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Colombia's Political Violence

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Abstract

Kirton employs concepts from the literature on globalization to ask the question: to what extent has Colombia's internal violence, and civil societal organization, become transcended by the processes of capitalist globalization? Following decades of protracted civil war, he argues that Colombia's armed conflict has entered a new, transnational, phase of political violence, characterized by the dynamics and imperatives of military globalization and the globalization of the security state. The United States military forces, transnational corporations, international drug cartels, global arms dealers, transnational capitalist elites, supranational geogovernance organizations, and private security multinational corporations, have hastened Colombia's enmeshment into a world military order; while armed actors, indigenous groups, human rights campaigners, social movements and non-governmental organizations have forged transnational linkages from within Colombia. Kirton concludes that Colombia's internal violence is as much driven by external forces and global systems as by domestic actors and political institutions. Furthermore, the logic of globalization has privileged militarization and the 'securitization of development' over the human security of Colombia's poor majority.

Global Forces: A New Phase in Colombia's Political Violence

War is the arrogance in the lips of the powerful, but it is blood and misery in the humble towns and neighbourhoods without hope. And after all it is the Colombian people on which the future of the nation finally depends¹

Introduction

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks in the United States the complex armed conflict in Colombia morphed, so the US government claimed, from the War on Drugs to the War on Terror. While two convicted members of the Provisional IRA and one Sinn Fein activist spent more than two years in Colombian prisons on charges of training Colombia's largest rebel army, the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), the British SAS were engaged in training the narcotics police, the Fuerza Jungla. The Irish trio, who were arrested at Bogotá airport in August 2001, one month before the 9/11 attacks, were alleged to have trained FARC guerrillas in designing mortars, rockets and home-made bombs. When 12 teenagers went to the scene of a small explosion in Villavicencio in April 2002 they were killed by a larger secondary device, the hallmark of a classic IRA attack. The *Guardian* reported: "That bomb and other similar ones in Colombian cities was to have reverberations not only in South America but also in Washington, Dublin, London and Belfast," (McDonald, Jordan, & Vulliamy, 2002). The SAS, meanwhile, had been sent to Colombia by Mrs Thatcher in 1989 to fight the drug cartels, and by extension, provide counterinsurgency training. In 2003 the *Guardian* revealed that Britain was 'secretly stepping up military assistance to Colombia', including military advice, the supply of military hardware and intelligence equipment, with support from MI6, and British customs officers working with SAS and SBS soldiers to intercept cocaine shipments, (Pallister, Brodzinsky, & Bowcott, 2003). Thus, the IRA and SAS were propping up opposing forces in an already protracted and complex Colombian civil war.

¹ Writers at the XIII International Forum of Poetry and Peace for Colombia, Medellin, 2003, cited in Murillo, 2004: 201.

The UK had become the second biggest donor of military aid to Colombia behind the United States. Under the aid package of Plan Colombia, the US provided US\$1.3 billion of economic and military support, including 18 Blackhawk and 42 Huey helicopters, radar systems, reconnaissance aircraft, and money for the construction of Andean military bases. In addition, US\$330 million of ordinary military aid was approved by the US Congress for 2000-01, confirming Colombia as the recipient of the highest amount of military aid of any Latin American country (Livingstone, 2009), and the third largest recipient of US military aid after Israel and Egypt.

This paper argues that Colombia's protracted civil war and security state has entered a new phase, driven by transnational practices and the imperatives of globalization. Global forces, including the United States as regional hegemon, along with transnational corporations (TNCs), international drug cartels, global arms dealers, transnational capitalist elites, supranational geogovernance organizations, and private security multinational corporations, have hastened Colombia's enmeshment into a world military order; while armed actors, indigenous groups, human rights campaigners, social movements and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have asserted their own transnational linkages from within Colombia, often in defiance of external globalizing forces. This paper asks: to what extent has Colombia's internal violence, and civil societal organization, become transcended by the processes of capitalist globalization?

Chapter one situates Colombia's political violence within four historical stages, as defined by Safford and Palacio (2002), and briefly surveys the literature on the *internationalisation* of Colombia's conflict. Chapters two and three draw upon conceptual frameworks from the globalisation literature in order to analyse the ways in which Colombia's conflict has entered a new, fifth, historical stage, characterized by transnational processes.

Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, (1999) argue that *military globalization* refers to the process of 'military connectedness that transcends the world's major regions as reflected in the spatio-temporal and organizational features of military relations, networks and interactions'

(1999: 88). Chapter two employs this conceptual framework of military globalization to argue that Colombia is firmly enmeshed in the world military order; first, through its integration into the war system; second through its interconnectedness to the global arms dynamic; and third, via forms of geogovernance.

Ian Clark (2003) argues that national security is being reshaped by the impact of globalization through four interrelated processes: first, the relationship between security and territoriality; second, the enmeshment of security in global networks; third, the creation of a new security agenda related to destabilized identities; and fourth, the diminished capacity of the state to provide adequate security for its citizens. Drawing upon these analytical concerns, chapter three argues that globalization has impacted upon Colombia's security state in multifaceted ways, facilitating transnational linkages and practices among domestic actors. Whereas chapter two analyses the reach of external global forces upon Colombia's domestic conflict, chapter three examines how globalization has impacted upon Colombia's internal sense of national identity, territoriality and sovereignty, and served to develop transnational solidarity, oftentimes as a counterforce to capitalist globalization.

I should note, as a caveat, that space constraints preclude a full discussion of the wider analytical concerns that occupy the expansive terrain of this present essay: thus, international relations, human rights issues, drug trafficking, peace processes, transnational advocacy networks, resource extraction, democracy formation, environmental degradation, indigenous rights, state sovereignty, etc, are drawn upon as determining dimensions of a globalising process which are inextricably linked to Colombia's armed conflict, and it is beyond the scope of this paper to extrapolate wide-ranging policy recommendations. Furthermore, while it is recognised that neoliberal capitalist economic globalisation (and its social impacts)² fundamentally underpins all of the above, it is not the purpose of this essay to explicitly engage in these well-documented debates.

² See Green, 1995

In concluding that Colombia's protracted civil war has entered a new transnational phase, this essay considers the implications of globalization for the peaceful resolution of Colombia's armed conflict, and the human security of its citizens.

CHAPTER ONE: Historical Stages Towards Internationalisation

How has Colombia's civil war transformed over time? This chapter outlines Colombia's recent historical trajectory, and briefly examines the literature on the internationalization of Colombia's conflict.

Safford and Palacios (2002) conceive of four essential phases of political violence in Colombia's modern history. The first phase, centered around the electoral campaigns of 1945-1946, refers to the 'violence of political partisanship', which marked the beginning of *La Violencia* (1946 to 1964), during which time it is estimated there were between 80,000 to 400,000 deaths. Oquist (1980) records that the violence of the late 1940s corresponded to interclass conflicts, accentuated by an abrupt change in official policy towards salaried workers, as well as partisan conflicts which anticipated the impending presidential election. Following the assassination of the Liberal Party leader and Presidential candidate, Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, on April 9th 1948, there began an especially brutal five-year period. The violence was extensive: 'In some parts of Colombia, practically everyone became a victim, a perpetrator, or a first-hand witness to horrific carnage. Throughout the country an entire generation grew up hearing vivid accounts of atrocities' (Kline & Gray, 2007: 209). In particular, peasant families and women were targeted: 'In these killings, torture, rape, and mutilation of pregnant women fulfilled the symbolic role of "destroying the seed" of the hated enemy' (Meertens & Stoller, 2001: 133). This phase of violence, under the presidency of ultra-conservative Laureano Gómez (1950-1953), unfolded against the backdrop of the Cold War, with anti-communist sentiment employed by the Church and the Conservatives to attack Liberals, as well as by the upper classes to

attack the poor and labour unions.³ The first phase of the violence ended in 1953 when Gomez was overthrown in a military coup by General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, whose amnesty to Liberal guerrillas led to their demobilization, and brought the partisan violence to a close. Safford and Palacios describe this as 'a germinal period, covering much of the national territory, which sowed the field with myths, representations, and modes of behaviour that would be harvested in later phases' (2002: 346).

The second phase, from 1954, described as 'mafia violence', predominated in the 'coffee slopes of the Central and Western Cordilleras.' Mafiosos, political bosses and gangs of bandits were typically involved in extortion campaigns with landowners and farmers over land, coffee and cattle. In 1956 Alberto Lleras Camargo and Laureano Gómez met in Spain and agreed upon a pact between the Liberals and Conservatives that would have both parties alternate in power every four years. The bipartisan coalition government, the National Front, continued from 1958 to 1974, and sought to consolidate national power in rural localities where partisan and economic-driven Mafia violence had prevailed under the partial collapse of the state. La Violencia, although officially over, resumed in a new form, what Sanchez and Meetens refer to as *Bandolerismo*. This banditry 'stemmed from the changing relations between armed rebels and the state, the political parties and the local and regional powerbrokers. To be a *bandolero* meant, above all, to have lost political legitimacy' (2001: 22).' Many of the bands which did not demobilize or disappear re-emerged in the 1960s as revolutionary guerrillas.

The third phase, from the beginning of the 1960s to the collapse of Communism at the end of the 1980s, is defined by the armed conflict of the various revolutionary guerrilla organizations. The ELN (Ejército de Liberación Nacional) date from 1962 and were inspired by the Cuban revolution and the doctrines of Che Guevara. The FARC's origins were as peasant self-defense organizations, but following the execution of *Plan Lazo* in 1964, when 16,000

³ See Bethell & Roxborough, 1992, for a sense of the post-war anti-communist and anti-Labour climate in Latin America

Colombian troops attacked a group of fifty or so supposed dissident peasants using US-supplied equipment, and led by US-trained officers, the peasants escaped the bombing, and subsequently formed a network of guerrilla groups which would lead to the formation of the FARC in 1966 (Simons, 2004: 42). From the mid-1960s until the promulgation of the 1991 Constitution, Colombia employed a measure from the 1886 constitution, known as a 'state of siege', to handle public disorder. 'The consequence', as Buitrago (2004) states, 'was the de facto abolition of the rule of law.'

The fourth phase, 'characterized by... insurreccional war of low intensity and mafia wars', involving drug-traffickers, guerrillas, paramilitaries, clientelistic politicians, cattle-owners, the military and the police, began at the end of the 1980s, and continues into the new century (Safford & Palacios, 2002: 347). The Colombian military, while fighting the FARC and ELN, has formed cooperative relationships with right-wing paramilitary groups who emerged in the 1980s to combat the guerrilla threat and further the interests of Colombia's elite, including multinational corporations. The paramilitaries have been responsible for some of the worst human rights violations, including killing more than two thousand members of the Patriotic Union (UP), a left-wing political party that emerged from Betancur's democratic opening, and was founded by the Communist Party and demobilized FARC guerrillas. The paramilitaries unified under the umbrella of the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC) in 1997, and have been fighting a dirty war against suspected guerrilla sympathisers. In 2005 the Justice and Peace Law facilitated the demobilisation of some paramilitary troops⁴.

Despite different and opposing fundamental ideological beliefs and political objectives all three illegitimate armed actors – the guerrillas, paramilitaries and drug traffickers (whose violence erupted in the mid-1970s) – share significant behavioural attributes, including: generating hundreds of millions of dollars per year from drug trafficking; engaging in violence,

⁴ For an examination of the DDR-process (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) culminating in a consolidation of criminal networks, see Rozema, 2008

extortion, kidnapping and murder⁵; assassinating government officials; recruiting foot soldiers from the rural and urban poor, including children; and conducting covert activities in the dense and rugged terrain of Colombia's mountains to evade detection (Kline & Gray, 2007: 220).

In the post-Cold War period, the US shifted its attention to the War on Drugs in which the guerrilla movement was fully implicated. In the aftermath of the attacks of 9/11, and as the aerial fumigation and military support of Plan Colombia gathered momentum, the narcoguerrillas were reclassified as narco-terrorists. In 2002 President Bush signed a law to finance the war on terror that permitted all of the support against drugs to be used in a unified campaign against all of the Colombian groups on the US list of organized terrorists. With as many as 40,000 lives claimed by civil war in the past decade, and estimates of three million internally displaced persons 'some consider that the country is now passing through several wars superimposed on one another and that their development implies not an insurrectionary perspective but an anarchical one' (Peñaranda, 1992: 308).

The literature on Colombia's international relations has necessarily privileged Colombia's bilateral relations with the United States, focusing in particular on the drug trade and human rights concerns.⁶ Bagley and Tokatlian argue that the rhetoric of the war on drugs, which was formalized in April 1986 with President Reagan's National Security Decision Directive 221, and authorized an expanded antinarcotics role for the U.S. military, imposed an "antidrug national security" regime on Latin American nations that lacked 'legitimacy, credibility and symmetry'. Throughout the 1980s Latin American nations had failed to fully recognise the extent of the drug

⁵ For an overview of the literature on Colombia's diversity of violence, see Peñaranda's chapter (Bergquist, Peñaranda, & Sanchez, 1992) on 'Surveying the Literature on the Violence'. Peñaranda states: 'the goal of these studies has been unfortunately, elusive: to destroy the Violence by understanding it' (1992: 294).

⁶ For a sense of Colombia's historical international relations, including: the secession of Panama; President Fidel Suárez's Doctrine of the Polar Star; Colombia's commitment to send troops to fight in a UN Command force in South Korea in 1951; Colombia's 'showcase' role in President Kennedy's Alliance for Progress in 1961; the political leverage acquired by Colombian decertification in 1996-97; Colombia's ambivalence towards extradition; and the increasing militarisation of the US War on Drugs, see Kline (1995), Steinger, (1999), Joyce, (1999) and Coleman, (2008).

problem as a national security priority, perceiving it largely as an American problem of consumption. This indifference allowed the US to pursue a unilateral response based upon realist analyses of the international system⁷, while Latin American states continued to prioritize other policy issues (debt, economic growth, political violence and democratic consolidation over anti-drug measures), until 'the rising levels of violence generated by both progressive militarization of the U.S. antinarcotics strategy in Latin America and the bloody responses of the drug traffickers – along with accompanying paramilitary and guerrilla conflicts – set in motion a wave of drug-related crime and terrorism that directly threatened state security' (Bagley & Tokatlian, 1992: 225). As Colombia, among others, complied with US imposed antinarcotics policies, and 'narcoviencia' increased in response to extradition measures, it became increasingly apparent that the drug issue was a serious threat to both national security and sovereignty.

Ramírez (2001), has written extensively on the internationalisation of the conflict which, he argues, began during the Presidency of Ernesto Samper, as a result of allegations of corruption and links to drugs money, which gave Washington the pretext to fully enter Colombia's domestic affairs. Ramírez states that apart from drugs, the other dimension which contributed to Colombia's sad notoriety, and which awoke the interest of the international community, was the ongoing and brutal violations of human rights and international humanitarian law (2001: 22). This theme is explored by various human rights analysts, including Welna and Gallón (2007) who assert the need to resolve Colombia's 'triple challenge' of peace, democracy and human rights.

Borda Guzman (2007) argues that, while not denying the power of the US and other relevant international agencies, the Colombian state has had far more space to take autonomous decisions in voluntarily internationalising its own internal war than existing literature

⁷ i.e. that nation states are key, rational, actors in international politics who prioritise national security interests, and respond to threats with the full range of national power resources

has recognised. Borda Guzman claims that although the international system, since September 11th 2001, has conditioned the Colombian government's decision to internationalise the war, it hasn't completely determined it. Rather, the administrations of Pastrana and Uribe have quickly understood how the links asserted between guerillas and the production and trafficking of drugs on the one hand, and the labeling of these groups as terrorists on the other, has created immeasurable opportunities for a new strategy of internationalizing Colombia's armed conflict.

Stokes (2005) argues that, contrary to the discontinuity thesis of mainstream academia, US policy toward Colombia has in fact demonstrated continuity in the post-Cold War period. This is for three reasons: "the preservation of a capitalist international order, US access to strategic natural resources, and the continuity of the CI [counterinsurgency] discourse which continues to construct social relations between the Colombian state and civil society in particular ways," (Stokes, 2005: 14). This continuity of policy, Stokes asserts, is part of a US imperial agenda to stabilize its political and economic arrangements, and protect the interests of US TNCs, and the demands of US energy supplies.

Richani (2002) argues that a comfortable impasse has been reached in Colombia's political economy, whereby a balance of power and forces perpetuates the equilibrium of a war system. Avilés (2006) examines how democratization and civil-military relations in Colombia, have facilitated – in the context of global capitalism – not only democratic and economic liberalization, but also political repression.

Further to the four stages of political violence outlined above⁸, I argue that Colombia's armed conflict has entered a fifth, transnational, phase of insecurity. 'Intermestic' processes

⁸ For recent historical surveys of Colombia's multifaceted and protracted violence see Safford & Palacios, (2002); Palacios, (2006); Bushnell, (1993); Simons, (2004); Hylton, (2006); Pearce, (1990); Bergquist, Penaranda, & Sanchez, (1992); Skidmore & Smith, (2005); Kline H. F., (1995).

have intensified in the post-Cold War and post 9/11 era, such that Colombia's civil war⁹ has not merely *internationalised*, but is being violently contested, and sustained, by political, military, criminal, economic and social forces of *globalisation*. Going beyond existing interpretations of the internationalization of Colombia's war system this essay offers a more panoramic interpretation of the multifaceted dimensions of accelerated globalization, in order to demonstrate that transnational actors and practices have become increasingly integrated into Colombia's internal conflict. This is a dual process which both perpetuates Colombia's historical violence, and offers hope for a peaceful resolution.

Chapter Two: Colombia and the world military order

I argue that key patterns of globalisation have transformed the trajectory of political violence in Colombia, such that both internal *and* international actors are enmeshed in a complex nexus of competing interests and armed conflict. This is distinct from earlier phases of political violence and civil war, driven by partisan and class conflicts; territorial claims, however, remain pivotal to the current phase of violence, characterised by transnational dynamics. Drawing upon Held's, et al, (1999) framework of military globalisation, the purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that Colombia has become enmeshed in the world military order.

According to Held, et al, military globalisation has been articulated through three key mechanisms: the war system (including the geopolitical order, conflict and security relations); the arms dynamic (including the diffusion of technologies); and the geogovernance of organized violence (1999: 89). The globalization of the war system refers in particular to four post-Cold War processes: first, multilateral security arrangements; second, military developments in strategically critical regions; third, non-military threats to national security; fourth, global

⁹ Several writers argue that the term 'civil war' no longer adequately describes Colombia's violence, and employ new terminology: thus Pearce (2007) talks of 'multipolar violence' or 'multi-polar militarisation' while Sanchez (2001) refers to 'multidimensional violence' to more precisely reflect the multiplicity of violence and diversity of armed actors.

systemic conditions, (Ibid: 101-103). Each of these processes are interrelated and reinforce 'the unified character of the world military order'. They are examined below in relation to Colombia's military and security context.

The War System: Multilateral security arrangements

First, Colombia, as elsewhere, has strengthened its international military cooperation and is participating in 'multilateral and collective defence arrangements'. Fundamentally, since the early 1990s, Colombia has continued to be the largest recipient of US military aid in Latin America. In 1982 the Colombian government received US\$2.8 million to fight illicit drug cultivation. This figure increased to just under US\$10 million in 1988, US\$26 million in 1994, and by 2000 President Clinton had signed a bill allocating approximately US\$800 million (Crandall, 2002: 1). The Centre for International Policy states that between 1997 and 2007, two out of every three dollars given by the United States to Latin America in military and police aid – \$4.9 billion out of \$7.3 billion - was received by Colombia (2007).

The United States Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), located in Miami, Florida, has coordinated US military involvement in Colombia in its efforts 'to thwart narcoterrorist activity' (United States Southern Command, 2008). SOUTHCOM's assistance to Colombia's armed forces includes: training and equipping elite units to fight illegal armed groups; providing training in operational planning; supporting Colombian military units with helicopters, intelligence, munitions, etc. In particular, SOUTHCOM's cooperation with Colombia's armed forces has been focussed on counternarcotics operations, and has resulted in disrupting 'the flow of more than 200 metric tons of cocaine in 2008 (ibid). Colombia has also participated in multi-national security exercises including UNITAS 49-08, involving maritime operations off the coast of Peru in coalition with Argentine, Chilean, Ecuadorian and US navies. SOUTHCOM also coordinated the Fuerzas Comando 2009, a military skills competition held in Brazil between security forces from 21 Central and South American countries. According to SOUTHCOM (2009), 'multinational

competitions like this build the required capacity to collectively confront direct threats. Many of today's transnational threats, such as kidnappings, international gangs, terrorism, drug trafficking and illicit activities, cannot be defeated by traditional military means alone.'

Stokes underscores the linkage between US intervention in Colombia, and the 'wider set of regional US economic, strategic and political considerations' (Stokes, 2005: 122). The role of SOUTHCOM is to preserve 'capitalist socio-economic relations and the continued and unhindered access to Latin American markets by US transnationals' (ibid: 123).

In July 2008, Colombia entered into a defence pact with Brazil, with an agreement to cooperate in military training, intelligence and weapons procurement, which would assist both nations in policing their shared border which is 'known as a haven for drug traffickers' (Reuters, 2008). In August 2009 it was reported that the US has upgraded its security agreement with Colombia which 'would allow the Pentagon to lease access to seven Colombian military bases for U.S. support in fighting drug traffickers and guerrillas involved in the cocaine trade', and increase the number of US troops in Colombia to 800 (Reuters, 2009). Thus, Colombia's security and defence arrangements are firmly linked to multilateral - and especially - bilateral relations with the United States.

Military developments in strategically critical regions

Second, the transnational phase of Colombia's political violence has been exacerbated by its strategic importance and global significance as a country rich in natural resources. Multinational corporations found it hard to penetrate Andean nation's economies during the 1970s and 1980s. The Andean Pact's Foreign Investment Code - in place from 1971 to 1987 – put forth stringent restrictions on MNC's conduct¹⁰, and 'ranked among the most hostile of regulatory environments outside of the communist countries' (Grosse, 1989: 252). In the wake of the debt crisis in 1982,

¹⁰ See Grosse (1989: 43-44) for an exposition of bargaining theory which posits competition between governments and multinational enterprises for resource allocation and economic gains.

the Andean Pact nations found themselves under increasing pressure from economic recession and lack of foreign capital. In 1987 new policies were implemented, designed to attract more FDI into the region by offering equal treatment of foreign and domestic firms. It was against this economic backdrop that the administrations of Presidents Barco and Gaviria significantly opened up the Colombian economy to foreign investment and restructured financial, trade and economic systems in line with neoliberal prerogatives. FDI grew at an annual rate of 55 per cent in the 1990s and there are now four hundred MNCs in Colombia – mainly in extractive, security and financial and service sectors - generating an annual income of about US\$15 billion, about 15 percent of Colombia's GNP (Richani, 2005: 115).

Colombia's geopolitical significance has also intensified in tandem with its expansion of trade and investment. Colombia has continued to rank among the top four largest exporters to the world of emeralds, coffee, flowers, bananas, and coal. However, in 2000, oil had overtaken coffee as the country's largest export earner and accounted for 35 percent of export earnings. Despite recent falls in production levels, the government has encouraged MNCs – including British Petroleum (BP), Occidental Petroleum, Triton, Shell, Chevron, Exxon, Elf Aquitaine and Total - to explore the country's vast potentially oil-bearing sedimentary basins which may contain up to 37 billion barrels of oil, (Livingstone, 2003: 105). In 2009, according to *Oil and Gas Journal (O&GJ)*, Colombia had 1.36 billion barrels of proven crude oil reserves, and was the fifth-largest producer in South America with 600,000 barrels of oil per day (bbl/d) in 2008, (Energy Information Administration).

Yet, the production of oil, and other natural resource commodities, is undertaken in the context of what Pearce describes as 'multi-polar militarisation'. In the case of the Cusiana and Cupiagua oil installations operated by BP-Amoco in Casanare, the 1990s witnessed the convergence of various armed groups, including the military, guerillas and paramilitaries, seeking territory, rents and accumulation of wealth generated by oil royalties. Pearce states: 'it is here that an oil multinational becomes an actor in the conflictive processes that inevitably

emerge when oil is found in a poor and peripheral region... A company of such size and power becomes the focal point of myriad distinct complaints, some justified and others not,' (2007: 239).

Attacks on oil pipelines between 1992 and 2002, mainly by the ELN, spilt 1.9 million barrels of oil, and has resulted in firebombs engulfing villages, and pollution to thousands of kilometres of rivers. As Tirado Mejia states: "the frequent kidnapping of foreigners and the ransom demanded for their liberation, as well as the constant threats of extortion against multinationals, especially oil companies, are seriously affecting Colombia's international relations" (1998: 120). It becomes evident, then, that 'the rising density of financial, trade and economic connections between states has', as Held, et al, argue, 'expanded the potential vulnerability of most states to crises in distant parts of the globe,' (1999: 102). Multinational corporate operations have transformed regions such as Arauca and Casanare into zones of strategically critical global significance.

Richani argues that the MNCs have brought about the conjunction of three factors that have led to the perpetuation of Colombia's civil war: first, MNCs have disrupted the subsistence peasant economy, exacerbating violent conflict over access to land; second, MNCs have triggered rent predation which helps finance the main armed actors and maintain the war system without impinging on corporate profits; third, MNCs have helped to internationalize the conflict, and consequently exacerbated the war system (Richani, 2005: 114).

In Casanare, Pearce argues, BP initially pursued an ineffective strategy based entirely upon securing their operations with no concern 'beyond the perimeter fence'. The military and a private security company, Defence Systems Colombia (DSC) - themselves part of a multinational security company, Defense Systems Limited (DSL) - allegedly filmed and photographed community leaders who were opposed to BP, and handed these pictures to the army. Although BP was eventually exonerated by the Public Prosecutor in 1998, international attention from the UK media, human rights protesters, the European Parliament, the House of

Lords, and an inter-agency group of UK NGOs, (Save the Children, Oxfam, Christian Aid, CAFOD and CIIR) all contributed to BP's internal rethink with regard to its conduct in local community relations (Pearce, 2007: 241).

International monitoring has consequently contributed to the development by BP of strategic partnerships with various regional actors including the state, private sector and local communities in order to improve relationships and strengthen social consensus around the multiple challenges that confront the various stake holders and participants.¹¹

Richani identifies the role played by multinational insurance companies in the resource extraction industry who may in fact be capitalizing on the 'war economy', albeit while escaping public scrutiny: 'These are the agents that negotiate ransom payments and capitalize on higher insurance premiums. Multinational personnel or Colombian businesspeople who are insured become primary targets of kidnapping, which, in turn, raises premiums and increases the incentives for kidnapping. It is a mutually reinforcing process; the kidnapers and the insurers are optimizing their benefits. Companies such as Kroll Inc. (U.S.) and Control Risks Group (Britain), Hiscox Group of Lloyd's (Britain), and IAG (U.S.) have joined the lucrative war economy,' (Richani, 2005: 136). With such speculation in insecurity, it is within the interest of some multinational companies to maintain the status quo.

While Colombia's oil and coal reserves remain of significant interest to TNCs and define Colombia's territory as of strategic global significance, other natural resources such as coca, and its links to transnational organized crime, provide a non-military threat to national security.

Non-military threats to national security

The third characteristic of military globalization, as proposed by Held, et al, encompasses non-military threats to national security due to the diffusion of industrial and technological knowledge as well as hardware. 'Environmental, economic, narcotics, terrorist, cultural, criminal and other

¹¹ see Pearce, 2007, pp. 254-257

threats to national security cannot be resolved through either solely military or solely national means. Accordingly, there is a permanent demand for global mechanisms of coordination and cooperation to deal with the expanding penumbra of security threats,' (1999: 102).

Many of these threats are encapsulated by the international drug trafficking and money laundering operations of the Cali cartel, whose global reach has extended across the western hemisphere, from production zones in the Andean countries, through transit routes and warehouses in Central America and the Caribbean, before crossing the Mexican border into the United States. In the mid-1980s, the Cali cartel penetrated Europe via tobacco smugglers in Spain and formed strategic alliances with Russian and Italian mafias to take advantage of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the withdrawal of trade barriers and borders within the European Union. In particular, the cartel formed strong links with the Camorro branch of the Italian mafia which had controlled a heroin network in Europe. The Italian mob set up laboratories, distributed cocaine and laundered money for the Colombians.

Mittleman (2008) has argued that the nexus of organized crime and globalization is impelled through several key trends: technological innovations in telecommunications and mobility; capitalizing on permeable borders and deregulation brought about by neoliberal capitalism; co-opting and recruiting marginalized members of the population who have become impoverished and set-aside by wider social and economic structural adjustments; emulating legitimate business practices and embracing the logic of the market economy through pursuit of the profit incentive, combined with the formation of strategic alliances to invest and launder capital, and insure their assets against external threats. Mittleman states: 'Whereas these groups may have ostensibly economic objectives, to the extent that they undermine the main actors in the globalization process – transborder firms and dominant states that acquiesce to it – then transnational organized crime groups are both a political component of, and a response to, globalization' (2008: 237).

The Cali cartel, then, effectively functioned as a multinational, with decentralised operations of processing and distribution. Chepesiuk writes: 'It made its money illegally, but that was about the only difference between the Cali cartel and an IBM or any other multinational corporation. In terms of structure, marketing, and distribution, the drug mafia had as much in common with the giants that made *Fortune* magazine's annual list of top 500 companies as it did with its rivals in the drug trade' (Chepesiuk, 2003: 115).

The transnational character of the Cali cartel's organised crime network led to increased coordinated transnational crime enforcement operations, involving the U.S. State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics Matters, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), HM Customs and Excise in Britain, and authorities throughout Europe. Operation Green Ice, in the early 1990s, was an international money laundering investigation which resulted in the seizure of US\$6 billion and forty-three kilos of cocaine and the arrest of three cartel members by UK authorities, while Italy's Servizio Centrale Operativo (SCO) and the Internal Security Service (SISDE) seized \$1 million and arrested twenty-one members, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police arrested one individual and seized another \$1.6 million (Chepesiuk, 2003: 114).

Besides cocaine, Colombian women have been caught up in international networks of trafficking in the global sex industry. 'Colombia is a major source country for women and girls trafficked to Latin America, the Caribbean, Western Europe, Asia, and North America, including the United States, for purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and involuntary servitude...Colombia also is a destination for foreign child sex tourists, particularly coastal cities such as Cartagena and Barranquilla' (U.S. Department of State, 2009). Many Colombian women have been trafficked to Japan through networks including the highly organized Yakuza mafia. Steele argues that civil wars increase opportunities for trafficking networks given the state's need to dedicate resources to fighting insurgents, and 'as many as 9 of every 10 women trafficked out of Colombia were originally from an area of conflict, since much of Colombia's

rural areas are plagued by armed groups fighting' (Steele, 2006: 86). Thus, international criminal networks such as those centred around the drugs and sex industries have contributed to non-military threats to Colombia's national security, but have also been exacerbated by civil war.

Global systemic conditions.

Fourth, Held, et al, argue that 'in the global states system the military security of all nations is significantly influenced by systemic factors. Indeed, the structure of power and the action of the great powers remain dominant influences on the military postures of each other and of all other states... How the great powers act affects the security of all the world's regions... Accordingly, national security, in an anarchic interstate system, can never be disentangled entirely from global systemic conditions' (1999: 102). Colombia, under the influence of the US as global hegemonic superpower, has had to redefine the nature of its internal conflict according to global systemic conditions. Traditional Cold War rhetoric that equated guerrilla warfare with communism has radically altered.¹² In order to encourage greater Congressional support towards expanding the US role in Colombia, senior officials in Washington began altering their discourse on Colombia from counter-narcotics and counterinsurgency to counter-terrorism. 'In the wake of September 11, Bush officials redefined the war in Colombia as a front in the global war on terrorism' (LeoGrande, 2007).

As Richani states: "since the Clinton administration, U.S. foreign policy toward Colombia has moved toward more involvement in the internal conflict. The Bush government completed the shift by merging the war on drugs with counterinsurgency, opening the door for a more substantial intervention than the one envisaged in Plan Colombia. This U.S. policy shift has

¹² Literature written by Conservatives and Liberals during the mid-twentieth century critiqued the other for their sympathies towards European fascist regimes (in the case of the Conservatives) and international communism (in the case of the Liberals) (Penaranda, 1992).

created a new dynamic in the war system, reducing the possibilities of a peaceful solution because it has changed the incentive structure” (Richani, 2005: 132).

The re-labelling of the FARC as ‘terrorists’ was, according to the Centre for International Policy (2007: 3), part of a much wider paradigm shift stemming from Washington: ‘When the Secretary of Defense made countering terrorism the U.S. military’s number one priority, it suddenly became a major priority for the Southern Command. Southcom had to defend its resources and relevance within an internal Pentagon climate in which all non-terror missions were clearly secondary’.

Drug traffickers were re-classified as ‘narco-terrorists’ as the Pentagon, in 2002-2003 sought to change the law in order that money designated for counter-drug purposes could be used for counter-terrorism, thus freeing budgets to perceive almost all illegal cross-border activity as potential threats. The U.S. Congress passed the change in law only in the case of Colombia, but not across the rest of the hemisphere (Ibid, p4).

Colombia, among other countries, has adopted the language of the ‘war on terrorism’ to describe its own fight against internal insurgents. As Jackson¹³ notes: ‘Linking rebels and dissidents at home to the global ‘war on terrorism’ gives these governments both the freedom to crack down on them without fear of international condemnation, and in some cases, direct military assistance from America’ (Jackson, 2005: 13).

Global systemic conditions, whether determined by Washington’s Cold War, the ‘war on drugs’, or the ‘war on terrorism’, have imposed their rhetoric upon Colombia’s internal armed conflict, and defined the nature and ideology of the enemy in its own terms.

¹³ See Jackson, 2005, for an examination of the way the ‘war on terrorism’ uses language to create and maintain hegemony and rationalise counter-terrorist activities.

The Global Arms Dynamic

In addition to the war system examined above, the second key mechanism that Held, et al, propose articulates military globalisation, is the global arms dynamic. Held, et al, argue that the extent of direct and indirect involvement in the arms trade is such that it has become truly 'global'; while the extensity, density and velocity of the contemporary arms trade and its related transactions signify a highly interconnected world military order; furthermore, these trends are driven by military technological innovation in advanced weapons systems and weapons of unprecedented destructive power (1999: 114).

Colombia has received significant flows of high-tech military equipment, small fire arms and weapons¹⁴, including 18 Blackhawk and 42 Huey helicopters, radar systems and reconnaissance aircraft as part of the Plan Colombia package (Livingstone, 2003: 153). The installation of a complex radar system in March 1989 led President Barco to be 'accused of yielding the nation's sovereignty and 'Vietnamising' Colombia,' (Steiner, 1999: 162).

Meanwhile, illegal arms shipments often arrive from Central America where stockpiles remain from the 1980s, including former US-supplied weapons originally given to the contras in Nicaragua (Erich, 2006). Millet describes one significant transaction of a large quantity of arms in November 2001 which led to a detailed investigation by the Organization of American States, since it represented a violation of the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Material: 'A Panamanian registered ship, the *Otterlou*, delivered nearly 3,000 AK-47 rifles and up to 5 million rounds of ammunition to AUC paramilitaries at the small Pacific [*sic*] port of Turbo, near the Panamanian border. The arms originated in Nicaragua and were ostensibly being shipped to Panama's National Police... Arrangements were made through Israeli arms dealers operating out of Guatemala and Panama, with the assistance of contacts in Mexico'

¹⁴ For details of UK arms exports to Colombia between 1998 and 2008 see Campaign Against Arms Trade, www.caat.org.uk

(2007: 170). The OAS investigation noted: “several Colombian customs agents were likely accomplices of or were bribed by the AUC” (ibid).

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimates that 80% of the arms entering Colombia illegally are destined for guerilla and paramilitary groups, while 20% goes to crime groups and organized crime (2006: 26). Furthermore, ‘there are many military reports denouncing the presence of FARC snipers in possession of ‘sophisticated high-precision rifles, which did not form part of this organization’s armament in the past’ (ibid). The demand for illegal arms, therefore, is determined by their tactical and operational suitability, as well as by quantity. Colombia can be regarded, therefore, as recipient of significant flows of both high-tech military aid and illegal arms from various sources involved in the global arms dynamic.

Emerging forms of geogovernance

Military globalization is better understood, Held, et al, argue, with an analysis of the three patterns of geogovernance of organised violence: the emergence of international security regimes; the regulation of war and military conflict; and the regulation of the instruments of war (1999: 123). The United Nations plays a fundamental role in this respect, and The Mission of Colombia to the United Nations has representatives in the Security Council, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, and other UN bodies. In relation to global drug control, the UN system includes several bodies charged with various functions. These include the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), the Division of Narcotic Drugs (DND) and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC). In the latter case, the UNFDAC had more than twenty programmes in operation in Colombia in 1990, including drug prevention programmes (Donnelly, 1992).

However, Lowenthal draws attention to the UN’s lack of funds and authority granted by member states to play a direct role in reducing the production, trade and consumption of illicit drugs: ‘Universal programs, worked out in the UN context, are bound to be longer on norms and

rhetoric than on concrete measures and sustained implementation. And the UN role... is likely to be “particularly peripheral” in the Americas because of a general UN tendency in most circumstances to defer to regional and subregional international organizations’ (1992: 306).

The Organization of American States (OAS) is one such regional body that has played a modest role in combating the drug trade, primarily through the formation of an Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), along with cooperation with the United Nations, Interpol and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) (Lowenthal, 1992).

The UN also plays significant roles in other aspects of Colombia's security situation, including illegal arms trafficking and humanitarian issues. Colombia played a key role in the UN Conference that led to the signing of the 2001 *Protocol Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components, and Ammunition*, which supplements the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2006: 95). Meanwhile, the huge number of newly displaced people - 270,000 persons in 2007 - ‘has attracted the special attention and concern of the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, John Holmes, and the Secretary-General's Representative on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, Walter Kalin, (Rothing & Skretteberg, 2009).

While ‘geogovernance’ essentially refers to the ‘institutionalisation of regulatory regimes’, I would broaden its parameters here to include what Sklair calls the Transnational Capitalist Class (TCC), composed of corporate executives, globalizing bureaucrats, politicians, professionals, and consumerist elites (Sklair, 2001: 4). Sklair states: ‘Members of the TCC see their interests bound up not only with particular corporations or states but also with the capitalist global system as a whole and see their mission as organizing the condition under which capitalist globalization can be furthered locally’ (Sklair, 2002: 160). Avilés argues that Colombia is now ruled by elite technopols and technocrats who work together to establish and maintain the ‘international hegemony of transnational capital’ (Aviles, 2006: 11-17).

This hegemony reflects the ideology of a 'neoliberal coalition' among Colombia's political and economic elite who have driven the stabilization and structural adjustment policies of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, in tandem with accommodating the imperatives of TNCs, and the agenda of US foreign policy.¹⁵ The latter has been centred around "Democracy Promotion", developed by agencies such as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), and The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the work of which is often complemented by military programmes and tied into specific aid conditionalities that link foreign assistance with changes in national political institutions (Aviles, 2006: 18).

Such dimensions of geogovernance are necessarily linked to the diminished capacity of the state to provide security for its citizens and maintain sovereignty, a matter discussed further below. However, what is clear in the case of Colombia is that supranational, transnational and multilateral organisations have gained increased governance over Colombia's security, political and economic institutions, facilitated by a transnational elite motivated by the values of capitalist globalisation. Seen as part of a process of integration into a world military system and global arms dynamics, the expanding reach of influence of geogovernance – in part to counter transnational political and criminal violence - has furthered the enmeshment of Colombia's protracted internal conflict into the world military order.

Chapter 3: Colombia and the Globalization of Security

The framework for analysing the mechanisms of military globalization put forward by Held, et al, is useful in interpreting the transnational and global transformations that have been impacting upon Colombia from the outside. This chapter interprets dimensions of globalized security from

¹⁵ Bergquist points out the ideological and political dilemma that confronts Colombia's elite with regard to the drug trade, reliant as they are on the hard currency generated by cocaine for economic growth in sectors such as real estate and construction, while also dependent upon the legal economy of the United States which demands an end to the drug trade (1992, p. 3)

the inside, in terms of internal transformations, which further Ian Clark's argument that 'security is being reshaped by the impact of globalization'. Clark puts forward four interrelated sets of arguments as follows: 'the detachment of security from territoriality; the enmeshment of security in global networks; the creation by globalization of a new security agenda; and the diminished capacity of the state to provide security for its citizens' (Clark, 2003: 178). Through an analysis of the internal transformations affecting such dimensions as Colombia's national identity, human rights, civil society, territorial claims and sovereignty, Clark's arguments serve to consolidate my over-arching claim that Colombia's armed conflict has entered a transnational phase.

The detachment of security from territoriality

While Clark furthers the argument that globalization helps explain the process of 'unbundling' issues of territoriality, he acknowledges that the relationship between globalization, territoriality and security is complex. In the context of Colombia's armed conflict, the state is not engaged in territorial battles *per se*, but is rather engaged in two separate but interrelated wars on insurgents and drug traffickers. However, the struggle for land has always been at the heart of Colombia's violence; as Berquist states: 'the immediate historical origins of the struggle for land lay in the massive alienation of territory in the public domain that occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' (Bergquist, Penaranda, & Sanchez, 1992: 5). Today, the struggle for land ownership and rights are bound up with issues pertaining to natural resource extraction, the cultivation of illicit crops, control by armed actors, the rights of indigenous groups and campesinos, and the economic imperatives of private landowners and TNCs.

Within Colombia, territoriality continues to define the armed conflict. For instance, in November 1998 President Pastrana withdrew armed forces from a demilitarized zone of some 16,200 hectares (often compared to the size of Switzerland) in the region of Caquetá, as part of his peace process. 'In effect,' as Hylton writes, Pastrana 'recognized [the FARC's] sovereignty over the region, which was logical given that [they were] the only group ever to have

administered the territory' (Hylton, 2006: 99). However, in February 2002, under pressure from the military and elsewhere, the demilitarized zone was retaken from the FARC, who had, in the context of the 'war on terrorism', lost much of their political legitimation.

Furthermore, the conflict itself has spilled over neighbouring borders, notably into Venezuela and Ecuador. In 2004, Venezuelan police arrested more than 70 Colombian paramilitaries who were, according to President Hugo Chávez, 'allegedly plotting to strike against the government in Caracas' (Lennard, 2004). In addition to numerous examples of cross-border insecurity, such as kidnapping, extortion and contagion of armed conflict, there is evidence of an increase in destruction of shared ecosystems, in particular deforestation due to the cultivation of illicit crops and the contamination of water from fumigation (Ramirez, 2001: 28).

Territoriality should also be considered in relation to displacement and migration. Numbers of internally displaced persons began to increase significantly from 1988-89 as a result of an upsurge in political murders and massacres¹⁶, especially in zones with a history of peasant struggles combined with the arrival of other armed actors. Many regions have seen a temporary movement of international refugees, such as from Chocó on the Pacific coast into Panama (which returned them), (Meertens & Stoller, 2001: 134).

Violence and crop fumigation has increased the numbers of victims of internal displacement, forced to relocate to shanty towns situated around major cities. Colombia has also witnessed an overspill of refugees across national borders, also to escape violence and poverty.

The latter is most evident in Ecuador and Venezuela where refugees have fled armed fighting and selective killings. A 2008 UNHCR Global Needs Assessment focussed on the unmet needs of refugees, IDPs, returnees, asylum seekers and stateless people in eight

¹⁶ Between 1985 and 2008, approximately 4, 629, 190 persons have been affected by forced displacement, including 925,838 families, ([CODHES], 2009)

countries, including Ecuador. The survey showed that 130,000 unregistered Colombian nationals – mainly indigenous people and Afro-Colombians – are living in a refugee-like situation in Ecuador, primarily at risk from a lack of documentation. State services, education, work and protection are all inaccessible without registration, and 'irregular armed groups are very suspicious of anyone without documentation, because this is seen as an attempt to disguise one's identity (because of belonging to 'the other side'). There have been many cases of people being killed for not being able to produce ID cards' (Verney, 2009).

Extraterritorial concerns are expressed by all of Colombia's neighbours. As Rabasa and Chalk state, all are concerned about refugee flows across borders, and any further deterioration of security in Colombia would threaten regional stability and see an expansion of the conflict (Rabasa & Chalk, 2001: 91). In May 2009 the Los Angeles Times reported that 'Panama could become next narco battleground' as FARC insurgentes have been seen crossing the border to get food and rest from pursuing Colombian armed forces (Los Angeles Times, 2009).

Ramírez writes: 'Los gobiernos de la región, lejos de buscar una respuesta conjunta y solidaria ante el conflicto colombiano, se han limitado a preservarse de sus impactos más negativos y han convertido incluso a Colombia en objeto de sus denuncias ante foros e instancias extraregionales' (2001: p. 32)

Meanwhile, an increasing number of Colombians are emigrating to escape violence or seek out more advantageous prospects. 'Nearly 3.3 million Colombians live abroad and regularly send remittances, which amounted to approximately 4.5 billion dollars in 2007, according to the Colombian Central Bank' (IOM, 2009). Such transmigration has a profound impact upon individual identities, and many Colombians suffer from both the separation from their homeland, as well as from the anxieties related to threats of deportation, problems of housing, work and health, or the suspicion of being connected to the drug trade simply for being Colombian.¹⁷ As Restrepo (2004: 183) states: 'Their voluntary exile signifies an anticipated 'undercapitalization' of the nation's future. One must note, nevertheless, that in the majority of

¹⁷ For an insight into life for Colombians abroad see Pearce, 1990, pp. 288-293

cases the emigrants who flee the country end up once again facing economic uncertainty, cultural displacement and lasting discrimination in their places of refuge.'

Long-standing territorial conflict within Colombia has, in this new transnational phase, spilled over regional borders and manifested in multifaceted transnational and extra-territorial concerns.

The enmeshment of security in global networks

As discussed already, security is increasingly structured into global networks – as exemplified by the Colombian military's participation in SOUTHCOM, and the enmeshment of drug traffickers in networks of international organised crime. Furthermore, Colombian insurgents have fortified their links with international actors, as indicated above by the FARC's involvement with IRA activists.

In January 2009, *Semana* published two articles based upon information held on the computer of Raúl Reyes, one of the FARC's top commanders, who was killed during an attack near the Ecuadorian border in March 2008. The FARC had an 'impressive web of support networks', the articles reported, 'in more than 30 countries', including links to the Basque separatist group, ETA, in Spain, the Italian and Turkish Communist Parties, the government of Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) in El Salvador, and other leftist and revolutionary movements throughout Latin America and Europe. (*Semana International*, 2009).

The FARC had previously participated in the peace process as delegates on a trip to Sweden, Norway, Italy, Switzerland, France and Spain in February 2000, in an agreement with the international community, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The ELN, meanwhile, had sought relations with the German government to guarantee human rights on the part of the Colombian government and to seek a solution to the internal conflict. In July 2000, following a diplomatic offensive by the ELN on various European governments and the Vatican,

France, Spain, Switzerland, Norway and Cuba agreed to provide humanitarian support in the peace process with the ELN (Ramírez, 2001: 54). In short, various armed actors have sought to intergrate themselves with the international community, both in terms of the peace process, and the armed struggle.

The creation by globalization of a new security agenda

The globalization of a new security agenda, Clark suggests, pertains to issues of identity, and the tendency to destabilize existing identities, as may be implied above in the context of forced displacement and migration, or the 'globalization of human mobility'. Clark states: 'Globalization is part of the complex of forces leading to the emergence of non-state-centric paradigms, and the reintroduction of societal dimensions of security,' (2003: 181) which assault the state from above (from external global forces) and from below (from domestic fragmentation).

In the Colombian context, national identity and cohesion is threatened by a diversity of violences and a fragmentation of identities by armed combatants who may participate in contradictory alliances and oppositions:

“Drug traffickers... are enemies of the state. So are the guerrillas, whose preaching against private property and in favour of expropriation also threatens the drug traffickers. As landowners, drug traffickers tend to take the role of keepers of 'law and order' against the guerrillas, therefore becoming allies of the army and the police. However, the guerrillas, while fighting drug traffickers and their much feared *autodefensas*, also make alliances with them, protecting their plantations and laboratories against the actions of the army and the police. The two latter institutions are obvious enemies of drug traffickers. Some of their members, however, occasionally contribute to the *autodefensas* to combat the guerrillas,” (Tirado Mejia, 1998: 118).

The globalization of a new security agenda, exemplified by fragmentation from within, 'local' resistance to homogenization, and societal dimesions of security (Clark, 2003) can be further examined with reference to Colombia's civil society, indigenous people and human rights movements. It should be stressed, however, that Colombia's divserse civil society movements

have repeatedly become victims of the dirty war¹⁸, as human rights and international humanitarian law have been increasingly disregarded, to a lesser extent by guerillas, but especially by paramilitary organisations engaged in extreme violence and terror. Koonings and Kruijt state: 'a very pernicious effect of violence is the undermining of civil society and the emancipative strategies pursued within it' (2004: 14).

Angel argues that during the 1980s and 1990s Colombian social movements became weakened by the hardening of the right, debilitation of the left and increasing armed violence: 'their traditional systems of organization and mobilization have proved inadequate in the face of the cruelty of armed confrontation and the disbanding of the actors of previous decades'. (Angel Urrego, 2001: 177). Kline and Gray describe how 'tens of thousands of rural Colombians have repeatedly marched on provincial capitals in protest of the aerial spraying of herbicides in the drug war, to no avail. Peace activists organize mass demonstrations in the large cities, and human rights workers bravely document the unending atrocities, but the influence of such groups on the government is at an all-time low. Indeed, President Uribe had referred to human rights NGOs as subversives' (Kline & Gray, 2007: 219).

October 24, 1999, saw the mobilization of 'millions of Colombians [who] took to the streets to wave white flags and green peace ribbons and to proclaim "¡No más!", [and] demonstrated their willingness to do something to end the violence, even if there is no consensus about what' (Pereira & Davis, 2000: 13). In October 2000, a civil coalition of human rights NGOs called Paz Colombia, joined forces with social movements to organize an International Conference for Peace, Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law in Costa Rica, with delegates from 32 governments, and a broad range of Colombian sectors represented (Rodriguez, 2004).

Similar international civil society mobilization occurred on February 4th 2008 when twelve million people around the world protested against the FARC's violence and kidnapping. The

¹⁸ See Murillo, 2004, Ch4, 'The Paramilitaries and the Dirty War'

event, organized by 'One Million Voices Against the FARC', included speeches in two hundred cities in forty countries around the world. Organizers used networking sites such as Facebook and YouTube to mobilize protesters at minimal cost.¹⁹ Given the exclusive nature of access to the Internet in Colombia, it might be argued, however, that this kind of civil protest was not representative of wider societal concerns, and appeared to disregard the atrocities committed by paramilitaries.

The participation of Colombian transnational advocacy networks²⁰ has taken on various manifestations including: focussing on solidarity among oppressed peoples through the development of alliances with international social movements; creating cross-border subaltern alliances, especially among unions; and establishing alliances with regional counterparts. In the case of the latter, MINGA (Association for Alternative Social Education) has addressed the collateral damage from US-sponsored counternarcotics operations, notably, fumigation, in conjunction with Ecuadorian NGOs, who were concerned about the 'spill-over' of refugees, armed actors and conflict (Tate, 2007: 189).

Transnational labour solidarity has developed in a number of international alliances. In 2001 the International Labor Rights Fund and the United States Steel Workers Union filed an Alien Tort Claim Act (ATCA) suit on behalf of SINALTRAINAL (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de Industrias Alimenticias* [National Union of Food Industry Workers]) in a US Federal Court in Miami against the Coca-Cola Company and two of its bottlers. Foster writes: 'The suit charged the company and its bottlers with intimidation, detention, and murder of trade unionists working at Coca-Cola bottling plants in Colombia' (Foster, 2008: 198).

Meanwhile, the British Teacher's union, the NASUWT, has shown solidarity with the Colombian teacher's trade union Federacion Colombiana de Educadores (FECODE), whose members have been 'targeted for persecution that includes torture, unlawful imprisonment,

¹⁹ Information gathered by author at a talk by Oscar Morales Guevara on May 20, 2009, at Canning House London, entitled 'One Million Voices Against the FARC'.

²⁰ See Keck & Sikkink, 1998

assassination and disappearance.²¹ The General Secretary of the NASUWT, Chris Keats has said: 'The Colombian government must recognise its responsibility to end extra-judicial killings and allow trade unions to function freely in this beautiful but much troubled country' (ibid).

Colombian NGOs and activists succeeded in creating a new human rights mechanism at the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva, when in 1996 an agreement was signed for a new office: the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia (UNHCR). Although the Commission itself has been critiqued by NGOs and the Colombian government as being bureaucratic, excessively political and ineffective, its reporting has furthered international advocacy campaigns (Tate, 2007: 199). The Colombian government resisted the designation of a country-specific rapporteur, arguing that Colombia would be condemned by the international community, and that its democratically elected government was caught up in a cycle of extremist violence. As Tate states: 'Among the challenges faced by NGO activists was shifting the framework used to describe Colombia, from drug trafficking violence in which the government is a victim needing support, to a human rights crisis for which the government is at fault' (Tate, 2007: 199). Following extensive lobbying from Colombian NGOs at the Commission – often operating as part of an international network of activists focussed on a range of issue-based lobbying - a negotiated agreement was reached whereby 'the Commission chairman requested the UNHCHR to establish an office in Colombia pursuant to the invitation by the government.' (Tate, 2007: 209). The mandate of the office has included advising the government, legislative branch, civil society and NGOs; and receiving complaints of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law (ibid: 110).

Zibechi notes that Colombia lacks a real social movement on a national scale. Indigenous movements represent a large geographic area of influence (30% of Colombian territory), but only 2% of the population. The National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC) unites all ethnicities, and under their constitutional rights, is fighting to protect what they

²¹ www.nasuwt.org.uk

regard as a 'new invasion' as a consequence of globalization. 'The first and fundamental step is the defense of territory, from people as well as from cultural, social, and economic threats' (Zibeche, 2005). The indigenous people's approach has been to show that you don't fight war with war, but peaceful mobilizations can lead to transformations 'made from the bottom up and from the inside out, from the local to the global and from the singular to the universal' (ibid).

The indigenous U'wa people, under threat from the exploitation of oil reserves in the remote Samoré Block, have engaged in transnational indigenous rights activism. The U'wa became the focus of international attention when 'they declared oil to be the blood of the earth and themselves to be the custodians of global harmony', and vowed that if oil exploration by Occidental de Colombia (Oxy) were conducted, 'they saw no solution other than committing collective suicide' (Haller, et al, 2007: 413). Support for the U'wa began in 1996 when ONIC formed an alliance with the Amazon Alliance for Indigenous and Traditional Peoples of the Amazon Basin, and an 'action alert' over the Internet mobilized Colombian citizens, NGOs, environmentalists and international journalists to march to the Ministry of Environment in Bogotá. US-based NGOs joined the coalition, including Amazon Watch, Rainforest Action Network, Project Underground and the Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund, with campaigns targeting Shell and Occidental, including the installation of a twenty-three-foot-long mock pipeline in the lobby of Occidental's Los Angeles headquarters (Gorman, Roberts, & Thanos, 2003). Following over seventy-five protests at its offices, Fidelity Investments, an Oxy investor, divested 60 percent of its Occidental shares, and in 1998 Shell pulled out of the Samoré Block. In 2001 Oxy stopped drilling due to a lack of oil discoveries in the area, although the Spanish oil company Repsol is attempting to continue drilling in areas of the U'wa ancestral homeland²².

²² For more information on U'wa, Oxy and Colombian state strategies to the Samoré Block reserves, see (Haller, Blochlinger, Markus, Marthaler, & Ziegler, 2007)

These various cases of destabilized identities, social mobilisation and transnational advocacy reflect the fragmentary nature of globalization, and its potential for the manifestation of non-state-centric paradigms of resistance from below.

The diminished capacity of the state to provide security for its citizens,

The weakening, and retreat, of the state has been widely examined with relation to sovereignty, the global economy and formation of democratic institutions, but less so in relation to security. Mittleman argues that the state is 'circumscribed but not disempowered', 'less autonomous, with diminished ability to control borders'. Furthermore, as a result of cross-border flows and unclear jurisdiction based on territoriality, the principle of Westphalian sovereignty is undermined to transnational crime (Mittleman, 2008: 240). Clark argues that while states maintain their monopoly on violence, their security concerns have shifted from unilateral to multilateral responses, (Clark, 2003: 186). Robinson, however, argues that: 'national states do not disappear or even diminish in importance and may still be powerful entities. But these states are captured by transnational social forces that internalize the authority structures of global capitalism' (Robinson, 2001: 175).

In the Colombia context, the interplay of state sovereignty on security can be evidenced in several ways: first, as Colombia has become dependent upon the United States for its military capacity, it has lost control over its own defence production and technology. Second, as the United States has imposed its drug policies, especially certification, it has increased its political leverage while weakening Colombia's state apparatus. Joyce argues, with regard to certification that: 'No other facet of US foreign policy would, if pursued conscientiously to its logical ends, demand such transformation of another sovereign state,' (Joyce, 1999: 208). In the attempt to curb the drug trade, the US is violating Colombia's sovereignty by taking actions beyond its own territory. Furthermore, with regard to the prominence of Colombia's drug cartels, 'the

globalization of organized crime weakens the very basis of government and constrains its capacity' (Mittleman, 2008: 239).

Third, transnational corporations are impacting upon Colombia's sovereignty as corporate decision-making resides with parent companies – most often based in the US or Europe – rather than subsidiaries. The Colombian government will, for instance, have less control over multinational oil companies than local firms, and the former may 'use the international nature of their organization to circumvent host-government policies, or in extreme cases, attempt to subvert governments" (Jones, 2005: 276). In the case of the Caño Limón oil installation in Arauca, a lack of state intervention increased the ELN's regional autonomy, and led to extortion of the oil industry and the misappropriation of oil royalties. Similarly, as Pearce argues, policy failure in both Arauca and Casanare, has increased opportunities for predation by armed groups, such that multinational oil companies believed themselves to be caught in the middle of guerrilla and paramilitary confrontations, and hence compelled to act on their own. 'Without the rule of law, effectively administered by state institutions, the industry remains very vulnerable' (Pearce, 2007: 250). Conversely, as Richani points out: "Extractive multinational corporations find in markets of violence a favourable opportunity to obtain better contracts for investment when states' authority has either partly or totally collapsed" (Richani, 2005: 115).

Fifth, along with broader neoliberal privatizing trends that has led to the withdrawal of the state, Colombia has expanded its privatization of security provision. A degree of devolution has occurred by which the military services traditionally identified with, and provided by, the state, have been contracted out to what Richani terms private security multinational corporations (PSMCs) who 'offer specialized skills in technological warfare, including communication, intelligence, aerial surveillance, fumigation, logistical support, battlefield planning, and training' (Richani, 2005: 133). A number of subcontractors to the US and British armed forces have been involved in this 'privatization of warfare', including Airscan, Military Professional Resources Inc. (MPRI), Northrop Grumman, Eagle Aviation Services and Technology (EAST), as well as

helicopter manufacturers Lockheed Martin, Sikorsky and Bell Textron (O'Shaughnessy & Branford, 2005: 100). The biggest contractor is DynCorp, who have employed foreign mercenaries (often military veterans from conflicts in Vietnam, the Middle East and Central America) on well-remunerated contracts to fly planes or military helicopters on fumigation missions. DynCorp has been contracted to spray illicit crops with Monsanto-produced Roundup, a potent herbicide containing glyphosate, which has proven highly toxic to humans and animals and catastrophic for the environment.

Such private security multinational companies, along with private security guards, are outnumbering the armed forces, and contributing to a crisis in the legitimacy of the Colombian state. Richani refers to the 'new international political economy of violence' in which the economic imperative intertwines state and private actors: 'The "privatization of war" is enhancing the rentier economy in the sense that public security and protection are now subject to the logic of the market; that is profit. This logic could assume a life of its own, with vested interests in the perpetuation of the war system in Colombia and, by the same token, elsewhere.' (Richani, 2005: 136).

In sum, while Colombia's traditional Westphalian sovereignty (albeit never fully consolidated) may in fact be threatened by US policy imposition, transnational organised crime, TNCs, and PMSCs, the privatization of security and warfare per se is part of the process of internalising the global capitalist logic, thus consolidating Colombia as a Transnational State.

Conclusions

Colombia's protracted civil war passed through four interrelated phases of political violence in the second half of the twentieth century, and has, since the 1990s, entered a new transnational phase of armed conflict, the confluence of which is marked as much by external global forces and internally-based transnational mobilization, as by domestic illegal armed actors and state forces. Transnational corporations, international organised crime networks, multinational private

security companies, transnational advocacy networks, international humanitarian workers and peace negotiators, global arms dealers, indigenous social movements, civil society, supranational geogovernance organisations, transnational elites, and multilateral financial institutions, are all implicit in the globalization of Colombia's armed conflict, and its peaceful resolution.

On the one hand, globalization impinges from the outside in. As Cha states: 'The threat posed by drugs, terrorism, transnational crime, and environmental degradation has been intensified precisely because of globalization. Moreover, the security solutions to these problems in terms of enforcement or containment increasingly are ineffective through national or unilateral means' (Cha, 2000: 394). On the hand, globalization impinges from the inside out, creating opportunities for global networks that may lead favourably to democratic peacebuilding, or unfavourably to the consolidation of transnational organised crime.

Since the 1990s, Colombia's transnational elite have increasingly steered the fate of the country and its people on a path aligned to neoliberal ideologies and US foreign policy, including realigning Colombia's own internal war on insurgents with the rhetoric of the US-led global system. The transnationalisation of the state has been driven by a transnational class fraction whose motivations are in harmony with global capitalism, but show scant regard for Colombia's majority poor who share the status of a global proletariat. By opening the country up to foreign investment, transnational corporations have been quick to extract and export available natural resources, but have become enmeshed in, and perpetuated, complex local relations driven by violence. Historical class conflicts may re-emerge as the polarisation of rich and poor becomes increasingly accentuated with minimal redistribution of wealth.

Despite Colombia's traditionally weak state institutions, globalization has exacerbated the diminishing capacity of the state to protect its majority citizens as drug traffickers, multinationals, private security companies and emerging forms of supranational governance erode traditional Wesphalian state sovereignty. Armed conflict among domestic actors,

supported by external military aid and illegal arms dealing, accentuated by multinational private security companies, and exacerbated by aerial fumigation of crops, has resulted in widespread death and increased internal displacement of millions. Moreover, conflict has heightened regional security concerns, as well as destabilizing identities and devastating natural environments.

At the time of writing, the Colombian media has been reinforcing the necessity of Colombia's latest bilateral agreement that will permit US forces to use Colombian bases to combat narcotraffickers and guerrillas (Semana, 2009), an agreement which is being met with concern by regional neighbours, and is damaging diplomatic and commercial relations with Venezuela. The Colombian Chancellor, Jaime Bermúdez, perhaps sensing growing regional isolation, is calling for greater regional cooperation (Tiempo, 2009). Within Colombia, as McGrew states more generally, *development* has been 'reinterpreted through the security lens' to signify *securitization*, and overt *militarisation*. 'Securitization also harbours the potential risk that legitimate rationales or pretexts for, and modes of, external intervention in the domestic affairs of developing states are expanded. .. In the context of the war on terror, globalization and the securitization of development are likely to remain mutually reinforcing.' (McGrew & Poku, 2007: 13).

What is needed most by Colombia's poor majority, is what Thomas (2007) calls 'human security', encompassing both freedom from want and freedom from fear. The forces of globalization have exacerbated the fear and reduced the freedoms of all Colombians, regardless of class, partisan allegiance, or ideological persuasion. Paradoxically, global forces can also influence peacebuilding and strengthen human rights to consolidate human security, but are most likely to succeed when supranational entities, such as the UN and OAS are further emboldened. Whilst capitalist globalization in all its multifaceted manifestations has its own determining logic, as the poem that began this paper reminds us, it is, after all, 'the Colombian people on which the future of the nation finally depends.'

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