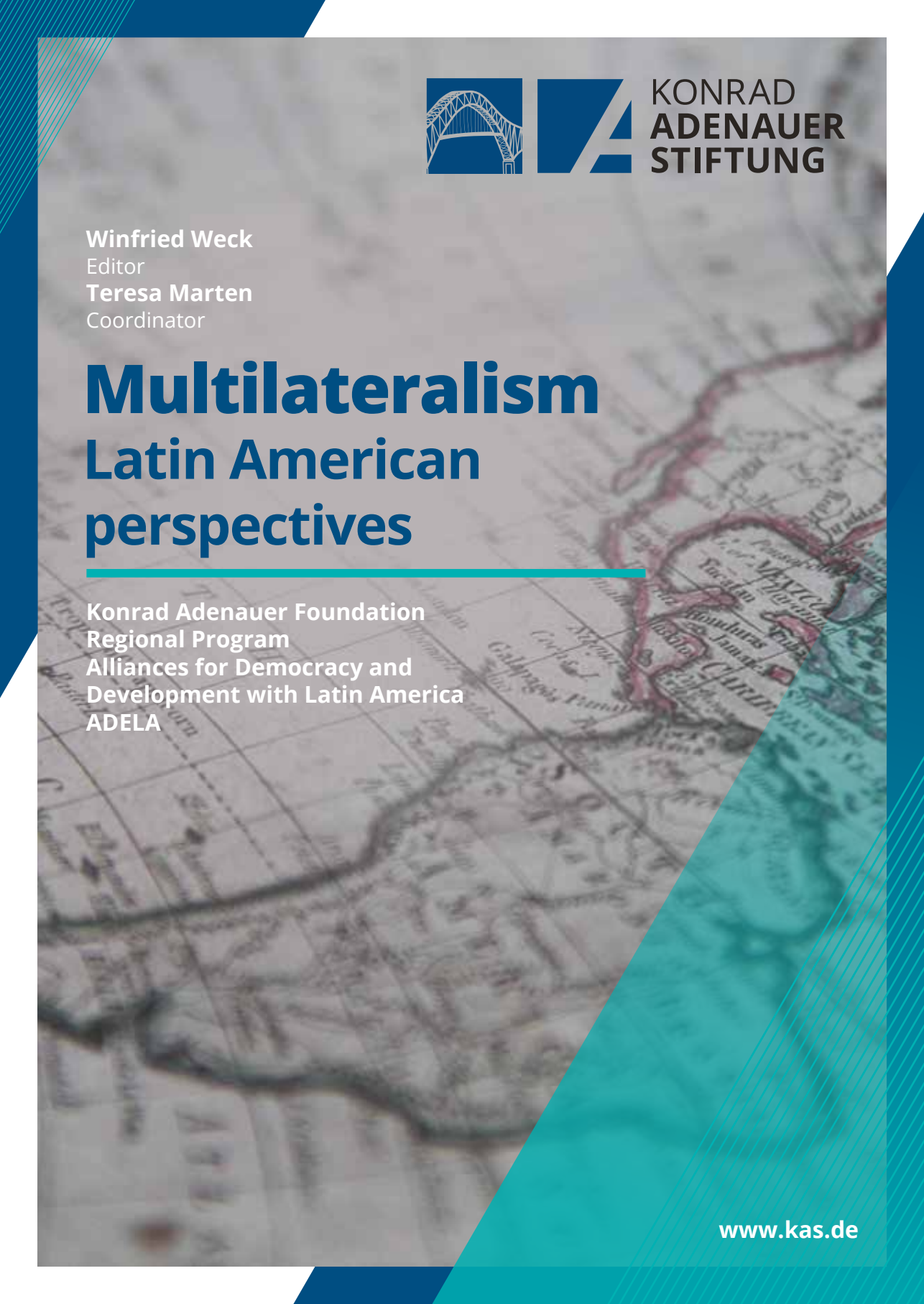

KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG

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Multilateralism
Latin American perspectives

Konrad Adenauer Foundation
Regional Program
Alliances for Democracy and Development with Latin America
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Preface

The political model of a free, pluralistic, democratically organized society based on ethical and ideological principles is under strain. Changes in areas of global influence, the rise in protectionist policies and the unilateralist foreign policy of certain leading states are changing international relations and compromising the liberal world order. Rooted in multilateralism and the free trade premise, the German Federal Government and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation are of the conviction that the world's great challenges cannot be resolved exclusively by national or bilateral states; multilateral cooperation is also needed, such as that offered by the framework of the United Nations and the European Union, in partnership with their members worldwide.

This will require strategic agreements, partnerships and alliances. Europe and the Americas are the most democratic regions in the world and natural partners in values and interests for the strengthening of supra-regional and global alliances, the common goal of which must be the competitiveness of our model of free democratic society in a multipolar world. In this context, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, with offices in Panama since 2019, has launched the new Regional Program "Alliances for Democracy and Development with Latin America" (ADELA). This program seeks to help strengthen cooperation between the liberal democracies of the Americas, Europe and other world regions, and to provide spaces for dialogue among the different actors. Target groups include young professionals from science and politics, business associations from civil society, and representatives of international and regional organizations, who are multipliers of economic, social, foreign, security and development policy.

"The world's great challenges cannot be resolved exclusively by national or bilateral states; multilateral cooperation is also needed".

In this regard, ADELA promotes dialogue between Latin America and other world regions on international policy, global and regional security, regional and international trade and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda SDGs. This is how we want to contribute to strengthening a global democratic and liberal order that promotes the interests of democratic states within the framework of multilateral cooperation and international obligations.

From this perspective, the book should be seen as an elementary contribution from our central concern for promoting international cooperation and multilateralism. As the title suggests, it takes stock of the historically strong roots of multilateral thinking and action in certain Latin American countries, the long-term positions that the various countries can adopt in relation to this, and the multilateral cooperation policies favored by current governments. Therefore, this publication is addressed not only to Latin American readers, but also to an international audience, since it seeks to develop a greater understanding of the positions and actions of Latin American countries in the regional and global context.

I wish to extend my sincere thanks to Teresa Marten, Coordinator until July 2020 of the Multilateralism and International Security Project of the Regional ADELA Program of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Panama. Her tireless efforts, professionalism and organizational talent have made her an asset to the creation of this work.

The Editor

"The countries of Latin America have a tradition of multilateral cooperation stretching back decades and, in some cases, even centuries."

Multilateralism
Latin American perspectives

Winfried Weck / Teresa Marten

Introduction

The countries of Latin America have a tradition of multilateral cooperation stretching back decades and, in some cases, even centuries. In contrast to other regions outside Europe, this stems from their early independence from the colonial powers of Spain and Portugal, achieved almost 200 years ago. Following World War I, a number of Latin American countries helped found the League of Nations in 1920: the 32 founding states of the League of Nations were the victorious allied powers, which included Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, Cuba, Nicaragua, Panama and Peru. Immediately after its creation on January 10, 1920, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Venezuela were invited to become members. When the United Nations was founded in 1945, Latin America was home to 37 percent of the 51 founding states: the 17 states of the continent plus Cuba and the Dominican Republic. Latin America's early and wide-ranging participation in the structures of world order no doubt boosted the national self-confidence of its countries' populations and their reputation in a community of nations and peoples that consisted of just over 80 countries 100 years ago.

It is a logical consequence, therefore, that most Latin American countries would participate in the global institutions of international cooperation. For example, certain countries have been chosen on several occasions to sit on the United Nations Security Council, where their officials have held high-level positions in the UN and its sub-organizations. Take, for example, Peru's Javier Pérez

de Cuéllar (1920-2020), who headed the United Nations as Secretary-General from 1982 to 1991. By contrast, the participation of Latin American countries in UN peacekeeping operations is somewhat more restrained, in terms of numbers at least.

For example, of the 121 countries currently participating in the 13 UN missions, with 81,370 posts[1], Uruguay is the exception with 1,126 troops deployed (holding 18th position in the classification of participating countries), in contrast to the leader, Ethiopia (with 6,658 peacekeepers), and is followed in this order by: El Salvador (in 45th position, with 291), Argentina (in 47th position, with 267), Brazil (in 49th position, with 268) and Peru (in 52nd position, with 236).[2]

The hesitance of Latin Americans to follow the lead of France and Germany in forming an alliance for multilateralism is even more surprising. While Mexico and Chile, along with France, Germany, Canada, Ghana, and Singapore, gave the initiative their backing, only Costa Rica, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic attended the first meeting of the new Alliance, held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in September 2019.[3] It was only when the Alliance for Multilateralism made its joint declaration against COVID-19, on April 18, 2020, that the group of signatory states was expanded to include Argentina, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.[4] However, whether or not these countries will play an active role in the Alliance in the future is something that will only be revealed with future activities, since the Alliance has deliberately dispensed with official membership, seeing itself instead as a loose network of states seeking to strengthen the existing rule-based international order and its organizations.

The question mark over the current willingness of Latin American countries to engage in multilateral cooperation is therefore the central theme of this publication. The new KAS regional program "Alliances for Democracy and Development with Latin America" (ADELA), headquartered in Panama, asked experts from selected countries in the region to submit articles outlining their views on the subject. Below, the key findings of these individual reports are summarized to provide an overview of the current international engagement of Latin American countries.

Multilateralism and its true meaning

We must first attempt to define the term "multilateralism" (ML). Indeed, political science offers different perspectives of the levels and intensities of multilateral cooperation. There is general agreement in scientific circles that ML, in its basic form, is the cooperation of three or more states on matters of international policy, thereby distinguishing itself from unilateralism and bilateralism. Unilateralism is the deliberate isolation of nations that do not seek cooperation with other countries within international policy. A classic example would be North Korea making inroads on the world political stage alone. "Bilateralism" refers to

cooperation between just two countries. For example, development cooperation between a donor country and a beneficiary country.

In its second form, ML includes not only cooperation between states (under the umbrella of regional or global organizations) to achieve one or more specific goals, but also common standards and norms that serve as the basis for that umbrella organization and which are shared by its members. The United Nations and its subsidiary organizations, for example, are found within this level of *goal-oriented multilateralism.*

The third level of ML can be termed *value-oriented multilateralism*. This means that countries not only cooperate in a goal-oriented manner and have common standards and norms, but they also share a worldview and value system for which they are accountable. An example of this would be NATO or the European Union and its Member States.

The term *multilateralism* traditionally refers to cooperation between sovereign state actors. In recent times, this classic form of multilateral cooperation has opened up remarkably. In the future, in the area of goal-oriented ML, we will see more non-governmental actors, particularly big business, playing an increasingly important role. This interaction between state and economic actors is already being seen in areas such as climate change and environmental protection, and in the future management of big data and artificial intelligence. This new form of cooperation was particularly evident in the intensive search for a COVID-19 vaccine, when a number of States took the decision to pool their state, economic and scientific forces. As a consequence of the pandemic, health care has become a new central theme of global multilateral cooperation between state and non-state actors.

Nonetheless, cooperation between States and civil society organizations (CSOs) is also a growing possibility, especially when certain issues become notoriously virulent global problems, as is expected from climate change and the associated increase in natural disasters, the ferocity of which is on the rise. CSOs are those institutions that demand action from states and the economy. Beyond a certain level of urgency, the role of NGOs is to respond or, at the very least, contain disasters and unite all forces. But this demand can become a need that is subsequently accepted by all actors.

One decisive process for these new multilateral forms of cooperation is the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN 2030 Agenda. The first part of the 2030 Agenda, the Political Declaration, intentionally addresses not only the 193 Signatory States and their administrative levels (provinces, circuits, districts or municipalities), but all actors too (commercial companies, CSOs, social groups, households and individuals) to do their bit to implement the SDGs.

Multilateral cooperation has its limits, however, and is not a panacea for every problem. A prime example of this is the Geneva Disarmament Conference, which has been in existence since 1979 and, despite multilateral cooperation, has made little progress over the last 20 years. A similar example in environmental protection is the 2015 UN Paris Climate Change Conference, which can essentially be construed as a *goal-oriented form of multilateralism*. However, the targets of the Paris Agreement for reducing CO2 emissions and limiting global warming from human causes now seem unrealistic.

There are four reasons why multilateral cooperation can stagnate or fail: first, agreements are often not mandatory for members, requiring only a voluntary commitment from participating countries. Second, it often lacks control mechanisms and effective sanctions against members who fail to follow through on the decisions made.

Third, when the leading powers in the ranking of global players withdraw from these collaborations, it can have a destructive effect and, in extreme cases, bring about their failure. And fourth, in some cases, the traditional instruments and mechanisms of multilateral organizations no longer reflect the current realities for finding urgent solutions to problems. One example is the composition of the UN Security Council, whose five permanent members and their veto right reflect the post-World War II situation and the confrontation between the free world and the communist world. However, this is not a true reflection of today's global realities.

Perceptions of multilateralism in Latin America

The individual contributions to this publication reveal differing interpretations of the term multilateralism across the continent. These ideas are often heavily influenced by the government in power in the country in question and its ideological leanings. For instance, Brazil is a country with a long multilateral tradition; according to its Constitution, the principle is even an instrument that legitimizes its foreign policy. This traditional consecration of ML changed when the incumbent President Jair Bolsonaro took office. He pursues a policy of explicit anti-globalization, seeking instead bilateral rapprochement with the United States, rather than placing importance on his country's former role as a multilateral global player.

There is also a similar influence of ideology on the importance of ML and the associated engagement in regional and global alliances in Argentina, where ML has been repeatedly threatened by populist presidents and isolationist and anti-globalization tendencies. Its governments have often failed to effectively convey to civil society the benefits of multilateral action as a mechanism for solving global problems. Consequently, a society increasingly disgruntled by periods of crises may have a poor grasp of multilateral commitments.

Other Latin American countries see ML as a principle firmly anchored in their foreign policy and play an active role in global institutions such as the UN and WTO, as well as in regional alliances like the Organization of American States (OAS), the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) and the Pacific Alliance. It is nonetheless difficult to determine the importance of ML for a country's government based solely on its participation in a multilateral alliance, especially since many of these alliances are currently in crisis[5] and since a country's dedication varies from government to government. For instance, Peru is a member and host country of many multilateral initiatives. However, the prevailing perception of ML in the country appears to be based more on macroeconomic preferences than shared values. Yet, unlike Brazil and Argentina, Peru has a track record in foreign policy that has remained constant for over thirty years.

Mexico was particularly active in multilateral cooperation under President Enrique Peña Nieto (2012-2018), in the hopes of distinguishing itself as a player with global responsibility. Since 2000, Mexican governments have worked hard to establish the country as a key regional player in international organizations based on its demographics, geographic location and size of economy and thus gain an international reputation.[6] Mexico views ML as the best option for solving collective problems based on common standards, principles and measures. Its central concerns in multilateralism are the safeguarding of international peace and security and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda SDGs.[7] For its part, Mexican civil society is somewhat disinterested in multilateral participation and it is not a public concern.[8]

In Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Peru, civil society's interest in ML is rather modest, although this appears to be due to dissatisfaction with politics among the populations of these four countries, which has generally risen in recent times. Over the past few years, public interest in national affairs – let alone international politics – in Peru has declined dramatically due to a slew of scandals. An exception to this are the CSOs of these countries that are committed to global concerns such as environmental protection, human rights and health issues, and which view multilateral organizations as champions of their causes, even against their respective governments.

Historical experiences of multilateralism in Latin America

All of the countries compared in this publication are members of at least one multilateral alliance and can look back on a tradition of multilateral government action that is sometimes stronger, sometimes weaker. However, this is not necessarily indicative of all governments being supportive of ML.

The experience of Panama in this respect is of special note: in 1826, while still part of Gran Colombia, the Panama Congress called together representatives of Latin

American countries to lay the foundations for an association of states, building on Simón Bolívar's idea[9] of an economic and political integration of the continent. Following its independence, Panama also joined the world's leading governance bodies and, in 1920, became one of the 32 founding members of the League of Nations. Panama pursues this approach of effective global participation to this day, actively participating in the Global Governance Group (3G) to promote joint policymaking with the G-20 countries and the United Nations. Panama is also a member of the OAS, where it is active primarily in the management of the Panama Canal and the creation of the Contadora Group (now the Rio Group) advocating peace in Central America. Panama has long played host to several multilateral summits, including the 1973 United Nations Security Council and the 2015 Summit of the Americas in Panama city. Many international organizations have regional offices in Panama, among them several UN institutions for all of Latin America (e.g. UN Women) or for Central America and the Caribbean.

Colombia also has a vibrant multilateral tradition, although its governments – in contrast to Panama – have not aligned themselves with models or structures of global governance. Instead, its foreign policy action is based on the interests and ideology that it shares with other countries. Colombia sets itself apart for being both donor and recipient of international cooperation, particularly through its active development cooperation with a number of Southeast Asian countries. Colombia has received support from the United Nations for its efforts to resolve the conflict with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Spanish: *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, FARC), which was instrumental in securing a peace treaty in 2016. Nonetheless, other relevant players in the international community, such as the European Union (EU), Germany and the United States, are still working with the Colombian government to establish a stable, lasting peace. In all, Colombia contributes financially to nine different multilateral organizations. The country's current government has shown greater interest in active involvement in regional and international alliances, primarily with the UN, OAS, Andean Community (Spanish: *Comunidad Andina*, CAN) and Pacific Alliance.

Chile has stayed true to its foreign policy principle of "open regionalism" owing to its positive experiences with multilateral cooperation in the past. Following its reintegration into the international community at the end of the military dictatorship, it has committed to a foreign policy shaped more by pragmatism than ideology. The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has been headquartered in the Chilean capital of Santiago since 1948. That same year, Chile joined OAS and was one of the originators of the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Chile also actively supports the UN peacekeeping mission. To date, Chileans have participated in 23 international peacekeeping missions (including MINUSTAH in Haiti), supported the UN resolution concerning

the Libyan civil war and the founding of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague.

Mexico also has a long history of engagement with and in multilateral organizations: between March 2015 and June 2018, Mexican security forces were deployed in Western Sahara, Lebanon, Haiti, the Central African Republic and Mali as part of eight different UN peacekeeping missions. Moreover, Mexico has served as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council on several occasions, expanding its influence in regions of the world to which it previously had little access.[10] Mexico's support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the formulation of the 2030 Agenda, the fight against drug trafficking, and the regulation of migration merit special note in this regard. The last two issues pose particular domestic political challenges for Mexico.

Latin American multilateralism: effective or vulnerable to crises?

There are many multilateral alliances in Latin America that have proven to be more or less unstable and susceptible to political and economic upheaval in their member countries. The recent history of these regional alliances begins parallel to consolidating the international community into organizations of multilateral cooperation. Following the end of the East-West conflict that had dominated international cooperation until that date, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) took place in Brazil in 1992. This UN event would mark a radical departure from previous multilateral cooperation in environment and biodiversity. Among other things, it led to the ratification of the Agenda 21 and several environmental agreements. For Brazil, in particular, this was an important milestone in gaining a reputation among the international community as a representative of environmentally relevant issues. In 2012, it organized the follow-up conference to UNCED, Rio+20, which laid the foundations for the ratification of the SDGs by the UN General Assembly in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda. The relevance of regional players combined with the rise of many countries – previously considered emerging countries and now regarded as influential on the world stage – turned Latin America into an attractive region for multilateral cooperation in subsequent years. The group of BRICS countries, composed of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, merits special mention here.

Even Central American countries began to increase their engagement in multilateral cooperation after the end of the Cold War. In 1991, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and Guatemala founded the Central American

Integration System (Spanish: *Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana*, or SICA). Two of the main achievements of this alliance, accomplished with support from the EU and the United States, were the peace processes in El Salvador (1992) and Guatemala (1996). In the same year, Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela partnered to form Mercosur for the purpose of advancing South American integration.[11] Venezuela's membership has been suspended since 2016 due to its flagrant restrictions on freedom and curtailment of democratic rights, in violation of Mercosur rules.

Regional coalitions like the Pacific Alliance and OAS now have greater potential for cooperation with the EU or other world regions than the Union of South American States (Spanish: *Unión de Estados Sudamericanos*, Unasur) or Mercosur. Founded in 2004, Unasur has virtually ceased to exist, given that eight of its nine member states have now withdrawn over the Venezuelan conflict and disagreement over the election of a new secretary-general.[12] Mercosur is also suffering under the policies of the current governments of Brazil and Argentina and looks set to drift into an existential crisis.[13] The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (Spanish: *Comunidad de Estados de América Latina y el Caribe*, CELAC), from which Brazil withdraw in early January 2020, is also in crisis.

The Pacific Alliance (Spanish: Alianza del Pacífico) is considered a stable community but has fizzled out somewhat owing to internal social tensions in its member states of Chile, Colombia, Peru and Mexico, which could have a negative impact on future cooperation with the EU. The same is true of the Andean Community (Spanish: *Comunidad Andina*), composed of Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Peru. Overall, it is clear that Latin American multilateralism has been weakened not only by the frequent changes of government and ideology in recent months, but also because of the mismanagement of regional crises (especially in Venezuela).[14]

These examples show that multilateral alliances in Latin America are in crisis or have been stagnated for some time now. In Venezuela, there has been a particular display of the "ambivalence of multilateral cooperation at the interface between regional stability and political self-interest".[15] The OAS was the first to denounce the situation in Venezuela but was unable to impose sanctions due to the ideological and political polarization of the parties.[16] Mexico, which sharply criticized Venezuela's regime for its undemocratic rule, faced charges of inconsistency between its domestic and foreign policy. At the time, Mexico was under public pressure to investigate the disappearance of 43 students who had allegedly been murdered, even seeking assistance from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).[17] Since the early 2000s, Mexico has been walking a tightrope, attempting to strike a balance between a multilateral policy that supports the protection of human rights and democracy and a national policy that often fails to ensure this protection.[18]

In summary, Latin America has no shortage of multilateral alliances or memberships of international organizations. Most of the democratic countries on the subcontinent have the rules and institutions to address the policy areas relevant to multilateral cooperation. Nonetheless, the "political, economic and military elites prevent or hinder the application of these rules."[19] A central issue in this regard is the impunity of the endemic corruption prevalent in many places.[20] This may also be the reason why Latin American countries do not seek help from existing established bodies (like the OAS) for their internal crises.

By contrast, due to internal political and ideological differences that play a major part in weakening these regional organizations, ad hoc alliances are adopted as solution mechanisms (for instance, the Lima Group as opposed to the International Contact Group, in the case of Venezuela).[21]

Latin America's Commitment to the Alliance for Multilateralism

Although all the countries in Latin America are members of a number of regional alliances and part of the international community, their interest and participation in the Alliance for Multilateralism initiated by France and Germany in 2019 varies widely. This illustrates what was discussed in the previous section: in Latin America, multilateral alliances and adherence to their agreements are subject to ideological shifts in direction of the countries' respective national governments, corruption and impunity, protectionism or increased emphasis on bilateral foreign policy.

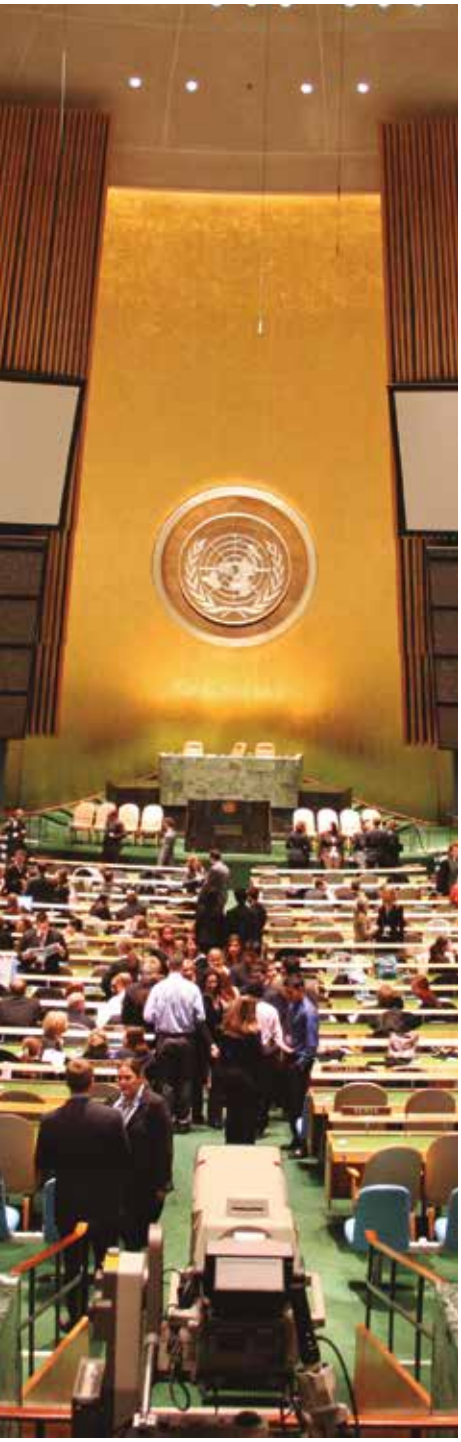
On the one hand, Mexico, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic have all supported the Alliance for Multilateralism from the outset. Mexico and Chile were even among the promoting countries when the initiative was launched on the sidelines of the 2019 UN General Assembly. At this first meeting of foreign ministers, Chile's Minister of Foreign Affairs spoke of the urgent need, in view of the global challenges, to renew the willingness to engage in multilateral action and modernize the international organizations that his country seeks to promote. In the current COVID-19 crisis, the Chilean government is calling for joint action from the global community to combat the pandemic, which stance it underlined by signing the Alliance's joint declaration in April 2020.[22]

Costa Rica is also an active supporter of the Alliance. At the last meeting, the Costa Rican Foreign Minister stressed the importance of multilateral cooperation, particularly in the light of the threat posed by the current pandemic, given that the virus knows no borders. Peru, under the government of President Martín

Vizcarra, has also taken the decision to join the Alliance. However, the creation of the network in 2019 and the COVID-19 meeting in 2020 went all but unnoticed by Peruvian civil society due to little or no media coverage in the country or echo in social media. Argentina is another signatory to the aforementioned declaration, although its participation in the network is limited to signing selected declarations. The Argentinian government is heavily critical of the initiative, considering that, on the one hand, participating countries have little say in the drafting of proposals and, on the other, the Alliance is relatively powerless without the participation of the United States and China. Moreover, it is regarded as an attempt by Europe to exert its influence, with Germany and France in particular seeking to consolidate moral power in the international system.

These participating Latin American countries are a stark contrast to others with no knowledge of the creation of the Alliance or that have limited interest in becoming involved. The latter include Brazil, Guatemala and Panama, cited earlier in this article. Brazil in particular has a long multilateral tradition, but its international participation in global organizations has all but stagnated under the current Bolsonaro administration. The coverage of the creation of the Alliance for Multilateralism in 2019 in Brazilian media and academic circles seemingly had no effect on the current Brazilian government. Panama's government has also shown little interest in actively participating in the multilateral alliance, despite a positive past experience.

In 2019, President Jimmy Morales of Guatemala was embroiled in a dispute with the UN and its Secretary-General António Guterres after his abolition of the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (Spanish: *Comisión Internacional contra la Impunidad en Guatemala*, CICIG), so no attention was paid to the Alliance for Multilateralism.



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COVID-19: An impetus to reinvigorate multilateralism?

The criticism made of the Alliance for Multilateralism, particularly with regard to the participation of countries such as Mexico and Singapore, is that there are large differences in democratic quality and in the political and ethical behavior of the respective governments of the participating states. In contrast to Canada, the Freedom House index classifies both Chile and Ghana (also co-founders of the network) as "only partly free". In Mexico, this is due to the difficult domestic security and human rights situation. The Alliance is also an initiative among countries with diverging normative and ideological ideas. As a result, the Alliance is unable to address profound global problems, focusing instead on pragmatic agreements in specific areas where they are relatively straightforward because they involve only a handful of obligations.[23] This may also be one of the reasons why, despite its long multilateral tradition, not all democracies in Latin America are involved in the multilateral alliance. Moreover, critics in the Argentinian government argue that the initiative is an attempt by Europe to configure and exert power on the international stage. The superpowers US and China have a strong influence on the Latin American continent, especially in terms of economic investment. Its countries logically fear that joining the Alliance will jeopardize their relations with the US or Chinese governments. Lastly, the general crisis affecting multilateral alliances in Latin America has killed off much of the interest in participating in new initiatives.

It remains to be seen whether the current global coronavirus crisis will change things, especially since it has moved global health to the top of the Alliance's agenda as a new area of importance in international politics. After all, the signatories to the joint declaration to combat the COVID-19 pandemic include ten Latin American countries (Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Colombia and Uruguay).

Biographies

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Teresa Marten was Project Coordinator for multilateralism and security issues at KAS-RP ADELA until July 2020.

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6. Ver Covarrubias Velasco, Ana 2019: México: ¿actor con responsabilidad multilateral? En: *Foro Internacional* (FI), LIX, 2019 No. 3-4, pp. 646-669, aquí: S. 645.
7. Cf. *ibidem* pp. 648-649.
8. Cf. *ibidem* S. 655.
9. Simón Bolívar (1783-1830) fue uno de los dos líderes del movimiento de liberación e independencia de América Latina. Luchó contra los conquistadores coloniales españoles en Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Perú y Panamá (cf. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2 Köpfe der Unabhängigkeitsbewegung, https://bit.ly/bpb-simon-bolivar [19.05.2020]).

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17. Cf. Covarrubias Velasco, Ana 2019: México: ¿Actor con responsabilidad multilateral? En: *Foro Internacional* (FI), LIX, 2019, No. 3-4, pp. 646-669, aquí: S. 656-663.
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20. Cf. *ibidem*.
21. Cf. *ibidem* p.7.
22. Gemeinsame Erklärung der Allianz für den Multilateralismus 2020: Wir brauchen eine starke weltweite Zusammenarbeit und Solidarität, um COVID19 zu bekämpfen, 16.04.2020, en: https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/newsroom/allianz-multilateralismus-corona/2333390 [21.05.2020].
23. Cf. Maull, Hanns W. 2020: Multilateralismus: Varianten, Möglichkeiten, Grenzen, Erfolgsbedingungen, en: Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik -SWP- Deutsches Institut für Internationale Politik und Sicherheit (emp.): *SWP-Aktuell* 11/2020, pp. 1-8, aquí: p. 6.

"Argentina considers itself an active part of the global institutional order constructed in the postwar era and trusts in the cooperation bodies that emerge within the framework of multilateral forums".

The Argentinian view

Elsa Llenderrozas

Introducción

Since the turn of the century, virtually no concern has dominated world affairs more than the crisis of multilateralism (ML). The topic appears both in academic literature and in the organizational domain and the highest echelons of world politics. The unilateral practices of the great powers and the failure of cooperation to tackle global agendas such as climate change, have increased pessimism in relation to ML. Although it is invoked in every diplomatic discourse and despite calls for its strengthening, ML remains mired in paralysis.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the weakness of ML and the obstacles to building systems for policy coordination. The media and civil society clamored for greater international cooperation, thereby revealing the nature of the problem: the consolidation of multilateral instruments in order to solve global issues. The issue has been dissected once again, but a roadmap for rebuilding an active, legitimate and effective ML has yet to be consolidated.

This article takes a conceptual look at Argentina's approach to the ML phenomenon, describing its tradition of international cooperation, main lines of action and dominant practices, along with future prospects.

Conceptual approaches

In academia, ML has been studied from two main approaches: functional and regulatory. This distinction has been applied to the analysis of the behavior of states

and international organizations. According to Robert Keohane's functional definition,[1] ML differs from bilateralism essentially in the number of states involved, which retain a high degree of autonomy and can choose ML as one of a number of options for the implementation of their foreign policy. By contrast, John Ruggie's perspective incorporates the normative dimension, whereby ML is an institutional form that coordinates relations between two or more states based on general principles of action that set out the appropriate behavior for each situation, without taking account of the specific interests of the parties.[2] State autonomy is specifically limited here.

A more recent conceptualization will be useful for understanding the context of dissatisfaction with the ineffectiveness of international institutions and the desire for change in existing ML. Julia Morse and Robert Keohane define *contested multilateralism* as the pursuit of strategies by states, international organizations, and non-state actors to use existing or newly created institutions to challenge the rules, practices, or missions of existing multilateral institutions.[3] In other words, states and non-state actors dissatisfied with ML can adopt two types of strategy: they shift their attention to another existing organization that better suits them, or they create an alternative multilateral institution.

These theoretical approaches can be useful for analyzing the actions of a country like Argentina in relation to ML, cooperation and the initiative of the Alliance for Multilateralism. This Franco-German initiative emerged as a new global coalition of states seeking to strengthen ML on diverse issues and agendas.

The case of Argentina

Throughout history, the doctrinaire work of Argentinian diplomacy has been outstanding in matters of international law and policy.[4] However, Argentinian governments of recent decades have not been guided by their own theoretical production (white papers, national strategy documents, etc.) formulating a definition of ML or an established strategy in this matter. Argentina's Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not produce doctrine or core concepts and nor has it created a specific agency for the planning of foreign policy in order to support its decision-making.

Thus, we must trace the conceptualization of ML back to discursive construction, to the narrative underpinning the country's international behavior in multilateral spaces.

For Argentinian governments, ML is a tool made available to the country as a middle power for diplomacy, to enhance its prestige and make its voice heard in the international system. It is regarded as a foreign policy resource and has been a relevant area for foreign action. Argentina seeks to establish a link with international states and

actors and a "rules-based" global order, these being defined in multilateral spaces. As a "recipient of rules" actor, it holds ML in high regard because it is functional. Hence, Argentina's approach to ML is essentially instrumental.

As is generally the case, Argentina's foreign policy and use of ML depend on the political and ideological program of the incumbent government and reflect the political leanings of this latter. While relations with other states have a minimum basis of strategic interests, these are associated more with shared values and ideas than with content and goals.[5]

Argentina considers itself an active part of the global institutional order constructed in the postwar era and trusts in the cooperation bodies that emerge within the framework of multilateral forums.

The strategy focuses on different multilateral mechanisms for diverse foreign policy objectives:

- It prioritizes the UN system for outstanding issues with the major powers, where unilateral treatment could be less effective (e.g. the Falklands issue, foreign debt). Within the UN framework, Argentina has an important historical and diplomatic tradition and has held prominent roles (member of the Security Council for nine terms, chair of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), chair of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Conference and of the Disarmament Conference and the Arms Trade Treaty, among others).
- It participates in the G20 as a policy of prestige in order to exercise a degree of leadership and, to an extent, deploy soft power while maintaining a high profile in this area. Argentina sees the space as highly dependent on presidential diplomacy and the dynamism shown by the G20 depending on the context.
- It is an active member and driver of regional bodies (OAS, Mercosur) with a dual technical and political dimension.

Over the past twenty years, Argentinian foreign policy has adopted two main views of ML: one that can be termed *adaptivist* and another that is more *reformist* in nature.[6] For both views, the general position is supportive of ML and international institutions, but the ML actions are different in each case. In the adaptivist stance, identified with the government of Mauricio Macri (2015-2019), participation in multilateral forums is acritical: they are the space for Argentina's "intelligent insertion", the country's "world tour", a withdrawal from its isolation with the adoption of a mostly acquiescent behavior. This includes a strong international profile, active participation in multilateral

spaces such as the G20 and the request to join the OECD. By contrast, the reformist model adopts a predominantly critical and propositional view.[7] This is a model with a long tradition in Argentinian foreign policy that dates back to the country's position in the international economic order in the 1960s.[8] It has been applied, for instance, in the foreign policy of the government of Arturo Illia (1963-1966) and continued, albeit with nuances, by the governments of Raúl Alfonsín (1983-1989), Eduardo Duhalde (2002-2003), Néstor Kirchner (2003-2007) and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007-2015).

Even taking account of the heterogeneous characteristics of the ruling coalition, Alberto Fernández's presidency could be regarded as leaning toward a reformist narrative. The vision can be summed up like this: ML is in crisis, accused of slowness and bureaucratic rigidity, for being spaces controlled by a handful of powers, and for its inability to respond effectively to global problems. Yet there are still reasons to continue to back ML: global problems demand joint and effective action (e.g. climate change, migration, pandemics); in the face of uncertainty, ML offers greater predictability and provides a platform for the less powerful to maximize their capabilities and limit the discretionality of the most powerful. In addition, alternatives to what exists are nowhere to be found. The emerging powers (like China and India) pursue a change in order, but not of the international order; they do not want to change the rules of the game, since their development was based on existing ML or they have created new institutions that respond to the same principles.[9]

The reformist character is expressed thus:

"ML is not a static system of rules and organizations created once and for all. Huge shifts are taking place in the distribution of global power and institutions cannot remain frozen in time forever. By contrast, ML continues to change and, if weakened, those with the most to lose are the countries with the least unilateral capacity. Despite the limitations of ML (...) abandoning everything that has been built thus far would not only mean taking several steps backwards, but also becoming more vulnerable to new threats."[10]

The direction will be confirmed in time, but at the G20 Virtual Summit in March 2020, the Argentinian government proposed a Global Solidarity Pact and the creation of a Global Humanitarian Emergency Fund, considering medical supplies, COVID-19 research, and scientific and medical knowledge as global public goods. The conditions of the international political context, the global economic crisis and the social consequences of the pandemic will drive a review of multilateral forums to make them more effective.

With regard to the Alliance for Multilateralism, Argentina has maintained a low profile and limited itself to certain topics. In 2018, it signed the Paris Call for Trust and Security in Cyberspace, launched at the Paris Peace Forum. In 2019, it signed the Declaration

on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS). In April 2020, it signed the COVID-19 Pandemic Declaration in support of WHO. In his address, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Felipe Solá urged member countries not to suspend payments to the institution: "We share a central idea that is to support multilateral organizations, and especially WHO, which provides essential scientific data."[11]

In summary, Argentina agrees with the arguments of the Alliance for Multilateralism that the "rules-based" multilateral order is in crisis and that like-minded states should step up their efforts to promote ML by creating a "global network of like-minded states" that functions as a flexible platform to foster cooperation in trade, human rights, nuclear weapons, climate change, and cyberspace, and committing to changing coalitions, with shared interests "in order to achieve maximum effectiveness through variable geometry and fluid membership".[12]

The main criticisms of the initiative relate to the non-participatory design of its proposals, questions regarding its effectiveness and real impact on global affairs, and whether ML can really be plucked from its current paralysis if the US and China are not included. It is also viewed as an attempt by Europe to hold on to its influence between these two poles within an argument of power that favors unilateralism. To a limited extent, it is seen as an attempt by France to regain power and moral stature in the international system at a time when its economic, military and political relevance is waning, and Germany is allowed to strengthen understanding with its European ally.

Argentina's international cooperation

The first point to note here is that Argentina has a long tradition of international cooperation (IC) in its dual role as both donor and recipient.[13] As donor, it views cooperation as a foreign policy tool subordinate to the political leanings of the incumbent government.

The country carries out different types of IC: a) bilateral (donors channel their funds directly to recipient countries, either to their governments or to other organizations). It is conducted primarily through bilateral agreements in the scientific and technological and technical domains.

b) Multilateral (governments send funds to multilateral organizations for them to use to fund their activities). It includes cooperation with the UN, the European Union and the Ibero-American Secretariat, among others. Funds are mainly allocated to the recruitment of experts, training activities (scholarships, internships) and facilities. Joint work schemes have been developed covering international organizations, state

bodies and civil society organizations through technical support or project evaluation. c) Cooperation through partnerships, aimed at strengthening links between civil society organizations from different countries.[14]

In Argentina, IC has been a dynamic process that has not followed a linear trajectory, since its actors and objectives have changed over the years. Under the governments of Carlos Menem (1989-1999), with the monetary regime of convertibility and parity with the dollar, Argentina received virtually no IC but did offer funds and programs to other countries. Subsequently, with the economic, social and political collapse of 2001, the country was reinstated on the UNDP list of countries receiving IC aid, though without "priority" status. The economic context subsequently recovered and the cooperation received from abroad nosedived.

Argentina channels its IC through the Argentine Fund for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (FO-AR), formerly known as the Argentine Fund for Horizontal Cooperation.[15] The creation of the FO-AR program under the International Cooperation Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs led to the coordination of numerous initiatives for South-South cooperation (SSC) and triangular cooperation (TrC), demonstrating the close ties with foreign policy.[16] In all governments, SSC and TrC target different countries, depending on the political objectives addressed.

Given its middle-income country status, Argentina also continues to receive North-South cooperation (NSC), particularly in academic and scientific matters. As an instrument of foreign policy that reflects the political leanings of the governments that implement it, SSC can reveal shifts in narrative that depend on the objectives of this policy. There remains, however, a certain continuity and identity partly explained by the permanence of a technical bureaucracy with shared values and understandings.[17]

In the 2010s, Argentina adopted a more active role and autonomous policy in international affairs, implementing a number of SSC and TrC programs. It identified itself as a Southern country and made Latin America its political and economic priority, in symbiosis with the development of spaces for technical and political dialogue and concertation of regional and Ibero-American scope.[18] It positioned itself as a donor of technical and humanitarian aid in Latin American, Caribbean and African countries.

Argentina prioritized its neighbors Paraguay and Bolivia, together with other South American countries, in order to strengthen integration processes such as UNASUR and CELAC. Within this narrative, such means allow similar middle-income countries to share technical know-how, in contrast to the dominant features of traditional NSC, or East-West cooperation.

Between 2007 and 2015, the discourse of Argentina's SSC-related foreign policy adopted a critical view of NSC. It opposed the principles and methodologies formulated by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) because the developing countries did not consider themselves included in their definition. This policy debate was integral to the identity of the South.[19] From 2013, attempts were made to increase the target countries and number of missions in Africa, the Caribbean and Asia, prioritizing the first two regions. Caribbean countries are important for support on the Falklands issue with the UN, while Africa and Asia are potential export markets.

Mauricio Macri's government added a new twist to Argentina's foreign policy: closer alignment with developed countries and a more pragmatic approach to investment and market opening. Latin America was still the main destination of SSC, cooperation with Asia increased and efforts were made to improve coordination with NSC programs and agencies. In 2019, Argentina committed to a policy of prestige and leadership in cooperation when it hosted the Second United Nations High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation, as it had done the first, 40 years earlier. This was viewed as a commitment to SSC and TrC and to the role of the UN in the governance of the system.

With regard to the management of Alberto Fernández, the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic and social effects undoubtedly changed the immediate priorities of his foreign policy, giving greater precedence to the receipt of IC (for example, health supplies from China) than the awarding of SSC and TrC.

In summary, Argentina has adopted a changing and very dynamic attitude towards IC and to SSC and TrC. Its receipt of IC has been determined by two main factors: a) shifts in the country's economic and social situation – including times that it has been classed as a middle-income country and off the spectrum for donor interests; b) the general downturn in official development assistance (ODA) flows, which has directed available resources to other world regions. Argentina received its maximum IC assistance during the 2001 crisis. Subsequently, as the economy recovered, international flows took a nosedive.

In this context, consideration should be given to how the UN and OECD countries define their IC priorities. Before the global economic crisis, Argentina was not a priority recipient of IC because its per capita GDP level was regarded as high in comparison to other recipient countries. Until 2018, Argentina was an upper middle

income country. According to the World Bank, Argentina's per capita GDP stood at USD 20,567.3 (PPP) in 2018, placing it above the Latin American and Caribbean average (USD 16,600). These macroeconomic indices not only reflect global averages and situations, but also paint an unrepresentative picture of the country's economic, social and geographic heterogeneity. It is also important to note that IC actors have changed over the years. While the State and international organizations continue to play a key role, the participation of non-governmental organizations and local governments is also increasing.

Civil society

Argentina has an extensive fabric of civil society organizations (CSOs) that has grown in response to economic shifts. The economic crisis of 2001 triggered the creation of diverse organizations supporting millions of Argentines left destitute and impoverished. However, the link between CSOs and donor agents is surprisingly low, despite having increased over the past 15 years. A 2004 study by UNDP, the IDB and the Institutional and Social Analysis and Development Group (Spanish: *Grupo de Análisis y Desarrollo Institucional y Social,* GADIS) found that, of a sample of 81,649 organizations from across the country only 2.7% received IC funds to finance their programs and activities.[20]

This fabric of civil society has expanded and diversified. It is estimated that there are approximately 105,000 CSOs in Argentina today, with very disparate links to ML and IC. These organizations can be classified into three categories: the largest CSOs and those most exposed to international work make up one third.

In general, they oversee international organizations (such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the OAS, other UN agencies), are broadly linked to human rights movements, and monitor conventions or work in partnership with specialized agencies (such as UNICEF, UN Women, etc). They regard international conventions and institutions as pacts between states, and that there are national political interests behind them. Generally, CSOs that monitor issues relating to children, gender or the environment are more familiar with these terms and consider ML as the space constructed through international "alliances" to achieve certain goals. In this regard, the new 2030 agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has been an important diffuser of this idea of "common goals" to be achieved by all countries (it has been more effective than the previous initiative of the Millennium Development Goals – MDGs).

In short, these organizations understand the meaning of ML and consider it an area of foreign policy actions and measures.[21]

Another third of CSOs see multilateral organizations and their conduct as initiative "funders", without overanalyzing the causes or reasons for the conduct of these actors or the reasoning behind the actions. A third group is disconnected from international dynamics, ML and the possibilities of IC; its focus is on local private donors or national public actors. Consequently, only a minority – the most professionalized sector of civil society – is clear on the meaning of the term ML, and we could say that in society, knowledge of ML is associated mainly with the action of international organizations.[22]

Argentina is, therefore, a dual country. A territory overflowing with natural riches, prosperous industries and great economic capacity, but with serious economic, social and political differences between the populations of its diverse provinces. The reduction in funds from international cooperation has led to competition for financing among civil society organizations, which has created problems related to the sharing of information between different organizations. This, combined with a lack of training, means that aid funds reach only a handful of CSOs.

Final considerations

Based on initial trends, Argentina's incumbent government will adopt an active and reformist ML practice. The current social and economic crisis brought on by the global economic slowdown may put Argentina back on the list of aid recipients, though not as a priority. Argentina's possibilities for promoting CSS and TrC policies will be limited.

A revitalized ML will require shared values with respect to its usefulness as a mechanism for the management and solution of global problems. This is what is called into question globally and challenged by many isolationist populist leaders and anti-globalization forces. ML is threatened from above by states that prefer to act unilaterally and from below by disgruntled societies that do not see the spillover of its benefits. Nonetheless, in order to function, ML needs a communal vision rather than a common policy.[23] In general, the post-pandemic global context may be one of deeper disorder or greater solidarity and cooperation. If the second trend emerges, some of the disputed multilateralism strategies could be developed, but there are many assumptions and not enough evidence of the nature of the context. Consequently, the future remains fraught with uncertainty.

Biography

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"Not only does Brazil have a tradition of international cooperation and multilateral action, but many Brazilians have also occupied prestigious positions in UN agencies."

Brazil and multilateralism, from tradition to radical change*

Monique Sochaczewski / Marcelo Valença

Introduction

As we write these lines, we are witnessing the biggest health crisis of recent history: COVID-19. Among the many challenges is the role of multilateralism and, in this most immediate case, the role of WHO and collective efforts to stop the pandemic. The options for dealing with the crisis were nationalist isolation or global solidarity, as Israeli historian Yuval Noah Harari has explained in conferences and interviews.[1]

In recent global crises, such as the 2008 economic crisis and Ebola in 2014, the US acted as global leader in managing and finding solutions. This time, however, the US government has chosen to focus on its supposed greatness and there has been collective paralysis.

The COVID-19 crisis has accelerated global change in economic terms, as well as in universal basic income, adopted by many countries that had previously expressed reservations about it, and remote learning and work. There has also been a general acceleration in the international shift in power, which was already unfolding with the rise of China in recent times.

On 24 April 2020, the UN and its agencies celebrated the 75th anniversary of the San Francisco Conference to mark International Delegates Day. The principle of sovereign equality emerged with the multilateral system created after World War II. However, it

reflected the interests of the victors of the conflict – especially the US – and was an expression of their power.

In this text, we will discuss the Brazilian vision of multilateralism. Enshrined in the 1988 Federal Constitution ("CF88") as the guiding principle of its international relations, multilateralism has been a strong component of Brazilian action since the imperial period. However, it is facing challenges in the current context, both domestically and internationally.

The meaning of multilateralism. Concept and role

In general terms, Brazilian foreign policy analysts say that the country has built its international operations on two long-term goals: the quest for autonomy and international relevance. To this end, multilateralism was considered central to Brazil's quest for legitimacy in international politics, especially on issues relating to security and trade.[2]

Here, we consider multilateralism, rather than a principle enshrined in Article 4 CF88 guiding Brazil's action in international relations, as a tool for achieving these long-term goals. According to Casarões, the use of the term multilateralism is relatively recent, dating back to the 1960s.[3] Together with pacifism, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the prevalence of human rights, multilateralism has become a "trademark" of the country, present at conferences of analysts and academics as well as in the speeches of political leaders. The question, therefore, is how to understand multilateralism from the Brazilian point of view.

Although the term was recently used in Brazilian foreign policy ("BFP"), multilateralism adopts different names and guises throughout Brazil's history.[4] It appears, for example, as the creation of consensus and defense of international forums and initiatives and commitments that converge and promote the long-term goals of BFP.[5]

Celso Lafer recently published the following in the O Estado de São Paulo newspaper: Multilateralism:

> the search for solutions for international coexistence. Its purpose is the development and application of norms and guidelines of conduct, developed collectively by states to govern their reciprocal relations in an interdependent world. It creates diplomatic meetings within the institutional scope of multiple

> international organizations, which operate as an intermediary between the parties. This is a space for the potential interstate articulation necessary to face the challenges of contemporary international society, which affects us all in the digital age.[6]

Note that Lafer bases his argument on widely recognized practical and theoretical bases, with experience as an academic and professional in International Relations, having served twice as Minister of Foreign Affairs (1992 and 2001-2002) and as head of Brazil's permanent mission to the UN and WTO. His vision of multilateralism corroborates more traditional understandings in the field of International Relations, as suggested by Robert Keohane.[7] According to the latter, multilateralism is the coordination of the national policies of three or more states through ad hoc agreements or institutions.

Lafer also highlights multilateralism's potential for coordinating multiple actors and agendas on an international scale. Considering the historical limitations of the material components of power in Brazil, multilateralism is an aid in mitigating these restrictions, offering new possibilities for international action.[8] It is therefore important to understand how the concept is formed from the combination of ideas and strategies developed by Brazilian diplomacy.

Over time, Brazil gained projection as an important player in the functioning of the regional and global architecture. In this regard, its international insertion in multilateral forums shows its consistency and regularity throughout history. The country presents itself as a mediator between the great powers and other members of the system, positioning itself as a defendant of the rights of lesser countries[9] and claiming equivalent recognition to the powers.[10]

The governments of Fernando Henrique Cardoso ("FHC") and Lula da Silva played a central role in laying the foundations for increased international insertion through multilateralism. The 2000s and first half of the 2010s involved an appreciation of multilateral forums and institutions by Brazil, which took on leadership roles in multilateral agencies. Therefore, despite differences in the political spectrum and methods of implementation, both governments retained the option of multilateralism as a way of projecting the country into the international system.

The subsequent governments of Dilma Rousseff and Michel Temer, however, minimized Brazil's international participation for political and economic reasons. The value of multilateralism nonetheless remained part of their foreign policy strategies. Both recognized the role of international institutions and forums for national development, but significantly restricted the country's participation.

The weight of multilateralism in Brazilian foreign policy declined when Jair Bolsonaro came to power in 2019. Under the new government, Brazil has adopted an attitude of contempt for multilateralism, which ideological grassroots advocates have labeled "globalism". Foreign Minister Ernesto Araújo's blog is highly illustrative in this respect. In it, he shares some of his ideas on foreign policy under the title *Metapolítica 17*: *Contra o Globalismo*. This position kicks against a political and diplomatic tradition that has been constructed since the nineteenth century, as we shall show in the next section.

A tradition of multilateralism

As mentioned, Brazil has a long tradition of international cooperation and multilateral action. At the regional level, Brazil participated in all of the integration initiatives in South America.[11] Globally, its adherence to multilateral instruments dates back to at least the second half of the nineteenth century, even before Brazil became a republic.[12] The country participated in important multilateral conferences and signed the first technical and economic treaties establishing cooperation among states.

Examples include signing the Paris Declaration Respecting Maritime Law (1858), the Universal Postal Union (1874), the International Telegraph Convention (1877) and the Convention on Industrial Property (1833). Its greatest participation, however, was at the first Pan-American Conference held in Washington from 2 October 1889 to 19 April 1890. This conference took place in the period between the fall of the Empire and birth of the Republic and addressed central issues of the formal structure of international society such as consular fees, extradition, and artistic and literary ownership.[13]

From then on, multilateralism began to appear as the principle of order of Brazil's external relations, albeit erratically. Even when the country did not participate in major international agreements, it recognized their value. Brazil was invited to the Hague Convention in 1899, but President Campos Salles declined to participate, citing difficult financial conditions and meager military forces. He was, however, present at the Second Hague Conference in 1907. On that occasion, the Brazilian diplomatic representative was Rui Barbosa, who laid the foundations for active parliamentary diplomacy, critical of the logic of the great powers and an advocate of the use of arbitration as a means to avoid war.[14] This was the inaugural moment of Brazil's active presence in international forums, calling for a more egalitarian role in the formulation of the rules that should govern the great international problems of the time.

Brazil was a founding member of the League of Nations, a status gained from its participation in World War I alongside the allies. The country was also nominated to occupy one of the League Council's four non-permanent seats in the body's first year of operation, 1920, and was continuously re-elected to the same seat until 1925.[15]

By participating in the League, it made a great effort to surpass the parameters of Americanism by working on an extra-continental action. With the non-accession of the US, Brazil saw itself as the greatest power of the American continent in Geneva. The brief experience, which lasted until 1926, primarily sought to gain prestige and increase its influence in order to become a permanent member of the Council. Nonetheless, it turned out to be extremely important because it allowed the monitoring of the main issues on the international agenda. Brazil's permanent delegation to the League of Nations accompanied and participated in meetings of the Council, Assemblies, technical bodies, international conferences, commissions and secretariat of the League.[16] Topics covered included the codification of international law, minorities, emigration and immigration, social and humanitarian issues and mandates. These were decisions that would affect the structure of international society and were aimed at structuring a new, more collaborative order among nations.

Brazil's withdrawal from the League represented an option for US-influenced isolationist pan-Americanism in the post-war period, to the detriment of the option of participating in universal multilateralism, whose hub at the time was based in Europe.[17] As Casarões points out,[18] despite confirmation of Brazil's final departure from the League in 1928, a spirit of multilateral collaboration remained in Brazilian foreign policy, even if the term was not used at the time, in accordance with the universal purposes of the organization.

Although no longer a member, Brazil continued to honor its multilateral organizations, making its annual contribution and even donating leprosy research centers to its health organization in 1931.

The "Vargas Era" (1930-1945) represented a "pragmatic equidistance" with the pendulum diplomacy between the US and Germany, which proved especially useful in promoting the national steel industry in the 1930s and for surmising the ideological position of the Getulio government. Brazil entered the war on the US side and participated in the final act of the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference, which created the IMF, the World Bank, and the origins of the GATT. The following year, Brazil was at the San Francisco Conference and was again a founding member of the organization that emerged from it, the UN.

Therefore, Brazil was present and involved in the formation of the chief multilateral institutions that make up the contemporary international order. This behavior ultimately shaped the parameters of Brazilian diplomacy, such that the reference to multilateralism would appear a few years later, in the 1960s.[19]

Not only does Brazil have a tradition of international cooperation and multilateral action, but many Brazilians have also occupied prestigious positions in UN agencies. A case in point is Sergio Vieira de Mello,[20] who was singled out by many as a likely candidate for UN Secretary-General. The son of a diplomat who was ousted by the military regime, he officially did not want to work for Brazil under any guise, but Vieira de Mello played an important role in East Timor's independence, reconnecting with his Brazilian origins, and was widely recognized. This symbolic capital is used by the country to justify its international and multilateral vocation.[21]

In addition to Vieira de Mello, Brazilian diplomats and scholars also attained senior positions within the UN. These included Marcolino Candau, WHO Director-General from 1953 to 1973;[22] Ambassador Rubens Ricupero, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, from 1995 to 2004;[23] José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO, from 2012 to 2019;[24] Roberto Azevedo, WTO Director-General from 2013;[25] and Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, who chairs the International Commission of Inquiry on Syria.

Some issues are also historically relevant for Brazil in relation to multilateralism. Issues that are naturally structured in collective bases, such as the environment and peace operations, are areas where Brazil's performance has gained in importance over recent years.

Brazilian diplomacy has assumed a leading role in environmental and sustainable development issues since the 1970s. Although environmental issues were viewed with suspicion, regarded as attempts by developed countries to undermine the growth of developing countries,[26] Brazil approved the Stockholm Declaration and other documents guiding countries to adopt national policies to institutionalize environmental concerns. Nonetheless, the country continued to project a negative international image due to the deforestation of the Amazon and the murder of Chico Mendes.[27]

The turning point occurred in 1992, when Brazil organized the second United Nations Conference, ushering in a radical change in diplomacy and multilateral engagement. The event was an undisputed benchmark from a formal point of view, approving Agenda 21 and the climate conventions for biodiversity; and informally too, for civil society's recognition of the international community as "indispensable for representing society alongside governments". Brazil has remained committed since then and has become a benchmark for the issue. Subsequently, in 2012, the country hosted Rio+20, which laid down the conditions for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), replacing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), adopted at the UN General Assembly in 2015. That year, the Paris Agreement still existed, and Brazil had adopted a new approach through BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China), with the goal of "replacing the G-7 which, due to its inclusion of countries with conflicting interests, had lost its capacity for prominence and representativeness". As Fabio Feldmann has pointed out,[28] Brazil

began to stand out with a key role in negotiations, due to its relevance in terms of GHG emissions and also for its leadership in establishing bridges with blocs and countries.

In peace operations, Brazil has been active since the first UN-organized mission. It participated in the first United Nations Emergency Force, with what was known as the Suez Battalion, sending about 7,000 men to the Egypt-Israel border between 1957 and 1967. In the post-Cold War with the revival of activities, it sent troops to Mozambique and Angola, and played a prominent role in Haiti, leading the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, MINUSTAH, from 2004 to 2017. Brazil also has dozens of military observers on diverse missions and the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force since 2011, with more than 200 military personnel.

Beyond the general relevance of the Brazilian experience in peace operations, two soldiers have gained considerable international projection. The first is General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz, who led MINUSTAH from 2006 to 2009.

His work became so important that, while in reserve, he was invited to take command of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MONUSCO, from 2013 to 2015. In 2017, Santos Cruz also penned a report, by invitation, that highlighted flaws and indicated improvements that should be made in peace operations.[29]

The other military officer of international importance is corvette captain of the Brazilian Navy, Marcia Andrade Braga. She joined the United Nations Multidimensional Mission in the Central African Republic, MINUSCA, in 2018. Her specific role was to serve as a military adviser on gender issues and she was so successful that she was invited to speak at the United Nations plenary session and awarded the UN Military Gender Advocate award in 2019.

Multilateralism and foreign policy in the twenty-first century

The governments of FHC (1995-2002) and Lula (2003-2010) put multilateralism at the core of their foreign policy strategies. The pragmatic institutionalism of FHC was characterized by gradual economic opening and adherence to international regimes and institutions. FHC broke with previous models by promoting multilateral forums set up to maintain international order, without focusing on alignments with specific countries. The logic behind pragmatic institutionalism was that Brazil's development depended on the regulation of international relations and that the country's international integration would be conditional upon values shared with the rest of the world. There was, therefore, an arrangement that highlighted the need for states to accord prestige to multilateral forums for defending order.

Lula's autonomous model retained the importance of multilateral organizations but in a more defensive and pragmatic way than its predecessor. The predilection for multilateralism also served as a way to defend the interests of the global southern states, mainly in international trade issues, aligning with this group to construct a regional leadership. Brazil's stance allowed it to act as interlocutor with developed countries, while the political capital acquired over time through its participation and respect for international norms set Brazil up as a benchmark and, to an extent, a global player as the pursued long-term objective of relevance.

The governments of Rousseff (2011-2016) and Temer (2016-2018) did not taint Brazil's predilection for multilateralism. However, political and economic crises and the need for domestic aid drained Brazil's international projection. Even so, the country remained relatively steadfast.

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This scenario has changed with the election of Jair Bolsonaro. He came to power in 2019 under the banner of anti-globalism and unfettered and automatic alignment with the US. As stated by Casarões,[30] foreign policy is at the heart of the crusade for "new politics" preached by the former captain. Breaking with the tradition of Brazilian multilateralism, Bolsonaro's foreign policy rejects alliances and cooperation with states seen as "left-wing," instead preaching sovereignty, the end of multiculturalism, and alignment with right-wing governments like those of the US, Israel, and Hungary. International organizations (UN, WHO, UNICEF and similar) represent globalism and communism, and seek only to diminish Brazil's conservatism and cripple its defense of "Judeo-Christian" values.

After almost a year and a half of government, it is clear that multilateralism has been replaced by strategic partnerships guided by a radical right-wing ideology based on supposed religious principles. This rejection of multilateralism has led traditional partners, such as the European Union, to revise their strategies and gradually marginalize Brazil in diverse areas. The conduct of Brazilian positions in international organizations adopts a messianic stance based on a very loose interpretation of the Bible. Bolsonaro calls himself a family man and a Christian, but openly proclaimed his sympathy for torture during the dictatorship. This has ultimately eroded the country's diplomatic position in arenas and organizations where it once showed leadership, and led to the defense of backward positions, especially with respect to protecting minorities and cooperating with states seen as rivals to the US.

In its handling of the COVID-19 crisis, the federal government's actions have been alarming. On the one hand, the Ministry of Health has followed WHO recommendations, promoted good practices and relied on multilateral collaboration for disease prevention and the search for cures; but, on the other hand, the presidency has rejected the evidence and played up the idea that Brazil can overcome the crisis without external or pessimistic interference. Even in the face of a pandemic that is claiming thousands of lives in Brazil, Foreign Minister Ernesto Araújo has chosen to approach this highly sensitive topic of the global agenda from an ideological perspective, calling it the "communavirus" and attacking WHO.[31]

Final considerations

The Brazilian media reported extensively on the creation of the "Alliance for Multilateralism" in 2019. This joint initiative by the governments of France and Germany seeks to develop a network of pro-multilateralism countries in the UN to create a united front against problems such as denuclearization, climate change, and human rights.[32] Canada, the UK, and Japan have all committed to participate

actively in it. This was not the case with Brazil. The initiative did not resonate with the diplomatic media.

Clearly, multilateralism is under attack from the Foreign Minister, but this is not true of academic or journalistic circles, think tanks and civil society.

In the academia, the criticism of the government and its foreign policy is recurrent and generally strong. Academics from diverse institutions and political backgrounds have criticized Brazil's isolation in South America and its alignment with the US as a regrettable page in the diplomatic history of the country, which previously aspired to leadership and served as an example to other states. The top figures analyzing foreign policy and the Brazilian government's behavior include professors Dawisson Belém Lopes of the UFMG (Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais) and Guilherme Casarões of the FGV (Fundação Getúlio Vargas). The analyses and editorials produced indicate a loss of political capital, marginalization by former partners and, in the current pandemic, a pariah status that the country has assumed with its neighbors.

In the press, journalists such as Jamil Chade report on the deterioration of Brazil's image in multilateral organizations, including the ongoing fight against COVID-19,[33] and how difficult it will be to recover a positive image on the international stage. Guga Chacra writes in a similar vein, focusing on how problematic it is for the country to turn its back on the multilateralist agenda and ally itself with the "sovereign" movement.[34]

The think tanks include CEBRI, whose diplomatic advisers include Gelson Fonseca Junior, Marcos Azambuja and José Alfredo Graça Lima, all with extensive multilateral experience. It has kept the debate alive with events and projects, including recent initiatives in partnership with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, specifically to address relations between Brazil and Germany, environmental issues, and Brazilian foreign policy. The Igarapé Institute has continued its work in a UN group on cyber-resilience and standards, and joint activities with the European Union in this regard. It also develops projects on peace operations in the Amazon and assists with the preparation of the National Action Plan on "Women, Peace and Security" in response to UN calls to create strategies to implement the commitments adopted with Resolution 1325.[35]

Last but not least, civil society has been extremely important in ensuring the effectiveness of Brazil's international commitments and even raising the country's level of ambition on the international stage. "Conectas Direitos Humanos" is an NGO based in São Paulo founded with "international action" as its cornerstone. It has focused mainly on how international organizations are dealing with the current pandemic and attracts them in pursuit of human rights advocacy in Brazil.[36]

It is well known that multilateralism is in crisis on an international scale. Since Trump came to power in 2017, the US isolationist position has been strengthened and the emergence of other leaders, such as Germany and France, has not yet gained the necessary political and economic capital to occupy the US position. The European Union could take on this role, given its leadership by example, but it still needs to overcome internal difficulties, especially with the UK leaving the bloc. China is also observing the world stage, occupying power gaps and promoting strategic cooperation with a series of partners, both old and new.

The isolationism of the US has inspired Brazil to adopt a similar position. However, without political capital and, essentially, the material components of power, to maintain its autonomy and relevance, the country has fallen into diplomatic insignificance, a rarity in its track record. It is, therefore, an outlier of Brazil's international trajectory since the nineteenth century.

Nonetheless, it should be noted that this positioning has been shown to be more passive than active, since Brazil has not withdrawn from organizations and nor has it denounced regional agreements. And the country is still trying to regain some importance on the external stage, especially in multilateral financial organizations. In mid-April 2020, during a meeting of representatives and authorities of G20 and the IMF, Economy Minister Paulo Guedes confirmed his intention to obtain the presidency of the New Development Bank, known as the BRICS bank. The man for the job would be the Special Secretary for Foreign Trade, Marcos Troyjo. Brazil also yearns for the presidency of the IDB and is already working to obtain US support for it. Indeed, US support is all the country has left to achieve its international goals, a lamentable return to the era of Americanism[37] of the early twentieth century.

Brazil has experienced three major crises in 2020: health, political and economic. If there are no significant changes in the conduct of its foreign policy, Brazil will become the opposite of what it has built up since the nineteenth century: an insignificant and belligerent diplomatic dwarf.

Biographies

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"Having normalized its bilateral relations, Chile has focused since 1990 on strengthening regional initiatives for conflict resolution and economic and political cooperation to become a 'driver of Latin American multilateralism'."

The Chilean perspective

Andreas M. Klein

Introducción

Ever since it was founded as a nation, Chile has had what one might call "multilateral intuition."[1] The Peace, Friendship, Trade and Business Treaty between Chile and neighboring Argentina back in 1855 laid down the principles for peaceful conflict resolution and arbitration by a neutral third party. With its exceptional topography and geographic location, combined with a relatively small population, every government of Chile since it hit its peak in the late nineteenth century has shown an interest in resolving incipient conflicts through "a sophisticated strategy of multilateral negotiations".[2]

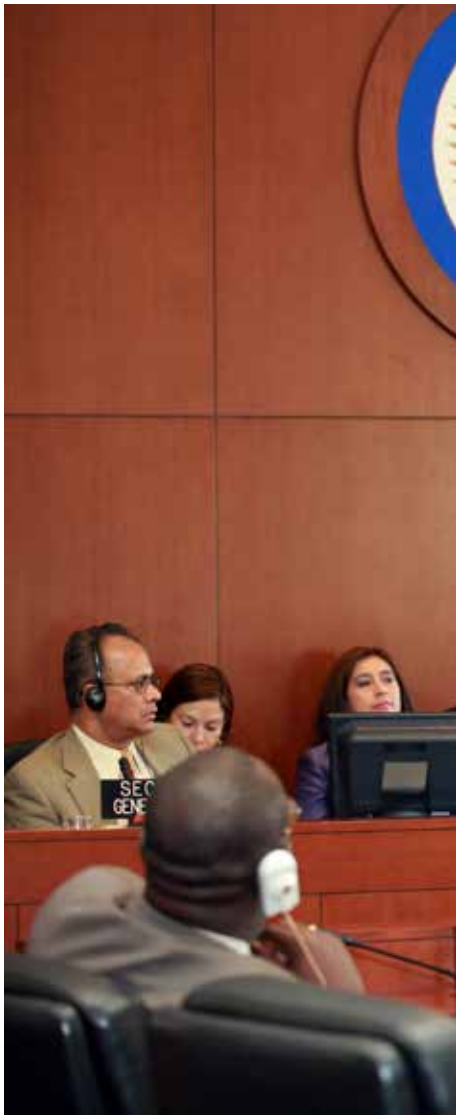
Following the military dictatorship, which plunged Chile into international isolation from 1973 to 1990, the top priority of President Patricio Aylwin's government after restoring democratic structures was the country's reintegration[3] into the international community. From the outset, President Aylwin underlined the importance of a pragmatic and ideological foreign policy oriented to the needs of Chile's economic and social development. This was to be done by diversifying international relations at the political, economic, social and cultural levels.

The shift in approach of international politics following the end of the East-West conflict from security to market globalization was seen by Chile as an opportunity for its progressive development and modernization.

Respect for and protection of human rights have been afforded special priority in Chile's foreign policy agenda.[4]

The "balancing act"[5] between a globalization-oriented foreign trade policy and the regionalist approach of open regionalism was characteristic of Chile's foreign policy during the first twenty years of its *Concertación* coalition governments, the umbrella under which parties opposed to the military junta united since 1990. With the goal of good neighborly relations, the democratic governments of Chile adopted the foreign policy tradition of Eduardo Frei during the 1960s. Specifically, this tradition used the strategy of intensifying inter-American cooperation and promoting Latin American integration through the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), headquartered in the Chilean capital of Santiago since 1948.

Immediately after redemocratization, the Chilean government sought to assume diplomatic roles in multilateral forums, thereby regaining some of the international respect of the pre-Pinochet era. The approach to foreign policy must be considered in the context of a changing global world order. During this period of transformation, the democratization of the country was seen by Chile's democratic political elite as part of a global trend towards political democratization and economic liberalization and as part of a regional trend towards democratization, economic integration and cooperative security.



With a strong emphasis on human rights protection, since 1990, the democratic governments of Chile have followed the foreign policy tradition of their country, which dates back to the post-WWII era.

Chile was one of the originators of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That same year, it joined the Organization of American States (OAS). Under the *Concertación* governments, Chile developed a foreign policy agenda based on the international defense and protection of human rights, as shown by its ratification

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of major international agreements on human rights, participation in multilateral organizations for the promotion of peace, human rights and democracy, and collaboration with peacekeeping measures under the umbrella of the United Nations.

This multilateral approach has been sown into the DNA of Chilean foreign policy following the interlude of the military dictatorship or, as then Foreign Minister Roberto Ampuero put it in 2018: "Multilateralism is an imperative of Chile's foreign policy[...]."[6]

From regionalism to internationalism

Having normalized its bilateral relations, Chile has focused since 1990 on strengthening regional initiatives for conflict resolution and economic and political cooperation to become a 'driver of Latin American multilateralism'."[7]

Chile backed US President Bill Clinton's proposal to resurrect the summit of heads of state and government of the countries of North and South America that had last met at Punta del Este, Uruguay, in 1967. Since 1994, the Summit of the Americas of democratic states between Canada and Chile has met at more or less regular intervals. The Chilean government organized the second summit in Santiago in 1998, which represented a new opportunity for Chile to host a major international forum. Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle's government had also hosted the Ibero-American Summit two years earlier.

With the Santiago Summit, Chile's foreign policy began to open up beyond a regional policy approach. First, with its support for the US initiative to revive the inter-American summits, the Chilean government was indicating that its country was ready to assume responsibility beyond the continent. And second, the interrelations between multilateral, regional and bilateral action were highlighted as the future trait of Chilean foreign policy. Chile chose to closely coordinate the initiatives adopted at various levels.[8]

In recent years, Chile has played out its role in multilateral organizations with a combination of institutionalism and pragmatism, using its participation in international committees to drive its own development. At the same time, it has seen itself as an advocate for weaker states and lobbied on their behalf to reduce poverty, overcome structural inequalities, promote social inclusion, and determine responsibility for cooperation. Chile's international influence is clearly on the rise. This is evidenced, among other things, by the number of Chilean figures at the head of multilateral organizations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO, 1999-2012), the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL, 2001-2007), the Organization of American States (OAS, 2005-2015), the world women's organization (UN Women, 2010-2013) and, since 2018, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. In 2014, Chile was elected for the third time since its return to democracy (the previous occasions being 1996/97 and 2003/04) as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. These examples demonstrate the willingness of Chile to serve on international organizations and to assume responsibility. They also reveal the renewed reputation of Chilean politics following the dark years of the military dictatorship.[9]

During the 2008 global financial and economic crisis, Chile led the informal group on global governance within the United Nations, which culminated in Resolution 65/94 "The United Nations in global governance" of 8 December 2010. This supports democratic multilateralism, whereby the United Nations is considered the natural forum for addressing global issues, and underlines the importance of an inclusive, transparent and effective multilateral system to address today's complex challenges.

Chile considers reform of the UN Security Council a priority issue for ensuring peace and stability in the world. Hence, Chile supports the expansion and reform of the working methods of the organization as a means to strengthen its capacity and legitimacy. Chile believes that the reform of the Council should focus on fair representation and an increase in members favoring developing countries, combined with more transparent and participatory working methods. In this regard, Chile acknowledges the efforts of Brazil, Japan, India and Germany (G-4) for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council but at the same time advocates a balanced geographic distribution for the Council's expansion that does not extend the veto right to new members.[10]

International peace and security

As part of its firm commitment to peace, Chile has contributed to efforts to define multidimensional security, which has led to a better understanding of new threats and how to address them both collectively and proactively. Since the neutral military commission in the Chaco conflict (1935) and the United Nations Military Observer Group in the conflict between India and Pakistan in 1949, Chile has participated in 23 international peacekeeping operations. Since its creation in 2005, Chile has participated in the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), founded to strengthen the reconstruction efforts of countries in post-conflict situations. Chile also actively participates in diverse forums and mechanisms of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation agreements.

To date, its participation in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) from 2004 to 2017 has been the pinnacle of its peacekeeping commitment. Approximately 12,000 women and men from the Chilean military and police forces participated in this UN mission to keep the peace and ensure security in Haiti over those 13 years.[11]

In 2011, Chile voted in favor of UN Resolution 1973 in response to further escalations in the Libyan civil war. Chile gave its full backing to the notion of responsibility to protect (RtoP) to prevent serious violations of human rights or international humanitarian law.[12] Ten years earlier, Chile had participated in the founding of the

International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague. It also supports the work of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), despite having had two pending cases against it. On 27 January 2014, the ICJ announced its arbitration award concerning the delimitation of the maritime boundary between Chile and Peru. From the Chilean government's point of view, this boundary had already been established in the trilateral treaties between the two countries and Ecuador in 1952 and 1954. The ICJ's award confirmed Chile's legal opinion but granted compensation to Peru in recognition of its rights to an extended area in the Pacific. In 2019, the ICJ decided in favor of Chile in proceedings pending since 2015 on Bolivia's access to the Pacific Ocean.

Border disputes with Bolivia have been the only burden in Chile's bilateral relations with its neighbors in recent years. Nonetheless, the country was involved in the Rio Group leading, in 2011, to the emergence of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and Unasur (Union of South American Nations) in the context of regional crisis management.

To summarize, since 1990, Chilean foreign policy has contributed to bilateral, subregional, regional and inter-American cooperation processes linked to institutions for the prevention and management of conflicts created in the inter-American system, such as the Mutual Assistance Treaty or the Pact of Bogotá, and in the United Nations (United Nations Charter). This approach has allowed Chile to shift from a militarized and sometimes conflict-prone regional policy to a new continental dynamic of increased cooperation and less conflict.

"Foreign policy marketing"[13]

There has been a structural element of Chilean foreign policy that it has maintained over the diverse phases of its political development since 1945: the interconnection between foreign policy and economic integration. Beginning with the phase of increased industrialization from 1945, the development economy under presidents Frei and Allende in the 1960s and early 1970s to the "open regionalism" vision of the early years of *Concertación*, this approach to foreign trade policy can be seen in today's foreign policy agenda, which pursues market integration and cooperation and the expansion of international economic relations.

An example of this is Chile's open reaction to the globalization of world trade, which has been a part of its foreign policy strategy at least since the presidency of Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (1994-2000). Under the first government of Michelle Bachelet (2006-

10), there was finally a shift towards Pacific markets in the Asian region, though without losing sight of the country's immediate neighbors in South America.[14] Chile is now shaping up to be a "model student"[15] within the WTO, with strict adherence to the organization's rules.

The salient importance of foreign trade policy for Chile has led to its implementation of organizational structures. Back in 1979, it created a Directorate-General for International Economic Relations (Direcon) within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the chief mission of coordinating bilateral trade agreements and participating in international forums and trade organizations. Direcon is also tasked with promoting Chile's foreign trade worldwide through the ProChile agency.

The founding of Mercosur on 26 March 1991 was observed with interest by Chile. It was certainly aware of the opportunities generated by the concentration and adaptation of norms and standards in the region. However, the tariff level in Chile had been at a uniform 11% since 1991 and hence below the common external tariff of 14% of the Mercosur region, so one of the original incentives of achieving a uniform tariff level for member countries was not applicable to Chile. With the progressive positive development of the Mercosur region in the 1990s, Chile nevertheless sought access to the trade association below the full membership threshold.

In June 1996, the association agreement between Chile and Mercosur came into force, giving the former privileged access to the region. Apart from its economic interests in Mercosur, security policy also played a role. For Chile, a strong integration alliance would help maintain peace in the region and consolidate democracy on a permanent basis.

During the first presidency of Sebastián Piñera (2010-14), Chile took the initiative of creating an integrated economic area of South America. In 2012, it joined forces with Peru, Colombia and Mexico to form the Pacific Alliance, with the primary aim of liberalizing trade in goods and services, the movement of capital and the free movement of persons. The Alliance seeks to promote the medium-term growth, development and competitiveness of its member states, thereby contributing to greater social cohesion and a reduction in poverty. The member countries of the Pacific Alliance currently represent 225 million people with a cumulative GDP of USD 1.95 billion (more than 40% of the GDP of Latin America and the Caribbean). With a three percent share of world trade, it is the eighth largest economic area in the world.[16] Its geographic location in the Pacific basin, stable democracies with prudent macroeconomic policies, favorable business climate, and traditional commitment to trade and integration, the Alliance has been an important integration initiative in Latin America from the outset.

For Chile, integration in the Pacific Alliance is "the natural continuation of a path"[17] mapped out with the country's redemocratization that started in 1990. The Alliance aims to be a pragmatic, supportive and open process of integration that does not compete with other regional agreements. Although the first phase of its implementation focused on trade issues, the Pacific Alliance is more than a free trade agreement. Progress has been made in abolishing visas, creating student grants, scientific collaboration to combat the effects of climate change, and other areas with a positive contribution to Chile's development. More than 59 countries now have observer status in the Pacific Alliance, including 22 from the European Union. Ecuador and Costa Rica are working towards full membership.

In the late 1980s, the Chilean Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation (CHILPEC) was founded under the auspices of its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with a strong orientation towards the Asia-Pacific region. By the 1990s, this had led initially to membership of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC), and subsequently to admission to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Since then, Chile has continued to expand its trade and diplomatic ties with the region beyond the Pacific. In 2004, the Chilean city of Santiago hosted the summit of heads of state and government of APEC member countries for the first time. During the prologue to the Chilean presidency of APEC in 2019, President Piñera made an unequivocal commitment to global free trade based on uniform rules and opposed protectionism under any guise.[18]

The signing of the bilateral trade agreement with the industrial country Canada in 1997 and the creation of a Chilean-Australian trade commission (1998) were of great symbolic value for Chile's self-image. The next important step for Chile's integration into world markets was the conclusion of free trade agreements with the European Union (2002/03) and the United States (2003/04). Chile has now signed 26 free trade agreements covering 64 countries, more than any other country in the world.[19]

Chile is also a signatory to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Before US President Donald Trump withdrew the United States from the TPP immediately after taking office in January 2017, the Chilean parliament had begun to ratify the agreement, although criticism of the agreement has recently intensified in Chile too. In its initial reaction to the actions of the US administration, the Chilean government expressed confidence in finding bilateral solutions with TPP partners.[20]

The attitude of Chilean foreign policy towards the termination of this important free trade agreement is an indicator of Chile's growing confidence in its own strength, due in particular to the successful diversification of its trading partners. The fact that Chile was the first South American country to be included in the OECD in May 2010 also contributed to this confidence boost.

Climate policy

Climate protection and energy security are relative newcomers to Chile's foreign policy agenda. In response to the recurring climate phenomenon "El Niño" and the effects of climate change on Chile in recent years – with unprecedented dry periods of extreme heat combined with torrential rains in other parts of the country – these political areas are becoming increasingly important in Chile's international projection. Chile supports the role of the United Nations in the climate debate and observes the legal norms negotiated on the environment and climate. While not among the Kyoto Protocol countries required to reduce their emissions, Chile has committed to participate in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). It has agreed to reduce its forecasted emissions in energy, land use and forestry by 30 percent from 2007 levels by 2030.

Chile is aware of the importance of a responsible and sustainable energy and environment policy. Ahead of the COP15 climate summit in Paris, the Chilean government launched an unparalleled campaign asking the population to participate in its international climate policy. Chile's negotiating positions were combined under the auspices of the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Despite all the shortcomings affecting the practical implementation of national environmental and energy policies, Chile can also take the lead in the region by adopting the next steps in climate protection and energy efficiency/ security, since its political and economic strength have equipped it with sufficient resources.

In this context, UN Secretary-General António Guterres asked Chile's government to lead the Mitigation strategy at the Climate Action Summit held in New York in September 2019. The Chilean government's decision to host the COP25 global climate change conference in Santiago de Chile after Brazil's sudden cancellation was a clear indication of its commitment as an actor in international forums to increase its future involvement in climate protection. Although, ultimately, Chile was unable to host the COP due to social unrest and internal political uncertainties, its mere willingness to host an event of this magnitude shows that climate protection is currently a priority of the country's political agenda.

In April 2020, the Chilean government officially submitted its updated Nationally determined contribution (NDC) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Chile was the first Latin American country and one of the first countries in the world to meet the Paris Agreement commitment of regularly adjusting NDCs to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and address the impacts of climate change. The document was presented by the Minister of

the Environment Carolina Schmidt, despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, by video call held with Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change. The updated NDC contains ambitious targets and commitments designed to allow the Chilean government to incorporate climate targets into the economic stimulus packages launched in the wake of the pandemic.[21]

Conclusion

Despite all the changes of government and partisan differences, the commitment to multilateralism is firmly anchored in the country's foreign policy doctrine. As a logical consequence of this, Chile joined the Alliance for Multilateralism launched by Germany and France in April 2019.

Speaking at the meeting of foreign ministers of the countries participating in the Alliance in New York on 26 September 2019, Chile's Minister of Foreign Affairs Teodoro Ribera stated that, given the current global context, "we urgently need to renew and strengthen our capacity to act collectively and internationally if we want to consolidate peace, eradicate poverty, achieve sustainable development and protect human rights". The Minister said that Chile sought to "promote the modernization of international organizations and adapt them to current times and needs". Mr Ribera also added that Chile participates in this Alliance, "with the conviction that multilateralism will be strengthened if states and other actors, such as civil society, the private sector and academia, share the responsibility to maintain or build democratic, peaceful, sustainable and just societies".[22]

In the current COVID-19 crisis, which has hit the South American continent since March, at least, the Chilean government is calling for concerted action by the global community to overcome the pandemic. In a video call with the health authorities of the Forum for the Progress and Development of South America (Prosur), he was invited, as Pro-Tempore Chair of the forum, to discuss the spread of coronavirus in the region. He concurred with his counterparts that coordinated measures should be adopted to mitigate the potential impact on the region's population and that joint actions should be developed to produce a comprehensive response to global challenges.[23] In another recent initiative, Chile is inviting Germany and other activists through World Health Organization (WHO) agencies to develop instruments and measures for an early collective response to future pandemics.

Biography

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"Colombia has historically adopted an approach of maintaining the status quo with international organizations, introducing modest regulatory reform initiatives to improve certain multilateral commitments"

Colombia
and its multilateralism contradictions

Eduardo Pastrana Buelvas / Andrés Mauricio Valdivieso

The concept of multilateralism in the government of Iván Duque and Colombian civil society

One could theoretically argue that multilateralism is visible in Latin America as a political and legal principle, evidenced by the high participation rates of neighboring states in the creation and coordination of many international regimes and treaties promoting the institutionalization of multilateral cooperation mechanisms.[1] However, it should be noted that, as an element of convergence in Latin American countries, "multilateralism is understood as the direct and dominant participation of the heads of state and government of the region, so institutional weaknesses and limitations to the participation of civil society persist in traditional multilateral instances".[2]

Nonetheless, the Colombian government develops, both at the level of governance plans and in governmental practice, a series of programs and projects with certain characteristics of a multilateralism steered by diplomatic procedure and adopts foreign policy measures that respond to ideological interests and spectrums that converge and are shared with other states.

Therefore, the Colombian government does not institutionalize or develop projects and programs related to global governance models or structures.

In its National Development Plan (2018-2022)[3] entitled "Pact for Colombia: Pact for Equity", in the section on structural pacts, the Colombian government outlines the bases and characteristics of its government and its foreign policy with regard to the role that it intends to project for Colombia on the global stage. Along these lines, the government lists the category of multilateralism for addressing global issues and social demands. It then establishes as Colombia's chief objective "participation in governance of the major issues and challenges on the global agenda that affect Colombia, and a commitment to multilateralism for keeping the peace… ".[4] It also sets out the need to "engage with diverse social actors with an interest in peace, security and democracy".[5] Therefore, to an extent, the Development Plan defines the basic concept of governance, since it recognizes the existence of other actors and establishes the need to relate with them continuously in processes of dialogue.

Nonetheless, these references to multilateralism and global governance reveal a number of problems, deficiencies and contradictions, both in the essence of the concept outlined in the Development Plan and in governmental practice. For instance, while multilateralism and governance are included as instruments and models to address Colombia's problems and global issues, the strategic lines section of the Development Plan (point 2, section A) does not explain how to carry out this multilateral implementation regulated by a governance oriented towards social and political practice. This also denotes a lack of clarity as to the meaning of the concept, in the sense that global governance involves both the recognition and connection through dialogue of state and non-state actors for decision-making, an aspect that is in fact limited in the operational guidelines of the Development Plan. For instance, the government indicates that, for achieving the objectives of the plan, executive leadership is called upon to "incorporate the diverse sectors of the State";[6] it further specifies that the "Ministry of Foreign Affairs will lead the exercise of constructing forms of governance",[7] but nowhere does it list or provide a plan for the coordination and connection of actors representing the diverse complex interests of civil society in the decision-making processes. On the contrary, the description of the strategies in the Development Plan refers only to the need for liaison between State entities.

In this regard, the final paragraph of the strategic guidelines establishes that "The national government will set up a National System of International Cooperation as a strategy for the orientation and coordination of agencies at national, departmental,

district and municipal level, and in the non-governmental private sector for the coordination of foreign policy",[8] but there is no evidence of the creation of such a System or that there are plans to do so. In sum, the National Development Plan of Duque's government evidences a lack of clarity in implementing models of multilateralism and the essence of global governance structures. On this basis, we can conclude that the multilateralism and governance cited in the basis of the National Development Plan are purely a rhetorical exercise, part of a campaign or mechanism to gain prestige in the international community. Equally relevant is the official document on Principles and Guidelines of Colombian Foreign Policy, titled Responsible, Innovative and Constructive Foreign Policy 2018-2022. It contains the same opening remarks on multilateralism and governance but its final section, titled "Actions", fails to outline the strategies for putting these categories into operation.

With regard to governmental practice, we can likewise infer a prevalence of a multilateralism focused on diplomatic procedures and foreign policy measures shared with other states in the region. This has been the case since the government was sworn in, given that, on August 10, 2018, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs headed by former Foreign Minister Carlos Holmes Trujillo presented and projected Colombia's international policy,[9] highlighting the prevailing aspects of its foreign policy. It was stated that, to address the issue of migration from Venezuela, Colombia would use UN mediation and leadership and diplomatic procedures to align with other states supporting moral and political sanctions on the Venezuelan regime. To this end, he stated that "Colombia supports a large international democratic coalition...".[10] Discussing the economy, he added that "a highly dynamic economic, commercial and cultural diplomacy will be put in place. The mission of embassies and economic and trade representations will be to secure the tools for economic growth."[11] The Minister also announced that he would "lead with like-minded countries such as the Lima Group"[12] to address common interests and problems. All this suggests that diplomatic procedure and isolation based on ideology and interests would be the guiding principles of foreign policy during this government.

In addition to all the above, on the issue of peace, Duque's government established diplomatic procedures to shore up financial and political cooperation in order to implement the points of the Peace Agreement signed between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Spanish: *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, FARC) and Colombia. In this regard, on 15 January 2019, President Duque requested that the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission meet in Cartagena, Colombia, where two aspects of national interest were discussed as central themes: funding and strategic alliances for peace.

Therefore, the Colombian government adopted a diplomatic procedure that, in general terms, secured the continued support of the international community represented by the United Nations system to improve the standards for implementing the Peace Agreement. But it was a controversial move and one criticized by civil society organizations since, in domestic practice, the Executive does not display signs of decisive support for the implementation of the Peace Agreement, as evidenced by the presidential objections[13] filed for non-approval of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace Bill, a cardinal institution in matters of justice for the construction of lasting and sustainable peace.

Subsequently, on 20 February 2020, the High Commissioner for Human Rights submitted its report on concerns in Colombia, including a call for protection measures to be adopted for social leaders and for programs to address endemic violence and improve social coexistence.[14] President Duque responded by branding the report an "intrusion into national sovereignty" and claiming that it contained "biases" that prevented a proper understanding of the national situation.[15] This shows that the processes resulting from the institutionalization of multilateral strategies are appropriate and plausible when they are in the interests of the national government.

By contrast, the multilateralism promoted by Colombian civil society could be framed in a way so as to reach structural levels of global governance from the social foundations, since civil society organizations generally call upon and lobby state entities in order for the government to recognize and, ultimately, address their demands or include their interests in state decisions. In human rights, for example, non-governmental organizations and social movements have joined forces and consolidated networks for cooperation and the coordination of their interests to lobby and unite efforts for greater social and political impact or influence. This is precisely how the Colombian Platform for Human Rights, Democracy and Development (Spanish: *Plataforma Colombiana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo,* PCDHDD) and the Alliance of Social and Associated Organizations (*Alianza de Organizaciones Sociales y Afines*) came about.

Yet, although civil society organizations and groups attempt to participate in public policy-making and the construction of domestic, sub-regional and international regimes, these initiatives lag behind in a political conflict with other actors whose ideological identities are similar to that of the government and which often have greater power and close ties or programmatic agreements with the government. Therefore, non-governmental organizations, social movements, academic communities, social groups and other actors lag behind in the exercise of political

pressure, public scrutiny and political and social control. This can be seen chiefly in issues such as the environment, specifically in the granting of licenses for the exploitation of non-renewable resources, in the exercise of prior consultations with minority communities (indigenous or afro-descendants).

Along these lines, more than 500 NGOs submitted a report to MEPs in Brussels in which they assessed the first year of Duque's government in the light of human rights commitments. The report, entitled El Aprendiz del Embrujo [The Sorcerer's Apprentice],[16] includes considerations on the failure to provide openness for direct dialogue with social organizations working in Colombia, asserting that "the Government has decided to fake peace and reinvent war. It has deliberately rejected a peace agreement that should serve as an example to the world. It has refused to accept this agreement as a State commitment."[17] It also refers to how the Government "attempts to weaken the Inter-American System of Protection for Human Rights",[18] "the refusal to receive UN Special Procedures"[19] and "the absence of participatory and transparent mechanisms to monitor international recommendations."[20] All this denotes a lack of interest on the part of the Duque government to open up channels of dialogue and concertation and, most importantly, to include or recognize minorities, vulnerable persons and civil society organizations in decision-making, in the framework of respect for human rights within Colombia's diverse and multicultural society.

This raises questions regarding the legitimacy of the multilateral exercise and governance promoted by the government since, in our understanding of the meaning of cooperation through global governance, it should be inclusive, pluralistic and ensure dialogue among the actors and subjects involved. Hence, legitimacy requires a redesign of multilateralism from a number of angles to ensure the incorporation of civil societies into these spaces of decision-making, citizen inclusion and multilaterality.[21]

Colombia as a recipient of international cooperation

Colombia has historically been a net beneficiary of international development cooperation owing to its long-running internal armed conflict, despite being classified by both the OECD and the World Bank as a middle-income country in 2013. Nonetheless, over the past 15 years, it has also been a recipient and offeror of triangular cooperation (TC) and South-South cooperation (SSC) in diverse areas. Colombia became a beneficiary of international cooperation in the 1950s

and 1970s when it accessed World Bank funds through the Currie mission. In the 1960s, it also channeled resources to consolidate its economic model of import substitution, promoted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). In the 1970s, a Special Division for International Technical Cooperation was created within the National Planning Department (DNP), tasked with coordinating cooperation programs with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During that decade international cooperation was channeled to meet the basic needs of the population, such as health, education, drinking water, nutrition and housing. During the debt crisis of the 1980s, Colombia secured international cooperation funds to ensure the balance of payments, reduce public spending and privatize companies. The Colombian government set up the Colombian Agency for International Cooperation (ACCI) in 1996 to increase resources and improve the cooperation benefits that the country attracted.

In the 1990s, Colombia also began to narcotize its cooperation agenda with the US in the fight against drug cartels. In parallel, it was favored by the EU with the GSP-Drugs (Generalized System of Preferences) in the framework of the principle of co-responsibility between drug producers and users. Co-responsibility was also a benchmark principle for the diplomatic strategy implemented by Colombia at the start of the twenty-first century to ensure the flow of international cooperation resources to mitigate the effects of internal armed conflict and, if the Colombian government's dialogue with the FARC guerrillas proved successful, to have the support of the international community to fund the post-conflict situation. However, the Caguán peace process, led by President Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002), broke down in 2002.[22]

The systematic violation by the FARC of the cessation of hostilities and the misuse of the "clearance zone" during negotiations with Pastrana for the purpose of strengthening itself led not only to the Government's an ideological realignment with the US, but also to a secularization and depoliticization of the internal armed conflict through the "Plan Colombia" program granted by the Bill Clinton administration in 1999. Pastrana's successor to the Colombian presidency, Álvaro Uribe (2002 - 2010), thematically and geographically bilateralized relations with the US in security and trade. He successfully coordinated the Colombian conflict with the global war on terrorism unleashed by George Bush in the context of Plan Colombia, such that Colombia became a large recipient of US military cooperation.

By contrast, Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018), Uribe's successor, deployed peace diplomacy in Colombian foreign policy (PEC) for the international legitimization of the peace process with the FARC (2012-2016) and to seek international cooperation

for post-conflict programs. As a result of this, relevant actors from the international community, including the EU, UN, Germany, US, etc., are currently working with Colombia to build a stable and lasting peace.

Colombia in regional and global international organizations

Colombia has historically adopted an approach of maintaining the status quo with international organizations, introducing modest regulatory reform initiatives to improve certain multilateral commitments. Consequently, closed regionalism projects (Unasur-CELAC) centered on the exclusion of the US and autonomous models of development and integration tend to be perceived by these elites as contrary to their interests. Their foreign, defense and security policies reveal continuities such as proximity to the US, inter-Americanism, the Andean subregional vocation, and the pursuit of support for issues such as drug trafficking and the international ties of armed groups, adopting an essentially domestic view of security.

Colombia has participated in regional and global international organizations and forums over the past nine years. Considering the annual budget allocation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during that period, we see that: a) UN participation tops the list of resources used with 55%, considering only the general fund, b) the OAS is the second priority, c) the Andean Community, Unasur (with Colombia's withdrawal in 2018) and the Ibero-American General Secretariat (Spanish: *Secretaría General Iberoamericana,* SEGIB) hold the next top positions, and d) the combined regional architectures (excluding SEGIB for Spain's role) represent 42% of total ministerial expenditure over the period. Colombia's use of resources reflects its ongoing commitment to multilateralism and regionalism, although contributions are less consistent for entities such as the Latin American Integration Association (Spanish: *Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración*, ALADI) and the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (Spanish: *Sistema Económico Latinoamericano*, SELA).

The budget allocation illustrates part of the political importance of forums and bodies, but also depends on the strength, frequency and institutional formality of these structures. It is, therefore, an approximation of implementation and not necessarily a systematic comparison. Colombia's interests and initiatives are focused on the UN, the OAS, the CAN and the Pacific Alliance (PA), as well as bilateral channels.

Table 1. Contributions by Colombia to diverse international organizations											
EXPENDITURE (USD)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	TOTAL	%
ONU	2,326,880	2,660,345	3,232,396	4,428,163	5,557,152	7,857,622	0	4,840,411	14,994,955	45,897,923	55.5
OEA	2,099,524	520,656	1,288,442	4,046,395	2,776,516	2,015,553	0	583,692	4,714,288	18,045,066	21.8
CAN	1,069,391	1,131,880	1,163,707	1,202,373	1,248,262	1,273,813	0	745,883	0	7,835,309	9.5
SEGIB	38,680	4,785,476	47,379	55,983	73,942	84,826	0	84,114	0	5,170,400	6.3
UNASUR	0	0	187,419	717,855	602,898	840,798	0	0	0	2,348,970	2.8
CARIBE	140,315	143,336	144,954	278,998	323,348	0	0	9,548	428,245	1,468,745	1.8
ALADI	244,160	223,236	237,739	250,819	0	0	0	0	0	955,954	1.2
SELA	75,505	77,063	76,861	40,409	50,246	0	0	0	528,423	848,509	1.0
CEPAL	43,795	14,842	6,094	$0	0	0	0	0	0	64,731	0.1
PROSUR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
TOTAL	6,038,249	9,556,833	6,384,993	11,020,995	10,632,365	12,072,612	0	6,263,648	20,665,912	82,635,606	100.0

DETAILS

EXPENDITURE(USD)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
ONU	2326880	2660345	3232396	4428163	5557152	7857622	0	4840411	14994955
OEA	2099524	520656	1288442	4046395	2776516	2015553	0	583692	4714288

Source: Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Prepared by the authors

Colombia is a member of the Pacific Alliance (2012) Together with Mexico, Chile and Peru, with which it proposed: 1) to construct an area of profound integration to make progress towards the free flow of goods, capital, services and people; 2) to promote the development, growth and competitiveness of the economies of member countries with a view to improving the well-being of their societies, and 3) to serve as a platform for political coordination, and economic and trade integration with a global reach, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. However, following a somewhat modest progress, in 2018, the PA announced its 'Strategic Vision for 2030'. One of the focal points of this are the external and inter-institutional relations of the PA, hence the goal of incorporating a further ten member states by 2030, its coordination with international forums that serve its objectives, such as the OECD and the G-20, and its contribution to strengthening the World Trade Organization (WTO). There is also talk of strengthening economic

and trade cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and gaining observer status in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum, to make progress in consolidating an Asia-Pacific free trade area. It also addresses the construction of a structured cooperation relationship with the European Union "allowing us to deepen our bi-regional ties and promote the Alliance's global profile".[23] Lastly, it plans to promote South-South cooperation and work on active projects and programs with the observer States and international institutions that support the Alliance. Alongside the goals of international integration, it seeks to strengthen physical and digital infrastructure, trade and financing for SMEs, among others. This reflects the importance of increased cooperation with the EU,[24] (especially with regard to initiatives such as the Alliance for Multilateralism decisively launched by Germany and France[25]), Germany's Latin America and Caribbean Initiative and the possibility of closer economic and political ties on key issues such as the climate crisis, and the receipt of European aid to promote and strengthen democracy in the region. Lamentably, the current president of Colombia, Iván Duque, has adopted a protectionist approach and is slowing down the pace of progress of the PA.

Colombia and multilateralism over the past twenty years

Colombia has prioritized its relationship with the US over the past ten years, adopting a *respice polum* ('Look northward') approach. Since the turn of the century, this has been driven more by geopolitical preference than specific foreign policy doctrine and has since determined Colombia's outlook.[26] In addition to voluntary alignment for cooperation in security matters, the pursuit of a free trade agreement (FTA) with the United States became the chief objective on the trade front, so the processes of regionalization in Latin America took a back seat and relations with other actors or issues on the global agenda became secondary or marginal. Colombia's international agenda during the Uribe era was extremely securitized and woven into the anti-terrorist discourse as an almost unique resource in that thematic area; in other words, it was extremely terrorized,[27] concentrated and bilateralized to the US both geographically and thematically.

This led Colombia to distance itself from its multilateralist tradition. As a result, neither Latin America nor Europe nor Asia and much less so Africa were given the attention they deserved.

For his part, Santos overhauled Colombian foreign policy with the strategic objective of geographic and thematic diversification, allowing him to rebuild relations with the countries of Latin America.[28] Thus, one of the priorities of the

Santos government was to restore and normalize Colombia's relations with two of its neighbors hardest hit by the conflict: Venezuela and Ecuador. This also marked the end of Uribe's ongoing dispute with UN agencies in Colombia over their objections to violations of human rights and international humanitarian law (IHL) by the armed forces during the Colombian conflict. To deal with this, he recognized from the outset the existence of an armed "conflict", seeking the total commitment of the armed forces to IHL and working to create an international foundation of legitimacy for future peace talks. Additionally, the Santos presidency established the following as pillars of Colombia's relationship with the UN: the formulation of the sustainable development agenda and indicators, political and police support for the stabilization mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the climate change agenda, impetus to the discussion on the global drug problem and the pursuit of UN financial and institutional support to accompany negotiations with the FARC and, subsequently, verification of compliance with the Peace Agreement signed in 2016. The aim of all this was to give coherence to and integrate the environmental, economic, security, peace and foreign policy goals.

With regard to Colombia's SSC and TrC, the receiving role of Central America and the Caribbean has increased substantially over the past 12 years. Since 2008, with the initiative of Uribe's government to offer SSC to the Caribbean and the decision in 2010 to participate in the Regional Program of Cooperation with Mesoamerica (Spanish: *Programa Regional de Cooperación con Mesoamérica*, PRCM) in the framework of the Tuxtla Mechanism of Dialogue and Concertation, Colombia, once a passive member of the Mesoamerica Project, is seeking to follow in the footsteps of Mexico to become a SSC manager.[29] These two subregional strategies constitute the guidelines of the Colombian offer and seek to build cooperation networks between the public sector, private sector and civil society organizations of both parties.

First, between 2008 and 2009, the Colombian Cooperation Strategy with the Caribbean Basin (Spanish: *Estrategia de Cooperación de Colombia con la Cuenca del Caribe,* ECCC) was devised and work began on its implementation. The strategy promotes projects for bilingualism, technical education, tackling and preventing natural disasters, food and nutrition security, academic mobility, culture and the environment.[30] Second, the PRCM was created in 2010 to foster initiatives in social promotion, quality management, public services, local governance, public security and support for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. In 2016, the decision was made to increase coordination between the PRCM and the lines of the Central American Integration System (SICA), also promoting issues such as transport, energy, telecommunications, trade facilitation, health, environment, housing, risk management and food safety.[31]

In TrC, between 2011 and 2016, Colombia, acting as a pivot, offered 22 projects to 23 beneficiary countries: 3 in 2011, 6 in 2012, 7 in 2013, 6 in 2014, 1 in 2015 and 8 in 2016. The recipients included 7 Central American countries (Costa Rica, Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Nicaragua and Belize) and 3 Caribbean ones (Dominica, Dominican Republic and Cuba). These individual TrC projects joined others that, in general terms, were granted to Central America and the Caribbean under Colombia's two subregional strategies. The country's TrC with Central America increased moderately under Colombia's Strategy for International Cooperation in Comprehensive Security (Spanish: *Estrategia de Cooperación Internacional en Seguridad Integral,* ECISI), which centers on combatting transnational organized crime (TOC) and is addressed to applicant countries in Central America, the Caribbean, South America and Africa. For an idea of Colombia's contribution as a pivot, we can use 2016 data on TrC indicating that, of 8 projects approved by participants in that year, for a total value of EUR 5.2 million, the country committed to a contribution of EUR 800 thousand.[32] In all, from 2011 to 2016, Colombia reported implementing 35 projects as a pivot. These projects were funded by the US, Germany, South Korea, Australia, Japan, Canada, and Israel, with the remainder being financed by UN agencies, the European Union, the OAS, and the Andean Development Corporation (CAF).

Relations between Iván Duque's new government and the UN have been very strained since it came to power in August 2018. In May 2019, controversy was sparked when a national newspaper printed an alleged suggestion by an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to UN delegates that certain agencies, including UN Women and the Population Fund, be removed from the country and greater emphasis placed on the Sustainable Development Goals than on cooperation for implementation of the Peace Agreement.[33] In June, the Human Rights Council clashed with the Executive when it stated that the security guarantees for demobilized FARC guerrillas were not being taken seriously.

Without abandoning the inter-Americanist tradition, the foreign policy of Duque's government has focused primarily on building an alternative to Unasur, which has been plunged into crisis less than a decade after its launch in 2008. Since the end of Santos' second term, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay and Peru have all suspended their participation indefinitely as differences in goals and values with Venezuela's dictatorial regime became untenable. Duque gave support to the creation of the Forum for the Progress and Development of South America (Prosur), which was formalized in March 2019 in Santiago (Chile) with eight member countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay and Guyana. Doubts remain as to whether Prosur can equip itself with institutions,

foster integration and go the distance. It is piling up ideological conflicts in an already fractured region and it is very difficult to foresee a positive influence on Venezuela, considering that solid and long-standing architectures like the UN and OAS have been unable to mitigate the crisis or impose sanctions on the Venezuelan government. In short, the crisis of regionalism in Latin America has shown that it can only function when there is ideological convergence among the incumbent presidents, which is a long way off the idea of effective multilateralism in the region.

The value of multilateralism for the Colombian government

Although Colombia is on record as having attended the founding ministerial meeting of the "Alliance For Multilateralism" project spearheaded by the governments of Germany and France in September 2019, the Colombian government has shown no clear interest in projecting and eventually leading processes that require demanding standards of effective multilateralism if the outcome of the cooperation does not largely satisfy government objectives. In addition, and with regard to this


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specific project, the Colombian government has not announced any changes or institutional references that would contribute to the multilateral processes resulting from or developed by the Alliance.

Moreover, despite the reference in official documents such as the National Development Plan (2018-2022) and "Principles and Guidelines of Colombian Foreign Policy: Responsible, Innovative and Constructive Foreign Policy 2018-2022" to the concepts of multilateralism and global and regional governance as a means to address the issues and concerns of the international and national agenda, these are neither parameterized nor developed in the sections on strategic guidelines or actions to be implemented.

It is, therefore, misleading to refer to these aspects as categories of governance without defining the means to implement them. Furthermore, considering governmental development to date, one can surmise that the Duque government accords relevance to multilateralism when it is in its interests. Civil society in Colombia is largely committed to multilateralism for meeting its legitimate demands, since it has used multilateralism in the past to achieve an indirect impact on certain public processes, to exercise social and political control, and to promote mechanisms of coordinated oversight with diverse civil actors.

In conclusion, the past ten years have demonstrated that Colombia is open to multilateralism, but the current scenario of multilateral cooperation appears to be mediated solely by the interests of an ideological spectrum that hampers and fractures any possibility of dialogue and effective multilateral inclusion to address common regional and global problems.

Biographies

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"The vision of effective global governance revolves around the observance of treaties and the rejection of war, as a country that abolished its military as a permanent institution seventy years"

Costa Rica
a devoted practitioner of multilateralism

Dr. Constantino Urcuyo Fournier

Introduction

It should be noted from the outset that Costa Rica's foreign policy is founded on solid values: peace, human rights, respect for the environment, and social justice. These universal values offer wide margins of diplomatic action for a small country with no army that finds in International Law (the result of normative multilateralism) its main instrument for protecting its sovereignty.

This paper is based on my own diplomatic political experience and on consultations with experienced diplomatic staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Definition

What does multilateralism mean for government or civil society? The meaning of the term for the government is clear. It is a concept managed by certain political elites; in general terms, one can say that its meaning is clear for a sector of these, but not for the majority of the population. As a small, unarmed country,[1] Costa Rica's main defense clearly lies in its adherence to democratic principles and human rights. Respect for and the enforcement of international law is also part of Costa Rica's interpretation of multilateralism.[2]

Beyond legal considerations, Costa Rican diplomacy

attaches great importance to international institutionality as a regulatory mechanism for state behavior and protection from abuses of office by the major powers. The importance of international public opinion, which demands respect for international norms, is a path of collective security that the country has followed for decades.

The signing of the American Convention on Human Rights (Pact of San José) and support to the functioning of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights are part of this interpretation of multilateralism as the pursuit of international justice in the framework of conventions between states and the recognition that unilateralism poses a risk for a country that, as an unarmed democracy, needs numerous allies to maintain its sovereignty and independence.

Recently, on May 4, 2020, in his State of the Nation address to the Legislative Assembly, President Carlos Alvarado stated:

"Internationally, we will continue to be enthusiastic advocates of multilateralism, human rights, peace and democracy."[3]

Costa Rica's repeated appearance before the International Court in The Hague seeking to resolve its border and boundary conflicts with Nicaragua is a clear sign of the country's commitment to international organizations and demonstrates that it avoids bilateral or unilateral solutions. It places trust in international institutionality as a means for global governance and a protective shield against hostile neighbors.

Costa Rica's firm adherence to the Paris Agreement on climate change is further evidence of this clear commitment to multilateralism. Costa Rica has been an active player in the Organization of American States (OAS) and recently played an important role within the Lima Group. San José's participation in the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) has also served as an example of how the Costa Rican diplomatic procedure follows the lines of continuous dialogue with other regional actors around the values of peace, human rights and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The vision of effective global governance revolves around the observance of treaties and the rejection of war, as a country that abolished its military as a permanent institution seventy years ago.

Principled foreign policy

Costa Rican foreign policy rejects unilateralism and isolationism. It is founded on an internal political philosophy that has built the rule of law and citizenship at odds with the conceptions of chauvinistic nationalism. It is structured around the understanding of citizenship as a set of rights and duties, rather than the nation as a body.

Costa Rica has focused its diplomatic action on building a legal and institutional infrastructure at the service of global governance. Two major regimes have occupied the nation's attention: human rights and the pursuit of collective security.

Human rights

In the first area, San José was an active participant in the process to formulate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The same stance was adopted with regard to the American Convention on Human Rights (Pact of San José, 1969) and subsequently with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, which is based in Costa Rica.

The country was an active driver throughout the process leading to the creation of the position of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (1993-1994). The adoption of the Inter-American Democratic Charter (Lima, 2001) stemmed from the action of Costa Rica as one of the chief promoters of the democratic clause:

"Article 19: An unconstitutional interruption of the democratic order or an unconstitutional alteration of the constitutional regime that seriously impairs the democratic order in a member state, constitutes, while it persists, an insurmountable obstacle to its government's participation in sessions of the General Assembly, the Meeting of Consultation, the Councils of the Organization, the specialized conferences, the commissions, working groups, and other bodies of the Organization".[4]

Collective security

The area of security in Costa Rican foreign policy is framed by the pursuit of the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The role played by former President Óscar Arias Sánchez in the peace processes in Central America in the 1980s is the expression of an international action that sought the resolution of war through multilateralism (Esquipulas Peace Agreement, 1987), in direct contrast to the interventionist unilateralism of the Ronald Reagan administration.[5]

San Jose also played a leading role in the process that led to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which regulates international trade in conventional arms, from small and light weapons to combat cars and aircraft, large-caliber artillery systems, attack helicopters, warships, missiles and missile launchers; it also regulates the ammunition of these weapons and their parts and components. It started out as an initiative of former President Óscar Arias Sánchez and other Nobel Peace Prize laureates, presented as an International Code of Conduct on Arms Transfer, which reached 50 state signatories in 2014 and entered into force as the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)[6] in December 2014.

Of note is the country's intense diplomatic effort to approve the Framework Convention for Nuclear Disarmament (1996), which led to the legal prohibition of nuclear weapons in the form of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. At the time, Costa Rican diplomacy stated: "The world has been waiting for this legal norm for seventy years," said Elayne Whyte Gomez, Costa Rica's ambassador to the UN in Geneva and president of the conference.[7]

More than 35 countries have now signed the treaty, despite strong opposition from all nuclear-armed powers.

The other dimension of Costa Rica's multilateral vocation is manifested in its participation as a non-permanent member of the Security Council on several occasions (1974-75, 1997-98), the most recent being in 2008-2009. Following its participation in the Security Council, San José became part of the UN Human Rights Council, demonstrating the close ties between the two facets of Costa Rican diplomacy: collective security and human rights. Costa Rica knows that its multilateral diplomatic presence is linked not only to its principled discourse, but also reflected in its active participation in international institutionality.

Active participation

Proof of this is its participation in the UN and OAS, and in CELAC. Its membership of the Central American Integration System (SICA) and support for Plan Puebla-Panama (later Plan Mesoamerica) testify to its interest in regional institutionality. The same is true of its presence in the Lima Group and the Association of Caribbean States.

With regard to its integration with Central America, it should be noted that Costa Rica is not a member of two Central American institutional initiatives: the Central American Parliament and the Central American Supreme Court of Justice. Cost Rica has historically distrusted the democratic authenticity of certain Central American regimes (military dictatorships in the past) and the authoritarianism of Nicaragua's current regime. Thus, by its abstention in these matters, it avoids giving legitimacy to such regimes.

The European Union Association Agreement, signed by the countries of Central America, is proof both of its commitment to multilateralism and of its adherence to the principles of regionalism. A Costa Rican national, former President Miguel Ángel Rodríguez Echeverría, was appointed Secretary-General of the OAS in 2002, an organization that Costa Rica used several times (1948, 1955) following the attacks by Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza García.

Requirements

Costa Rica is an active member of the UN, the OAS, the Central American Integration System and, as mentioned, signatory to a cooperation treaty with the EU. In trade matters, the country has signed fifteen free trade agreements.[8] There are also treaties in process and bilateral investment agreements.[9] Costa Rica's participation as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council during the Arias Sánchez administration (2006-2010) is a sign of the country's heavy involvement in multilateral organizations at the current time.

In politics, the intervention of the ICJ in The Hague and the OAS, as described above, have been used in the past to resolve conflicts with Nicaragua, both on land and at sea. Costa Rica's experience of international cooperation in trade is very positive and has positioned the country as one of Latin America's biggest exporters per capita. Foreign trade relations are headed by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and a foreign trade promoter (Procomer). Costa Rica has initiated procedures to join the Pacific Alliance but pressures from internal economic sectors have delayed the completion of the process.

In security, it works closely with the US to tackle drug trafficking and jointly patrol the oceans,[10] although it also collaborates in the Caribbean with France and the Netherlands. Its cooperation with Colombia in policing matters is also very significant. The tense situation in Nicaragua and Venezuela has highlighted the close ties between the security policies of the United States (Venezuela) and the issue of drug trafficking. The new military exercises of the United States Southern Command in areas close to Caracas testify to this.[11] The difference with the US has been the opposition in principle to a military and unilateral exit from the conflict.

Practice

In recent times (since 2000), the country has been an active player on the multilateral stage, particularly in Latin American issues (Venezuela-Lima Group) and at CELAC meetings. Lately, however, due to holding the presidency of the group that drafted the Treaty on a Nuclear-Free World (legal prohibition) Costa Rica has played a special role in this multilateral practice . Effective multilateralism is evidenced both in the country's active participation in the Inter-American System of Protection for Human Rights and in the structure of the Central American Integration System, particularly in economic matters, given the country's intense trading activity with its neighbors to the north and south: approximately 20% of its exports.

Recently, in September 2019, the country signed a memorandum of understanding[12] with the People's Republic of China and has cautiously joined the Belt and Road project, driven by Beijing with the backing of a large number of countries in Africa, Central Asia and Europe.

Perspectives

The Government is aware of the Franco-German Alliance for Multilateralism initiative, but this is not the case with civil society, where little is known about the initiative. Recently, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic participated in the forum organized by the Alliance with foreign ministers from all world regions, evidencing the country's interest in the project.

On that occasion, Foreign Minister Solano Quirós pointed out that Costa Rica, as a country with no army, reaffirms that its defense has been and will continue to be international law and human rights in the different multilateral instances. "During this pandemic, we must strengthen initiatives like the Alliance for Multilateralism, which promote solidarity against an invisible common enemy like COVID-19 that knows no borders. Today more than ever, the international community must stand united; we must support the United Nations system."[13]

The COVID-19 pandemic will further incentivize multilateral cooperation, particularly with UN agencies like the World Health Organization (WHO), which has played a very important role in relations with the Ministry of Health during this emergency. On this point, President Alvarado noted:

"...the country's leading role in establishing the patent repository for the fight against COVID-19 to ensure that future treatments and vaccines are available to all and promoting a global initiative to ensure that pandemic funding for middle-income countries – like Costa Rica – will be fixed-rate, hopefully zero-rate, and long-term."[14]

Located in the privileged area of influence or "backyard" of power,[15] the call to multilateralism will likely be interpreted as a challenge to its domination. Following the words of US Secretary of State John Kerry regarding the obsolescence of the Monroe Doctrine, the Trump administration has reaffirmed its validity and multilateralism could be interpreted as a call for diversion from Washington's unilateralist objectives.

América Latina

As for Latin American multilateralism today, the prospects are not at all promising, since division between countries seems to be the order of the day. The Cuba-Venezuela-Nicaragua axis, albeit with a degree of proximity to the current governments of Argentina and Mexico, had no proximity to the Lima Group. On the other side of the spectrum, the positions of the current government of Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil and the Bolivian transition foreshadow situations of conflict and contradiction based on ideology and not at all favorable for the formation of long-term regional alliances.

CELAC, despite establishing talks with the People's Republic of China and the European Union, seems to have come to a grinding halt in the face of the prevailing regional disorder. Further, Latin America is disintegrating its integration platforms such as Mercosur. Unasur has been dismantled, as has the Andean Community.

The regional winds for dialogue and political concertation are blowing in the wrong direction, and Costa Rica must stay true to its tradition of universalist values aligning it with the Franco-German proposal and allow it to maintain cautious relations with its immediate neighbors.

Instability in the countries north of its borders (Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Honduras), and its relations with hegemonic power, preoccupied by a complex internal situation, must be taken into consideration, but cannot prevent cooperation and adherence to multilateralism. It is essential to simultaneously consider all these dimensions for the defense and promotion of its strategic interests in the region.

Strengthening respect for international humanitarian law, climate initiative, security and trust in cyberspace, democracy, equality and the regulation of lethal autonomous weapons, are advocated by the Alliance for Multilateralism and coincide with the values of a state policy anchored in freedom, democracy, international law and respect for the environment.

Costa Rica has supported initiatives to strengthen humanitarian law, information and democracy and the 11 Principles on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems. San José has also been a strong supporter of the Alliance's statements on the fight against the COVID 19 pandemic.[16] This support is aligned with our principles of peace, international law, democracy and the rejection of war as a means to resolve international conflicts.

In conclusion, Costa Rica has always regarded multilateralism as the best way to promote its interests in the international arena. A small, unarmed country needs alliances, founded on the values of peace, democracy, respect for international law and legitimacy from international opinion to curb abuses of power and promote international cooperation.

Costa Rica aspires to a multilateral order founded on respect for international law as a guarantee for stability and peace, the challenges to which can only be solved by cooperation and the recognition of interdependence.

Biography

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"I see this crisis as preparation for the ecological crisis." Markus Gabriel[1]

The Trump effect on Guatemala and Mesoamerica

Fernando González Davison

Multilateralism today

No power has emerged victorious from the coronavirus crisis because they have all been hit hard. But there is now a pressing need for multilateralism to be reborn from its ashes, following Donald Trump's merciless attempts to destroy it. Such destruction can be witnessed in his recent decision to cut funding to the World Health Organization (WHO). He is an advocate of isolationism and false Anglo-Saxon populist nationalism. The UN secretary made it clear at the Paris Peace Forum in November 2018 that today's world is chaotic and not unlike the one that preceded two world wars, adding that climate change, migration, inequality and technology have increased the risk of hostility. He emphasized the currency of the multilateralism outlined in the Preamble to the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted in Paris 70 years ago. The UN system was very weak. Multilateralism matters, said Guterres, because it has halved infant mortality since 1990; extreme poverty has dropped from 36% to 8%; the WHO immunization programs eradicated smallpox, and 7.6 million people have been prevented from dying from AIDS.[2] For more than half a century, over one million men and women from 125 countries have served on peacekeeping missions. The UN harmonizes efforts towards peace and sustainable development.

Two years ago, Trump also torpedoed multilateral cooperation and the role of the United Nations in helping Central American countries fight the scourge of corruption and drug trafficking. Multilateralism got to work in these issues back in 2006, since they were causes of increased poverty and insecurity in the region and forced thousands to flee to the US, which posed a threat to its national security. The Central American political class was sent to the dock on corruption charges while the UN made arrangements to launch its International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (*Comisión Internacional contra la Impunidad en Guatemala*, CICIG), which was met with opposition from political parties because it signaled the end of their impunity.

The boom in multilateralism after the Cold War

In 1991, at the end of the Cold War, multilateralism took off as it embraced international relations as part of a burgeoning globalization. The United Nations system was consolidated to deal with humanity's great challenges: an international coalition was formed against Iraq for its invasion of Kuwait. The Earth Summit was held in Rio in 1992. NATO stopped Serbia's war against its neighbors. The world opened up to the free flow of goods and services in countries that had eschewed real socialism in favor of the market economy, as China had already done. This global world also saw a number of third-world countries flourish, including Singapore, South Korea, China, India and Brazil. Meanwhile, the European Union expanded with the absorption of the eastern European countries and created the euro as its official currency. With the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, NATO and the EU expanded to the border with Russia, a country plagued by question marks over its survival but which was now the second nuclear power. Mexico distanced itself from Latin America by joining Canada and the US in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The Ibero-American Summits began, the first of which was held in Mexico in 1991.

However, Latin American multilateralism was actually forged in the previous decade, following the Falklands War in 1981, when the inter-American defense system collapsed. Latin America reacted by coordinating and averting widespread war in Central America with the creation of the Contadora Group. In this subregion, a war was stopped that had resulted from the close ties between Nicaragua's Sandinista government and Cuba and the USSR, turning the region into a Cold War hotspot. Thus, the European Community and the Contadora Group brought peace to the isthmus; the Rio Group was formed and Latin America acted in unison. The creation of the Central American Parliament in 1989 served to democratize Nicaragua. The specter of war in the region disappeared when the Berlin Wall fell in 1989.

Nicaragua held general elections and members of the aforementioned parliament were also elected. In 1991, the Central American Integration System (Spanish: *Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana,* SICA) was set up by Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama,[3] together with the Central American Court of Justice which, in coordination with the European Union, the United States and the United Nations, facilitated peace processes on the isthmus that were successfully completed in El Salvador and Guatemala in 1992 and 1996.[4]

The foreign ministries of Guatemala and the isthmus created platforms for their active participation in international forums and to attract formal foreign and NGO aid. Guatemala made arrangements in its Ministry of Finance and Planning Secretariat (Segeplan) to apply for foreign financial cooperation, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Segeplan liaised to request and accept international technical cooperation. The Ministry of Economy was put in charge of the process to serve the Secretariat of Central American Economic Integration (SIECA), while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs created a deputy ministry for SICA affairs.[5]

After the 2001 al-Qaeda terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York, the United Nations and NATO gave their backing to the White House to occupy Afghanistan, where al-Qaeda were based. Subsequently, George W. Bush took the unilateral decision to wage war on Iraq too, without the backing of the United Nations Security Council. Without justification, that action undermined global multilateralism. Meanwhile, globalization continued to benefit China, India, and Brazil, among others. Russia joined forces with these three countries to rescue their foreign participation and together they formed BRIC. Geopolitical changes were definitely taking place around the world. The Central American Common Market found its way out of the quagmire of the 1980s and managed to find its feet both economically and commercially. Belize joined SICA. Mexico, Colombia and the US boosted to investment in Central America. Nonetheless, as the new century unfolded, SICA failed to coordinate Central American countries to expand their social integration, as the European Union had proposed. As a result, the third-generation changes did not materialize.

Washington forced its member countries to act in unison voice and negotiate a free trade agreement, so they signed it. The Dominican Republic later joined this, SICA and the Central American Parliament. Then, the historic border disputes raised their heads again: Guatemala/Belize, Nicaragua/Costa Rica, El Salvador/Honduras. Typically, these Central American countries have voted similarly in the UN and the OAS, with the exception of Nicaragua, to date.

In parallel, in 2006 and 2007, the White House and the Guatemalan government, at the request of President Óscar Berger and Vice President Eduardo Stein, created CICIG to investigate parallel structures co-opting the State.

The latter was created under the auspices of the UN and the White House pressed the Guatemalan congress to approve it.

In 2008, Brazil's President Lula da Silva took over the region's leadership, not only guiding a new kind of multilateralism that favored regional development, but also defending small and intermediate countries from the big powers. Lula's idea was supported by his country's corporations. Thus, the presidents of Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Bolivia, Uruguay and Ecuador united to foster South American integration and created the Union of South American Nations (Unasur), with autonomy from the United States and a critical stance toward the OAS.

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International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG)

CICIG was approved by the Congress in 2007 and began operating the following year under President Álvaro Colom. A year earlier, Guatemala and the US had signed a military agreement that gave privileges to their armed forces as part of a multinational exercise to be held each year. It was based on the 1955 Military Assistance Convention between the two states (exemption from taxes and security for personnel, as well

as US-owned land vehicles, ships and aircraft). The military would be fighting drug trafficking at borders.

CICIG was part of that bipartisan US effort to stop migration and corruption. The UN effort and funding from several European countries, Canada and the US began to bear fruits. Would it save Guatemala from impunity and failure as a state? The State had to assume its responsibilities because it was drifting and sowing insecurity around the world: transnational organized crime controlled a variety of political parties in Mesoamerica, including President Colom's own party. Its government was seized by the military mafia that had previously taken full control of Alfonso Portillo's government (2000-2004) and was a cancerous growth for the whole national and municipal political structure. To add insult to injury, it was now apparent that SICA was dragging its heels in the integration process.

The 2008 global financial crisis and multipolarity

The collapse of Wall Street in 2008 gave way to state bailouts of big banks and factories in the US and Europe. The G-7 economic powers, in need of other financial contributions, created the G-20, which, in addition to the original seven, incorporated China, Argentina, Brazil, India, Russia and Mexico. A new multilateralism was created to tackle the crisis under the sign of multipolarity.

As the US waged multi-billion-dollar wars in the Middle East and Afghanistan, China seamlessly penetrated Africa and Latin America with trade, becoming the world's largest factory. It even participated in the expansion of the Panama Canal. At the fourth Summit of the Americas in 2007, 34 Latin American and Caribbean presidents rejected the US proposal to create a hemispheric free market, given that China was already the largest buyer of materials in Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela and other countries. Subsequently, the presidents of these three countries, along with those of Ecuador and Uruguay, created new integration institutions, without first suspending the inoperative SELA (Latin American Economic System), ALADI (Latin American Integration Association) and the Andean Pact. The most rhetorical were the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the Unasur Treaty, which also sought to unite the Andean Community (CAN) and Mercosur under its umbrella, without success. Odebrecht[6] used this framework to seize major infrastructure projects in the region by bribing many South American and Mesoamerican officials.

International support for Guatemala against corruption

CICIG also had the support of several Latin American countries during the Colom administration (Mexico, Uruguay, Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, etc). And it began

to investigate the clandestine apparatus dominating the State (officials who had worked in military intelligence since the dictatorship in the 1980s) that had co-opted the state and the judiciary. They posed a threat to US security because drug trafficking and corruption had impoverished Guatemala and generated a huge flow of migrants into the US, as noted earlier, diminishing resources for its sustainable development. If the drug trade was international, it ought to have an international response too. CICIG succeeded in prosecuting former Guatemalan president Alfonso Portillo in hopes that he would give the names of the military mafia godfathers. In Costa Rica, two former presidents were jailed for corruption,[7] and then the same happened in El Salvador. Given CICIG's positive results in Guatemala, it was thought that a similar commission could be set up for Honduras, but this proved more difficult because it was obvious that organized crime controlled part of the Honduran government. Under pressure from the White House, Honduras set up its own CICIG in 2015: the Mission to Support the Fight against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (Spanish: *Misión de Apoyo contra la Corrupción y la Impunidad en Honduras,* MACCIH), with OAS support.

In 2010, Central America was split into three areas: 1) the Northern Triangle of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, with high insecurity and poverty rates; 2) the dictatorship of Nicaragua, isolated from its neighbors and dependent on Venezuela; 3) the area of Costa Rica and Panama, with higher social and economic indices than the rest and low homicide rates. The outdated Central American Parliament was criticized as a haven for corrupt leaders, since entry is automatic once those who are usually persecuted by justice leave power. They find immediate immunity there.

Although progress was made with the customs union between Honduras and Guatemala, SICA did nothing about the military coup in Honduras that deposed the elected President Manuel Zelaya in 2009. So, with Washington's backing, the path to a *de facto* dictatorship took its course. In Nicaragua too, Daniel Ortega, although elected in 2007, shifted towards a dictatorship when he was unconstitutionally re-elected in 2012.

In 2012,[8] Guatemala held the rotating Latin American seat on the United Nations Security Council.[9] Two years previous, Venezuela had opposed its candidacy and Panama took its place. At that forum, Guatemala supported White House policy. President Barack Obama saw Central America and Mexico as part of his security strategy: a natural US expansion into the Caribbean. He later urged continental unity, but it was not followed up with action. SICA was not able to overcome the mutual distrust of Central American countries.

The first EU-CELAC Summit took place in January 2013. The Central American presidents also attended the Panama Summit and signed the association agreement with the President of the European Commission. It was the first of its kind and very

comprehensive, from region to region, covering political dialogue, cooperation and trade. But the isthmus was fragmented. The Ibero-American summits now lacked any value because they lacked sustenance and were dominated by rhetoric.

To reduce the national threat posed to the US by the emigration of Central Americans, in 2015, Vice President Joe Biden presented the Alliance for Prosperity Plan for Central America, addressed to the Northern Triangle (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador).[10] These three countries were lagging behind the rest of the isthmus because corruption and unemployment grew with low social indicators. In Latin America, Guatemala was bringing up the rear in democratic development. The World Food Program (WFP) found that food insecurity affected 874 thousand people in Guatemala in 2015, 682 thousand in Honduras and 85 thousand in El Salvador. Local and international action had to be harmonized in order to solve this serious problem, but SICA was powerless.

Guatemala and the international context 2015-2019

In 2015, US Secretary of State John Kerry accused Guatemala's President, General Otto Pérez Molina, and his Vice-President Roxana Baldetti of widespread corruption. That year, CICIG presented evidence of corruption against them and their circles of military friends and businessmen working in their government and at the head of the Guatemalan Institute of Social Security (IGSS).

More than 300 officials, including former ministers, magistrates and Vice-President Baldetti herself – who was forced to resign – were incarcerated. The Guatemalan Ministry of Foreign Affairs encouraged criticism of CICIG in all embassies and multilateral missions in defense of Pérez Molina's government, while the Central American Court of Justice washed its hands of the affair.

Corruption led thousands to migrate north as common violence grew and hospitals ran out of medicine, making the poverty and malnutrition even more evident.

The standoff with Belize was put on the backburner as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs opened new embassies in India, Morocco and Turkey – yet another waste of funds that should have been allocated to fighting hunger and malnutrition.

The then-US Vice-President Joe Biden hoped that his development plan could curb migration in the midst of the severe humanitarian crisis of migrants from the Northern Triangle to Mexico and the US, making for major headlines in the international press.[11]

Biden criticized the economic model of the Northern Triangle because criminal capital was coordinated with legal capital. He said that such collusion produced the

lowest rates of human development in all of Latin America, with the highest levels of social violence and homicide in the world. The Northern Triangle is home to 70 percent of the population of the Central American isthmus and receives just 15 percent of regional foreign investment; while Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, with 30 percent of the population, received 85 percent of foreign investment, and the homicide rate did not exceed 12 percent (this figure quadrupled in the Northern Triangle). For months, Pérez Molina refused to renew CICIG's mandate, eventually extending it under pressure from Barack Obama through Biden. Pérez Molina later resigned to face trial on corruption charges. The Konrad Adenauer Foundation found that Guatemala ranked last in democratic development in Latin America in those years[12] and was 124th in terms of the least press freedom.

The US Congress approved the White House's request to allocate $750 million to the Alliance for Prosperity Plan for the Northern Triangle,[13] but Donald Trump was sworn in as president in 2017 and the plan was shelved as he pursued another policy.

A year earlier, in 2016, Jimmy Morales had assumed the presidency of Guatemala with the slogan "Neither corrupt nor a thief" but the CICIG soon discovered that both he and his family were indeed those things. Morales retaliated by orchestrating a long and grueling campaign to remove commissioner Iván Velásquez from CICIG throughout his term in office. Morales based his campaign on a corrupt justice system and a congress of impressionable politicians. And in doing so, neglected everything else. He lunched on occasion with traffickers like Mario Estrada, who was later arrested by the DEA in the US[14] and pleaded guilty to drug trafficking, as did the "Queen of the South" Marjorie Chacón, financier of Pérez Molina and his Vice-President Baldetti, also before the DEA. The UN Secretary-General backed Velásquez, as did the international community.

Morales then suddenly began to give in to Trump's every demand and, at his request, moved his embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. In return, Morales asked for Trump's support to shut down the CICIG. President Hernández of Honduras acted in similar fashion in exchange for shutting down his own commission against impunity. The reverberations of Trump's anti-multilateral action were felt in both countries when he agreed to help them shut down CICIG and MACCIH. Morales ordered his UN representative in Washington to join with the Presbyterian fundamentalist evangelicals and conservative American Catholics, who were calling for the three embassies to be moved to Jerusalem. Trump supported the fight against CICIG by sending US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley to Guatemala. Meeting with Morales, she raised questions about CICIG and incited Morales and his group – dubbed "Pact of the Corrupt" by the press – to support her criticism of the Commission. Morales

then spoke ill of Secretary-General António Guterres for praising the CICIG headed by Iván Velásquez.

Meanwhile, Guatemala and Belize agreed to take their territorial differences to the International Court of the Hague, as Costa Rica had done with Nicaragua.

And the caravans of migrants from the Northern Triangle headed for the United States continued relentlessly. SICA did not address the issue or the troubled situation in Honduras and Nicaragua where the people were protesting against their rulers' dictatorships. While this was happening, the US and Mexico held talks about migration with officials from the foreign ministries of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

And still, the international community backed CICIG

In the end, Morales shut down CICIG in 2019, leaving without trial a hundred cases received by the co-opted Public Prosecutor who did not want to deal with them. This created unease among the countries that had funded it: Canada, Sweden, Spain and the UK. It also prompted a split between the two major parties in the US. In the face of all this, Guatemala's ambassador to the UN and Morales's Foreign Minister excused themselves saying that CICIG posed a national threat, despite having the approval of more than seventy percent of Guatemalans.[15] After the Commission's closure, its investigations were archived by the Public Prosecutor's Office. President Morales again attacked the UN and closed Guatemala's embassy in Sweden because the Swedish ambassador had strongly defended CICIG. The EU was indeed bothered by that move and tensions were felt across the international community. Morales was another Central American pariah like his counterparts in Honduras and Nicaragua.

The Guatemalan Ministry of Foreign Affairs stood with Morales against the UN and multilateralism throughout 2019. As a result, it paid no attention to the Alliance for Multilateralism, proposed in April of the same year by France and Germany, given that Morales was too busy attacking CICIG and the UN Secretary-General. The international community watched as the efforts of more than ten years of multilateral struggle against corruption collapsed, strengthening the illegitimate presidents of Honduras and Guatemala, who had broken the constitutional order but were kept in office by impunity.

On April 24 of that year, the International Day of Multilateralism, several countries clamored for a return to international cooperation. This was echoed by ECLAC, which called for a renewed and inclusive multilateralism in the face of the economic, social and environmental challenges thwarting the development of its countries. However, the

international organizations in the region were affected by the global drop in commodity prices, and inertia became the order of the day. Meanwhile, in the Northern Triangle countries, where poverty had not declined as it had in other Latin American countries when raw materials prices increased, the indicators of malnutrition and extreme poverty were still rising. Without CICIG, corruption was on the increase. Regional multilateralism had been reflecting this situation since the inoperative Ibero-American Summits, especially since the last one held in Guatemala at the end of 2019, with the participation of 17 heads of state. It was hosted by Morales, wholly lacking in legitimacy in the community of nations, who gave the RIP to those meaningless summits that had achieved nothing in thirty years. Spain had been their leader in the early days but had ceased in its role because it could not purport to be an example of anything with its infinite public debt, similar to that of Italy, which were far higher than their annual GDP.

In addition, in December 2019, Trump decided to split from the World Trade Organization (WTO) by no longer accepting the decisions of the Appellate Body, which was the only thing keeping the organization alive. WTO had failed at everything else since its inception. China and the US were in trade disputes that affected the whole of the global economy and there was no new arbiter in sight.

The US and Central American migration in 2019

Trump persuaded the new Mexican President A. M. López Obrador to send six thousand troops from the new Mexican National Guard to the border with Guatemala in 2019. Failure to do so would have led to a five percent levy being imposed on Mexican exports to the United States. Those troops were joined by a thousand Mexican migration guards at the same border. Mexico's Foreign Minister tried to save face by stating that López Obrador[16] sought to implement ECLAC's comprehensive development plan for southern Mexico and Guatemala, a rehashing of the Puebla-Panama Plan, which will never be implemented because of the coronavirus pandemic.

In 2019, Trump the quid-pro-quo negotiator had imposed a secret agreement on the Morales government to receive the Central American migrants arriving in the United States. However, he cut off development aid to Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador for failing to stop migration.[17]

Remittances from Guatemalan migrants in the US totaled ten billion dollars that year.[18] Pulling the plug on the announced aid broke off Washington's bipartisan policy. Shortly before the end of his term, Morales, with a clientelist flourish, opened new embassies in Australia, the Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Thailand,[19] among others, and appointed his friends to those diplomatic posts. Then, to avoid justice, on the same day he left office in January 2020, he and his Vice-President were sworn in as members of the Central

American Parliament to enjoy immunity for another four years, amid public outcry over the move. Doctor Alejandro Giammattei thus assumed the Guatemalan presidency amidst administrative chaos, a legacy from his predecessor.

A change of tack with the new president

Giammattei did a U-turn by opening up to the world in his inaugural speech in January. The following month, his Foreign Minister Pedro Brolo told the UN Security Council that multilateralism was a pillar of the new government's foreign policy. He reiterated his commitment to sending military contingents for peace operations.

During the coronavirus pandemic, Giammattei and his Salvadoran equivalent Nayib Bukele have coordinated similar restrictive measures to isolate their countries and stop the coronavirus from ravaging their population. They followed WHO's recommendation to keep families at home, and the Pan American Health Organization's recommendation to tackle the emergency quickly. In March and April, the number of US deportees increased and many brought the virus back to Guatemala with them,[20] a circumstance that generated protests from the Episcopal Conference of Guatemala. The fact of the matter is that Guatemala confronted the pandemic with more will than means: with a health system in ruins and 70% of the population working in the informal economic,[21] hunger is a reality.[22]

Giammattei and the President of El Salvador exchanged opinions on restructuring SICA and dissolving the obsolete Central American Parliament. Brolo is open to international cooperation and positive about UN peacekeeping missions and to contributing his know-how in diverse areas. He is also prepared to endorse any initiative to stimulate multilateralism. Meanwhile, the FAO and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (Spanish: *Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture*, IICA) hosted a virtual meeting of agriculture ministers of the Americas to implement actions to make food available to the population in this crisis. Guatemala's foreign ministry has a structure suited to becoming an active part of multilateralism, even though it was not well used in the last government. Its bureaucracy is on alert and includes diplomatic relations with 158 countries:

41 barely or not at all effective foreign embassies, 75 dual accreditations, 42 countries with which it maintains diplomatic relations through the Mission in New York to the UN, and 4 missions to international organizations (UN New York, UN Geneva, OAS and WTO). It prioritizes the Central American integration process and can create synergies with El Salvador and Honduras to revive the Biden plan. In 2020, it voted for the continuity of the incumbent OAS Secretary. The embassy to the WTO is inoperative, in much the same way as the paralyzed organization. The country is a member of

null and void organizations such as the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Ibero-American Summit and General Secretariat, and the Summit of the Americas. It must therefore prioritize the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean Summit (EU–LAC). Its directorate of multilateral policy monitors human, social and cultural rights issues and acts as an official liaison between the diverse governing bodies and diplomatic and permanent missions to UN and OAS agencies. It monitors the issues of disarmament and international security: a) weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical and biological), b) conventional weapons, c) demining, d) small arms and light weapons, e) terrorism, f) corruption, and g) security. It advises and coordinates competent government institutions in support of the UN in peace operations and at presidential summits. The Presidency's Planning Secretariat has launched the 2030 K'atún Plan with external cooperation priorities along with a roadmap for their approval.[23]

Multilateralism in April 2020

The leaders of France, Germany and Norway, together with the Council of Europe and the Presidency of the European Commission, agreed to work together to combat the pandemic. WHO was given their support in order to create a $7 billion fund for this purpose.[24] The European Union agreed to set up a €1.2 billion fund to tackle the coronavirus, in the form of a new Marshall plan.[25] ECLAC said that the coronavirus would have "devastating effects" on the Latin American economy:[26] extreme poverty could increase from €67 million to €90 million. It called for a lowering of the interest rate, freezing the surcharge for non-payment of water services, and the suspension of bank loan collections. It revived Raúl Prebisch's ideas of the 1950s to recreate domestic industries.[27] Trump also announced that he would resume his pathetic aid to Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador.

The international political organizations of Latin America have not risen to the expectations with which they were created, owing to their short-sightedness and the failure to see long-term results (which are seen by sectoral and technical organizations in the fields of health, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, and more). This has become clear in the current crisis, because they have failed to respond to the demands of the moment.

Along these lines, Argentina effectively suspended its participation in Mercosur this year. In Central America, SICA requires reform and there must be a discussion on how to end the Central American Parliament and other dysfunctional forums, such as the Central American Court of Justice.

Guatemala has the largest and most populous economy of the isthmus, yet it still cannot repair the chaos left in the wake of the previous government. It is evident that multilaterality is urgently needed to address serious problems that go beyond a country and a region, in a world that will no longer be the same. Segeplan and the cabinet must redefine new forms of solidarity and cooperation in the current crisis: multilateralism is key to tackling economic and social decline. A universal minimum income for every citizen from our own funds and those of the international community – and establishing this on a permanent basis – would be highly desirable.

Biography

Fernando González Davison is a Guatemalan lawyer, writer and internationalist.

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"[...] Mexico's thematic priorities in multilateral forums – those that it works on continuously despite changes in government – are related to the country's structural characteristics or challenges: migration, the drugs problem and fight against organized crime, the regulation or prohibition of weapons of all types and disarmament, human rights, the 2030 Agenda, free trade and climate change."

The Mexican Perspective

Natalia Saltalamacchia / María José Urzúa

The changing concept of multilateralism in Mexican diplomacy

Mexico's foreign policy has an important multilateral tradition. From the early twentieth century to date, the country has been committed to promoting an international order based on general principles of conduct and norms allowing for the coordination of international actors. Efforts to promote the development of international law and build regimes in diverse thematic areas are a continuous feature of Mexican diplomacy.

Mexico's commitment to the defense and strengthening of multilateralism is based on structural elements and has therefore been lasting. First, it responds to the needs of a country with less relative power that has historically had to manage neighborhood relations with the world's biggest power: the United States. That conspicuous and permanent asymmetry of power with its neighbor has marked Mexico's preference for the development of international rules that could reduce, to a degree, its margin of unilateral or arbitrary action. Second, from the late 1980s to date, Mexico has configured a model of development that is highly dependent on its international economic integration focused on exports, attracting foreign direct investment and even exporting capital through Mexican multinationals.

Today, around 80% of national GDP depends on foreign trade.[1] For this reason, the country favors the development of multilateral architectures that

introduce certainty to the global economic game. Lastly, from the twenty-first century, issues with a clear and growing transnational dimension – such as the fight against drug trafficking networks and the management of migratory transit flows – became more acute and increasingly figured as top priorities on the national political agenda. This was further motivation to invest efforts in the ongoing pursuit of international cooperation.

The view of multilateralism among Mexican diplomats has certainly evolved over time. Like many other countries, Mexico subscribed for almost the entire twentieth century to a statewide or Westphalian understanding of multilateralism characterized by the following elements: a) the role of states as the main actors, with the monopoly to decide on the rules of global interaction, granting a limited or barely consultative space for non-state actors; b) net preference for intergovernmental decision-making procedures, with a narrow margin of autonomy for international entities or organizations; c) an absolute understanding of the rule of sovereignty, linked to the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs, which left many issues to the reserved domain of States, especially those relating to the exercise of citizens' rights with the public authority.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, however, Mexico's vision of multilateralism changed in response to both systemic and national processes. Indeed, since the technological revolution and globalization, non-state actors (companies, NGOs, social movements, organized crime, etc.) have become increasingly important and high-profile, introducing greater complexity to the international system. The state-centered multilateral model of intergovernmental cooperation lagged behind in its ability to respond to global challenges and the effectiveness of multilateralism was hotly debated, as was the legitimacy of international decision-making processes involving only government representatives.[2] Clearly, Mexican diplomacy was no stranger to the signals that changes were needed to the multilateral governance framework. At the same time, the process of democratization was accelerated on a national level – leading, in 2000, to the first alternation in the presidency of the republic – and shook some of the operational foundations of Mexican foreign policy.

Both factors ushered in major changes to the conception of the Mexican Foreign Service, both in terms of the role of non-state actors in multilateralism and in the application of the sovereignty rule linked to multilateral initiatives or entities.

With regard to the role of the population in multilateralism, from 2000 onwards, there began "a phase of progressive citizen engagement in Mexico's the international agenda, especially in multilateral issues".[3] The Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (Spanish: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, SRE) began to adapt its organic structure[4] to

incorporate in an institutionalized manner the knowledge and opinions of civil society in the design of foreign policy and to increase the legitimacy of Mexico's international positions. This openness and positive vision for social participation at the national level was counterbalanced by the stance adopted by Mexico in multilateral forums: the country positioned itself with others that encourage the presence and substantive participation of civil society organizations and other stakeholders, as opposed to those seeking to retain state control of the agenda and decision-making. Proof of this is the practice of formally accrediting civil society specialists as part of Mexico's official delegations at high-profile multilateral events.[5] Similarly, the policy of using its agenda power as a host country of summits or multilateral forums to open up broader spaces for social representatives and introduce innovations in formats to make dialogue with government delegates more effective.[6]

Lastly, Mexico adhered to the liberal understanding that accepts that international norms and organizations are legitimate and useful enablers in the exercise of democratic governance. This redefined the concept of sovereignty and the principle of non-intervention, which made it possible for the country to increase its involvement in strengthening multilateral architecture on topics that previously generated reluctance, such as human rights or the principle of responsibility to protect in relation to humanitarian law.[7]

Today, Mexico can be said to maintain a pluralistic understanding of multilateralism characterized by: a) identifying the role of states as non-monopolistic leading agents that promote and coordinate the substantive participation of the many stakeholders (complex multilateralism); b) accepting participation both in purely intergovernmental organizations and in autonomous international bodies with characteristics of supranationality (such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights); c) an understanding of the rule of sovereignty that has limitations in respect of the protection of the rights of individuals and therefore accepts the application of certain international mechanisms to enforce international treaties in this regard.

The opinion of multilateralism among the Mexican public and civil society

As noted, Mexico's multilateral activism responds to a diplomatic tradition and a number of strategic considerations. It must be understood as a high-level political decision that enjoys the consensus of specialists in the field, but it is not a topic with which the bulk of the population is familiar. With the exception of the interest in relations with the United States, foreign policy is often not a matter for public debate

and unimportant in the definition of political platforms, election campaigns, and the evaluation of governments.

Although, as noted above, the SRE has been promoting the participation of Mexican social organizations for the last twenty years by offering information, spaces for dialogue, workshops to strengthen their capacities, and their inclusion in official delegations, the vast majority of civil society organizations (CSOs) do not contemplate the objective of the impact on Mexico's foreign policy or on the multilateral global agenda. Those that do are part of a small hub typically based in Mexico City, with highly qualified staff and often either already integrated into international networks or they are the local chapter of a global civil organization (e.g. Oxfam or The Hunger Project). Naturally, the members of these organizations understand the importance of multilateral forums as spaces for influencing the agenda as well as for absorbing experiences from other places that may be useful in their local work.[8]

Beyond this hub of specialized CSOs, most people have very little knowledge of international organizations and what they do. Nonetheless, opinion polls often show that the UN is seen by Mexicans in a positive light. The Mexico, Americas and the world survey (Spanish: *México, las Américas y el mundo*), the latest round of which took place in 2016-2017, shows that the UN is the most well-respected international organization; unsurprisingly, its level of approval is higher among leaders (79%) than the general public (67%), which probably relates to their level of knowledge of the body, since only 59% of the general public reported knowing the meaning of the organization's acronym.[9]

The 2019 Pew Research Center survey offers a comparative view of the level of acceptance of the UN in Mexico in comparison to 33 other countries. Again, a majority of Mexican respondents (58%) said that they had a positive opinion of the UN. These results position the country right at the survey average, which is 58.4%. Mexico is well below the levels of support of countries such as the Philippines (86% have a favorable opinion), South Korea (82%), Canada (69%) and Spain (63%), but it is above the other two Latin American countries included: Brazil (47%) and Argentina (38%).[10]

The above data suggest that the activism of Mexican diplomacy at UN level has reasonable social support, but the country does not particularly stand out for the consensus of its society on this leading multilateral organization.

International organizations with Mexican participation

Mexico expresses its tradition of international cooperation in its open commitment to the UN system. The country is a member of all the specialized UN bodies (15) and the

entities and courts linked to it.[11] It is also part of a further 32 multilateral international organizations, understood as organizations of three or more States, established by an international treaty, with permanent bodies and headquarters, and which have a legal personality different from that of their Member States (see Table 1).[12]

Mexico is also a member of numerous treaties and cooperation forums that are not international organizations and, hence, are excluded from Table 1. These include regional initiatives such as the Pacific Alliance and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), which we shall discuss in the following section.

Table 1.
International organizations of which Mexico is a member state[13]

International organization	Membership criteria	Theme
1. Association of Caribbean States	Regional	Multi-thematic
2. Latin American Integration Association	Regional	Specialized
3. Central American Bank for Economic Integration	Regional	Specialized
4. Development Bank of Latin America (formerly CAF)	Regional	Specialized
5. Bank for International Settlements	Universal	Specialized
6. Inter-American Development Bank	Regional	Specialized
7. International Bureau of Weights and Measures	Universal	Specialized
8. Latin American Civil Aviation Commission	Regional	Specialized
9. Permanent Court of Arbitration	Universal	Multi-thematic
10. Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences	Universal	Specialized
11. International Institute for the Unification of Private Law	Universal	Specialized
12. Bureau International des Expositions (Bureau of International Expositions)	Universal	Specialized

13. International Regional Organisation for Plant and Animal Health	Regional	Specialized
14. Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean	Regional	Specialized
15. Organization of American States	Regional	Multi-thematic
16. United Nations	Universal	Multi-thematic
17. Organization of the Andrés Bello Agreement for Educational, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Integration	Regional	Multi-thematic
18. International Hydrographic Organization	Universal	Specialized
19. International Organisation of Vine and Wine	Universal	Specialized
20. International Tropical Timber Organization	Universal	Specialized
21. International Criminal Police Organization	Universal	Specialized
22. World Organization for Animal Health	Universal	Specialized
23. International Mobile Satellite Organization	Universal	Specialized
24. International Telecommunications Satellite Organization	Universal	Specialized
25. International Sugar Organization	Universal	Specialized
26. International Cocoa Organization	Universal	Specialized
27. International Coffee Organization	Universal	Specialized
28. Latin American Energy Organization	Regional	Specialized
29. World Customs Organization	Universal	Specialized
30. World Intellectual Property Organization	Universal	Specialized

31. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	Club	Multi-thematic
32. Latin American and Caribbean Economic System	Regional	Specialized
33. Ibero-American System	Regional	Multi-thematic
TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS	**19 universal (58%), 13 regional (39%) and one club (3%)**	**7 multi-thematic (21%) and 26 specialized (79%)**

As the fifteenth largest economy in the world, Mexico is responsible, in relative terms, for making significant contributions to the regular budgets of these organizations and indeed usually meets its financial obligations. For example, Mexico is the sixteenth largest contributor to the UN's regular budget,[14] based on its quota calculated according to the country's payment capacity.[15] Similarly, Mexico is the fourth largest contributor to the regular budget of the Organization of American States (OAS), based on its allocated quota,[16] after the United States, Canada and Brazil.

Multilateralism in practice

Now, in the twenty-first century, Mexico's multilateral practice features elements typical of its two-way middle-power status. First, it is a country concerned with helping to strengthen and increase the effectiveness of multilateral architecture.

Second, it tends to take a committed stance in international negotiations: it portrays itself as a hinge player or mediator between conflicting positions (especially when they concern the north-south divide). Along these lines, Mexico often seeks alliances with developed countries to promote specific issues, such as the Franco-Mexican initiative on regulating the veto in the Security Council in the event of mass atrocities (2014), or its recent adherence to the Franco-German initiative of the Alliance for Multilateralism (2019).

Based on a review of multilateral policy since 2000, Guadalupe González G. et al. have pointed out that Mexican diplomacy has made three different types of contribution to the strengthening of multilateralism: 1) taking the lead to push forward agendas, build coalitions or push for negotiations to take shape on the priority issues for the country; 2) fostering regulatory or institutional development by promoting treaties or creating international forums; 3) proposing improvements to the procedures and working methods of international organizations.[17]

Clearly, Mexico's thematic priorities in multilateral forums – those that it works on continuously despite changes in government – are related to the country's structural characteristics or challenges: migration, the drugs problem and fight against organized crime, the regulation or prohibition of weapons of all types and disarmament, human rights, the 2030 Agenda , free trade and climate change.

Generally speaking, these characteristics have been present in Mexico's multilateral diplomacy during the first year and a half of Andrés Manuel López Obrador's government albeit, naturally, with the shifts in emphasis or focus that come from the need for differentiation of any new government. However, given the President's clear lack of interest in foreign policy, the SRE has less chance of bringing in ambitious initiatives that require the allocation of resources. The Under-Secretariat for Multilateral Affairs has focused more on establishing how United Nations agencies in the country can contribute to the development of the Mexican government's internal objectives and less on building multilateral architecture outside the country. Mexico's most important and high-profile activity in the coming years will be its participation as a non-permanent member of the Security Council (2021-2022).

Continuity can also be observed in subregional or Latin American multilateralism. In the early decades of the twenty-first century, Mexico's leadership in this area was expressed by its support for the creation of two initiatives: CELAC and the Pacific Alliance.

Both can be seen as part of a Mexican state policy, since there has been a continued interest in their promotion across the governments of the National Action Party (2006-2012), the Institutional Revolutionary Party (2012-2018) and the National Regeneration Movement (2018-2024), beyond programmatic differences in other foreign policy matters.

The Pacific Alliance is chiefly economic in vocation and seeks to increase the exchange of goods, services and capital among its member countries by liberalizing flows and strengthening their economic integration with the rest of the world, particularly in Asia-Pacific. It includes intergovernmental cooperation exercises on sectoral agendas (e.g. innovation, regulatory coherence, migration transit) to promote the goal of increased integration, together with diplomatic initiatives (e.g. shared embassies) and educational and cultural proposals.

The Pacific Alliance has proved itself to be a successful multilateral mechanism in increasing diplomatic interaction between its member countries, making them visible to the rest of the world and, to a lesser extent, increasing economic exchange. It is currently one of the most dynamic blocs in the Latin American

region, account taken of the disintegration of other multilateral mechanisms such as the Union of South American Nations (Unasur) and the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA), and the impasse of the Southern Common Market (Mercosur).

We can identify certain precepts that could go some way to explaining its relative effectiveness. First, the criterion of membership is based not on geographical contiguity but on affinity: the "core requirements" for membership are having a liberal representative democracy and an economic model committed to the market economy and export development. Second, institutionalization is based on a framework agreement, but the generation of costly international bureaucracies are circumvented in favor of a flexible structure. Third, it responds to the idea of "complex multilateralism" insofar as it contemplates mechanisms for the participation of interested social agents, such as the Council of Entrepreneurs. Fourth, it aspires to expand the social foundations of the mechanism with initiatives to promote the mutual knowledge of groups such as young people, students and academics.

But CELAC is also experiencing a moment of great weakness due to rifts in its membership caused by the situation in Venezuela. Mexico decided to risk assuming the Pro-Tempore Chair (2020) of the mechanism in a bid to prevent its disappearance, once again adopting the role of mediator. It proposed a work program focused on technical and non-controversial issues, with the idea of cultivating spaces of trust among mid-level officials, despite the fissures created by high politics.

It hopes to show that CELAC can contribute to solving common problems and is therefore worth saving.

Mexico and the Alliance for Multilateralism

Given all of the above, it is unsurprising that the Government of Mexico joined the Alliance for Multilateralism, which officially launched in September 2019 at the UN General Assembly session. Mexico was one of the seven co-chairs of this initiative, alongside Germany and France (its creators), Canada, Chile, Ghana and Singapore. The Alliance expresses "the conviction that a rules-based multilateral order is the only reliable guarantee for international stability and peace and that our common challenges can only be solved through cooperation."[18] This concern, as we have seen, has always been at the heart of Mexican foreign policy, but it has been intensified by the nationalism and unilateralism of Donald Trump's presidency in the United States.

For an initial insight into knowledge about this initiative in Mexico, a survey was conducted between 25 May and 4 June 2020 among specialists or persons familiar with international affairs. The survey consisted of an unrepresentative sample of 172 people from the following groups: academics, public officials (including officials of the Mexican SRE), members of civil society organizations, think tanks and foundations.

The results show that, even among experts, the Alliance is not well known: only 54.1% of specialists "have heard of the Alliance for Multilateralism". Moreover, this knowledge is superficial, since only 32.6% of those surveyed said that they knew of its main themes. Surpisingly, the group that reports having the greatest knowledge of the Alliance are academics (64.5%), ahead of SRE officials (57.9%).

Specialists were also asked to indicate, in their opinion, the "order of priority for Mexico of the first six initiatives of the Alliance". These are the initiatives promoted since its launch:

a) strengthen and improve the implementation of international humanitarian law (Humanitarian Call for Action); b) introduce binding rules for the regulation of cyberspace (Paris Call for Trust and Security in Cyberspace); c) promote global access to reliable information for democracy (International Partnership for Information and Democracy); d) request regular reporting from the UN on the consequences of climate change for international peace and security (Joint Position on Climate and Security); e) promote gender equality in sub-Saharan Africa through education policy (Equality at the Center Initiative); f) promote an international regulatory framework for the development of lethal autonomous weapons systems (11 Principles on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems).[19]

There is considerable agreement among the surveyed specialists as to which initiative is the highest priority for Mexico (number 1) and which is the lowest priority (number 6). As shown in Table 2, strengthening international humanitarian law was ranked number 1 by the majority of participants overall (34.3%) and ranked first by every age range, followed by monitoring the consequences of climate change for peace and security (20.3%). The initiative on access to information occupied a distant third place (15.7%).

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Table 2.
Percentage of people who evaluated each Alliance for Multilateralism initiative as the number 1 priority, by age range

	International humanitarian law	Cyberspace	Access to information	UN report on climate change	Gender in sub-Saharan Africa	Lethal autonomous weapon systems
25-35 years	30.6%	5.9%	29.4%	21.1%	9.4%	3.5%
36-45 years	30%	18.5%	3.7%	29.6%	7.4%	11.1%
46-55 years	45.8%	25%	0%	16.7%	8.3%	4.2%
56-65 years	35%	10%	5%	10%	15%	25%
65 years and older	43.8%	12.5%	0%	18.7%	12.5%	12.5%
GENERAL (not broken down)	34.3%	11.6%	15.7%	20.3%	9.9%	8.1%

By contrast, Table 3 shows that the promotion of gender equality in sub-Saharan Africa was ranked as the lowest-priority initiative for Mexico by almost half of respondents (42.4%), followed by the regulation of lethal autonomous weapons (29.7%). The first result is unsurprising, being a very specific project in a region perceived as distant to Mexico.

Table 3.
Percentage of people who evaluated each Alliance for Multilateralism initiative as the number 6 priority, by age range.

	International humanitarian law	Cyberspace	Access to information	UN report on climate change	Gender in sub-Saharan Africa	Lethal autonomous weapon systems
25-35 years	9.4%	8.2%	2.4%	3.5%	44.7%	31.8%
36-45 years	7.4%	0%	0%	25.9%	44.4%	22.2%
46-55 years	12.5%	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	37.5%	37.5%
56-65 years	20%	5%	15%	10%	35%	15%
65 years and older	0%	12.5%	0%	6.3%	43.7%	37.5%
GENERAL (not broken down)	9.9%	6.4%	3.5%	8.1%	42.4%	29.7%

Lastly, the specialists were asked whether or not they support Mexico's accession to the Alliance for Multilateralism. In this case, the consensus is remarkable: 91.3% said they agreed, 0.6% disagreed and 8.1% said that they did not know. The very high approval rate for its participation in this multilateral initiative, despite having limited knowledge of it, seems to be indicative of a common sense instilled in the elites with an interest in foreign policy: multilateralism is good for Mexico. And this is expressed in the diplomatic tradition discussed in this text.

Biographies

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"[...] initiatives like the Alliance for Multilateralism merit consideration by Panama, which for its track record and renewed commitment to multilateralism, is obliged to play a more spirited role in the global agenda."

Panama and its confidence in multilateralism

Alonso E. Illueca

Introduction

Since joining the international community, the Republic of Panama has been characterized by an internationalist vocation and a strong commitment to multilateralism. This commitment is so deeply rooted in Panama that it predates the Republic itself, going back to its departmental era, when it was part of Gran Colombia. Since that time, multilateralism has found its expression in Panamanian ideology and one of its earliest manifestations can be seen in the Panama Congress of 1826, known also as the Amphictyonic Congress, which sowed the seed of the Bolivarian dream of the economic and political integration of the American States.

The Panamanian understanding of multilateralism has evolved over time, embracing notions of effective global governance, models of interstate cooperation in international politics, and common foreign policy measures with other states. In this sense, Panama's relationship with multilateralism has acquired a unique place in the development, management, and implementation of its foreign policy.

Effective global governance and the UN system

Panama's internationalism is expressed in its membership of the two major global governance projects in the history of humanity: the League of Nations (LON) and the United Nations (UN).

With the end of World War I, Panama joined the LON project and participated in its first assembly on 15 November 1920 as an original member.[1] While Panama's LON membership was not recognized by Colombia (Panama's admission to the LON did not lead to state recognition by Colombia),[2] its membership would nonetheless play a fundamental role in establishing diplomatic relations between the two states in 1924. The exposure of the young state to a global forum created a de facto situation since, despite Colombia's wishes, Panama was already part of the fledgling international community of states.

During World War II and after its end, Panama would play an important role at the UN as one of the signatories to the 1942 United Nations Declaration establishing a military alliance and would later become an original member of the UN. At the San Francisco Conference, Panama's delegation made important contributions to the various committees, including those formulated by Dr. Ricardo J. Alfaro regarding the incorporation of the term "human rights" in the UN Charter. Dr. Alfaro also added important input to the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which gave substance to the term outlined in the UN Charter.[3]

By participating in both initiatives, Panama can be said to have joined a system of global governance devised by the LON and continued by the UN. The system, while imperfect, has its basis in international law and its fundamental rule is the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes through multilateral forums or judicial channels, prohibiting the use of armed force in international relations. The full implementation of this global governance project will depend on the will of the states and their compliance with international law.

To date, Panama remains committed to a multilateralism centered around effective global governance through its active participation in the Global Governance Group (3G).[4] An informal group of small and medium-sized states, 3G seeks to promote joint G20 and UN actions by bringing together their agendas in order to revive the global governance project.

Interstate cooperation in international politics: the Torrijos-Carter Treaties model

Multilateralism has also been implemented by Panama as an effective model for interstate cooperation in the international arena. The foremost example in this regard is Panama's decision to take its dispute with the United States of America (USA) over the Canal Zone to the multilateral arena. Panama's new strategy, implemented from 1972, was to take its aspiration and legitimate right to recover the Canal Zone to multilateral

forums such as the UN and the Organization of American States (OAS). This required a diplomatic offensive of the highest order that contributed to a considerable number of states sympathizing with Panama's cause.

At the UN, Panama actively participated in the organization's chief agencies. In the General Assembly, it promoted the decolonization agenda, inserting the canal issue as a key example. On the Security Council, Panama played a key role in the international peace and security agenda, occupying on three occasions between 1972 and 1982 one of the two non-permanent seats on the Council for the Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC). In other words, for six of those ten years, Panama was on the Security Council.

In 1973, Panama persuaded the UN Security Council to meet in Panama City (it has only met outside its headquarters in New York, USA, on three other occasions: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1972; Geneva, Switzerland, 1990; and Nairobi, Kenya, 2004).[5] At that meeting, Panama was able to raise the Panama-US dispute over the Canal Zone. With a large number of non-member states on the Security Council, including representatives of GRULAC and the African Group, Panama and a number of other states proposed a draft resolution that obtained thirteen votes in favor, one abstention and one vote against: the US veto.[6]

The diplomatic success of moving the Security Council from its headquarters to host the session in the territory of a Member State for the second time in its history was undoubtedly a crowning moment for Panama's diplomacy and the drivers of multilateralism. This later led to the achievement of the pursued objective: the conclusion of the Torrijos-Carter Treaties in 1977, which abrogated the Hay–Bunau-Varilla Treaty of 1903. The fact that the Panama Canal issue had been discussed in a multilateral forum gave a strong boost to the Panamanian agenda, and global pressure on the US began to mount.

In addition, the international backing of Panama in its quest to recover the Canal led to an increase in the country's participation in multilateral forums and in the international peace and security agenda. In 1973, following the Yom Kippur War, the UN's Second Emergency Force was formed, to which Panama contributed 406 military observers. Similarly, in 1976, Panama joined the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), a forum where there was widespread sympathy and support for the Canal cause.[7]

It is crucial to note that the Torrijos-Carter Treaties have a multilateral component: the Protocol to the Treaty concerning the Permanent Neutrality and Operation of the Panama Canal, which to date has nearly forty signatory states. In this Protocol, the signatory states adhere to the regime of neutrality of the Canal and adopt a shared foreign policy measure: to observe and respect that regime.

Common collective foreign policy measures: international law in action

The model of negotiation adopted to conclude the Torrijos-Carter Treaties has been replicated by Panama on a number of occasions. Specifically, with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the multilateral mechanism served to pressure the US into signing an agreement by which it committed to cleaning up areas contaminated with old chemical munitions on the island of San José, Panama.[8] Hence, this is a functional multilateralism successfully used as a tool to promote common collective measures centered on achieving shared the legal goals and obligations of states, in this case, of disarmament.

Another initiative of note was the negotiation process for the Contadora Group and its efforts to promote peace in Central America. The mediation, led by Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela and Panama, sought to end the armed conflict in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua through specific commitments to peace, democratization, regional security and economic cooperation. The Contadora Group later expanded to become the Rio Group (1989-2010).[9]

Similarly, through its participation in regional agencies and integration projects, Panama has developed common foreign policy measures with other states, which have shared content, goals and methods. One of the most notable examples in this regard is Panama's participation in the Central American Integration System (SICA), through which the Central American states have developed basic guidelines and a methodology to shape a new regional security model and promote the sustained economic development of the region, without overlooking the defense of democratic institutionality and respect for human rights.[10]

Another key example is the OAS and its community standards of democratic governance and respect for human rights. On the subject of democracy, OAS Member States have adopted a series of instruments to prohibit participation in activities organized or sponsored by the organization by governments coming to power through coups or electoral fraud.[11]

As a result of this, most states in the hemisphere have developed in their foreign policy common doctrines of non-recognition of de facto governments and, in the event of a breakdown of democratic order, they organize collective initiatives for its restoration. One important example in this regard is Panama's participation in the Lima Group and the Contact Group, which promote the implementation of joint foreign policy measures among their Member States to address the breakdown of constitutional order in Venezuela.[12]

The multilateralism implemented by the states of the American hemisphere in the framework of the Inter-American System of Human Rights is also a noteworthy

example. Based on their chief instruments[13] and their courts, the nations comprising the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) together with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, have developed effective foreign policy measures whose content is defined by binding legal instruments with one clear objective: full respect for human rights. They also have a single shared method: conventionality control, which is manifested through the decisions of the IACHR and obliges all Member States of the Court, regardless of their participation in the case, to make the appropriate adaptations to their domestic law to ensure respect for the violated human right, as provided for in each decision handed down by the Court.

There are diverse blocs and groups of states that play a fundamental role within the UN system and its specialized agencies. These promote specific agendas and propose common policies, depending on the nature and representativeness of each body or agency. They include the Group of 77, the NAM, GRULAC and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). In multilateral forums, Panama tends to adhere to the pronouncements and collective positions expressed by each of the groups to which it belongs, implementing common collective foreign policy measures.

"Panama Coopera 2030" Plan

In the past, Panama was one of the group of countries that received international aid and cooperation. However, its transition in 2011 to a middle- to high-income country,[14] and in 2019 to a high-income country[15] meant that it was no longer eligible for a significant proportion of international development cooperation. This, combined with its commitment to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), led Panama, in 2017, to develop its national cooperation plan "Panama Coopera 2030".

The plan proposes a series of international cooperation strategies, targets and instruments with a focus on the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

Through the Panama Coopera 2030 plan, Panama redefined its international cooperation profile with a new strategic orientation focused on the SDGs and its geographic location to become an offeror of cooperation.[16] Panama's cooperation offer is centered on economic growth, development and social inclusion, scientific education and innovation, environmental sustainability, justice, state and governance. This offer supports a number of cooperation models, including South-South, South-North, triangular and multilateral.[17]

Panama is also still a recipient of international cooperation, often through the multilateral route. As a SICA member, for example, Panama continues to benefit from the regional aid and cooperation programs of international organizations such as the EU or other cooperating states such as the US or Spain.

Panama in international organizations

Panama is a member of the UN and actively participates in its main bodies and specialized agencies, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Labour Organization, the International Maritime Organization, the World Intellectual Property Organization, the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Telecommunications Union, and the Universal Postal Union. Panama plays an active role at the UN and has a long tradition of leadership within its various agencies. The non-permanent GRULAC seat on the Security Council has been held five times by Panama. Panama currently holds one of the 54 seats of the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Likewise, nationals of Panama have held high-profile positions within the UN, as is the case of Dr. Jorge E. Illueca, who was elected President of the General Assembly, and Dr. Ricardo J. Alfaro, who was a judge and Vice-President of the International Court of Justice.

Panama is a Member State of the OPCW, on whose Executive Council it serves, and of the International Atomic Energy Agency, where it works to foster the goal of disarmament. It is likewise a member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the International Criminal Court.

At the regional level, Panama is a Member State of a number of agencies, including the OAS, the CELAC, the Association of Caribbean States, the Organization of Ibero-American States, the SICA, the Central American Parliament (Parlacen), the Latin American Parliament (Parlatino), and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Panama's multilateral cooperation from 2000 to 2020

With the return of the Panama Canal to Panama's hands on December 31, 1999, following the Torrijos-Carter Treaties, the former Canal Zone disappeared. The term *disappeared* is used here because, through a gradual process begun on October 1, 1979 and completed on December 31, 1999, a total of 1,474 km2 was returned to Panamanian territory. Besides the Panama Canal, these territories were home to various administrative entities of the Canal and the colonial enclave, as well as military bases intended to defend the Canal but also used for other geopolitical purposes.

Paradoxically, the former US military base Fort Clayton today houses a large number of regional and sub-regional offices of multilateral agencies, owing to the fact that, following the creation of the City of Knowledge Foundation, the National Government passed Decree-Law 6 of 1998 to transfer to that Foundation the 120 hectares of Fort Clayton.[18] Through the City of Knowledge and with the support of the National

Government between 1999 and 2004, multilateral agencies were invited and encouraged to consider the area as a potential site for their offices. This strategy of attracting multilateral bodies was continued by subsequent administrations and materialized through Panama's transformation into the headquarters of a significant number of UN regional offices and programs, including the Central America Regional Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Regional Office for Central America, Cuba and Mexico of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the Regional Office of the Disaster Relief Program of the Pan American Health Organization and WHO, and the UN Development Program's Regional Service Centre, among others.[19] The United Nations system also has national offices in Panama. Other agencies such as the International Organization for Migration and the International Committee of the Red Cross have likewise established headquarters in Panama. In 2000, the Tenth Ibero-American Summit was held in Panama City.

Panama's participation in multilateral cooperation continued during the 2004-2009 term of government. Highlights included Panama's election to the UN Security Council for the biennium 2007-2008 as the consensus candidate.[20] The headquarters of Parlatino were also relocated to Panama with the signing of the site agreement in 2007.[21]

The 2009-2014 period saw Panama's failed attempt to withdraw from Parlacen. The Central American Court of Justice ruled that Panama could neither withdraw nor denounce the Parlacen Treaty, a decision that Panama rejected.[22] However, the Supreme Court of Justice of Panama declared that the procedure used was unconstitutional and Panama remained in Parlacen.[23] In 2011, the 124th IPU Assembly was held in Panama City[24] and, in 2013, the 23rd Ibero-American Summit was held in Panama City.

The 2014-2019 administration coordinated strategies centered on the promotion of multilateral cooperation through the development of a national cooperation plan. In this regard, one of the flagship projects was the establishment of a Regional Logistics Centre for Humanitarian Assistance in Panama.[25] At the UN, Panama was elected to sit, for the first time in its history, on the organization's Human Rights Council for the period 2016-2017.[26] The seventh Summit of the Americas also took place in Panama City in 2015.

The current administration (2019-2024) has focused the bulk of its efforts on addressing multilateral measures adopted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the EU and the Financial Action Task Force to include Panama on the gray and black lists of non-cooperative jurisdictions. The role of multilateralism in Panama's new international strategy has yet to be defined in this regard. Nonetheless, Panama's response to the COVID-19 pandemic centered on multilateral cooperation through the coordination, supply and channeling of humanitarian aid from Panama to the Americas has given us an insight as to the potential position of the current administration.[27]

Panama: working towards effective multilateralism

Effective multilateralism serves the best interests of humanity. Hence, Panama's foreign policy and international strategy must pursue common and shared goals, both globally and regionally. In this regard, it is essential for Panama to share and replicate its successful experiences and contribute to the effective implementation of human rights and community rules of democratic governance through global and regional mechanisms. The legal instruments are already in place and now their strict application through international law has become urgent.

Panama must reactivate itself on the agenda of international peace and security, especially considering its candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2025-2026. In view of the multidimensional nature of international security, and building on the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, Panama must incorporate a humanitarian strategy into its foreign policy based around its National Cooperation Plan and the Regional Logistics Center for Humanitarian Assistance. Nor can Panama afford to ignore the sustainable development agenda, for which it must integrate its national programs into the global agenda and vice versa, through the adoption of a multidimensional, multisectoral and participatory approach.

Effective multilateralism requires effective multilateral bodies. Consequently, Panama must continue to participate in the process of renewal, transformation and revitalization of organizations such as the UN and the OAS. It must also reaffirm the UN's place at the center of the world order. In the light of the resurgent unilateralism and isolationism and the many challenges inherent to globalization, effective multilateralism underpinned by an effective regulatory apparatus has become a pressing need. Given this situation, initiatives like the Alliance for Multilateralism merit consideration by Panama, which, for its track record and renewed commitment to multilateralism,[28] needs to play a more spirited role in the global agenda.

Biography

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"There is also the outstanding task of teaching in Peru to ensure that the population is fully aware of what multilateralism means and the benefits it brings. This is a responsibility that the Government must assume, specifically through state media."

The Peruvian perspective

Francisco Belaunde Matossian

Introduction

International relations on the global stage have been going through unsettling times for a number of years. In general terms, there has been a resurgence of nationalism that could be further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.[1] The most worrying aspect of this panorama, and clearly related to the above, is the weakening of multilateralism, which has led to increased unpredictability and uncertainty, bolder violations of international law, declining solidarity with the weak, and a reversal of joint actions to address the common problems of humanity, in addition to less economic progress and even impoverishment. In this context, the Franco-German initiative of the Alliance for Multilateralism has proved very welcome and deserves to be applauded and supported. Peru has joined the alliance, in consonance with its tradition of multilateralism. In the following lines, I will refer briefly to the most relevant aspects of Peruvian politics and its society's attitude towards it.

Peru's position

A) The Government

a) A tradition that favors multilateralism

From its early beginnings, Peru has given many indications of its commitment to multilateralism.

For example, it was a member of the Society of Nations created after World War I.

Subsequently, Peru was among the signatories of the 1944 Bretton Woods agreement and is a founding member of the United Nations. Within the latter, two of its most distinguished diplomats have held the most senior offices. The first, Víctor Andrés Belaunde, chaired the General Assembly in 1959, while the second, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, served as Secretary-General from 1982 to 1991. Moreover, the lawyer and former president of the Republic José Bustamante y Rivero served as President of the International Court of Justice between 1967 and 1969. Thus, remarkably, three Peruvians have been at the head of the main institutions of the UN system.

This situation repeats itself somewhat at the regional level, since Peru, also a founding member of the Organization of American States (OAS), has been represented in high-level positions within the inter-American institutional system. For example, lawyer and former foreign minister Diego García-Sayán was President of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights between 2010 and 2014, while former justice minister Francisco Eguiguren was President of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights between March 2017 and March 2018. By contrast, attempts by Peruvian figures to occupy the seat of Secretary-General of the OAS have thus far proved unsuccessful. During the 2020-2025 period, the Government supported the candidacy of former deputy minister of foreign affairs, Hugo de Zela, who was nonetheless forced to give up the campaign as he failed to rally sufficient support among countries.

Special mention must be made here of the leadership action to support democracy that has been carried out consistently by Peru mainly during the 1980s, coinciding with the end of the military dictatorship that governed the country between 1968 and 1980. We can highlight three major moments in this regard:

The first was the initiative adopted in 1985 by the then-President, Alan García, to form a group in support of the Contadora Group created two years earlier by Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela and Panama to help end the armed conflicts ravaging Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, based on democratic principles. The second was the Lima Group, a quartet composed of Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil as well as Peru. Both were the seeds of what was later called the Rio Group, which drew together all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean under a single umbrella to address diverse common issues and problems affecting the region. This Group, in turn, paved the way for the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

The second milestone was the Inter-American Democratic Charter promoted by Peru at the Special Session of the OAS General Assembly held in Lima on September 11, 2001, which also coincided with the restoration of democratic institutionality following the end of the authoritarian rule of Alberto Fujimori a year earlier. This document binds its member countries to respect democracy and the rule of law under the penalty of sanctions.

The third was the creation of the Lima Group in 2017 at the initiative of the then-President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski in order to find solutions to the Venezuela problem. In other words, Peru decided to adopt a leading role in the defense of principles and values, and specifically, in this case, those of democracy, a commendable feat. In matters of integration, Peru is a founding member of the Andean Community, set up in 1969 under the original name of *Pacto Andino* (the Andean Pact), headquartered in Lima.

b) Renewed momentum for multilateralism

The foundations of Peru's economic upswing were laid back in the 1990s but it was consolidated at the turn of this century. At this point, the country began to increase its activity on the multilateral stage in very diverse areas, both regionally and globally. In trade and economics, it was the initiative of Peruvian President Alan García that led to the creation on April 28, 2011 of the Pacific Alliance, composed of Peru, Colombia, Chile and Mexico.[2] On February 4, 2016, the Peruvian government signed the Trans-Pacific Partnership with several countries in Oceania, Asia and the Americas. Subsequently, following the withdrawal of the United States on the order of Donald Trump, the treaty was amended. The Peruvian authorities have worked tirelessly for Lima to host summits and meetings such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum, of which it is a member, held in 2008 and 2016. This is in addition to the meeting of World Bank and IMF governors in 2015, the Summit of South American-Arab Countries in 2012, and the European Union-Latin America and the Caribbean Summit in 2008. All of the above is circumscribed within a policy of open trade and integration that includes the signing of trade agreements with countries as diverse as the United States and China, the European Union and Mercosur, of which Peru is an associate member.

In politics, it was in the city of Cusco that the South American Community of Nations was created in 2004, later to become Unasur. In this now-defunct organization, Peru distinguished itself by advocating positions of consensus as opposed to the conflicting ideological positions of other member countries. It is now a member of the Forum for the Progress and Development of South America (Prosur), created little over a year ago at the initiative of Chilean President Sebastián Piñera to take the lead as the subcontinental organization. Peru has also been a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council on five occasions, most recently from 2017 to 2019. In addition, Peruvian soldiers regularly form part of the Blue Beret contingents in diverse parts of the world.

In environmental matters, the hosting of the World Climate Change Conference (COP 20) in Lima 2014 paved the way for the signing of the Paris Agreement the following year under the leadership, accepted by all parties, of the then-Environment Minister of Peru, Manuel Pulgar Vidal. Along these same lines, the summit of seven Amazonian countries was held at the initiative of Peru and Colombia on September 7 last year in the

Colombian city of Leticia to coordinate actions in response to the forest fires that had ravaged vast expanses of rainforest at the time.

In migration matters, Peru signed the Global Compact for Migration, adopted in December 2018 in Marrakech, Morocco, ignoring the dissenting voices of many countries (including Chile) to retract its initial adherence;[3] voices which, in the context of the massive influx of Venezuelans, also echoed internally. Interestingly, there has been a continuity in trade and economics across the different governments that has coincided with the maintenance of the same macroeconomic policy for the past thirty years, aside from certain nuances.

The current administration of President Martín Vizcarra, adopts the same line, as he clearly ratified during his speech at the 73rd UN General Assembly on September 25, 2018.[4] The decision to join the Alliance for Multilateralism, launched by Germany and France, is a clear indication of that position. There is, then, a state vision that attaches great importance to multilateralism, both regionally and globally and in its different aspects: cooperation, trade openness, financial institutionality and a degree of predictability resulting from the regulatory order, which is not perfect but of value nonetheless. All this serves the interests of a country like Peru, which is not among the global powers. Multilateralist activism allows it to build a degree of influential capacity that is certainly of interest.

In parallel, alongside its pursuit of national goals, there are concerns about the prevalence of values such as democracy, human rights and solidarity, as well as the common destiny of humanity and the planet.

Naturally, this does not mean that Peru has never rejected a multilateral effort; it may specifically refuse to sign a treaty in the global interest for reasons that it may consider unjustified, above and beyond its sovereign right to make its own foreign policy decisions. One case that comes to mind is that of the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea, which, paradoxically, adopts many Peruvian approaches to the subject. However, Peru refused to sign it because it could not accept the thesis of the 200-mile territorial sea, which had been the country's workhorse since the 1940s, and which ultra-nationalist sectors transformed into religious dogma, thereby rejecting the intermediate formula contained in the Exclusive Economic Zone Treaty of up to the 200th mile.[5] Interestingly, Peru subsequently used the provisions of the Convention to presents its arguments before the International Court in The Hague during the maritime dispute with Chile, which ended in January 2014, based on the fact that they had adopted the status of international custom. After that episode, it made sense for Peru to adhere to the treaty, as many scholars and former diplomats proposed. However, policymakers appear to be overwhelmed by the fear of being accused of "betrayal of the homeland" and "offending the heroes" in manifestos posted on social and other media.

B) Society

The media typically dedicates little space to international news, except in the case of high-impact events such as, for example, rising tensions between the US and North Korea at certain times, leading it to fantasize about the possible outbreak of World War III and publishing apocalyptic front pages. Nonetheless, a large sector of the population does keep abreast of foreign affairs and the country's international politics and have opinions on them. In academic circles, they are growing in importance, albeit slowly. More and more universities offering the International Relations degree are joining in.

In general, there is a positive view of multilateralism per se that echoes the state vision, although the need for reform is also mentioned.[6] However, as in other countries, certain sectors on opposing political shores criticize international institutionality, the expansion of "gender ideology" and "leftist" ideas, the mass influx of Venezuelan immigrants, the imposition of "neoliberalism" and/or acting as pawns of China or the United States, among other grievances. Sovereignty, or at least an understanding of it, is the flag hoisted when criticisms are raised. The controversial performance of the World Health Organization (WHO) during the coronavirus pandemic undoubtedly fueled the offensive. While not necessarily demanding that Peru withdraw from this and other organizations, a number of voices are calling for corrective action.[7]

Opinions aside, the interaction of various actors with international institutions can be used as a measure for society's relationship with multilateralism. First, mention should be made of the human rights NGOs that frequently seek assistance from the Inter-American System of Human Rights, of which Peru is a member. The State of Peru is frequently brought before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights because of excesses committed by members of its law enforcement agencies against the terrorist organizations Shining Path (Spanish: Sendero Luminoso) and Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (Spanish: Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru, MRTA), which cases were archived by the judiciary. However, the Court annulled several trials against the subversive groups that had been held during the government of Alberto Fujimori with diminished safeguards for their defense, ordering their retrial with respect for the rule of law. In addition, the issue of bringing back the death penalty is a recurrent one in public debate, but it comes up against the American Convention on Human Rights, which forbids it. Peru is then asked to denounce it, unsuccessfully. Even the Fujimori government did not go that far; it was used as a mere threat and then quietly shelved.

Other entities that use multilateralism are the trade unions, which take their grievances and complaints to the International Labour Organization (ILO), whose Latin American and Caribbean headquarters are in Lima, incidentally. Indigenous

and native communities, their federations, and the NGOs that take up their defense have also formed ties with this international institution. In particular, these groups seek to enforce Convention No. 169 - ILO, which lays down the regulations protecting these sectors of the population and the obligation to consult them before starting hydrocarbon exploitation and mining activities in areas where they live.

Environmental organizations also use multilateralism, and particularly the 2015 Paris Agreement, to push their agenda. It should be noted that Peru is home to some of the richest biodiversity in the world and, according to international experts, is among the countries most impacted by climate change.[8] As elsewhere, disputes arise with the economic fabric, specifically with mining industries for the creation of ecological reserves, for example.

However, business is also appreciative of multilateralism, especially insofar as concerns trade integration. It is not just about the Andean Community space, exploited mostly by small and medium-sized producers; the creation of the Pacific Alliance was obviously greeted with enthusiasm too. There is general support for opening up the country and the integrationist policy of successive governments, since this has allowed Peru to conquer new markets, especially for its agricultural exports, which have grown to be its core activity. Of course, there are some who lean towards a degree of protectionism, especially the textile industries with their concerns over competition from China, along with rice, sugar, maize and dairy producers. Indeed, Peru was brought before the World Trade Organization (WTO) by the government of Guatemala, which claimed that the established price bands violated the principles of free trade and competition. The organization's dispute settlement body ultimately ruled against Peru.

Beyond trade, Peru's economic fabric naturally regards as positive the country's membership of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, along with other multilateral financial institutions. It recently lobbied for the country to be admitted to the OECD, so far unsuccessfully.

In addition to all that has been mentioned in this section, it is relevant here to refer back to a time when the whole of Peru could appreciate the benefits of multilateralism: when the ruling of the International Court of Justice in The Hague was read out partly in favor of its position in the dispute with Chile for control over a large expanse of maritime territory.[9] The ruling was celebrated as a great event, particularly because it was a victory against Peru's southern neighbor and, as such, had the effect of soothing the national spirit, still begrudged by the defeat at the hands of Chilean forces in the Pacific War 140 years previous that saw the loss of two provinces. The revenge-driven impetus cultivated by certain sectors was reasonably appeased and, once Chile's initial irritation had subsided, led to improved bilateral relations which were already intense but now less affected by the burden of the past.

C) The reception of the Franco-German Alliance for Multilateralism initiative

As stated in the introduction, the Peruvian government is a firm supporter of the initiative. It attended the conference held on April 17 on combating the COVID-19 pandemic and signed the final communiqué stressing, among other points, the need to defend and maintain multilateralism in the current context and in general.[10]

Along these lines, Peru confirms its support for WHO, which is most welcome, for we must leave to one side the mistakes that it may have made but which cast no doubt on the importance of its role. Nonetheless, it is also true that the news of the creation of the Alliance and its meeting have gone unnoticed by the population. There has been virtually no echo in the media or on social networks, nor even in circles familiar with international relations, at least to date.

Conclusions

It is clear from the above that Peru has a serious commitment to multilateralism, not least because it is in the country's interests. And this is how it should be, since Peru is not a great power and has not yet achieved full development aside from the progress made in recent decades. It therefore relies on the international community to reach a number of goals and address the challenges that lie ahead. However, Peru does not simply seek to use multilateralism to its advantage; the conviction, as pointed out above, that we must act in defense of universally recognized values and principles, particularly those of democracy, also weighs heavily.

And there are added concerns to extend our solidarity, on the understanding that we are a community of peoples, beyond our differences, and that our respective fates are therefore interlinked. We have recently seen the resurfacing of nationalist impulses and reflexes, even – lamentably – at the pinnacle of power in the United States, a world power that previously, for better or for worse and despite the contradictions noted, had spearheaded multilateralism. It is vital, therefore, that no effort is spared to turn this trend around. This was no doubt the motivation of the governments of Germany and France in launching the Alliance for Multilateralism and of all the countries that have subsequently subscribed their initiative. There is a lot of work ahead, since the road is rather steep. There is also the outstanding task of teaching in Peru to ensure that the population is fully aware of what multilateralism means and the benefits it brings. This is a responsibility that the Government must assume, specifically through state media. However, it is also the job of academic circles, universities and organizations with a formative role.

Biography

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"We are heading towards a new multilateralism that will guide digitization policy in order to address challenges in a collaborative and collective manner, with actions rather than mere discussion."

A new multilateralism to address the challenges of digitalization

Elaine Ford

Internet access and digitalization are global processes now affecting over half of the world's population. The Internet and emerging technologies have transformed the way individuals relate to each other, how societies interact and how public policies are designed. The interconnected world, alongside all the good things it offers, also poses several challenges.

So how do we address them in a digital space that transcends borders? Multilateralism is a solution, but it needs a new approach taking account of the particularities of the twenty-first century.

Introduction

Internet access and digitalization are global processes now affecting over half of the world's population. Connectivity is a priority in international forums and in the public policies promoted by governments.

The Internet and emerging technologies have transformed the way individuals relate to each other, how they exercise their rights and liberties, how the diverse agents of societies interact, how public policies are designed, and so on and so forth. The Internet is here to stay and has demonstrated its revolutionary power to change patterns of behavior, habits, and customs established over decades and even centuries.

Despite resistance from skeptics, the Internet has demonstrated its power to transform the lives of individuals and at no time has this been more clearly

evidenced than in the global COVID-19 pandemic or novel coronavirus in early 2020. Humanity almost entirely shifted its offline life to the online realm. Work, education, shopping, conferences, banking, sports, recreation, and many other activities were all confined to Web 2.0 and all the digital tools created to meet the needs of populations. Governments have invested considerable resources in setting up communication channels, web portals, social media management and messaging apps to deliver information to their citizens in a timely and effective way. The Internet has clearly been a great ally in addressing the health crisis in the best way.

There are countless benefits to the interconnected world. In fact, the Internet was created for the purpose of serving humanity. "The Internet is an extraordinary and powerful tool for building trust and transparency, but it is the people who will make a difference,"[1] said Vinton Cerf, one of the founding fathers of the Internet at a conference I attended in the city of Washington D.C. Cerf's wise words were intended to explain how an instrument created with the best intentions could have a very positive impact if used responsibly, but it would be up to us human beings to determine its use – for good or for bad.

Thus, alongside all the benefits of the Internet, a number of challenges have arisen in recent years: new scenarios in the digital arena that also pose threats to individuals, governments and societies. The risks of disinformation, censorship, blocking, hate speech, exclusion, surveillance, cybercrime, cyberbullying, anonymity and data privacy are a latent reality that increasingly poses challenges to states in terms of how to most effectively address and resolve them. This is no mean feat because these practices and crimes often transcend borders and evolve as quickly as new technologies are developed; therefore, they are not regulated or there is insufficient case-law to determine how to address these adverse situations.

Algorithm manipulation and artificial intelligence are also highly sensitive areas today, considering that in both cases these technologies can be used to undermine political systems and destabilize democracies. Advances in digitalization can entail complex scenarios that have already been demonstrated by various events around the globe, but which are nonetheless difficult to foresee and even harder to address in order to find a solution. These are global threats that involve many factors, complicating the methods for solving them.

Could multilateralism be a solution? The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) is held each year within the framework of the United Nations. At the 14th IGF, held in Berlin in November 2019, Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel, together with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, agreed on the need to strengthen multilateralism and collective responsibility to address the risks and challenges posed by the current technological revolution.

It is nonetheless interesting to reflect on the nature of multilateralism that might be used, since it is well known in international relations that multilateralism is currently going through a difficult phase. A year before the IGF in Berlin, at the 13th Forum held in Paris, President Emmanuel Macron highlighted the importance of devising a new multilateralism adapted to address the current risks posed by digitalization. Macron was emphatic in stating that the IGF requires more resources, a more robust structure and high political relevance in the UN system.[2]

Internet governance has a strong multidisciplinary nature, covering a range of aspects from very technical to public policy concerns; it therefore requires the active participation of the many stakeholders that ensure the development and evolution of the Internet (also known as a multi-stakeholder approach). This approach includes governments, private corporations, civil society, and the technical and academic community. All these actors are involved in international discussions and forums to shape the future of the Internet.

Clearly, this is an excellent starting point for rethinking how to strengthen multilateralism or how to conceive new forms of multilateralism that adopt the features of today's international politics, in which other actors relevant to digital decisions are invited to the debate. Another question that needs to be asked is whether Latin America will be ready to take on these new challenges at the international level; whether it has the political will to address these issues; whether they are priorities for Latin America; whether government bureaucracies can be adapted, and whether they would act in coordination to address the global challenges of the digital age.

The phases of multilateralism and the role of the OAS

In international relations, multilateralism has taken on several facets, whether global, regional or subregional. The diverse events that have characterized certain time periods have been crucial to the development of the different forms that multilateralism has taken over the past 30 years. From the end of the cold war to the present, there have been boom years, times of crisis; times of defiance and tension in states themselves.

Back in 2000, Francisco Rojas Aravena stated: "The turn-of-the-century scenario is characterized by globalization as processes and by a crisis in multilateralism that is affecting the fundamental structure of planetary institutionality. It is a profound crisis that requires an effective rethink of the multilateral system. Without efficient multilateralism, cooperation wanes and the dangers of the use of force are increased. Evidence of the crisis of multilateralism can be seen in the United Nations system and also in subregional organizations."[3]

In the post-Cold War era, multilateral international organizations faced a major challenge: to rethink how they should operate on a different international stage with new needs, apprehensions, priorities and, most of all, with the participation of new actors that were just beginning to emerge. Large international corporations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), among others, also began to play a leading role that displaced traditional summit diplomacy. In addition to all this, the strong presence of global media and progressive increase in Internet access have a direct impact on the issues addressed in major international forums within the framework of the UN, EU, OAS, among others.

The twenty-first century arrived at the very peak of globalization, which also changed the way states intervened at the multilateral level. Integration and interdependence gained momentum in international relations. Borders were blurred by the increase in activities related to finance, trade, politics and social, corporate and cultural affairs, among others.

On this topic, in 2000, Dirk Messner warned in his book *Challenges of Globalization* that "States, and non-state actors too, are increasingly powerless in disconnecting and disengaging from events in other parts of the world. A global system of economic, political, ecological and cultural relations engages states, businesses, organizations and individuals themselves in an increasingly interdependent fabric."[4] The presence of new non-state actors in a multilateral global space is clear, but it is one where everyone has something to contribute to a pluralistic and effective debate.

Latin America is no stranger to this reality. It is part of this global process that is speeding along. The inter-American system, through the Organization of American States (OAS) with its 35 Member States, is the most emblematic multilateral body to define the hemisphere as a bloc and has been committed to multilateralism since its founding. Although criticized on many occasions for its inability to react powerfully to situations affecting democracy and human rights in some countries in the region, it remains the main regional body representing states and their governments. Civil society is also gaining in strength and plays a very active role in certain areas, including the Summits of the Americas, where it participates in thematic proposals and on the issues of the regional agenda.

Nonetheless, in digital policy matters, there is currently no international framework treaty or instrument in the OAS with a binding effect on the States that lays down regional guidelines for digitalization. Over the past twenty years, however, various declarations and resolutions have been drafted that seek to strengthen cooperation and promote public policies in areas related to Internet access and use.

One example of these is the Declaration of Santo Domingo: Governance and Development in the Knowledge Society, approved on June 6, 2006 at the thirty-sixth

regular session of the General Assembly. It refers to the development of information and communication technologies (ICT) for the purpose of strengthening individual freedoms and safeguarding the peoples of the hemisphere. Similarly, statements have been made by ministers of science and technology, the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL) and at the various Summits of the Americas, specifically in Miami (1994), Quebec (2001) and Mar del Plata, Argentina (2005).

In addition, the OAS has established working areas on certain topics, which have developed coordinated action plans, programs and initiatives with member countries. These areas are:

Science and technology: In response to the challenge of increasing the scientific and technological capacities of the region, the OAS contributes through its Inter-American Committee of Science and Technology (COMCYT) to the formulation and implementation of policies and initiatives to promote science, technology and innovation within the framework of solidarity cooperation.[5]

eGovernment: eGovernment, also known as digital government, uses information and communication technologies to help governments to be more accessible to voters, improve services, be more efficient and be increasingly connected to other parts of society. The OAS supports eGovernment because it allows for greater access to information and, in turn, improved transparency and better relations with citizens. It has an eGovernment network in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as an eGovernment program.[6]

Cybersecurity: The OAS, through its Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) and Cybersecurity program, is working to develop an agenda on cybersecurity in the Americas, considering that the birth of the Internet and its widespread use in the region over the past decade has led to the emergence of new threats and ways of committing crimes.[7]

Knowledge society: This refers to a well-educated society that relies on the knowledge of its citizens to drive innovation, entrepreneurship and the dynamism of its economy. Within this context, the OAS is committed to creating knowledge societies throughout the region. The Declaration of Santo Domingo affirms that "the development of and universal and equitable access to the knowledge society is a challenge and an opportunity that will help achieve the social, economic, and political goals of the countries of the Americas."[8]

Telecommunications: The OAS has an agency specializing in information and communication technologies/telecommunications (ICT) in the form of the Secretariat of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL),[9] which deals with broadband, spectrum, and other technical issues.

As is clear from these examples, the OAS promotes the programmatic work of diverse sensitive areas of the digital sphere, albeit in isolation, which coordinate directly with the States and invite the participation of civil society and other non-state actors. Nonetheless, greater dynamism and capacity are required to coordinate all these sub-themes presented in a major inter-American mandate. Unfinished business for Luis Almagro, who was recently re-elected as Secretary-General of the OAS.

Internet governance and progress towards new multilateral models

The Internet is a network of networks, and we are all collectively responsible for its future. Thus, Internet governance refers to the processes and regulations affecting the decentralized and collaborative way in which the Internet is managed. Bottom-up coordination has prevailed, meaning that there is no single, centralized authority in charge of the Internet.[10]

Work began on defining the concept of Internet governance during the first phase of the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) held in Geneva in 2003.

At the subsequent 2005 WSIS in Tunisia, the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society was adopted, which provides a definition of Internet governance:

> ***"Internet governance is the development and application by governments, the private sector and civil society, in their respective roles, of shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programs that shape the evolution and use of the Internet."***[11]

The Internet evolves on a daily basis and so do the new trends and challenges to be addressed. The Diplo Foundation is one of the organizations paying great attention to Internet governance. In its origins, it identified five major areas or "baskets", which now number seven:[12]

1. **Infrastructure:** domain names, Internet protocols (IP), network neutrality, cloud system, technical standards, etc.

2. **Security:** cybersecurity, cybercrime, cyberterrorism, encryption, digital signature, spam.
3. **Legal:** legal instruments, jurisdiction, intellectual property rights, copyright, trademarks, patents.
4. **Economic:** e-commerce, data economy, trends such as: Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, online banking, e-money, virtual currencies.
5. **Development:** linked to digital technologies and development, how ICT affects the development of societies.
6. **Socio-cultural:** online education, cultural diversity, multilingualism, global public goods.
7. **Human rights:** freedom of expression, privacy and data protection, online rights of children, people with disabilities, and gender, among others.

It should be noted that today's Internet ecosystem is based on the fundamental principles of the Internet itself, strengthened by the participation of a wide range of actors using open, transparent and collaborative processes. Cooperation and collaboration remain essential for sustaining Internet innovation and growth.[13]

According to a UNESCO comparative study on principles for governing the Internet,[14] there are a total of 52 global statements, guides and frameworks that have adopted the foundation of Internet governance. Of these, 39 refer to multi-stakeholder participation.

A key element of this governance model is the need to strengthen the multi-stakeholder approach to ensure that all actors are watching over the evolution and development of the Internet. As mentioned earlier, these stakeholders are governments, private corporations, civil society, and the technical and academic community. Furthermore, the participation of different positions and different views in discussions on access, connectivity, security, infrastructure and human rights is optimal because it provides a more holistic view.

Point 16 of the Declaration of Santo Domingo provides for "[likewise reaffirming] the principles enunciated in the Geneva and Tunisia phases of the WSIS that the Internet has evolved into a global facility available to the public and its governance should constitute a core issue of the Information Society agenda. The international management of the Internet should be multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations. It should ensure an equitable distribution of resources, facilitate access for all and ensure a stable and secure functioning of the Internet..."[15]

Could this applied model for Internet governance be seen as a new form of multilateralism? I believe so, because of the need to incorporate other actors and other approaches and perspectives to address digital policy properly, taking into account that the technological revolution is roaring along. The participation of other disciplines is also required, as UN Secretary-General António Guterres said at the opening ceremony of the 13th IGF in Paris: a multidisciplinary approach is also needed, in which more philosophers, anthropologists and sociologists can unite their efforts to provide another reading and a broader understanding of the effects of digitalization.

Moreover, these international events held to discuss trends and the development of the Internet and digital issues often do not have a strong governmental presence. Official government delegations are notoriously absent from Internet governance forums, especially those of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The opposite is true, for example, for the participation of civil society organizations and the technical and academic community of the region, which usually have the strongest presence.

And it is in this context that multilateral multi-stakeholder initiatives have recently emerged, including the Alliance for Multilateralism launched by the foreign ministers of France and Germany in 2019. This is an informal network of countries united in their belief that a rules-based multilateral order is the only reliable guarantee for international stability and peace, and that common challenges can only be solved through cooperation.

It also extends to non-state actors, who are considered key partners in addressing the challenges, from peace and security to climate, human rights, development and digital transformation. The Alliance will thus adopt a multi-stakeholder approach and will be extended to all members of the international community, international organizations, regional institutions and other relevant actors, who will play the role of essential and active partners.

The Alliance focuses on specific initiatives to achieve its objectives. For the purposes of this document, we can highlight two such initiatives, given their close ties with digital issues. In both cases, the multi-stakeholder approach is promoted as a key element:

- Paris Call for Trust and Security in Cyberspace. Cyberspace is not a space outside the law. We must protect its openness and capacity for connecting people. The Call seeks to introduce binding rules for Internet behavior; to that end, it will adopt elements from various existing processes to promote peace and stability in cyberspace.

- International Partnership for Information and Democracy. This declaration sets out objectives and principles to ensure free, pluralistic and quality reporting despite changes arising as a result of new forms of digital communication. For example, it opposes the manipulative use of fake news to undermine democracy.

Another recent initiative beginning to take root in the international arena is the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation promoted by UN Secretary-General António Guterres to make progress in the global multi-stakeholder dialogue on how to work better to harness the potential of digital technologies and optimize human well-being and mitigate risks.

In June 2019, it presented its report The Age of Digital Interdependence,[16] which makes recommendations in five areas:

1. Build an inclusive digital economy and society.
2. Develop human and institutional capacity.
3. Protect human rights and human agency.
4. Promote digital trust, security and stability.
5. Foster global digital cooperation.

Common human values such as inclusiveness, respect, human-centeredness, human rights, international law, transparency and sustainability should serve as a guide, according to the report.

Nonetheless, the report points out an additional and perhaps more important element to ensuring more effective digital cooperation: strengthening multilateralism. Thus, a combination of classical multilateralism (represented by governments) is proposed alongside the multi-stakeholder approach, which has been the predominant strategy of recent international forums on Internet governance, with the active involvement of civil society, the technical community, the public sector and the private sector. This is a crucial issue because it is the call to action. In other words, it is not only about discussion, but about policies and actions too.

In both the Alliance for Multilateralism and the High-level Panel, various global stakeholders have been called upon to consult, endorse these initiatives, and promote dialogue and reflection based on experience and achievements. And also to show what the weaknesses have been and the priority issues to be addressed in their respective countries.

These are new approaches to a multilateral model that requires the active participation of governments, but it is also essential to hear the voice and feel the presence of individuals, civil society organizations, private corporations, and members of technical, scientific and academic communities.

We are heading towards a new multilateralism that will guide digitization policy in order to address challenges in a collaborative and collective manner, with actions rather than mere discussion; a new model suited to current times and the way modern societies interact in the twenty-first century.

Biography

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