THE NEED FOR A CONVENTIONAL CONFLICT DOCTRINE CHANGE TO ONE FOR PEACEFUL TIMES: THE CASES OF CHILE AND ECUADOR

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Introduction

Which are the principles that South American Armed Forces have established for their doctrinal guidelines to act as forces in peaceful times? How does the above apply to the cases of Chile and Ecuador? The purpose of this paper is to answer the questions mentioned above, but despite the subsequent development of the work, we intend to present simple answers, in order to establish an introductory basis. In the first place, the majority of the Armed Forces in South America have, within their doctrinal structures, the basis for the concept of deterrence as a substantial part of their planning models. Thus, both the structure of the forces, the deployment in the territory, as well as the purchases and renewal of weapons, are stipulated on institutional needs, but on the aforementioned concept. To this, the main constitutional mission of the aforementioned armed forces must also be added, which is the protection of territorial integrity. And as a result of the above, added to a historical, social and cultural process, a perspective of integration of the Armed Forces with the State is achieved, having as key processes their participation in the event of an international warlike conflict, or confrontation with groups armed that have a configuration that rival with the Armed Forces.

But without prejudice to the previous scenario, the Armed Forces of the region have not participated in a real conventional war conflict for several decades, which may be due to the fact that countries have closed the border issues pending with internationally recognized legal instruments, and those

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who still maintain differences, have chosen to resolve them through peaceful means. In conjunction with the above, the advent of democracy as the government regime, the economic interdependence that occurs between several countries in the region, and the emergence of the so-called “new threats”, have resulted that the probability of an armed conflict, although it still does not disappear at all, had diminished significantly. This point of view not only affects the way of perceiving the phenomena from the State and the society they represent, but also the Armed Forces themselves, since the basis of their fundamental mission lies within a process of change. Thus, the armed forces have begun to establish new doctrinal parameters, taking into account a perspective more linked to the peacetime evidenced by the region. In this regard, it is possible to observe as experiences the experiences of both Chile and Ecuador, thereby establishing common denominators, as well as substantial differences in their processes.

The object of study focuses on establishing what are the main elements, both for the cases of Chile and Ecuador, which generate the basis for an eventual modification or the beginning of a debate about the functions of their armed bodies, beyond those already indicated. In this regard, it is possible to consider that the influence of the external media has been greater than those aspects that are characteristic of the countries, considering the possible extensions in the roles and functions of their armed bodies. But despite the aforementioned, it is the endogenous elements of the States that, finally, establish the differences between them, mainly because it is in the internal reality that the same exogenous phenomenon is weighted differently from the State. Thus, when considering elements as subjective as the “weighting”, the present work has a high interpretation component based on official documents, as well as the experiences that have been rescued through both written means and the experience itself of the undersigned with actors linked to the Armed Forces in both countries.

It has been decided to establish a comparative study based on relatively similar components, especially in the case of Chile and Ecuador, taking into account the amount of population, historical institutional relations of cooperation, as well as similar doctrines, in order to get to know their realities and difficulties around the context of security and regional defense indicated. The above is also complemented in the case that in both countries, the factors that affect the change of context are observed, although with some differences. However, and although a series of dimensions are established on which it would eventually be possible to replicate that methodological structure to other cases, this is not necessarily the objective of the present work. However, this research has the methodological quality that by comparing the reality of
these two countries that are in the process of change in the field described above, it is possible to replicate the present study in, eventually, countries that share some of the characteristics described.

It is concluded that although both Chile and Ecuador have established processes of changes in the indicated dimensions, it is possible to identify a series of elements that limit, and even generate resistance to changes, especially in those processes that link both a change of doctrine and its subsequent implementation. The above is especially visualized in segments of structural qualities, and more specifically in the doctrine on a cultural level, and the application of the doctrine in concrete acts. But without prejudice to the foregoing, it is also observed that although the resistance is highly complex to overcome, this does not weaken the generalized conception that it is within a process of major change, at international and regional level, as regards to the needs of the countries regarding the extension of the functions of the Armed Forces.

The context of change in security and Defense for South America

Talking about a context of change implies, *per se*, that a stage or process is being left behind, or even including a part of that, on the other. And the realization and execution of this new process also implies differences with the above. Failure to comply with the above would mean a process of change that is not such. Therefore, it is necessary to point out, what was the previous context in the region in the areas of security and defense, and also what are the elements that make up the eventual new context, especially in terms of processes. In this sense, it is possible to consider five aspects in which the change is palpable: first, the fact that most of the border disputes between the countries of South America have reached a resolution between the different parties involved; secondly, it is appreciated that those territorial disputes and differences that persist have had a diverse treatment by the countries, prioritizing a peaceful resolution of the controversies, as opposed to the use of military means. Thirdly, it is observed in the region that democracy has been imposed as the main government regime, which has been legitimized by the rest of the countries both in the region, as well as by different organizations in a regional and international sense. In the fourth aspect, it is possible to visualize a high degree of interdependence between the States of South America, highlighting in this sense in the first place the economic aspect, but with a strong social and cultural component that are on the rise, although
taking into account some aspects that maximize or minimize the mentioned process. And finally, new forms of threats have been experienced that have had high negative impacts on the development and security of the countries of the region, beyond the so-called traditional threats, resulting in a new way of visualizing security both regionally and worldwide.

One of the aspects to take into consideration, is based on the fact that the aforementioned processes cannot be understood as atomized and exclusive aspects of each other, but that they have a relationship with each other, while maintaining a relationship with processes of greater weight and scope. In this sense, the aforementioned processes would act as intervening variables, which influence the behavior and direction of the processes of change in the notions of security and defense as a whole. But to the above, the fact that although they are intervening aspects, they have a different weighting for each case must necessarily be considered. This depends especially on the degree of importance and relevance that a factor has in one reality or another, based on the fact that there are idiosyncratic and training elements, both at the level of societies and also of the armed bodies themselves, which generate facilities in the adoption of certain concepts, such as resistance (Neumann 2010; Zehfuss 2009).

An example of the above is visualized around the interpretation that the notion of interdependence can generate in the field of security and defense. Thus, and from a liberal point of view, interdependence is seen as a process that helps to understand a decrease in the likelihood of a conventional war between two or more countries, due to the fact that a war adventure would bring more damage than benefits for the parties involved, as well as the fact that the communication channels between the actors are expanded. But interdependence is also interpreted from a different point of view, taking into account that by creating greater channels of communication and mutual dependence, various actors can intervene in sensitive spaces and with strategic qualities for one of the parties, which in turn yes it would generate an increase in distrust and conflict. The above, even without taking into account the degree of asymmetry that interdependence has, which allows for the intervention of other processes in the indicated gear, such as the opening of borders, the inclusion of the Armed Forces as an actor within the national and international market, or even the inclusion of the country within a process of regional integration, which directly influence the notion of security and defense.

As mentioned before, one of the characteristic elements of the region from the conformation of the republics in the nineteenth century, until the same decade of 1990, were the territorial issues pending between the States.
According to Juan Carlos Arriaga (2013), this type of conflict in the region had two essential aspects regarding its origin. First, the vague delimitation of territorial-administrative spaces made by the Spanish authorities at the time of the Colony, which then gave rise to the delimitation of future Nation States in the region. And secondly, there are the interests of the new South American oligarchies who wanted to maintain their power spaces with those authorities that allowed them to achieve that. With this, a highly elitist conception of the processes of independence of the countries is observed, which added to the vague perspective of territorial demarcation left at the time of the Spanish Colony, gave way to the different war conflicts, evidenced with greater force in the second half of the 19th century.

The territorial definitions were solved during the nineteenth century, in the vast majority of cases, through the use of the war instrument, which resulted in a conception where military force was a decisive factor for the imposition of interests of a country over another, especially when there were territorial disputes (Nunn 2011). This approach was the generator of the “arms races” among some countries in the region, especially in the first two decades of the twentieth century. But despite the negative economic consequences of maintaining high budgets in armament, maintenance and renovation, the countries of South America did not use these (with the exception of Argentina, in their conflict with England over the Falkland Islands), except with the configuration of the “deterrence” process (Kacowicz and Mares 2016). However, countries still maintained territorial problems and disagreements that were managed through the use of the Armed Forces, as was the case of the conflict between Ecuador and Peru in 1995 in the Alto Cenepa area, better known as the “War of the Condor.”

Even, the conception of protection of the territory through the military means, goes further in regard to the generation and strengthening of the doctrinal parameters of the Armed Forces of the region. Thus, as a result of the need to maintain a force prepared for a conventional conflict, the process called “professionalization” of the Armed Forces began, which consisted in the preparation of military personnel, specifically officers, in aspects related to the knowledge generation within the field of military sciences. And within the areas of knowledge of the military sciences, especially stood out the strategy, elements related to the command and control of the different military units, as well as aspects related to the geopolitics and the neighborhood reality of each country (Nunn, 2011). That was considered as part of the basic knowledge that was given to students who were part of the Higher Schools or War Academies in the region, but always having as a structural part, the consideration that the country had to have a dissuasive notion, especially with
regard to the conventional means to make war, in order to achieve the most basic parameters of military professionalization. But what also happened was that the deterrent model was maintained and strengthened, beyond the international security and defense context, and even at the national level, was being modified, especially since the end of the Cold War.

Thus, the change is not only generated at the time of resolving a dispute between state actors, but rather by the forms and elements that are appreciated as influential in these processes. In the first place, all the territorial conflicts that were resolved, did so through an international treaty, thereby generating both rights and responsibilities between the contracting parties. But in addition to the above, an international treaty has a different legal conception since the birth of the United Nations Organization (UN), because all of these legal instruments must be deposited in said organization, as a way to establish both a International legitimacy as a notion of transparency among the actors when a difference could occur. But perhaps more relevant than mentioned, is that the UN establishes regulatory mechanisms for the use of force. Therefore, countries are not free to act with the use of the warlike instrument when discrepancies between states appear. Thus, the United Nations has served as a “dissuasive” actor towards countries, in regard to the use of their Armed Forces in conventional terms (Jackson 2007).

And secondly, and related to the previous point, it is necessary to specify that the territorial disputes that are still pending, countries have established as the main instrument to resolve their differences to Public International Law. Through peaceful mechanisms, supported by the UN, the States in South America have decided to use them as valid instruments when a territorial dispute arises, being the most used mechanism in the present 21st century sentences issued by the International Court of Justice of Hague, an international tribunal linked to the UN system, and that most of the countries of the region recognize with competence for that through the American Treaty of Pacific Solutions, better known as the “Pact of Bogotá” signed the year 1948\(^3\). Thus, a good number of the countries in the region have chosen to solve their territorial problems through international treaties; and those who still maintain differences over a territorial space, have made the decision to prioritize peaceful dispute resolution mechanisms, protected through the UN system.

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3 The Bogotá Pact was signed by Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, United States, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela. However, both Argentina, Cuba, the United States, Guatemala and Venezuela have not ratified it, and Colombia and El Salvador denounced it.
But the aforementioned cannot be interpreted as an absolute element, but must necessarily be linked to other processes, to achieve a better understanding of the phenomenon of change indicated at the time. And within these other processes, it is possible to point out democracy as the prevailing government regime, as well as the great and growing interdependence that a number of South American countries possess. Since the beginning of the 21st century, democracy has been the regionally accepted government regime, which has a double perspective. First, it is established that democracy is the government regime that precedes authoritarian perspectives; that is, government leaders are elected by the public through periodic elections and that the process itself is subject to the scrutiny of society as well as international organizations, where its transparency is validated. With the above, it seeks to establish an adequate representativeness of the governed through the rulers. And secondly, democracy has been established as the government regime legitimately recognized by the rest of the countries in the region. Thus, and as a consequence of the authoritarian regimes that were evidenced in the region by the 1970s, democracy is seen as that regime where human rights are mostly respected, as well as fundamental freedoms. Derived from the above, when a South American country demonstrates an institutional crisis that could put the democratic system at risk, regional organizations act so that this does not happen. The aforementioned happened through the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) in the events of Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay in the 21st century.

As a complement to the aforementioned on the perspective of maintaining the democratic system in the region, there is the fact that having larger countries that have embraced the maintenance of democracy as their government regime, has given way to the opening of new channels of communication and actors involved in the generation or execution of the different areas of foreign policy among the countries of the region. In this regard, the fact that although international management issues as well as security issues in the region is highlighted, it is still strongly centralized in the state apparatus (Weiffen and Duarte 2017), strategies are visualized, specifically in the border areas, to channel efforts and measures that help the inhabitants that constantly transit between countries (Ovando 2017). The aforementioned, together with paradiplomacy initiatives, has allowed that in case of any problem or misunderstanding, more rapid and specific channels of dialogue are activated, thereby avoiding the escalation of the conflict. And while that is not necessarily proper to visualize it exclusively within a democratic regime, the truth is that it has been thanks to the qualities of that regime, where those spaces, especially those linked to communication in the border space, have
enhanced and increased their relevance, especially at times when territorial disputes have been visualized within these geographical spaces.

Another point on which a degree of influence can be visualized between the decrease in the likelihood of an armed conflict is the link between the economic ones of the countries of the region, also considering at this point the presence of other actors with influence international, as they are companies of transnational characteristics, establishing a logic of mutual dependence or interdependence. In this sense, it is pointed out that the conception of interdependence limits that countries resolve their differences through the armed route, due to the negative consequences that this form of relationship brings to trade, as to other areas of interrelation between the societies that make up the States (Morgan 2007). However, in the case of South America, although there is a high degree of interdependence between economic development models, such as the relationship between Argentina-Brazil or Chile-Peru, that strictly speaking is a reductionist vision of the phenomenon of interdependence, because the link between countries has not reached the same areas as in the European or North American case (between Canada and the United States of America), but has been prioritized in commercial and mobility aspects. But the relevant thing is that it is possible to observe that interdependence and democracy go hand in hand, due to the product of a more institutionalized democratic system, the channels of dialogue and negotiation are expanded, resulting in increased links between countries and, with it, a change in the prospects for security threats and their defense.

As a way of complementing the ideas indicated, and although the arguments presented have a theoretical root of understanding that comes from a liberal vision, it cannot necessarily be considered as an exclusive point of view. Even, within the context mentioned at the time, there are other phenomena that have resulted in a change in the way of appreciating the dangers and threats that affect the State, particularly from a perspective in which the so-called conventional ones, that is, those that they come from one state actor to another, they have emphasized the phenomena that become non-state actors. These phenomena have been classified as unconventional threats or new threats, and have a high degree of negative impact on the societies that are affected (Cabrera 2012, David 2008).

The problem is that although these phenomena have been presented throughout history in the different countries of the region, the panorama that is visualized in the 21st century does not show a variation of the nature of the phenomena themselves, but that in its magnitude and in the means that are used. As a result, it is possible to show that if before the actions of the institutional groups dedicated to the internal security of the countries, such as
the Police, were able to deal with the actions of the actors that managed illicit activities, that no longer possible, due to the magnitude of the phenomenon and the means used, the latter being increasingly sophisticated in terms of technology and resources (Rivera 2008). That is why when considering new threats as actors and processes that are constantly involved, and with increasingly negative effects on societies, a need to even the balance, always in terms of means, with the use of the Armed Forces, both as an auxiliary form of media cooperation for the Police, or plane as another operative part, in the fight against new threats.

The rise of these so-called unconventional threats, those that do not have a quality of traditional warlike conflict but that are permanent, affect the population and in multiple cases are operationalized through means of war, both from actors other than the State as well as by the organisms in charge of fighting those phenomena. However, both the impact and the magnitude of the phenomena indicated, has given the Armed Forces and their respective States to have established changes in the respective security and defense doctrines, with the aim of having a better task, taking into account their geographical location as well as the degree of permeability that they have in the area of their borders, among other aspects. Thus, considering both contextual aspects as well as their geographical and political qualities, the States of the region have begun a slow but clear process of modification of their armed bodies, especially identifying themselves in the change of general doctrines for the Armed Forces.

The need for a change of doctrine and resistance

As a consequence of the aforementioned processes, the probability of a warlike confrontation between countries of the region, although it has not been annulled in its entirety, had given way to a decrease in the probability of that happening, especially when it is in presence of a controversy or difference in the territorial aspect. But what is relevant at this point is that the classical conception of the use of the Armed Forces is in a process of change and renewal, a product that the perspective and interpretation around the concept of “deterrence”, from a conventional view, is not applicable in its entirety or, failing that, it is not apt to be able to establish a structure and planning in the strategic scope for the countries. For these purposes, it is contemplated that the conception around conventional deterrence is directly conditioned to the weight of the military element, which is greater with respect to other aspects, from a vision of the classical strategy (Gray 2012). Thus, deterrence is based on the perception that an eventual and / or potential adversary may have that
the cost of undertaking an armed operation is greater than the benefits that can be obtained through it (Morgan 2003).

This way of understanding deterrence is, as mentioned at the time, from a conventional conception. That is to say, deterrence is observed to work when the eventual adversary does not carry out any action that could go against the interests of a country, but from a military point of view. However, this interpretation is not only restricted, but also does not apply in its entirety to the regional context indicated at the time, for various reasons. According to Frank Zagare and Marc Kilgour, the vision of deterrence has two major components. On the one hand, there is a military perspective, which has prevailed in the elaboration of the plans and doctrines of the Armed Forces of the region; but on the other hand, deterrence has a strong political component, which translates into diplomatic actions that countries establish to accompany the previous process. Thus, deterrence cannot be understood exclusively as a military aspect, but must be complemented by international efforts, with the aim of minimizing any degree of threat to the various interests that a State may have (Zagare and Kilgour 2004). And even within the aforementioned, there are a number of aspects that could determine the political action of a State, such as the economic-commercial or even the possible international links and alliances that may have, so it could be considered that the latter the approach has a multidimensional quality, when addressing the deterrence process.

But as a consequence of the previous situation, the following scenario is generated in South America. On the one hand, there is a military approach to deterrence, but on the other hand the political component of it does not materialize effectively. This can be visualized through the demands that have been made in international courts of justice, taking into account discussions and controversies of a territorial nature. Thus, the fact of possessing a “deterrent” armed component has not been a key aspect for the conception of deterrence when making a decision to sue a country internationally. Even the terms of the claim are, in most cases, accepted by the defendant, since it is considered that this vision is considered as one of the multiple peaceful mechanisms to resolve disputes between States. Therefore, deterrence as a concept, for the regional level, is not used in a holistic way, thereby generating an asymmetric way in the use of the instruments that are part of that strategic conception, and leaving the “deterrent” doctrines atomized of conventional armed components.

Another of the components that are evidenced within a generalized scheme of changes and renewal of doctrines, is the one which is related to the increase of the tasks related to development by the Armed Forces of the region. While it is true that it is possible to verify that the armed forces, throughout
the history of the different countries of the region, have contributed significantly to improving the development and living conditions of the population, especially when it comes to areas that could be referred to as isolated from the main urban centers of a country. But such efforts, although they can be considered as part of the nature of the Armed Forces, are not necessarily circumscribed as a substantial part of a national doctrine in the use of armed means, because the main work of the bodies mentioned in the region is associated with the maintenance of territorial integrity based on the doctrinal conception of deterrence (Thies 2016). Derived from the above then, it is understood that the work of helping the population and development in general terms, is a secondary or subsidiary function of the armed forces.

It was within that “subsidiary functions”, in which the so-called new threats or unconventional threats have been circumscribed. Notwithstanding that, the foregoing is also a consequence of a context in which it is complex to classify a phenomenon that has, in itself, a diffuse nature and that escapes the conventional or classical notion of threat, taking into account the doctrinal vision of Armed Forces in the region. The context indicated in question, accounts for a series of phenomena that are not necessarily limited to acting or controlling by a particular State, nor do they have a defined scope in terms of their manifestations, instruments and consequences for both countries, as well as for the societies in general. With this, phenomena such as drug trafficking, terrorism, money laundering, to mention some of the most relevant for the region, have been part of regional security agendas and guidelines in general, such as security and defense policies of countries in particular (Stolberg 2012).

Thus, and as a consequence of the aforementioned context, it is that the Armed Forces have found themselves in the need to maintain within their missions, a role that is based on mitigating the negative impact of the threats indicated in the respective countries. But that, in turn, has an explanation that becomes internal to the countries, as well as the external environment. Among the former, it is possible to consider support for the functions performed by security and police forces, which have been exceeded both in the media and in competencies, and the internal reality of each State in matters of security and defense. While external aspects are given by the level of regional linkage that the country in question has, as well as by the nature and dimensions of the threats that loom over countries (Griffiths 2007).

One of the aspects that has led to the armed forces being part of the fight against the so-called threats of unconventional characteristics, is the fact that institutions traditionally focused on this objective have been overwhelmed in their actions, both due to the lack of resources they possess, as
well as the nature of the threat itself. In this regard, it has been possible to
demonstrate a good number of corruption cases, as a consequence of the
actions of criminal gangs, which have a large amount of economic resources.
This being the case, since the Armed Forces are the only establishment that
legally possesses instruction in weapons as well as in technological support
and logistics elements, relatively similar in comparison to the police forces,
they have seen the need to cooperate with them in the fight against this type
of phenomena (Pion-Berlin 2010, Bruneau 2005).

Another of the internal aspects that could explain the use of the traditio-

nal means of Defense, in tasks that are not their own within their classical
docrinal conception, are the realities experienced by each particular country.
For example, the geographical qualities of a State, although they may have
similar points with other pairs, after all they are unique. This aspect has a
high degree of influence in matters of internal security, since the actors that
are part of transnational criminal phenomena know about those realities and
use them in their favor. Some examples of that is what happens in the cases
of Colombia, Peru and Bolivia in the region, to mention some of the most
significant. Even, the geographical positioning that the country has, from a
classical geopolitical notion, gives rise to sustain a characterization of said
State, within the economic and commercial logic, both in a lawful and illicit
sense (Cabrera, 2019). Therefore, having complex and unique geographical
qualities, where the traditional security forces do not have the necessary in-

struments to combat the aforementioned groups, the Armed Forces are called
to carry out such action. However, and as mentioned at the time, the internal
aspects mentioned cannot be fully understood if they are visualized atomized
and separated from each other (Celi 2015, Palma 2015).

While on the external level, the relationship and linkage that a State
has with a certain environment, preferably in a regional and neighborhood
setting, largely determines a degree of influence regarding both the territorial
positioning of the Armed Forces, as well as the type and magnitude of the
phenomena that threaten the respective society. In other words, depending on
whether there is any territorial claim by a neighboring country, the location
of the main military means will be linked to that area. Likewise, if a country
is geographically between two major drug production centers, or failing that
it is used as an exit door for drug trafficking, due to its port positioning, they
are elements to be considered as sources that potentially increase the impact
of the negative phenomena towards the country.

The mentioned aspects not only predispose to a possible change of
doctrine in the armed bodies, but also in the way in which the professionali-

zation of them is carried out and planned. In this regard, it is necessary that
together with an eventual modification of the doctrine of the Armed Forces, a high level of professionalization of the people who are part of them is possessed, because a change of doctrine does not necessarily imply a dismantling of the capacities and competences that were possessed at the time. On the contrary. What is considered pertinent at this point is the maintenance of a doctrine about the main function of the aforementioned bodies (protection of territorial integrity), but adding greater capabilities depending on their new and eventual roles. This directly results in a qualitative and quantitative increase in the skills and characteristics of military personnel, taking into account an increase in the professionalization of personnel; that is, in this area, the Armed Forces, although they must not fail to consider their fundamental role, must be prepared for other functions that, although they are not the main ones, are part of their actions in the current context, both internal and external. This in turn has given way, in some cases, to a conception of “versatility” of the Armed Forces, especially when countries are constantly affected by natural events such as earthquakes, tidal waves, floods, large forest fires, to mention phenomena derived from nature (Kacowicz and Mares 2016).

But the fact that countries begin to glimpse a vision around the changes in the threat focus, the degree of implication that these phenomena have in society, and the notion of “versatility” within the actions of their forces, also responds to a conception that derives from the fact that new threats incorporate the actions of actors that are extra-regional and that have interests in a series of regional elements. One case of this is the appropriation and control of a series of natural resources that, for various countries in the region, are considered key and with the label of “strategic”, product of which through these resources, countries concentrate much of their development and well-being for their respective societies (Bruckman 2012). This fact, although it has a lower probability regarding the direct action of an extra-regional State on a country in the region in conventional terms, has also led to planning a different strategic vision, where a notion of the weak to the strong is used, taking strategic modes and models that are associated with mobility and the use of geographical conditions in favor, at the expense of a significant increase in technological capabilities (Cabrera 2011, Contreras 2008).

The process of changing the doctrine, or in its absence of a greater incorporation of functions and competences to the armed forces, is not in itself a process of easy management. The doctrine within the Armed Forces, being one of the base components in the way of acting among its members, as well as one of the pillars in the eventual understanding of both national and international phenomena that could affect the main object of protection on the part of the aforementioned bodies, it is an element that although it
is the focus of constant modifications, those are not necessarily substantial, or they help to reinforce the degree of relationship between cultural and institutional aspects within the personnel that is part of the organization. And at the same time, these doctrinal elements, on multiple occasions, have a root that becomes both the traditions of the Armed Forces, and the history of those bodies, which ultimately make them unique and differentiate them from their peers internationally, although some common denominators are observed. Therefore, a substantial change within the doctrinal composition of the Armed Forces, such as the modification of the focus and understanding of the conflict, is an aspect that would change the very nature of the armed bodies, thereby generating resistance as a result of the aforementioned.

A point to take into account within the resistance against a change of doctrine, comes from what could be considered as “the weight of history”, which in turn is expressed in the maintenance of conflicting traditions and imaginary, of character conventional, mainly associated to the neighborhood and when it has as a background some kind of military confrontation in bilateral history. In this sense, within the logic of the imaginary, it is possible to find that a relevant sector of the military segment and decision makers in the field of Defense, continue to consider plausible, the repetition of conflicts of the past under a logic of perceptions of conventional threat. This would also be explained by the way in which neighboring countries make allusions about those lost territorial spaces and their eventual desire for recovery (Jervis 2017; Levy 1983). Thus, the decrease in conventional military capabilities, which help in the constitution of the perception of deterrence, would establish a greater probability of repeating scenarios of a conflictive past.

As a form of complement to the previous premise, it is observed that it is also possible to explain this view of resistance to doctrine change, under a geopolitical interpretation. At this point, the consideration of resistance would be the product of the imaginary related to both the vision of the territory and a synonym for absolute power of the countries, as well as the fact that an eventual loss of it can also mean a strategic positioning of another country, which goes against the interests of the affected country (Barton 1997). It is because of this vision that geopolitics is still considered a discipline that is part of the training of staff officers, which helps to understand the political processes and projections of the geographical qualities of a country, in the international context. Thus, even from a point of view regarding the professional and theoretical training of officers, it is that the vision of deterrence is also understood from the perspective of geopolitics, as a way of understanding the “intentions” and interests of another State, in direct relation with their own interests, especially when they are in the presence of aspects that would determine an eventual territorial projection (Cabrera 2018).
Therefore, and considering the above, it is necessary to incorporate some cases that reflect not only a possible need for doctrinal change in the field of the Armed Forces, but also those resistances that have been visualized in the aforementioned process. Given this, it is possible to highlight the comparison of the cases of Chile and Ecuador, since they are countries that have carried out two reform processes within the established parameters and processes, focusing each one on specific sectors that are related to the doctrinal elements substantial in relation to the modification of the understanding of the conflictive focus.

Chile and Ecuador in comparative perspective

One of the aspects that underlies Chile and Ecuador in comparative terms is that both countries have evidenced, within the second decade of the 21st century, attempts to reform the doctrinal sphere in relation to their Armed Forces. However, although common elements have been established that have been incorporated into their respective strategic plans, a resistance of certain sectors of the Defense has also been visualized, taking as arguments an eventual de-professionalization of the military function, as well as relative to leaving the main constitutional priority of the armed segments, which is based on the protection of territorial integrity. Regarding the aforementioned, it is appropriate to establish a description around the main points that both Chile and Ecuador have experienced, in order to achieve some degree of joint perspective and, eventually, replicable for the region.

The experiences regarding the processes of modification of doctrines, in a strategic sense, in both cases, also go through short-term political moments, which have been increased both by the form of evolution of the respective political systems, and by the role that you want to have of the armed bodies in peacetime. But in addition, there are aspects that are external and that, in some way or another, influence the way of conceiving the contemporary actions of the Armed Forces, such as the same geographical location of the country with respect to the drug generating centers, the border permeability, to mention a few elements. With this, both Chile and Ecuador have aspects that are common as unique, when describing their processes of doctrinal changes at the strategic level.

The Chilean case

One of the elements that distinguish the Chilean perspective, from the
point of view of the elaboration of the doctrine from the strategic level, is the fact that the country still has territorial spaces that are the subject of a claim by the countries with which borders are shared. This happens, at present, with each of its neighbors. In the case of the relationship with Peru, although both countries held a dispute over maritime delimitation in the International Court of Justice of Hague, the ruling resulted in a territory that is in dispute: the so-called “terrestrial triangle”, which is a territorial space in which the maritime border between both countries begins. However, it should be noted that the magnitude of the territory is only approximately 37,500 square meters. With Bolivia, despite the fact that international lawsuits have been filed in the aforementioned Court, both from Bolivia to Chile and vice versa, even such processes persist, so the management of the possible resolutions will take some time, leaving aside the still existing controversy over the use of the waters of the Lauca river. While with Argentina, the clear non-delimitation of the so-called “southern ice fields” persists, a space located in the southern zone of both countries, but despite the lack of establishment of international boundaries, that has not been a priority space in the bilateral agenda. Therefore, from the Chilean perspective, the country still has a space in the 21st century to establish a perception of insecurity, especially around its northern neighborhood border.

As a consequence of the above, the strategic doctrine in the field of Defense still handles hypotheses of conflict from the conventional point of view, especially with those countries in which lawsuits have been raised in international courts of justice for bordering aspects. This is one of the key points, because Chile still explicitly establishes the concept of deterrence within its doctrine, which in turn is represented in the various purchases of war material, as well as in the roles themselves. that armed bodies must have for peacetime. In this regard, although it is pointed out that the Chilean Armed Forces have the mission of protecting territorial integrity, this is also conceived within the level of deterrence and non-interference in other tasks of internal characteristics (Ministry of National Defense 2010). In this sense, the vision of civil-military relations in Chile, although it has been highlighted as a form of separation of spheres regarding the competences of each of the aforementioned decision-making levels, it is also true that this is explained for the recent past, particularly the period of the government of Augusto Pinochet. The transition to democracy not only conditioned the way in which civilians and military would understand each other in a new political moment, but also established the basis on which relations between the two segments would occur for the rest of the years. Thus, the conception of a possible conventional threat that could affect the country was supported
by the civil and political sector of the Defense, both to separate the military from political issues, as well as to achieve adequate professionalization of the Defense segment, on issues that were typical of its competence, leaving aside the interference in the aspect of internal security. But in addition, there is the presence of two police institutions, with national scope (Police and Investigative Police), which are dedicated to internal security tasks, so that the presence of conventional armed forces was not necessary, especially in the 90’s (Navarro 2013; Nunn 2011).

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Chilean Armed Forces, even within the period of the Military Government (1973-1990), have dedicated themselves to tasks that go beyond the classical conception of deterrence. One of the main examples of this was the construction of the so-called Austral Highway, a road that joins different parts of the country, with which there was no direct connection. But apart from that, it has been as a result of natural disasters that have hit the country in the 21st century, where the Armed Forces have turned to aspects of helping the population in situations of risk. Such has been the relevance of the collaboration of the armed forces, both in rescue and reconstruction work, that their tasks in important periods of time have concentrated on finding ways to improve the level of development of the population, and to optimize their deployment capacity within the national territory, in the face of complex situations (Griffiths 2011).

Another of the elements on which the armed bodies are considered key to the Chilean case, is to visualize them as an instrument of international projection of the country, either through different peace operations, as well as establishing a presence in the Antarctic territory. Both aspects, which are framed within the country’s foreign policy, are executed through the country’s Defense policy, and more specifically as a consequence of the actions of different components of the armed forces. This is one of the most relevant aspects in the field of Defense, because it is a direct link between this sector and Foreign Relations. But at the same time, it becomes a tool where the country exposes and projects a certain image to the international system, thereby establishing a series of interests in which the Defense in general, and the armed forces in particular, actively participate. But these actions are not necessarily representative of a change of doctrine, but an extension of it. And the application of the aforementioned actions are neither executed internally, nor are they part of a substantial doctrinal modification by the armed bodies (Navarro 2009).

Notwithstanding the above, the fact of attempting a change in the doctrinal conception of Defense, from both a political and strategic point of view, has been part of the debate, although not alien to criticism and multiple
resistance, from the different actors involved. An example of this was evidenced in the concept of Expanded Security, a concept that was established in the so-called National Security and Defense Strategy (ENSYD in Spanish), under the administration of Sebastián Piñera (2010-2014). This concept involved, explicitly, that armed bodies could engage in support tasks, in the face of unconventional threats, especially drug trafficking. However, this concept only remained as a proposition, since the ENSYD was not approved by Congress, although two attempts were made to improve it, due to the resistance of both parliamentarians from different political sectors, members of the Armed Forces, as well as political decision makers, in the field of Defense (Rivas 2014).

The quality of visualizing a “versatility” in the Chilean Armed Forces, although it has been driven by the different socio-natural disasters that, in a relatively constant way, affect the country, has not minimized the deterrent notion of the defense doctrine. The foregoing is reinforced by the publication of the last National Defense Book, in 2017. In that book, which maintains a line with its predecessors, especially with regard to the way in which the actions are constructed and planned of the different actors of the Defense. However, there is also an explicit recognition that the Defense has to consider, within its planning, processes that are ongoing, such as the impact of climate change, the new regional integration processes, and even the contribution of the Defense media in the construction of a much more complex and comprehensive security architecture for the country (Ministry of National Defense, 2017). With this, it is clear that external and internal processes have had a consequence in the way in which Defense is articulated, both in terms of means and also in its own culture to act and organize.

And in relation to the above, in 2019, through a presidential decree, with the corresponding legislative and legal approvals, the participation of the Armed Forces in tasks related to the fight against drug trafficking was explicitly approved. However, it was also established that such collaboration will only be restricted to areas of surveillance and support in logistics (El Mercurio, 2019). As a result of the above, it is sought to prevent the Armed Forces from directly intervening in tasks related to the capture and investigation in a criminal sense, nor as an auxiliary force, of the work carried out by the police forces in said matter. But the legal and institutional recognition that the Armed Forces have an established role in the fight against drug trafficking, gives rise to new forms of organization and coordination, especially with the police and civil authorities linked to the assigned task.
The Ecuadorian case

Unlike the Chilean case, Ecuador has concluded all the points that were pending, from the territorial perspective. That is, the country does not have territorial controversy with any of the countries with which it shares an international limit, whether land or sea. In this sense, the probability that an international conflict is unleashed, as a consequence of a discrepancy in the interpretation of international limits, is very low for the country. Even the incident that occurred in the month of March of the year 2008, in the border town of Angostura with Colombia, can be considered as a consequence of the management of an internal conflict, by the Colombian government, and which directly affected Ecuadorian sovereignty. But, from no point of view, there was a confrontation between the two countries whose background was the borderline differences. Therefore, the strategic architecture of Ecuador, although it manages the conception of conventional deterrence, is based on a conflict hypothesis whose potential for occurrence is highly low, due to the solution of all territorial disputes through international instruments (Ministry of Security Coordination 2011).

However, and as another point to be taken into account, the geographical location of the country becomes a weak point in itself, derived from the internal events that occurred within the internal scope of border countries. On the one hand, both Colombia and Peru are considered the main cocaine producing countries worldwide; and in conjunction with this, the Colombian case has a more complex derivation, product of the presence of organized criminal gangs and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), with operations in the border region between Ecuador and Colombia. Therefore, the impact of what happened in Colombia, regarding the management of its internal conflict, is relevant in the security and defense of Ecuadorian society (Pérez and Cruz 2015).

Derived from the above, although the country no longer has conventional conflicts in the neighborhood, the level of impact of unconventional threats is high. And although the Armed Forces have as their mission the protection of territorial integrity, as a constitutional mandate and fundamental mission, this is mainly understood from the perspective of the conventional threat. This form of unconventional conflict, although it was duly analyzed within the Books of Defense (2002 and 2006), its impact on the country’s defense doctrine was minimal. That situation is modified with the presidential management of Rafael Correa (2007-2017), where both the new Constitution and the National Plan for Internal and External Security of 2007, exposes the concept of Integral Security, which involves a more broad security vision,
recognizing as destabilizing factors for the development of the country, those that did not necessarily have a conventional origin. With this, the Defense doctrine is turned into a strategic doctrine, linking other institutions, in addition to the Armed Forces, in complying with the parameters of Integral Security (Coordinating Ministry of Internal and External Security 2008).

The aforementioned context was, at the beginning until the middle of the second decade of the 21st century, a purely discursive aspect, because the concept, despite the introduction of the so-called National Comprehensive Security Plans (2011-2013 and 2014-2017), had not been properly discussed. It was in the last plan in which the concept obtains a greater solidity, both in the elements that it involves as well as in the phenomena that drive to adopt the mentioned concept. But the consequences and competences of each of the actors that were part of the concept, remained a topic to discuss, mainly for the Armed Forces. Notwithstanding that, it was in 2015 where, through a modification to the 2007 Constitution, in which the Armed Forces are explicitly involved in tasks of “support for Integral Security”. In other words, explicit recognition was obtained, from the political level, so that the Armed Forces could act in certain internal security matters. With this, the role of the armed forces was extended from the highest level of political and strategic decision, which also involved a modification of the doctrinal conception of the Armed Forces (Pérez and Cruz 2015).

The indicated event can be understood, within the Ecuadorian context, under three premises. The first is that the negative impact of unconventional threats has been more detrimental than what was contemplated in an eventual planning, and the resources used in internal security tasks for the National Police were not sufficient, so the incorporation of the Armed Forces would help mitigate the problem. Secondly, having established all the country’s international limits (the last one was the maritime boundary with Costa Rica in 2016), from an economic point of view, there is no urgent need, from the political level, to have Armed Forces prepared for a warlike conflict whose probability is low. Therefore, its employment must be under a premise of conflict that, although unconventional, is present and produces a negative impact on the country’s development. And thirdly, the current capabilities of the Ecuadorian Armed Forces in terms of deterrence, in comparison with neighboring countries, do not meet the conditions to achieve the desired effect. And derived from the negative economic conditions that the country has presented in the last 3 years, as a result of the international fall in the price of oil, the acquisition of war material is not justified under the premise of deterrence.

Despite the political direction around the application of Integral Security, by the Armed Forces, resistance has manifested mainly in civil-military
relations in the country. From the military side, the main concerns go for a “de-professionalization” of the personnel, because being more linked to internal security tasks, they will not have time to acquire and reinforce the necessary skills to fulfill the main role of the Armed Forces. While on the political side, it is observed that the tasks related to Integral Security are a way of keeping the armed forces in action, and not simply under an abstract concept such as deterrence. However, the same linkage of the Armed Forces in matters of Integral Security is in itself broad, and is at the discretion of what is established by law. Therefore, the debate on the construction of a new doctrine, was reduced to an order / compliance approach between the political and military level, and did not give space for an adequate socialization of the possible consequences, both positive and negative, that such regulations could generate.

The previous panorama around the implications of Integral Security and the conformation of a new doctrinal scheme for Defense, changed radically by internal and external aspects. The main internal element is related to the advent of the new government of Lenin Moreno, in 2017. The new administration established a diametral change, compared to the previous government management, in relation to the conduct and management of the Defense, assigning to a General in a situation of retirement, the command of the Ministry of Defense, giving way to the development of new guidelines in that field, trying to retake doctrinal notions typical of the last Books of Defense. Notwithstanding that, it was the external element that determined the doctrinal action of the Ecuadorian Armed Forces. On January 27, 2018, a terrorist attack occurred, against the police district in the town of San Lorenzo, near the border with Colombia. It was a car bomb, causing damage to the structure and 23 people injured, being perpetrated by the FARC dissident group Oliver Sinisterra (El Comercio, 2018). This gave way to a progressive “militarization” of the northern border, even establishing a new theater of operations, coordinated by the Joint Command of the Armed Forces, with the aim of minimizing the negative consequences of the Colombian peace process, and especially the groups that stayed out of it.

Derived from the aforementioned, is that the discussion about new doctrinal paradigms in the field of Defense, was relatively untouched, due to the conflicting processes that the country began to show, giving way to the maintenance of more classic doctrinal parameters, seeing this evidenced by the publication of the last National Defense Policy of Ecuador, better known as the Soft Book of Defense, in 2018. In this document, it is observed that despite the fact that the country evidences the presence of conflictive processes derived from non-state actors, continues to structure a defense policy based on the concept of deterrence, although in a restricted way. The restriction is
given by the strategic situation of Ecuador, as well as by the fact of privileging the links with powers, specifically the United States of America, in the construction and application of relations and cooperation policies, in the field of Defense (Ministry of National Defense, 2018).

The problem with the above, is not due to the fact of returning to the doctrinal canons that were not observed during the administration of Rafael Correa, but because the need to update the doctrinal parameters is minimized. In this regard, the reinforcement of the classical doctrinal parameters in the Defense segment, although it helps to mitigate some of the negative consequences imposed by the situation, especially with regard to the context of the northern border of the country, the truth is that it is left sideways a process with structural characteristics. The functionality of the Defense for Ecuador, both before and after what happened in San Lorenzo, gives rise to a necessary reflection on the maintenance or change of the doctrinal parameters that guide the actions of the Armed Forces, especially when deterrence as such does not occur in the neighborhood case, and other phenomena require greater attention.

Final Remarks

The elements presented at the present work provide a conceptual and contextual basis on why a change of doctrine is not only pertinent, but also necessary. However, it can also be observed as an absolute aspect in the doctrine, that in order to incorporate a suitable change in some institution and organization, it must be adequately planned, taking into consideration those cultural elements (or doctrinal ones) that prevail within a space of time. If so, the changes in doctrine should not be thought of, nor should they be reflected upon the basis of the element which one wants to change, but upon the basis of the problem to be mitigated. That is why the doctrinal conception of dissuasion, from a conventional point of view, does not apply to a phenomenon such as drug trafficking or a natural catastrophe.

If so, one of the main points to be supported in the present work, has been that the Armed Forces in the region, and especially for the analyzed cases of Chile and Ecuador, cannot maintain an absolute and total conception of dissuasion, since they must have an integral vision that, at present, is not perceived. However, the concept of conventional conflict, by the elements mentioned in the present work, has greatly diminished the probability in the region, which does not rule out that those countries that have a hypothesis of conflict of such characteristics, are exempt from that scenario. Therefore, a transition in order to achieve a balance between a classic view of the Defense
and a point of view of where the Armed Forces participate in the internal areas, not necessarily the paths that shock, the bell that must be and must be compatible, with the aim of finding a degree of polyfunctionality.

In the case of Chile, the conception of deterrence although it has paid off in a dimension of the concept, it has not been established in an integral way. Moreover, in the 21st century, and taking into account that the main factors of insecurity or even a state of war in non-war situations occur as a result of natural disasters, an aspect that has been constant throughout its history, is that planning around conventional deterrence must change. There should be a greater balance in that material that is exclusively for military use, in direct relation to those instruments that can be used for “other functions.” That is why a more specific polyfunctional visualization of the Armed Forces of Chile is required, but thinking that the doctrinal conception must be modified.

In the case of Ecuadorian reality, the perspective is different. The political management of the Defense has not been adequate to adapt the armed forces to the necessary new functions that they must adopt in peacetime. An eventual modification of the doctrine, taking into account a high degree of polyfunctionality, should be gradual, but based on a recognition of those key elements of the doctrine. Therefore, although the Ecuadorian Armed Forces have also been employed in development-related tasks, linking them to other tasks more related to internal security, without adequate socialization and debate among the institutions involved, is a field which, in itself, generates resistance. Polyfunctionality is given by the correct political conception of the actions of the armed bodies in times of non-war, but at the same time leaving aside a perspective that is the base, the backbone of the Armed Forces in the country.

The cases are not isolated. Most of the Armed Forces in the region have acted on the basis of internal conflicts so far in the 21st century, despite the fact that their structure is considering an eventual conventional conflict. That in itself is a doctrinal contradiction that, for the cases analyzed, must be considered as the support of a change. But this reflection must not only occur at the level of theorization or academy, but must be incorporated into a wide debate, with all the actors that make up what could be called the Defense Community of the countries, taking into account the current reality and not the experiences of a remote past.
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The Need for a Conventional Conflict Doctrine Change to One for Peaceful Times: The Cases Of Chile and Ecuador


**ABSTRACT**

Defense notions in South America have traditionally been linked to the protection of border areas as a means of guaranteeing territorial integrity. However, States have established the boundaries of their borders by peaceful means, so the Armed Forces must necessarily reform both their doctrine and their own capabilities. That is why, taking as cases of study the realities of Chile and Ecuador, it is possible to determine which are the main points on which the armed bodies have been adapted, the changes of doctrine, such as the problems that are generated, both at institutional and social level, with these changes. It is concluded that although there are resistance and problems in the implementation of changes, also its visualize in the countries the acceptance of a regional context that implies changes in the Armed Forces, especially for peacetime.

**KEYWORDS**

Armed Forces; Defense; Chile; Ecuador; Doctrine.

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