al., 'Failing States or Failed States? The Role of Development Models: Collected Works', *FRIDE*, Working Paper N° 19, February 2006; Mariano Aguirre, 'Naciones Unidas y España en Haití', *FRIDE*, Comment, February 2006; and Eugenio Diniz, 'O Brasil e a MINUSTAH', available at http://www.ndu.edu/chds/Journal/PDF/2005/Diniz_article-edited.pdf.

⁸ Lieutenant General José Elito Carvalho Siqueira (Force Commander, MINUSTAH, 2006); Ambassador Cordeiro; Lizbeth Cullity (MINUSTAH), Arnaldo Caiche D'Oliveira (Brazilian Embassy); Ettore Di Benedetto (Human Rights Section, MINUSTAH); Javier Hernández Valencia (Civil Affairs, MINUSTAH); Garaudy Laguerre (Executive Director of the Instituto Superior de Formación Política y Social); Gerardo Le Chevalier (Electoral Assistance Section, MINUSTAH); Ernesto López (Argentinian Ambassador); Sabine Manigat (*Le Matin* newspaper); Edmond Mulet (Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, 2006); General Augusto Heleno Ribeiro Pereira (Force Commander, MINUSTAH, 2004-2005); Horacio Sánchez Mariño (Head of Military Operations, Argentinian Armada); Catherine Sung (Electoral Assistance Section, MINUSTAH); Juan Gabriel Valdés (2004-2006); Marcel Young (Chilean Ambassador).

⁹ In 2000, Jean Bertrand Aristide was elected president with 91 percent of votes (only 10 percent of the eligible population voted due to a boycott organized by the opposition parties). The opposition and the international community accused the government of rigging the elections by committing fraud and manipulating votes. The international community imposed severe sanctions that affected the country's economy. In February 2004 an armed revolt broke out that rapidly extended throughout the country. After failed negotiations and Washington's resolve to send troops, Aristide decided to leave the country. The UN Security Council authorized (upon request of the interim president Boniface Alexandre) the deployment of a Provisional Multinational Force, with US, French, Canadian and Chilean troops. On June 1st 2004, MINUSTAH was established by resolution 1542 for an initial period of six months.

¹⁰ The first UN mission in Haiti was UNMIH (United Nations Mission in Haiti), from September 1993 to June 1996. The second was UNSMIH (United Nations Support Mission in Haiti), from July 1996 to June 1997. The third was UNTMIH (United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti), from August 1997 to November 1997. And the last, before MINUSTAH, was MIPONUH (United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti), from December 1997 to March 2000.

¹¹ The countries that participate in MINUSTAH are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Peru, Canada, United States, Croatia, Ecuador, France, Guatemala, Jordan, Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, Philippines, Spain and Sri Lanka.

participants in PKOs; of Peruvian and Bolivian contingents that reinforced even more the South American presence in the MINUSTAH. Furthermore Jordan, Nepal and Sri Lanka also contributed, as well as the important non-military support from France, Spain and the US. The participation of the ABC in reconstruction efforts in Haiti was sustained domestically by new links established between foreign policy and defense policy, with the aim of broadening their respective influences in the international arenas involved in global governance and effective multilateralism.

From the start, MINUSTAH authorities had to deal simultaneously with challenging political conditions and constant international pressure, in particular the dubious collaboration received from the transition government and the US expectations that an electoral calendar would be followed. Also, coping with the moroseness of international support – starting with the UN machinery –; and responding to the public opinion of their own countries, became a source of permanent concern for the ABC governments. From the Haitian view, the Mission's positive impact was acknowledged given the desolate political reality – worsened by the devastation caused by natural disasters. Although the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) initially opposed the MINUSTAH, it became slowly more supportive to the mission's reconstruction efforts. The tasks of institutional rebuilt, prevention of human rights abuses and disarmament of gangs – with non-confrontational methods – in the months preceding the elections produced positive results¹².

The military presence of Southern Cone countries – with the exception of Chile – in peacekeeping missions has had different significance in the last 15 years. During the 1990s, participation was motivated in large part by the need to re-define the role of the Armed Forces in the context of local re-democratization processes. In Argentina, due to the importance of civil-military subordination; in Uruguay, mainly as a economic source for the maintenance of the military; in Brazil, as a source for a renewed and prestigious engagement in international affairs. In each case, motivations resulted from the combination of domestic needs and external interests. Currently- with the inclusion of Chile- foreign political stimuli has gained as these countries discover their capacity to “export” stability and democracy. In the previous phase, peacekeeping operations were seen as a functional instrument to consolidate the rule of law within Latin American countries, and as a contribution to the change of the military mentality. Nowadays, participation in peacekeeping operations adds more meaning to the mission of Armed Forces. Altogether, this participation links itself with the idea that Peace Operations contribute to strengthen the conditions of inter-democratic peace within the international community. This perception, which stems from the assumption that democratic regimes are less prone to war, argues that these very regimes dispose of more adequate resources and are more prone to participate in this kind of operations¹³.

The participation of South American countries in MINUSTAH has gone hand in hand with the evolution of the Haitian process since 2003. Three phases can be identified:

¹² The most difficult areas in Haiti were Cité Soleil – under the jurisdiction of the Argentinean Army – and Bel Air – under the command of Brazilian troops. According to a UN Security Council report, MINUSTAH was successful in recovering the locations held by the rebels and in decreasing the activities of criminal gangs, especially in Bel Air. MINUSTAH's presence in Cité Soleil increased: on 9-10 April Ravix Rémissainthe (former military officer associated with the trafficking group of Grenn Sonnen), René Jean Anthony and eight members of important gangs were killed. In October 2005, two people were arrested in Bel Air. See UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti', May 13th 2005.

¹³ See Andreas Anderson, 'Democracies and UN Peacekeeping Operations, 1990-1996', *International Peacekeeping*, 7:2, Summer 2000.

Phase I: (2003-2004): This period corresponds with the intervention of the Provisional Multinational Force, which precipitated the resignation of President Aristide. The ABC countries had no military presence during the final stage of the Aristide government and were mere observers of the French and US-led action that led to his downfall¹⁴. The first South American country to commit itself to an intervention authorized by the UN Security Council was Chile, which saw this as an opportunity to make up for its stance in 2002 against the war in Iraq when it sat as a non-permanent member at the UNSC. The Chilean presence in Haiti was settled between the Chilean and US administration. Brazil's participation was a result of understandings held between the Itamaraty and the UN Secretary-General. The Brazilian initial position was reluctant, avoiding committing to a peace imposition mission as envisaged by the UN Security Council resolution. After becoming more flexible regarding initial position, Brazil insisted that Argentina join MINUSTAH since the very beginning.

Phase II: (2004-2006): This phase witnessed the creation and intervention of MINUSTAH. It tested the enforcement of methods which implied a moderate use of force, the intense use of political and military dissuasion, and the assurance of providing peace and stability for carrying forward the process of political transition. MINUSTAH's main challenge at the time was to succeed at a strategy that was effective in the preparation of presidential elections and the maintenance of internal order. Any slip that implied increasing the dosage of violence could be used by local elites as a pretext to postpone an electoral outcome.¹⁵

Since the beginning the mission was adapted to a multidimensional concept that implied tasks of military, police, humanitarian assistance and human rights protection, as well as the provision of public services (especially in the areas of health, road engineering, housing and sanitary conditions). During this period, the divergent expectations between Washington and the MINUSTAH authorities expanded. While the Bush administration advocated actions more in accordance with chapter VII of the UN Charter – which provides the means for peace imposition – MINUSTAH political and military policies sought to maximize actions in accordance with Chapter VI- which favors the maintenance of peace-. This phase concluded with presidential elections and the victory of René Préval.

Phase III: (May 2006 to the present): In this period MINUSTAH assumes responsibility for ensuring that René Préval- who unlike the previous government had wide popular support- may rely upon acceptable governance conditions. MINUSTAH functions are two wise: a) to guarantee stability – peace and security – throughout the national territory so that the democratic process is completed in accordance with Haiti's constitution, and in order to minimize intervention in the local political process; and b) to contribute to the reconstruction of the Haitian state by coordinating international development cooperation – in which the funds provided by donor countries are of crucial importance. One of MINUSTAH's more delicate tasks is to contain and deactivate corruption mechanisms linked to international development cooperation in the Haitian state. In addition to providing technical assistance in a myriad of public policy areas, it purposely tries to avoid the overlapping of initiatives and development cooperation programs. This would add difficulties to the

¹⁴ Brazil, as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, voted in favor of resolution 1529 establishing the Provisional Multinational Force on February 29th 2004.

¹⁵ Interview with Juan Gabriel Valdés.

coordination amongst the UN, government members to the Donor Commission¹⁶ and the small Haitian state. Coordination becomes even more difficult given the vast and uncontrolled presence of NGOs, which control “de facto” the great part of economic and technical resources destined to development cooperation, especially those coming from international bodies such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the European Union (EU).

Domestic Policy and Foreign Action

The ABC countries have perceived the MINUSTAH as an opportunity to deepen inter-state diplomatic and military coordination.¹⁷ To pursue this goal the Chilean Juan Gabriel Vales head of the UN Mission in Haiti collaborated closely with the Brazilian military command who relied upon an Argentinean official, the second military command and a Chilean official as Chief of Operations¹⁸. This team spirit was strengthened by convergent foreign policy perceptions regarding the Haitian reconstruction process. Nevertheless, each countries presence in Haiti was driven by specific domestic and international interests. From the start, sending troops to Haiti became a controversial issue within political and intellectual circles in Brazil, Chile and Argentina. Despite some national peculiarities, controversies generally have been raised in regard to four aspects: i) the pro-coup origin of the mission; ii) its ‘de facto’ subordination to US interests; iii) the costs and benefits for the presence in Haiti; and, iv) the mission’s chances of success.

The first aspect has been closely related to the link between the recent history of these countries and the conditions in Haiti, which led to the UN Security Council decision to approve multilateral intervention. The legacy left by the military coups that abolished the rule of law in Argentina, Brazil and Chile reinforced the suspicion within leftist groups regarding a link between the MINUSTAH initiative and the organization of a coup against the government of Bertrand Aristide. This sort of perception has been connected to the understanding that the region’s governments’ decision to assume interventionist responsibilities in Haiti was the result of an ‘outsourcing’ or delegation determined by Washington to “help-out” in situations of institutional collapse in the Western Hemisphere.¹⁹

The following two aspects are more associated with the perceptions of ABC conservative elites. The use of both economic and security resources is questioned, and it is considered more relevant that police and Armed Forces play a role in domestic insecurity situations than waste efforts in a far away reality whose future has little or no national implication. In this case, the idea that the presence in PKOs is a source of international prestige is perceived as irrelevant. Instead, international

¹⁶ The countries participating in the Donor Commission are: Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, Sweden and the United States. The international organizations that participated in the Commission were: World Bank, European Commission, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

¹⁷ Juan Gabriel Valdés, former Chilean Ambassador to the United Nations and Argentina, assumed the leadership of MINUSTAH in August 2004, remaining until May 2006.

¹⁸ Force Commanders of MINUSTAH (Brazil): General Augusto Heleno Ribeiro Pereira (February 2004-September 2005); Urano Teixeira da Matta Bacellar (September 2005-January 2006); Lieutenant General José Elito Carvalho Siqueira (January-December 2006). Second Troop Commander: Alfredo Lugani (Argentina) from August 2004–September 2005); and Eduardo Aldunate Herman (Chile) from September 2005.

¹⁹ Juan Gabriel Tokatlián, ‘El desacierto de enviar tropas a Haití’, *Página 12*, 13/06/04

acknowledgement should result from positive economic performance, and not regional solidarity or humanitarian gestures.

The fourth and last argument considers MINUSTAH as an impossible mission in the face of the socio-economic and politico-institutional conditions in Haiti. Doubts are raised especially in regard to the effectiveness of this operation, not only because of the past in Haiti and the chances of repetition of democratic failures, but also due to the present resistance by armed groups, which continue to illegally control parts of the territory in the island in connections with drug-trafficking and organized crime. This scenario will be even worse if the links between the local bureaucracy and the politicians behind the Haitian transition government (2004-2006) with crime and corruption prove true.

Among ABC countries, Chile was the country that expressed the least doubts about intervening in Haiti. President Ricardo Lagos expressed his agreement even before the creation of MINUSTAH. On the other hand, the Argentine diplomatic and military representation has been the one most under domestic pressure among the ABC and was the most doubtful country to participate in the MINUSTAH. Argentina's lack of enthusiasm is explained by domestic political reasons given that participation in peacekeeping operations has been strongly associated with the foreign policy of the Menem administration²⁰. This was pointed out in the parliament, among the political parties, and in the media in the debates proceeding the deployment of troops in Haiti²¹. Despite domestic opposition, Argentina's intervention in Haiti acquired an original and different aspect with respect to previous experiences. Military action in coordination with the Armed Forces of neighbor countries attained a symbolic value that was recognized by its leaders who praise themselves for abandoning the agendas of conflict that had characterized the country's defense policy in the past. Besides, Argentina's foreign policy has made a positive use of the lessons learned from the 2001 crisis transforming these into an asset for iSouth-South cooperation, a valuable resource in the Haitian context. An example has been the implementation of the Pro-agriculture program in Haiti to attend to the dramatic food shortage and unemployment necessities in the country's rural areas²².

Brazil acted in Haiti in response to several motivations. As UNSC non-permanent members, Brazil and Chile, worked side by side towards for the approval and renewal of the MINUSTAH mandate in 2004. (Afterwards – when MINUSTAH's mandate was renewed in 2005 and 2006 – Argentina and Peru acted likewise). Brazil also sought to diminish CARICOM's, Venezuela's and Mexico's opposition to MINUSTAH. For Brazilian foreign policy discourse, presence in Haiti meant to replace old times non-intervention policy for present non-indifference policy²³. As part of the

²⁰ In the 1990s, Argentina participated in 22 peace keeping missions: *Angola*: UNAVEM I (1988-1991), UNAVEM II (1991-1995), UNAVEM III (1998-1997), MONUA (1997-1999); *Mozambique*: ONUMOZ (1992-1994); *Rwanda*: UNAMIR (1993-1996); *Guatemala*: MINUGUA (1997); *Haiti*: UNMIH (1993-1996), UNTMIH (1997), MIPONUH (1997-2000); *Cambodia*: UNAMIC (1991-1992); *Croatia*: UNTAES (1996-1998), UNPSG (1998); *Ex- Macedonia*: UNPREDEP (1995-1999); *Prevlaka Peninsula*: MONUP (1996-2002); *Bosnia-Herzegovina*: UNMIGH (1995-2002); *Iran-Iraq*: UNIMOG (1988-1991); *Iraq-Kuwait*: UNIKOM (1988-1991); *Western Sahara*: MINURSO (1991-present); *Cyprus*: UNFICYP (1964-present); *Kosovo*: UNMIK (1999-present); *Middle East*: ONUVT (1948-present).

²¹ Parliamentary Debate on the Deployment of Troops in Haiti, Senate and Congress, June 2004, available at <http://www.resdal.org/haiti/main-haiti-crisis.html>

²² The Pro-agriculture program (headed by the National Agro-Technology Institute, INTA) is a food security program whose main objective is to improve the food level of those living in situation of structural poverty and below the poverty line. In Argentina, this program was started in 2003. Currently, according to INTA data, there are 560,000 families that benefit 2.7 million people.

²³ Speech by Celso Amorim, 35th OAS General Assembly, 06/06/05

growing responsibilities assumed by Brazil in PKOs, the presence in Haiti stands out as an example of Brazilian more audacious diplomacy in Latin America. Brazil is determined to exert political influence over international action that monitors Haiti's reconstruction, and hence it is also under pressure from donor countries and international organizations for assuming such responsibilities. On the other side, even though the Lula administration is integrally committed to MINUSTAH, it faces different kinds of limitations imposed by Brazil's legislation. The Foreign Ministry and the the Armed Forces are the only sectors of the Brazilian bureaucracy that may move around the world. The other sectors face normative and legal restrictions, that which affects development cooperation initiatives in other countries in crucial areas such as basic sanitation, health and education. One solution sought by the Foreign Ministry has been to rely upon Brazilian NGOs that work with social issues and public violence and have been developing new areas of foreign collaboration. In Haiti the NGO Viva Rio has been an example of this sort of partnership.²⁴

From the beginning, the decision of the Lula administration to participate in the reconstruction of Haiti was criticized and questioned by Brazilian politicians and academics. Concerns over internal support for the intervention in Haiti led the Itamaraty to promote visiting to Haiti by members of parliament. As a result, criticism gave way to greater comprehension and support to Brazil's presence in MINUSTAH²⁵. This effort, however, did not avoid the inclusion of the issue in the politicization of Brazilian foreign policy, especially visible in the 2006 presidential election²⁶.

The Chilean government has also been under pressure for participating in MINUSTAH. However, unlike the Brazilian and Argentinean cases, most doubts in Chile were raised by right-wing segments. Left-wing criticism has been moderate, limiting itself to the Communist Party in particular, which was cautious due to Cuba's decision of maintaining diplomatic relations with Haiti after Aristide left government. Strongest opposition came from the Independent Democratic Union (UDI) that strongly protested in 2004 when President Lagos announced that Chilean troops were to participate in the mission in Haiti. One of the key points was that the president announced this decision without consulting the Senate. In February 2006, UDI did not support the continuity of Chilean troops in Haiti, but its opposition lost momentum once the Coalition forces, the Christian Democracy and the Socialist Party still favored continuity.

²⁴ Viva Rio coordinates disarmament tasks in Haiti, due to the fact that it has acquired experience in this area from working in the shanty towns (*favelas*) of Rio de Janeiro. In July 2006, Viva Rio also headed (together with other international organizations) a project of urbanization and cultural valorization in Bel Air.

²⁵ After their visits to Haiti, Cristóvam Buarque (PDT senator) and Fernando Gabeira (PV congressman) changed their hesitant positions regarding Brazil's participation in MINUSTAH. In September 2005, Cristovam Buarque visited Brazilian troops in Haiti. In a message to the Senate on September 19th, he claimed, 'I want to say that I came back even more convinced that my vote in support of the decision of the Brazilian government, of the decision of President Lula, to send troops to this country was correct'. Source: *Defesa@net*, October 2005. In February 2006 after Fernando Gabeira visited Haiti he declared, 'At the beginning I was against sending troops, but we cannot leave all of a sudden, it would be irresponsible. Haiti is not at war. We must explore other forms of cooperation, namely in the cultural and educational fields.' Source: 'Presidente Eleito de Haiti quer que Brasil mantenha tropas no país', *Folha Online*, 10 March 2006.

²⁶ See: Mônica Hirst, 'Los desafíos de la política sudamericana de Brasil', *Nueva Sociedad*, N° 205, September/October 2006. The former Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Celso Lafer, questioned whether Lula's actions in Haiti – particularly sending the national football team for a friendly match – were not simply 'showbiz politics', source: 'Para Lafer, política de Lula é a do espetáculo', *Folha de São Paulo*, 18 August 2004.

Military Action and Public Security

When discussing security in Haiti, the first challenge stems from the very definition of the nature of the mission. From a military perspective, what justified the creation of MINUSTAH was not civil war- which implies the existence of different parties in conflict- but a situation of complete lack of control and institutional collapse, characterized by the escalation of violence and insurgency with unpredictable consequences.

This is the most complex aspect regarding the participation of ABC countries in MINUSTAH, given the gap between means and ends. A contradictory situation emerges from the fact that the same attributes that have led Argentina, Brazil and Chile to assume greater responsibilities in the Haitian transition impede these countries to deal with the security constraints which affects the tasks assigned to the MINUSTAH. As already has be stated, one of the shared principles of the democratic transition processes in Argentina, Brazil and Chile is the prohibition of the involvement of the military in internal security matters, given the consequences it has produced in the past regarding the abuse human rights. In South America, this is a dividing line between the Southern Cone and the Andean region; the latter being exempt from this sort of prevention. For the Southern Cone however, democratization involved the formulation of security policies²⁷ leading to the built-up of new patterns of civil-military relations.

But security problems in Haiti are mostly internal the use of force and coercion power normally not dealt with by the military in Argentina, Brazil or Chile. Security problems in Haiti request strong police apparatuses, that which the MINUSTAH does not dispose of.

Still more serious are the connections among the police systems and organized crime in Argentina and Brazil. The difficulties faced by both states in containing this vicious circle at home have led to situations of chronic public insecurity. Due to this type of connection, organized crime has expanded operational capacity at national, regional and global levels. As the capacity of the governments to fight these gangs in the big cities has become more limited, public opinion has become lest resistant to the idea of an intervention of the military to renew the ability of the state to monopolize violence. Undoubtedly, in Brazil this debate has become crucial in face of the dramatic expansion of violence and crime in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.²⁸ Brazilian elites have raised the possibility that Haiti could serve as a useful training experience to prepare the Armed Forces involvement in the repression against organized crime.

MINUSTAH have been quite effective to contain and dismantle organized gangs, former soldiers or *chimeres*²⁹. The kind of action that in Argentina, Brazil and Chile raises doubts regarding the military involvement in internal security UN terms translates into moving from chapter VI (peace-keeping) to chapter VII (peace enforcement) of the UN Charter. While for some countries – such as the Jordania –

²⁷ See: Mónica Hirst, 'Seguridad Regional en las Américas', in Wolf Grabendorff (ed.), *La Seguridad Regional en las Américas. Enfoques críticos y conceptos alternativos*, Friederich Ebert Stiftung, in Colombia, FESCOL, Bogota, 2003; Jorge I. Domínguez, 'Conflictos Territoriales y Limitrofes en América Latina y el Caribe', *Conflictos Territoriales y Democracia en América Latina, Siglo XXI*, FLACSO, Argentina, 2003.

²⁸ An example was Claudio Lembo's (governor of Sao Paulo) refusal to accept help from the Armed Forces in August 2006 to contain escalated violence generated by the PCC, a Brazilian organized crime group. Centro Estratégico de Estudos. *Weekly Press Summary*, Grupo de Estudos da Defesa e Segurança (GEDES) of the Universidade Estadual Paulista, Brazil, 2006.

²⁹ Political activists loyal to Aristide.

applying Chapter VII does not represent a problem, for the Argentine, Brazilian and Chilean troops, it is a permanent source of tension.³⁰ In this case, the main concern consists in the impact upon public opinion at home, since this type of action supposes a higher risk of casualties on both sides.

Beyond peacekeeping, MINUSTAH contingents have been engaged in all sorts of tasks dealing with communications, infrastructure, public health and engineering, crucial to provide basic needs to the Haitian population. These tasks became even more urgent after the devastating effects of hurricane Jeanne in October 2004.

The fact that these tasks undertaken exceed the MINUSTAH mandate does not mean that the Haiti experience has not been valued by the ABC Armed Forces as a positive experience for the strengthening of their military organization. In any case, there has been special appreciation of the collective and regional dimension the MINUSTAH has added to their mission.

In the case of Argentina, there is a clear contrast between the confidence derived from accumulated PKO experience and the manifest sensitivity caused by degradation suffered by the military as a consequence of both the defeat in the Malvinas-Falklands War and the record of human rights abuse during the Authoritarian regime³¹. For the Argentine troops the MINUSTAH experience represents an opportunity to leave behind a traumatic past and, more importantly, replaces former conflict hypothesis with neighboring countries with cooperation in the reconstruction of Haiti³².

For the Brazilian military Angola has been the only post-cold war relevant PKO experience (in terms of sending troops). Military presence in Haiti is considered an experience that contributes to military formation and the consolidation of principles and values that are necessary to dealing with complex situations which involve institutional crisis, violence and dramatic social condition. For the Brazilian military command in Haiti the MINUSTAH is not considered an occupation force does, it must be conceived as a mission of political stabilization³³. The Brazilian in the MINUSTAH is treasured as an opportunity to deepen the collaboration with the Foreign Ministry in promotion international prestige for Brazil in world affairs, specially the context of new threats and conflicts, and increasing humanitarian challenges.

All in all, the high degree of understanding and cooperation among the South American contingents of MINUSTAH is not in itself a solution to the challenges faced by the Mission in the security field. It has become a widely shared perception that it is harder than ever to face Haitian reality, especially with respect to the nature of its problems. On the one hand, it is believed that the presence of MINUSTAH is justifiable until Haiti becomes self-sufficient security wise. On the other, there is a prevailing notion that the greatest obstacles to stability are no longer the political clans and former military officers, but the ever growing presence of narco-trafficking and organized crime, and its regional connections, principally with its Colombian counterparts.

³⁰ See Luis Kawaguti, *A República Negra: Histórias de um repórter sobre as tropas brasileiras no Haiti*, Editora Globo S.A, São Paulo, 2006.

³¹ In Argentina, the derogation of the laws of Due Obedience and End Point (*leyes de Obediencia Debida y Punto Final*) by the Kirchner administration allowed the reopening of judicial cases against approximately 240 military officers.

³² Interviews with the author.

³³ Interviews with the author.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, it is clear that the solution to Haiti's security problem depends upon police action, which, in a context of Haitian self-sufficiency, would imply a local independent force, with authority and resources. For the ABC countries, this means facing challenges and uncertainties such as the need to increase and prepare local police forces (PNH) – a task which is the competence of the US and Canada – and the evaluation of costs and benefits of the creation of a new local army.

Between Perceptions and Imagination

ABC actions in Haiti are evaluated comparatively, always in reference to previous international experiences. If, on the one hand, the ABC Mission in Haiti is perceived by Haitians as an external occupation, on the other it is regarded as benign when compared with the presence of countries such as the US and France. Progressive political and intellectual opinions regard these two countries as responsible for the coup that overthrew Aristide, while the MINUSTAH is considered as the 'lesser evil'. Nevertheless, the dominant elite, that has always opposed Aristide, is critical of the ABC, especially to its moderate use of force.

MINUSTAH encompasses a symbolic and historical dimension, which brings together a Latin American collective memory, with common ideological references and shared political and diplomatic antecedents. The peculiarity of such juxtaposition has served as inspiration for the rhetoric of South American countries with regard to their presence in Haiti. A sense of identity is added to the common ethical-political content of PKOs.

Since the beginning of MINUSTAH, a symbolic cross-referencing between South Americans and Haitians was established. The Mission's presence in Haiti stirs the past, bringing to the surface its history, in particular the movements for independence and abolishment of slavery. This liberation process remains an underscored chapter in the historiography and literature of the region has become a commonplace in the interventionist rhetoric, used by UN officials as well as by Latin American diplomats³⁴. The acknowledgment of the historical contribution of Haiti to the emancipation of the region – 'an obsessive memory' – also added a sense of duty and reciprocity to the Mission. Such perception distinguishes MINUSTAH from other UN operations, especially with reference to the impact that a irreversible collapse of Haiti would have on Latin America. Similar appreciation is shared by Haitians when they demands solidarity and cooperation for its reconstruction. Within Haitian left-wing circles, ideological links between Haiti and the region are reinforced, incurring on the inspiring figures of 'Che' Guevara and Salvador Allende.

Alongside references to nineteenth century national formation and twentieth century revolutionary episodes and heroes, the memory of more recent Latin American diplomatic initiatives is also present. It is worth mentioning the experiences of the Contadora Group and its Support Group (*Grupo de Apoyo a Contadora*) in the

³⁴ Alejo Carpentier's serves as an outstanding example. See: 'El reino de este mundo' (1949), in *Obras Completas de Alejo Carpentier*, Vol. 2, Mexico City, Siglo Veintiuno, 1989. "...Haiti, with its successful black rebellion, which eradicated the European caste, is a memory obsession'. Tulio Halperin Donghi, *Hispanoamérica después de la Independencia. Consecuencias sociales y económicas de la Emancipación*, Biblioteca América Latina, Editorial Paidós, 1972, p. 55: 'Haiti symbolised not only independence, but revolution; not only freedom, but also equality'; See also John Lynch, 'Los orígenes de la independencia hispanoamericana', in *Historia de América Latina*, Leslie Bethell (ed.), Editorial Crítica, Barcelona, 1991. Torcuato Di Tella, 'La rebelión de esclavos en Haití', Instituto de Desarrollo Económico y Social, 1984.

pacification of Central America³⁵. From the very beginning, the memory of the political mobilization around the Central American crisis was a precedent repeatedly cited by the representatives of the ABC. The regional identity of MINUSTAH was highly valued as the experience in Haiti could be understood in continuity with the Central American pacification³⁶. Also, for UN officials, the experiences of El Salvador (ONUSAL) and Colombia, constitute the most recent and recurrent precedents in their respective trajectories³⁷. It is also interesting to refer to the ABC's past and its historical role in interstate relations within the Southern Cone³⁸. This is an open chapter since the early XX th century.

As a final mention within the field of symbolism, the ABC Haitian vision is still strongly influenced by soft variables, amongst which football plays a central role³⁹. A non-violent rivalry exists in Haitian society between Brazilian and Argentine football fans, particularly visible during the 2006 World Cup, which led to the creation of an Argentina-Brazil association, presided over by the Chilean Ambassador to Haiti.

Concluding remarks

The main objective of this essay has been to offer a critical analysis of the regional and international role of the ABC countries concerning their responsibilities in the post-war reconstruction mission in Haiti.

Within the Southern Cone, the interaction of their Armed Forces gained new impetus through the shared goal of expanding their respective presences in the MINUSTAH. In fact, for region, the majority of military joint exercises- bilateral or multilateral- are simulations of peacekeeping operations.

With respect to Brazil and Argentina, there is a sense of continuity and complementarities of the activities of their respective Armed Forces in Haiti with the confidence-building measures practiced in the last two decades.⁴⁰

Another important aspect of the South American presence in MINUSTAH is the global tendency to enlarge the responsibility of regional organizations and actors in multilateral intervention initiatives in situations of governance crisis and insurgent violence. The literature on this phenomenon suggests the use of the concept of "subsidiarity", which grants political authority and local legitimacy, thereby improving

³⁵ The Contadora Group was created in 1983 by the governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela. Its objective was to establish peace in Central America. The *Grupo de Apoyo a Contadora* (Contadora Support Group) – integrated by Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay – was created in July 1985. The Mission of UN Observers in El Salvador (ONUSAL) functioned between July 1991 and April 1995. Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela were the Latin American countries that provided the Mission with military observers. Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico sent police observers. Argentina sent medical officers.

³⁶ Gabriel Gaspar Tapia, 'Haití: ¿complemento o vacío hegemónico en América Latina?', *Foreign Affairs (in Spanish)*, 5: 1, January-March 2005.

³⁷ Interview with the author.

³⁸ The ABC idea was first conceived in the early XXth century and later recreated in the fifties by Perón (Argentina), Vargas (Brazil) and Ibañez (Chile) as a populist coalition.

³⁹ As a consequence of President Lula's initiative, the Brazilian national football team traveled to Port-au-Prince on 18 August 2004 to play against the Haitian national team.

⁴⁰ The 24th edition of the bilateral exercises called 'Fraterno' which simulated various cooperation situations, such as humanitarian aid and UN Charter chapter VII were undertaken in October 2005 in the *baía de Marambaia* in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil,. See María Elena Polak, 'Ejercicios con ritmo carioca', *La Nación*, 16 October 2005.

the chances of success of international intervention⁴¹. The valuable presence of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in humanitarian missions in the African continent may corroborate this. However, neither South America nor the Southern Cone can count on similar alternatives. MERCOSUR suggests the creation of a Peace Zone, but it does not point to the instruments that might help to achieve this goal. Equally limited are the Group of Rio and the Organization of American States (OAS). The latter has been playing a significant role in electoral observation and monitoring human rights abuses, but it does not have the power to summon military or police forces that might assume stabilization and peace maintenance missions. The residual alternative, therefore, is the adoption of "home-made recipes", combining intergovernmental initiatives with the UN's operative and normative capabilities. In this sense, the expansion of UN economic and organizational resources for PKOs may stimulate the use of the UNSC as a legitimizing body for this type of solution.

Collaboration between South American and Southern Cone countries seems more viable within global institutions than at the regional organizational level. The creation of a security community implies a level of defense policy homogenization that is very hard to achieve, especially due to the diverse nature of perceived national threats for states in South America. Southern Cone countries that are willing and able to undertake larger responsibilities in humanitarian action missions prefer to do so under the auspices of a multilateral organization. The political future of Haiti will inevitably have an impact on the Southern Cone countries' perception of repeating experiences and missions of this kind. Yet a scenario of shared responsibilities and common political and security between the ABC countries is still uncertain.

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⁴¹ David O'Brien, 'The Search for Subsidiarity: The UN, African Regional Organizations and Humanitarian Action', *International Peacekeeping*, 7:3, autumn 2000