



NATIONAL STRATEGY FORUM REVIEW

ESTRANGED RELATIONS: US POLICY IN LATIN AMERICA

**ESTRANGED RELATIONS:
US-LATIN AMERICA 2008**

Cynthia Watson, Ph.D.

**TACKLING TRANSNATIONAL CRIME:
ADAPTING US NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY**

Vanda Felbab-Brown

**US-LATIN AMERICA:
THE INTERSECTION OF TRADE AND SECURITY**

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BOOK REVIEW
Leaderless Jihad by Marc Sageman

Reviewed by Lauren Bean

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER	4
<i>Richard E. Friedman</i>	
ESTRANGED RELATIONS: US-LATIN AMERICA 2008	6
<i>Cynthia Watson, Ph.D.</i>	
TACKLING TRANSNATIONAL CRIME: ADAPTING US NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY	10
<i>Vanda Felbab-Brown</i>	
US-LATIN AMERICA: THE INTERSECTION OF TRADE AND SECURITY	14
<i>Laura Carlsen</i>	
BOOK REVIEW: <i>Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century</i>, by Marc Sageman	19
<i>Reviewed by Lauren Bean</i>	
RECENT SPEAKERS	21

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

By **Richard E. Friedman**

How can the next US administration restore America's world leadership position and why does it matter? The US relationship with its Latin American neighbors may provide the answer.

The US has suffered a precipitous decline in world public opinion in recent years. For example, several years ago Turkish public opinion was 90 percent favorable to the US; now 90 percent of Turkey's public regards the US unfavorably. There are strategic reasons that compel a realistic self-evaluation of why and how the US can win a world popularity contest.

US world leadership is necessary to attain and retain global political and economic stability. Disorder in world economic markets and the potential for growing and more lethal (nuclear) acts of terrorism compel the conclusion that the US cannot go it alone.

The pendulum is swinging back from the unipolar world which has existed since the demise of the former Soviet Union in 1991 to a multi-polar world where the US once again shares power with others: China; a nuclear-armed autocratic Russia; and, perhaps most importantly, the asymmetric leverage that could be exercised by militant Islamist states, and other states and organizations that might employ asymmetric leverage armed with nuclear weapons. However, the US has the unique experience, talent, and resources to act effectively as a world leader.

The predicate to US world leadership begins with America's backyard, which is Latin America. America's closest neighbors are Mexico and Canada. Latin America is composed of nearly 550 million people, 20 countries, and has an annual gross domestic product (GDP) of an estimated \$3.3 trillion. This compares to the European

Union's population of nearly 500 million people and an annual GDP of almost \$14 trillion.

The Monroe Doctrine (1823) served notice to European states that the Western Hemisphere is America's backyard. (Canada was excluded because of its special political relationship with Britain). The US at that time had neither the economic or military force to challenge Britain. The US treated Latin America with "benign neglect" until the early 1930s. During this period, there were approximately 32 US military incursions into the "banana republics." President Franklin Roosevelt announced the "Good Neighbor Policy" in the 1930s, and President Kennedy proclaimed the "Alliance for Progress" in 1961. Neither well-meaning US policy was implemented. In 1971, President Nixon stated, "Latin America doesn't matter. People don't give one damn about Latin America now."

The bright spot of US / Latin American relations began in President Reagan's second term when US policy began to focus on democracy in the region. This resulted in the deposing of several Latin America states' "caudillos", bringing a modicum of democracy to the region which has grown substantially.

The Latin American perception is that the US is indifferent to the region, which creates distrust of the US. However, Latin American leaders want the US to take an active leadership role in Latin America, because the US is the only state that can effectively advance Latin American interests. Latin American political leaders do not wish to be perceived as too loosely aligned with the US. This poses a problem of form over substance.

The broad US policy objectives in Latin America are to counter drug-trafficking, counterterrorism, and to consolidate democracy. Additional US policy objectives might include assisting Latin American states in reforming their law enforcement and judicial systems, and bolstering Latin

American economies, which requires adjusting US agricultural and textile policies to assist Latin American states where they have a competitive advantage. There is a need for the US to reexamine the efficacy of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). For example, why are Mexican factory jobs moving to China? The US has not implemented its free market rhetoric. For example, the US continues to subsidize US sugar agriculture.

A major US strategic challenge in Latin America is how to cope with US oil import dependency. The US imports approximately 15 percent of its oil from Mexico and 13 percent from Venezuela.

Venezuela's poverty has increased even though it enjoys huge windfall oil revenue. Venezuela has the highest inflation rate in the region, more than 20 percent annually. Oil production is decreasing because the government siphons off Venezuelan oil companies' revenues, depriving them of reinvestment in oil production infrastructure. Venezuela's oil industry provides 45 percent of total government revenues and accounts for 80 percent of its total exports. In 2007, Venezuela's oil industry revenue decreased by 26 percent and the projection is that it will continue to fall at an increasing rate.

The rise to power of Venezuela's President Chavez is symptomatic of left-leaning politics in Latin America. There is a new generation of Latin American Che Guevaras, self-styled revolutionaries with an anti-capitalistic and anti-US agenda. They believe that wealth must be taken from those who have stolen it from the people. Rather than seeking to enlarge the economic pie to provide more for those in poverty, President Chavez's oil/economic experiment has reduced the pie and created greater poverty for those in need.

President Chavez has used the Castro/Cuba model of enlarging the state's intelligence services to foster political regimentation and social dependence on the government. Chavez's anti-US rhetoric recalls Russian President Nikita Khrushchev's statement, "We will bury you." President Chavez's strategic objective is a unified pan-Latin, anti-American consortium coupled with Ecuador, Bolivia, and other Latin American countries.

The recent armed political and military pos-

turing between Colombia and Venezuela-Ecuador is a symptom of the growing tenuous dichotomy in Latin America. The cause of the confrontation was the Colombian army's one mile incursion into Ecuador, which resulted in the death of a FARC leader and 20 FARC guerillas. FARC, Colombia's largest rebel group, has been conducting terrorist operations in Colombia for the past forty years. It escalated when President Chavez expelled Colombia's Ambassador and other diplomats. He also mobilized troops and fighter jets in a show of force.

The rise of Marxist populism is not surprising because there is widespread poverty in Latin America. Although there has been significant progress made in establishing functioning democracies, there is a leadership vacuum caused, in part, by the lack of nuanced US policy and presence.

Latin America provides an outstanding opportunity for the next US administration to focus on becoming a good neighbor in word and deed. The starting point for America is to determine the strategic objectives of its neighbors and fold these objectives into US policy. •

NSF NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

National Strategy Forum Review NEW DESIGN

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ESTRANGED RELATIONS: US-LATIN AMERICA 2008

Cynthia Watson, Ph.D.

The next president of the United States faces a mighty task in reconciling U.S.-Latin American relations, but the task is not insurmountable. When George W. Bush assumed the presidency seven years ago, Latin America was optimistic about a former governor from a border state with an acute understanding of at least Mexico's importance to the United States. Mexico itself had broken the more than seven decades' grip on the presidency when Vicente Fox Quesada won the election in mid-2000. Americans both north and south of the Rio Grande woefully overestimated the powers that each new president brought to the bilateral relationship, particularly after September 11th, 2001. While relations have changed with all parts of the world since that day, the ties with Latin America have arguably suffered the greatest decline, because Washington has sought to center all policy on the 'global war on terrorism', while Latin American leaders have largely tried to draw attention back to the problems confronting the region.

With Washington's attention focused elsewhere, China and Europe play increasingly important roles in this part of the world. The 2004 'rock star' tour by Chinese president Hu Jintao illustrated Beijing's greater interest in and commitment to the region, for a variety of reasons. Latin America offers a considerable amount of energy and raw materials that a modernizing China seeks to maintain its massive economic growth. Additionally, as China seeks to move people off the inefficient farms into more productive enterprises, Latin America offers a source for agricultural goods to feed the popula-

tion in the Middle Kingdom. Politically, China hopes its growing presence in the region will encourage the remaining supporters of Taiwan as a legitimate diplomatic entity (concentrated in Central America and Paraguay) to abandon Taipei in favor of the mainland and push Taiwan towards peaceful reunification. Finally, as China seeks to reassume its self-assessed leadership position in the international community, Beijing can promise Latin America that China will not patronize or abandon the region, as the Latin Americans feel Washington has done. At the same time, Europe plays a major role as a market for Latin raw materials while providing the region with considerable investment for its growth.

Latin America watched the Argentine economy collapse in the early years of this decade as Colombia's political system also fell into chaos. Yet since 1982, Latin America began exporting major amounts of its vast agricultural, energy, and raw material resources. Peru, Brazil, and Argentina have healthy growth rates well above those in the United States and Europe. With world demand for Latin America's exports high, life in the region looks relatively good compared with seven years ago, much less the 1980s.

The United States does not play into much of this activity, except as one of the many engines demanding Latin exports such as petroleum. Washington's view of the region is not especially positive, however, because of the advent of 'nationalist populist' regimes in Venezuela, Ecuador, and Bolivia. Former labor activist Luis Ignacio Lula de Silva assumed the presidency

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in Brasilia in 2002 to the trepidation of many free market advocates in the United States, but 'Lula' maintains a relatively open economy in the South American state and advocates relative openness for the region.

Hugo Chávez Frías in Venezuela is a different matter. A former Army Lieutenant Colonel cashiered and incarcerated for a 1992 coup attempt against the long-democratic government in Caracas, Chávez Frías won the presidency six years later on a platform of strong anti-corruption rhetoric. Nearly a decade later, he has moved steadily towards a more overtly anti-Washington (and anti-Bush) position eerily reminiscent of Fidel Castro's anti-gringo positions of the 1960s. Chávez Frías blames any and all problems, ranging from environmental decay to rising fuel prices to anything else, on Washington, playing an increasingly strident nationalist card aimed to raise populist sentiments. He courts foreign leaders such as Saddam Hussein (prior to 2003) and Hu Jintao in an obvious ploy to annoy Washington, but has been relatively unsuccessful at fomenting the goal of a 'Bolivarian Revolution' in Latin America. Recent indications, however, are that the Venezuelan populus is growing tired of the Chávez Frías antics as grumbling is growing across the nation. He is not yet under enough pressure to force necessary changes in his behavior, but the tide may be turning against him.

Chávez Frías retains power, but saw his quest for an open-ended endorsement by his population end with the defeat of a referendum in late 2007. As 2008 progresses, he will need to provide more than rhetoric to prove the efficacy of his platform at building a new, durable Venezuela. Indications are that popular support is waning as the Venezuelan seeks more personal power without producing anything for his increasingly weary public.

The presidents of Bolivia and Ecuador, Evo Morales Ayma and Rafael Correa Delgado, respectively, won election by advocating protection of their nation's resources in the face of external exploitation. Morales Ayma, in par-

ticular, appears to model his policies on Chávez Frías' rhetoric, adding to Washington's concern by highlighting the power of Bolivia's coca growers. After more than a year in office, however, neither of these leaders governs a country which seems to share their beliefs as was true of their pre-election campaign promises. Concerns in Bolivia and Ecuador support the reality populists often face when they prove unable to improve the living conditions of their populations.

The Road Ahead

It is difficult to envision circumstances whereby Latin America would become a top campaign topic in the United States, except in immigration policy. Immigration is a potent issue that pulls at the heart strings of many in the United States at the same time that the advent of Hispanic immigrants seems an exceedingly threatening phenomenon. Apart from that issue, Latin America remains only a peripheral concern for the majority of people in the United States even if the last two presidents have made major investments in a democratic Colombia to support a pro-U.S. regime. Colombia continues to suffer from severe internal political polarization, which is worsened by the continued violence of the leftist Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Colombianas (FARC) and the remaining paramilitaries on the political right who have not yet demilitarized under the title of the Auto-defensas Unidas Colombianas (AUC). This still threatens to undermine the century-old facade of the democracy in the nation.

Beginning in 1999 under President Andrés Pastrana Arango, the United States sent billions of dollars in assistance to improve the Colombian military and other portions of the Colombian polity. By early 2008, President Álvaro Uribe Vélez claims to have overcome the FARC and coopted the paramilitaries on the right under an amnesty program. Uribe Vélez has proven a forceful political leader in Colombia, but only after he leaves office in 2010 will the durability of his reforms appear successful or unsuccessful

in a system where Colombian leaders have often claimed success with no real shift in the political landscape. For the Bush administration, Uribe Vélez stood apart as the sole defender of the U.S. president's goals in the region, mitigated only by the failure on Washington's part to achieve a free trade agreement with the Colombians because of widespread Democratic Party concerns about persistent human rights violations in Colombia. An example of these concerns are the stalled Free Trade Agreement for Colombia which Democrats are blocking because of fears this will give support to elements in Colombian society which seek to purge political opponents, to the utter frustration of Presidents Uribe Vélez and Bush.

“...Ties with Latin America have arguably suffered the greatest decline because Washington has sought to center all policy on ‘the global war on terrorism...”

In the longer term, Mexico and Cuba offer substantial challenges for anyone in the White House or on Capitol Hill. The right-of-center government of Felipe Calderón, assuming power after a prolonged, contentious election in 2006, has consolidated power slowly and gradually, instituting a number of lower level reforms aimed at improving Mexico's economy and the citizens' standard of living. Much more difficult, however, is the growing drug-driven violence affecting the border regions with the United States and the Mexican justice system. As drug trafficking has moved north from Colombia into Mexico, the accompanying violence has also shifted. Numerous indications of intimidation of justice officials populate the Mexican newspapers.

Similarly, the violence in northern Mexico is frequently spreading north into the southwest of the United States. The immigration problem is one of the most passionate issues in the U.S. Political system, illustrated by boos aimed at nominee-apparent Senator John McCain at the February 2008 Conservative Political Action

meeting in Washington when he mentioned immigration reform. President Bush similarly receives scathing criticism on his stance for a guest worker program. More immediately, however, along the border the movement of immigrants has brought tremendous street violence to cities and towns. Mexicans note that the United States allows easy purchase of guns, thus blaming the gringos for the root of the problem, while U.S. citizens blame Mexican illegals carrying their feuds north.

As the political discourse is so divided in the United States, it is hard to see a near-term resolution. Compounding the immigration and violence issues are difficulties of environmental waste and water scarcity problems on both sides of the border. In short, the relationship with Mexico remains, on a day by day basis, the single most pressing issue facing any U.S. Government, because of the proximity and the explosive nature of the ties.

Finally, some forty-nine years after he grasped power, Fidel Castro announced on 19 February 2008 that he will no longer bedevil the United States as head of state. While Castro appeared to be on his deathbed in late July 2006, he continued de facto as the supreme leader, even though he had transferred power to his brother Raúl. Fidel has held the true reins of power by persisting with policies mandating state-controlled and strict separation from the United States. The importance of the 19 February announcement is unclear. Is Castro capable of standing aside while he is alive? Would Cubans like to completely oust the Party or would they desire someone younger but within the Party to rule? Will someone within the Party now challenge Raul for control? Will the United States start altering its relationship with the island in the aftermath of Castro's position as chief of state? All of these are unknowns.

More important from a U.S. policy perspective is the follow-on when Castro finally dies. The issue, however, is what the U.S. Government response will be when this occurs. Many analysts assume that there has been no institu-

tionalization of the Cuban Communist Party, yet the eighteen-month interregnum of Raúl is instructive: there have been no apparent moves to oust him in favor of someone else, indicating that a coherent Party hierarchy exists.

Others in the United States assume that the Cuban exiles in the United States will be satisfied with Fidel's removal (regardless of the cause), but there remains evidence that the children of many exiles will want to return to Cuba to reclaim land and assets seized by the Communists in the 1960s. The return and possible upheaval resulting could destabilize whatever regime seeks to replace Castro's long government. The freedom from Castro's rule may also lead to vast numbers of boat people as frustrated Cubans see their chance to go to more developed parts of the world, such as the United States, where they can catch up on the increase in living standards that have been on hold for half a century.

For the U.S. Government, Cuba poses a supreme problem because the Helms-Burton Law of 1996 instituted high standards that subsequent regimes in Havana must meet in order to have the relationship with the United States 'normalized'. At the same time, any moves within the United States to prepare for this eventuality meet with resistance on the part of Cuban-Americans who fear that preparing for a post-Castro era will somehow free the Cuban leader to resist attempts to oust him. With Cuban-Americans a powerful voting block within southern Florida and New Jersey, politicians of both parties tread warily as they seek to institute these basic steps in preparation for the inevitable. Yet, Cuba remains a mere hundred miles off the U.S. Coast and has been one of the most volatile foreign policy issues in U.S. history.

In February 2008, President Bush made a widely lauded visit to Africa where his administration has spent \$15 billion over its tenure, largely focused on preventing or treating the dreadful HIV/AIDs virus. The President is far more popular in Africa than he is in the United States or certainly in Latin America. The Bush

administration, rightly or wrongly, has proven a terrible disappointment for the region, as the region has for President Bush. None of the presidential aspirants still struggling towards the nomination has any particular links to Latin America, so it does not seem realistic to see a dramatic improvement in the relationship with the inauguration of a successor in 2009. Perhaps the emerging Chinese involvement in Latin America will spur significant U.S. attention, but Beijing is proving cautious about its activities there for fear of upsetting the delicate balance of Sino-U.S. relations. It appears, instead, that Latin America will remain the neighborhood we take for granted until a crisis erupts. Unfortunately, we never know what that crisis may be.

No evidence exists that a new McCain, Obama or Clinton administration would automatically raise Latin America in the U.S. priorities. A fresh appraisal of the region, however, might bring creative new concerns, but it is likely that Latin American ties with Washington will remain estranged. •

TACKLING TRANSNATIONAL CRIME: ADAPTING US NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

Vanda Felbab-Brown

The absence of traditional security threats to the United States in Latin America and the post-9-11 focus on state weakness and terrorism have elevated crime to the top of the US national security agenda in the Southern Hemisphere. Specifically, the United States has focused on suppressing transnational crime that generates “bads” that penetrate the US such as drugs, illegal aliens, smuggled humans, and youth gangs (*maras*), and on suppressing crime that funds belligerent groups in the region (once again drugs). Beyond the transnational illegal trade that directly affects the United States, crime in the Southern Hemisphere also threatens the state in Latin American countries as well as the human security of large segments of the population. Compared with the United States or Western Europe, crime’s ability to eviscerate the state is far more pronounced in Latin America because the state is critically weak to begin with. The significant growth of crime below the transnational level in the Hemisphere over the past two decades – at the level of the state and the “street” – undermines efforts to combat transnational crime. The United States policy toward the “bads” emanating from the Hemisphere will be improved if the United States also undertakes addressing crime at the state and street levels in Latin America, and does so by placing a far greater emphasis on socio-economic issues in the region.

Along with growing economic inequality and the decades-long economic stagnation of vast poor segments of the Latin American population, crime and the lack of public security have become a key social issue for a majority of people in the Hemisphere. With the exception

of Colombia, which since 2002 has experienced a drop in homicides, kidnapping, and violent robberies, albeit from some of the highest rates in the world, criminal activity throughout the region has exploded. Homicide rates in Latin America are among the highest in the world. To an unprecedented degree, ordinary people in the region complain about living in fear. At the same time, national governments have failed by and large to adequately tackle crime and provide for public security, even while satisfying the demands of the United States to cooperate in counternarcotics policies. Both the police and courts have proven ineffective at combating the type of crime that is of most concern to the population and have frequently been deeply corrupted by criminal elements.

Most U.S. attention has been focused on crime at the transnational level in Latin America. At this level, trafficking organizations facilitate the transfer of illicit commodities and services between source and demand countries. Such illicit flows transfer narcotics produced in the Andean region via Mexico and the Caribbean to the United States and via Brazil and Argentina to Europe; illegal aliens from Central America and humans smuggled for sexual exploitation and slavery from Asia and Eastern Europe to the United States; and illegally-trafficked arms from the United States to the Southern Hemisphere. Apart from the concern about the intrinsic social bads for the United States, such illicit economies have also attracted attention from U.S. policymakers as potential sources of funding for anti-US terrorists since they globally generate hundreds of billions of dollars. Regarding the potential threat of Islamist

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terrorists in Latin America, the U.S. focus has centered on the Triborder region of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, a decades-old smuggling hub of various kinds and an area with minimal state oversight and law enforcement plus a fairly large community of Middle Eastern immigrants. Although no public evidence ever has linked al Qaeda to profiting from the smuggling in the Triborder region or to other illicit operations there, such as counterfeiting of documents, some evidence suggests that Hezbollah, and possibly also Hamas, have profited from the illicit trade in the area.

Illicit economies, however, also generate various social bads for the source and transit countries. First, criminal organizations both at the production and smuggling segments of the trade seek to corrupt the state so that they can operate with ease and impunity. They bribe police and Customs officers and members of the judiciary, inevitably accompanying their financial inducements with threats of physical elimination of those who oppose them. Law enforcement, investigation, and prosecution of criminals collapse. The weaker the state, the more corrosive the effect of crime-related corruption. The public security apparatus can become paralyzed. In Mexico, for example, entire police units have stopped performing their official role and have come onto the payroll of the traffickers. In extreme cases, such as the Zetas in Mexico, the counternarcotics policemen themselves have defected to provide violent protection to the traffickers against the state and against rival traffickers. The state thus fails both in the provision of security and in the dispensation of justice. Such crime-related corruption can also undermine the political process itself, making a mockery of democracy and basic accountability. In a way too uncomfortably reminiscent of Carlos Ledher's and Pablo Escobar's schemes in Colombia during the 1980s, criminal networks in Guatemala, for example, blatantly interfered with its 2007 elections, bribing politicians and participating in the murder of more than 50 candidates and their supporters. The more the state becomes corrupted, the more difficult it becomes for it to tackle crime either at

the transnational or at the street level as well.

The Guatemala case also shows that state-crime relationship is not simply one of crime penetrating the state, but also one of the state coopting crime. The Guatemalan military, for example, had a long history of utilizing contraband profits to support its institutional budget and clandestine operations and to provide income for its senior officials. During the civil war, the military incorporated criminal organizations into its counterinsurgency operations. In the post-war period, many members of the security apparatus of the state set up and morphed with criminal networks, frequently in collaboration with traditional elites. El Salvador has seen the rise of a similar collusion of state and crime. In Peru, during the presidency of Alberto Fujimori, his intelligence chief Vladimiro Montesinos utilized the state and its counternarcotics resources to eliminate drug competition and build himself up as a, if not the, principal trafficker in the country.

Second, burgeoning crime also threatens the state in the economic sphere. Intense crime-related violence -- the result of both state efforts to repress crime and of turf battles among criminal organizations -- prevents local economic development, undermines human capital, and deters foreign investment. Large-scale illicit economies, such as widespread cultivation and production of illegal drugs, also have various pernicious macroeconomic effects, by contributing to inflation and real estate speculation, undermining currency stability, and displacing legal production. Yet labor-intensive illicit economies, such as the cultivation of illicit crops, also provide economically superior livelihoods to large segments of the population in Latin America, many of whom do not have access to licit livelihoods and live in acute poverty.

Finally, crime and illicit economies threaten the state in the security realm, by strengthening anti-state belligerent groups both physically, and frequently also politically. Belligerent groups, such as the Shining Path in Peru in the 1980s or the FARC, the ELN, and paramilitaries in Colombia, have derived very large financial

profits from illicit economies such as extortion, kidnapping, and the drug trade. With these vast financial resources, frequently on the order of tens of millions of dollars a year, belligerent groups have been able to grow in size, hire more combatants, greatly improve their arms procurement, and simplify logistics. But when such groups protect labor-intensive illicit economies, such as drug cultivation, they also obtain political capital from the population, since they provide for the population's basic and frequently sole livelihood. This political capital, critically manifested in the unwillingness of the population to provide intelligence on the belligerents to the government, is all the more pronounced, if the government attempts to suppress the illicit economy without providing legal economic alternatives to the population. Under such circumstances, the primary manifestation of the state is the destruction of the population's livelihood, and hence of fundamental alienation of the population from the state. Then belligerents can step in and offer themselves as protectors and economic providers for the marginalized population.

Perhaps ironically, belligerents also provide a modicum of order, by suppressing "street" level crime, adjudicating disputes, and providing courts. Although the belligerents are themselves brutal and capricious, the population nonetheless welcomes even such minimal and warped provisions of public security and law and order if the alternative is state absence. Such political capital accrues not only to insurgents, but also to the crime organizations themselves. Moreover, this popular alienation from the state in Latin America is no longer simply a phenomenon of remote rural peripheries, but also of the poor and underprivileged urban areas. In Brazil's *favelas* (slums), for example, the population frequently rejects the presence of

“Efforts to strengthen the state in the Southern Hemisphere so that local governments can tackle crime are crucial.”

state agencies. In fact, traffickers' gangs themselves mitigate street-level crime, such as murder, rape, and robbery that the state has failed to address. As long as their presence does not generate turf wars in which bystanders get caught, the population prefers the traffickers' forms of law provision and enforcement to that of the police, which are widely seen as brutal and corrupt. Similarly in Haiti, with its pervasive state failure, local gangs of thugs not only participate in drug smuggling and other crime, but also establish local zones of control where they enforce security and order. Although such *chimeres* and *organisations populaires* inflict brutality on the population and extract rents, in the absence of a legitimate state (many of these gangs, in fact, overlap with the state), they become the only providers of minimal security amidst the otherwise pervasive chaos and violence. Youth gangs (*maras*) that have proliferated throughout Central America and increasingly grown more organized and violent, are yet another manifestation of the hollowing out of the state in Latin America and of social organization outside and against the state. Indeed, the provision of security and order has become differentiated and "privatized" throughout Latin America: the affluent ones who can participate in the currently booming legal economies in the region can hire private protection (both legal and extralegal), whereas the poor marginalized population frequently need to rely on the provision of minimal security and order through belligerent groups, criminal organizations, and gangs.

The dominant focus of U.S. anti-crime and national security policies in Latin America has been directed at stopping the transnational bads through interdiction and eradication. Interdiction operations both on land and on sea seek to disrupt illicit flows through direct U.S. operations as well as through the provision of interdiction assistance to national governments. Even when successful in particular locales, such interdiction efforts have frequently only redirected illicit traffic to other areas. Successes in Jamaica in the 1970s, for example, moved cultivation of and traffic in illicit drugs to the

Andean region. Beefed-up efforts in the Caribbean in the 1980s and 1990s shifted smuggling to Mexico. Although in some instances interdiction operations have had very positive effects on strengthening the state by weakening criminal organizations, such as by destroying the Medellín and Cali cartels in Colombia in the early 1990s, they have failed to substantially reduce the in-flows of drugs, illegal immigrants, and smuggled humans into the United States.

Eradication operations, such as under Plan Colombia, later renamed the Andean Counterdrug Initiative, seek to destroy the global bad, in this case, illicit crops so that no drugs enter the system. Eradication promises to accomplish two objectives: reduce consumption of drugs in the U.S. and critically weaken belligerents, such as the FARC, by depriving them of financial resources. Although eradication has not reduced drug consumption in the US nor substantially weakened belligerent groups – the FARC has been weakened since 2002 as a result of direct operations by the Colombian military funded with US counterinsurgency money, not by eradication of illicit crops – and has little resonance with local populations, the U.S. has nonetheless demanded that Latin American governments make eradication and counternarcotics policies their top anti-crime and national security policies.

Efforts to strengthen the state in the Southern Hemisphere so that local governments can tackle crime are crucial. An indispensable component of state strength is its law-and-order apparatus – the police and military – so that the state can provide security for all of its population. But states in Latin America will be more effective in cooperating with the US in combating transnational crime if the governments in Latin America become more effective in addressing the socio-economic issues that are the primary interest of the population. In the security sphere, that means that the national governments and the U.S. should focus to a far greater degree on providing security to the population -- from belligerents, yes, but also from criminal gangs, and, crucially, ordinary street crime.

Such a policy involves expanding police presence and reforming the police so that they themselves are not brutal corrupt thugs. It also means directing greater attention to community policing and undertaking very careful vetting of to whom the United States provides aid, such as under the planned Merida Initiative for Mexico. Far greater attention needs to be given to improving the judicial system throughout Latin America and making it accessible to the entire population.

But efforts to secure more effective cooperation from Latin American governments in tackling transnational crime should also include encouraging and helping them bring economic and social development to underprivileged marginalized populations. If the manifestation of the state becomes benevolent by providing legal economic opportunities for social development and legitimate and reliable security and justice, many root causes of transnational crime, such as illegal immigration will be addressed and belligerent and crime organizations delegitimized. The populations will become both far less interested in participating in illicit economies such as the cultivation of illicit crops and far more willing to participate with the state in tackling transnational crime. •

US-LATIN AMERICA: THE INTERSECTION OF TRADE AND SECURITY

Laura Carlsen

There has never been a time in U.S. history when the nation's security and trade policies were not linked. The nation's status as a superpower on the world stage derives from both its \$14 trillion economy and its unsurpassable military might. In attaining U.S. global objectives, if the military is the stick, the market is the carrot—and sometimes also the stick.

Although this relationship has been a constant in Latin America since the Monroe Doctrine, rarely have trade and security been as explicitly linked in a single foreign policy grand plan as in the Bush National Security Strategy of 2002. Although better known for formulating the change from containment to pre-emptive war and regime change, the document dedicates an entire chapter to positing a fundamental relationship between free markets and U.S. national security. Chapter VI, entitled “Ignite a New Era of Global Economic Growth through Free Markets and Free Trade”, begins by assuming a causal chain between the free trade model, economic growth and prosperity, and national security.

The Bush administration has consistently affirmed and repeated this doctrine throughout subsequent years. The strategy argues that free trade and free markets lead to economic growth, poverty alleviation and higher incomes, thus building more stable world partners. It also goes further to equate free markets with freedom in general, by including the establishment of market-based economies as part of American values to be spread throughout the world to ‘defend, preserve and extend our national security.’

U.S.-LATIN AMERICA TRADE POLICY

In the Western Hemisphere, prior to the September 11th terrorist attacks, the link between the free-trade agenda and national security policy was implicit. When the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was negotiated and signed in the early nineties, few people were thinking about its security implications. There was vague talk about improving tri-national relations as a natural outgrowth of regional economic integration, but in the absence of specific threats, national security rarely figured in the discourse. The main goal was to create a North American trade bloc to compete in a global market.

Negotiations toward a NAFTA began formally on June 12, 1991, under then-presidents George Bush Sr. and Mexico's Carlos Salinas de Gortari. The broader goal of a hemispheric trade pact, the “Enterprise for the Americas Initiative”, was already on the table at the time, pushed by President Bush and a coalition of businesses. The U.S. strategy was to begin with NAFTA and as other countries joined in, gradually extend the model throughout the hemisphere.

The U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement of 1989 provided the template for broadening the pact to include Mexico. However, there were important differences. Although Mexico had already undergone important structural reforms toward a market economy, Salinas' strong conviction in favor of unfettered markets, and the exclusion of representatives of peasant farmers and other sectors from the negotiations, led to

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a pact that mandated Mexico's sink-or-swim entry into international competition for trade and investment and tied its fortunes to the U.S. economy.

NAFTA remains today the model of a drastic conversion in a developing country from an economy where the state still played a key role in development and distribution of resources, to an economy tied to international markets - predominantly the U.S. market.

NAFTA did not include transition mechanisms, allowances for the asymmetries between the two nations (the U.S. economy was fifteen times the size of the weaker Mexican economy), compensation funds, or specific measures for poverty alleviation. With the major exception of oil, all products entered into the agreement, with basic staples including corn and beans given the longer tariff-elimination periods. The assumption was that by creating a mega-market of 360 million consumers, the North American Free Trade Agreement would offer export opportunities that would outweigh losses to imports in the domestic market, lower consumer prices and create more efficient competition. Instead, increases in consumer prices on basic goods like the corn tortilla and massive job displacement has occurred.

In the fifteen years since its drafting and passage, NAFTA has been adopted by the U.S. Trade Representative as the paradigm for trade and investment agreements. The agreement includes clauses that go beyond liberalization stipulated in the World Trade Organization, such as competition policy, investment and government procurement, which have been resisted by developing countries in the WTO, and the establishment of more stringent intellectual property requirements. NAFTA's Chapter 11 grants foreign corporations the ability to sue the government directly in cases where they can prove a loss of profits - present or future - and the agreement creates a system of ad hoc tribunals charged with making binding decisions on trade and investment conflicts. These provisions, along with U.S. agricultural subsidies that were not dealt

with in the agreement, became the bones of contention in later trade negotiations.

Following NAFTA, the U.S.-Chile Free Trade Agreement went into effect in January of 2004. It was the first of its kind in South America and adhered to the model established by NAFTA. In 2005, the U.S. Congress passed the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) with Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Costa Rica by only two votes, after delaying the vote for months due to lack of support. Protests against ratification broke out in all the countries, and Costa Rica was only able to ratify following a close referendum in 2007.

Negotiation of an Andean Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was shelved after Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez pronounced his opposition to an FTA with the United States, and Ecuador and Bolivia also decided to seek other forms of regional economic integration. In December, 2007, the U.S. Senate followed the House in approving the U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement with bipartisan support after including more stringent labor and environmental provisions. Peruvian president Alan Garcia had been a staunch advocate of the agreement.

Throughout the post-NAFTA period, the creation of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) continued to be the primary objective of U.S. trade policy. A ministerial meeting in Miami in November, 2003, ended in an agreement to allow countries to "opt out" of clauses when talks stalled over Brazil's demand for a commitment to eliminate U.S. agricultural subsidies. Then in November, 2005, a meeting of heads of state in Mar del Plata, Argentina buried the FTAA when Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela formally declared that "...the necessary conditions are not yet in place for achieving a balanced and equitable free trade agreement with effective access to markets free from subsidies and trade-distorting practices, and that takes into account the needs and sensitivities of all partners, as well as the differences in the levels of development and size of the economies." Since then, the countries that form

part of the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) have also prioritized regional integration over FTAs with the United States.

The collapse of the FTAA, and obstacles in the Doha Development Round of the World Trade Organization, where talks broke down in Cancun in 2003 and have not progressed significantly since then, led the U.S. government to a strategy of negotiating bilateral and, where possible, regional free trade agreements like CAFTA in the hemisphere.

In the words of Condoleezza Rice, “We will actively work to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world.” This aggressive promotion of the free trade model abroad has deepened geopolitical fissures in the region, as the consensus on the free-trade model has broken down within Latin America and the United States.

Following the failed coup attempt in 2002, which enjoyed the tacit support of the Bush administration, Hugo Chavez consolidated power in Venezuela and began to construct trade and aid relations with Latin American countries to dilute the influence of the U.S. government in the region. As the relationship between presidents Chavez and Bush became increasingly antagonistic, the U.S. government emphasized trade agreements as part of securing the region for both business interests and geopolitical influence.

THE IMPACT OF U.S. FREE TRADE POLICY IN LATIN AMERICA

As NAFTA approaches its fifteenth year, evaluations of its impact on Mexico have been mixed. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) reports that total trade between Mexico and the United States doubled under the free trade agreement and foreign investment increased substantially. However, Mexican GDP per capita grew an average of only 1.5 percent annually over the period, falling short of previous periods and of

other Latin American countries, despite high oil earnings.

Even more important, convergence between Mexico and the United States in GDP and wages did not take place. In critical sectors, including farming, U.S. imports displaced Mexican

“In attaining U.S. global objectives, if the military is the stick, the market is the carrot—and sometimes also the stick.”

producers, contributing to a doubling of the immigration rate to the United States. While some export sectors experienced a boom, small and medium-sized businesses that produced for the domestic market were often either bought up or forced out of business by imports. The

result was net job creation at only about half of the one million jobs needed annually to absorb new workers entering the labor force.

Chile experienced a similarly mixed result. Bilateral trade between the United States and Chile officially doubled since the U.S.-Chile Free Trade Agreement took effect, totalling \$16.36 billion in 2006. On the one hand, Chile’s economy under FTAs with the U.S. and the European Union has been hailed as an example for the region. On the other, critics point to the concentration of exports in raw materials, the more rapid rate of increase in U.S. imports over Chilean exports to the U.S., and continued U.S. trade barriers as warning signs for the future of the commercial relationship. Mexican and Chilean dependence on the international market and particularly the U.S., has increased U.S. government leverage.

Throughout Latin America, criticism of the NAFTA-model has grown over the past decade and a half, erupting into violence on occasion. Five Peruvian farmers were killed in uprisings following passage of the U.S.-Peru FTA, and in Guatemala a protestor was killed during a demonstration against CAFTA and enabling legislation. Although there is no clear line between

the impact of FTAs and previous economic liberalization, privatization and restructuring programs, opposition to the U.S. trade and investment model has left its mark on regional politics. FTAs were a factor in unseating cabinet members in Ecuador and Bolivia and bringing center-left candidates to power there, as well as in the contested razor-thin defeat of center-left candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador in Mexico's 2006 elections.

The four fundamental criticisms of the NAFTA model most often cited by the opposition are:

- 1) FTAs are not effective as a development or poverty reduction strategy and increase social inequality.
- 2) FTAs propose a false reciprocity that locks in advantages of large U.S.-based corporations.
- 3) FTAs consolidate an export model based on low value-added products, especially natural resources and agricultural products.
- 4) FTAs condition U.S. market access on commitments that are detrimental to public welfare and development goals.

THE GEOPOLITICS OF TRADE POLICY

Even if the Bush administration had not declared trade a pillar of its security policy, it was obvious that FTAs with the United States had become a defining feature of Latin American geopolitics. Today U.S. trade policy is inextricably bound to U.S. foreign policy. For the U.S. government and for Latin Americans, the decision to enter into a U.S. FTA reflects not only an economic strategy but a geopolitical definition of sides in an increasingly divided region.

Two examples suffice to illustrate this equation. The first is the extension of NAFTA into the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP). In March, 2003, the three heads of state of NAFTA countries agreed to begin a dialogue to deepen integration under NAFTA. Working

groups set out to change regulations to further facilitate trade and investment and they also explicitly added the security element. The official U.S. web page states: "The SPP is based on the principle that our prosperity is dependent on our security and recognizes that our three great nations share a belief in freedom, economic opportunity, and strong democratic institutions."

Although the SPP is not a signed agreement with Congressional and public involvement, making it difficult to know all the recommendations that have resulted from the talks, the security component mandates border security, intelligence sharing and surveillance, military and police training, and adoption of new technologies under the logic of the U.S. counter-terrorism campaign. The extension of NAFTA into regional security under an agreement that has been criticized for a lack of transparency has raised issues of sovereignty, always close to the surface in the U.S.-Mexico relationship.

Another recent and controversial example of the trade and security equation is the U.S.-Colombia FTA now before Congress. On March 1, the Colombian government attacked a camp of the guerrilla FARC in Ecuador, killing over twenty people including FARC leader Raul Reyes. The action earned condemnation from Latin American nations as a violation of Ecuador's national sovereignty and led to a diplomatic crisis in the region. The Bush administration endorsed the action and has used it to push for passage of the Colombia FTA, calling it "pivotal to America's national security." The Democratic majority has opposed the agreement due to assassinations of labor leaders in Colombia, government ties to paramilitaries and human rights violations.

Both examples show the use of U.S. trade agreements to support a U.S. security policy that much of Latin America considers threatening. Moreover, the lack of flexibility in the free trade model, which has led to increases in social inequality, and the attempt to divide nations between FTA partners and a Venezuela camp has caused fissures and eroded regional integration

efforts in the Mercosur and Andean regions.

None of this can be understood without recognizing the rise of Hugo Chavez's proposal for Latin American "Bolivarian" integration. The U.S. government views free trade agreements as a bulwark against Chavez and touchstones of democracy in a continent threatened by a return to government intervention and authoritarian leaders.

This "us vs. them" reading of regional geopolitics fails to distinguish the varied motivations behind resistance to US trade policy. Mercosur nations spurn U.S. FTAs based on what they see as unequal terms and favor South-South ties; Andean nations (except Colombia) seek limits on private-sector exploitation of natural resources; and Venezuela has embarked on a plan to use oil money to forge ideological alliances. Binding trade policy to the security doctrine ignores these differences and valid aspirations. The State Department's 2007 report on hemispheric relations notes, "In 2008, we will continue our efforts to secure congressional approval of pending free trade agreements with Colombia and Panama. Once implemented, these three agreements [counting the recently approved Peru FTA] will complete an unbroken chain of trading partners stretching from Canada to Chile." The use of the territorial image again demonstrates the geopolitical importance attached to FTAs within a hemisphere increasingly divided between perceived allies and renegades.

The U.S. Congress faces a vote on two more free trade agreements in Latin America that will test domestic sentiment on trade policy and the relationship of trade to security. The administration hopes for rapid resolution of the Colombia FTA and eventual passage of a U.S.-Panama agreement as well. Both Democratic presidential frontrunners have come out in favor of renegotiating NAFTA and rethinking policies that have affected jobs in the United States: both have opposed the Panama and Colombia FTAs, in addition to case-specific reasons, their opposition mirrors polls showing the majority of the

American public opposes the free trade model.

Within this debate there are two opposite ways of viewing the security implications of trade policy. One is the current perspective that free trade leads to free societies and shared interests based on democracy, open markets and defense against common threats. Another is that modifying the NAFTA model to conserve jobs in the U.S. and allow greater latitude for national development policies in Latin America could forge a wider U.S. consensus on trade policy, increase security and improve international relations. Economic policy instruments to decrease social inequality could be especially effective in countering the non-traditional security threats that are on the rise in the region. •

LEADERLESS JIHAD: TERROR NETWORKS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Marc Sageman

208 Pages

University of Pennsylvania Press

Reviewed by Lauren Bean, *Editor*

Film can provide an alternate perspective on complex global issues such as terrorism through a creative medium with a mass appeal that differs from newspapers or non-fiction books. If developed properly, the construction of different storylines and character perspectives can reveal patterns and intricacies that would otherwise remain hidden if examined in isolation. Gillo Pontecorvo's 1967 film, *The Battle of Algiers*, is one example of how this medium can effectively inform broader understanding of terrorism. Still powerful and pertinent after 50 years, *The Battle of Algiers* was studied by the US military in 2003 at the outset of the Iraq war and has been referenced by newspapers, journals, and bloggers since for its insight into insurgency and counterinsurgency (note the French commander and former French Resistance fighter "Lieutenant Colonel Mathieu's" use of a metaphor to characterize terrorism: "Terrorist groups are like tapeworms—they keep reviving unless you destroy the head..."). However, events of the last seven years demarcate a distinctively changed threat from that of the past. Al Qaeda is no longer the central coordinating force with one leader: it has become an organizational model to be aspired to and replicated by independent local terrorist groups led by different heads. What we already know about terrorism remains relevant; however, a steady emergence of new information requires new thinking.

In his latest book *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century*, Dr. Marc Sageman offers readers an organized framework for how to think about terrorism, based in part on the personal stories of terrorists. Using scientific empirical research (data collected from his study

of approximately 500 Islamist terrorists), Sageman dismantles the paradox of terrorism's apparent unpredictability to reveal patterns and intricacies that seem commonsense in reader hindsight. Although scientific research and data may not sound like best-seller material, Sageman's compelling analysis of the twenty-first century threat will surely inform a new dimension of the "war" film genre.

Since September 11, 2001, Sageman has challenged what we thought we knew about terrorists, terrorism as a means, and terrorism as a movement. With an M.D. and a Ph.D., seven years of service with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and a robust career in the forensic and clinical psychiatry fields, he has established himself as a leading expert on what makes a terrorist. Sageman has created a movement to enlarge public understanding of terrorism, and perhaps more importantly, to inform preventive US counterterrorism strategy. *Leaderless Jihad* is an accessible 'one-step-further' analysis of *Understanding Terror Networks* (2004). (See Marc Sageman's most recent article in *Foreign Policy*, "The Next Generation of Terror".)

Sageman argues that the US lacks an effective national strategy to counter the global Islamist threat, which he characterizes as disconnected ("leaderless jihad"), in some cases homegrown, highly networked via the Internet, but "self-limiting in terms of both structural capability and appeal." An effective counterstrategy must incorporate the study of the individual, external influences, and group dynamics, and it must also address the process of radicalization, which Sageman breaks out into four phases. The first phase is a sense of moral outrage, for example over an incident in which Muslims are discriminated against and/or subjected to violence. Typically, these events reinforce the perception that Islam and the West are at

war. Next, the global becomes personal, and then the individual fuses broader context with personal plight. This frustration is then shared with others, via the Internet or offline. In the final step, the individual joins a terrorist cell, which provides a sense of family and community. It is in this phase that the Islamist terrorist ideology is implanted and nurtured.

To begin, developing a more effective strategy requires enlarging the current understanding of terrorists' demographics (the poor, uneducated, "brainwashed" Muslim male youth predisposed to violence) and how to contain the threat, which he characterizes as "the vanguard trying to establish a certain version of the Islamist utopia", and later in the book with more specificity, as "al Qaeda Central, the remnant of the organization that committed the 9/11 atrocities, and the leaderless al Qaeda social movement."

"Contain" is the operative word, and as Sageman argues, the only feasible strategy. He contends that aiming to "win the war of ideas" using an ideology-driven approach (to advance democracy) is an evidently deficient strategy. While he agrees democracy is a "worthwhile goal by itself...it will not affect terrorism." Besides, he explains, credibility is needed to win the battle for hearts and minds in the Muslim world, and the US is losing this battle.

Some of Sageman's suggestions are not new, such as securing the homeland and diminishing moral outrage in the Muslim world. With regard to the latter, Sageman endorses withdrawing from Iraq, which he qualifies as "the main fuel" for young Muslim outrage. (He does not elaborate on a withdrawal strategy, and one can't help but implore, "Do tell Dr., do tell".) Other recommendations include countering the enemy's appeal by bolstering "alternative" (to terrorists) local Muslim heroes to serve as role models in Muslim countries. The goal would be to diminish the appeal of terrorist violence. A supplemental step is to improve reporting of terrorism to limit sensationalism. Also, Sageman echoes the need for greater cooperation between local and federal law enforcement to eliminate terrorist networks and deny terrorists the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction.

Sageman's call for the inclusion of science in the study of terrorism is most revealing in terms of the fundamental challenges to an effective national strategy.

Science and national security have an inconsistent past - periods of close collaboration followed by disjunction. The current relationship between the academic community and the US government appears tenuous. However, the value of cooperation is evident, at least at a glance: science adds certain credibility to policy, and policy adds a sense of nationalistic purpose to science. However, this reciprocity seems to have diminished since the end of the Cold War, and the explanations generated by both sides are loaded.

Sageman recommends the creation of government-funded terrorism research projects that apply social science methodology and data collection (similar to the 1950s and 60s government-initiated Soviet studies projects) led by Ph.D.s from the "academy" (the academic community) -- not young graduates for hire with little or no formal social science training. However, the overarching barrier to the creation of such programs, Sageman explains, is prejudice in government funding (a preference for "modeling" over data collection) and government secrecy surrounding the acquisition of information about terrorism. As a result, scholars are limited in their analysis of new developments in the field. How this issue might be resolved remains to be seen.

Leaderless Jihad is an insightful, comprehensive analysis of the global Islamist threat and options for containment. Dr. Sageman knows a great deal about terrorists and his social science background adds a critical perspective on how the West should be thinking about terrorism. At times his recommendations reflect well-worn arguments. However, he can't be faulted for ambiguity on such issues as Iraq's future and the issue of data collection and government secrecy. These topics have their own extensive bibliography. Still, the reader is left with an additional thought after reading *Leaderless Jihad*: We now know why individuals join terrorist movements, but why do they leave? And what might a counterterrorism strategy look like that factors in the exit variables as well? •

RECENT SPEAKERS

Summaries of Remarks by Recent National Strategy Forum Speakers

On January 11, 2008, the National Strategy Forum hosted Leena Salim Moazzam, Counselor-on-Leave with the Pakistan Foreign Service for the Embassy of Pakistan in the United States. Madame Moazzam discussed the importance of US-Pakistan relations, addressing Pakistan's role in the fight against Al Qaeda and other Islamic terrorist groups in South Asia and the impact of recent destabilizing events on the country's future.

Madame Moazzam explained that while Pakistan's efforts in global counterterrorism predate September 11, 2001, its role in the campaign against terrorism has become more defined since the 9/11 attacks. "We [Pakistan] have deployed more than 100,000 troops in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and along the border with Afghanistan. The commitment of 100,000 troops means that we have 300,000 troops in the area, if rotation is taken into account," she stated. Acknowledging that extremism is a "complicated phenomenon," she outlined the multi-pronged strategy Pakistan is implementing to address the root causes of terrorism and to promote peace, tolerance, and progress in the region.

In the tribal areas, Madame Moazzam said that Pakistan is pursuing a strategy to promote peace and progress. It is comprised of military, political, economic and administrative components. She stated that the strategic objective is to "win the hearts and minds of the local population and to isolate the militants from the moderates." She added that the North Waziristan Agreement, which was concluded with tribal elders, is one example of Pakistan's efforts to bring peace

to tribal areas resulting in decreased violence locally.

According to Madame Moazzam, Pakistan's most complex challenge is Afghanistan. She noted that "most of the problems of Afghanistan lie inside Afghanistan." However, she explained that each day an estimated 30,000 people cross the vast 2500 km long Pakistan-Afghanistan border, making efforts to manage the movement of terrorists or suspected terrorists extremely difficult. She said that "Pakistan plans to fence about 35 km of the border in the roughest terrain, where clandestine crossings take place," and that "Pakistan is also introducing stricter measures to better regulate the legal border traffic."

Madame Moazzam explained that Pakistan continues to be engaged with the US on a range of non- and counter-proliferation issues, and is opposed to nuclear proliferation in South Asia. When asked why Abdul Qadeer Khan (former head of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program), who sold nuclear technology and information to Iran, North Korea, and other rogue regimes around the world, was not turned over to the US, Madame Moazzam explained that the government took the necessary steps to condemn A.Q. Khan's rogue proliferation activities (he was pardoned and confined to house arrest in Islamabad) while preventing a public uprising. She noted that, to the Pakistan public, Khan had become a national hero, assuring the survival of the nation by acquiring nuclear capability. Handing him over to the United States would have caused political instability, and potentially could have incited mass chaos.

Madame Moazzam expressed sadness about the assassination of former premier Benazir Bhutto and emphasized the importance of the upcoming February, 2008 parliamentary elections. She said that enabling Pakistan's citizens to choose their leader through a civilian-led democratic government is critical to the country's stability and its future. •

On January 31, 2008, Admiral Timothy Keating, USN, Commander, US Pacific Command (PACOM) discussed the challenges and opportunities of the Asia-Pacific region - PACOM's area of responsibility (AOR). US Pacific Command includes 41 countries, including two of the four biggest world economies (China and India); four of the top US trading partners, which includes the world's largest trading ports (China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan); and 51 percent of total surface of the North and South Poles. As international focus shifts toward PACOM's region of command, top priority issues include the relationships between the US and China, China and Taiwan, and North Korea.

China's position in the Asia-Pacific region – both its geographic location and its position of regional dominance – represents the most complex strategic challenge for PACOM. Admiral Keating noted that US policy toward China (“one China”) has not wavered since 1979, but emphasized that protecting US interests and security while also preserving healthy US-China relations is a tricky balance that requires better communication, and greater trust and understanding.

To increase transparency between the US and China and reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings and possible conflict, Admiral Keating explained that communication is of paramount importance. The ability to pick up the phone and call the Chinese directly – a telephone “hotline” to China – would open critical, real-time channels of communication between the two countries.

Two recent events, Admiral Keating noted, highlight the need for direct communication channels to China. One incident occurred when

two US minesweepers seeking shelter from a storm were inexplicably denied entry to a Hong Kong port. This event caused Admiral Keating to question whether the apparent communication gap between the US and China was wider than was previously thought. While Admiral Keating continues to push for open lines of communication to eliminate confusion and prevent recurrence of such incidents, China has not yet provided PACOM with direct telephone links for Chinese military chiefs and other leadership.

China's military aspirations in the region, illustrated by the Chinese navy's development of bluewater capability and its expanding submarine force as well as China's relationship with Russia, also raise questions about transparency and the need for more open dialogue with the US. The Admiral acknowledged that both countries want to protect what is theirs, but that sharing information regarding strategic objectives is critical to mitigating possible areas of tension or conflict.

An integral requirement of maintaining an appropriate US posture in the Asia-Pacific region and a stable US/China relationship is preserving peace between China and Taiwan. One of PACOM's fundamental goals is to prevent the destabilization of cross-strait relations and the worst-case scenario of war. Admiral Keating added that over 40 countries are involved a multilateral approach intended to ensure future peace and stability in the region.

When asked about another potentially destabilizing force in the area – North Korea – Admiral Keating expressed optimism, citing the progress of the six party talks and the sizable US force capability in the Korean peninsula.

Admiral Keating noted that US PACOM's key alliances - Japan, India, and South Korea – are working well. However, he explained that greater defense cooperation with other areas of PACOM's AOR such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia is critical – all of whom are at risk in the war terror. •

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