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I. INTRODUCTION: VIOLENCE AND CITIZEN SECURITY IN THE POST 2015 MDG AGENDA

Peace and security, human rights, rule of law, democracy and inclusive policies were not included among the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Currently, there is a strong argument¹ for the inclusion of these dimensions into the post-2015 development agenda, based on a number of elements.

Firstly, a number of international instruments recognize the mutual reinforcing relationship between development, peace and security, human rights, the rule of law, and democracy. The Millennium Declaration² identified peace, security and disarmament; development and poverty eradication; protection of the environment; human rights, democracy and good governance; and protection of the vulnerable. It also enshrined fundamental values, such as the freedom from fear of violence, oppression or injustice and equality.

Secondly, analytical work regarding the concept of development is now broader than two decades ago and includes areas such as peace, security, rule of law and political participation. The concept of development has broadened in recent decades from a narrow focus on economic growth related to basic needs, to a broad view in the 1990s on human development, human security and freedom.³

¹For example see Final statement of the Global Thematic Consultation 31 January – 1 February 2013 Panama City, Panama; Brinkman, Henk-Jan, 2012. Think piece on the inclusion of goals, targets and indicators for peace and security and related areas into the post-2015 development framework (Unpublished Paper); Denney, Lisa, 2012. Security: The Missing Bottom of the Millennium Development Goals? Prospects for inclusion in the post-MDG development framework. London: ODI; PBSO, 2012. Thematic Think Piece on Peace and Security, UN System Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda; Saferworld, 2012. Issue paper 1: The impact of conflict and violence on achieving development, Addressing conflict and violence from 2015 and Issue paper 2: What are the key challenges? What works in addressing them? Addressing conflict and violence from 2015. London: Saferworld; UNDP, UNICEF, PBSO and UNISDR, 2012. Conflict and Fragility and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, Report of the global thematic consultation held on 29-30 November 2012, Monrovia, Liberia.

²United Nations, *Millennium Declaration*, A/RES/55/2.

³AmartyaSen, *The Standard of Living*, Oxford University Press, 1987; AmartyaSen, *Development as Freedom*, Oxford University Press, 1999; and AmartyaSen, *The Idea of Justice*, Harvard University Press, 2009.

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Human security defined as the protection to the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedom and human fulfillment, also takes a broad view on development. Human security means the freedom to bringing together development, human rights and security in one concept.⁴

Finally, empirical evidence highlights the strong interaction among development, peace and security and justice. Consequently, as peace and security are important conditions for development, violent conflicts have become a large obstacle to the MDGs. The consequences of violence on development are significant and long-termed. Violent conflict is the main cause of death, disease and displacement, damage to the environment, and major obstacle that interferes with education and investment. The gap in MDG performance between conflict-affected countries and other developing countries is large and increasing. No low-income fragile or conflict-affected country has achieved a single MDG as of 2011.⁵ Therefore, progress towards the MDGs will severely lag without progress on issues such as peace and security, inclusive politics and human rights and rule of law.

Moreover, conflict-affected and fragile states face extra challenges to meet MDG3 on gender equality and MDG5 on maternal mortality. Women are often the highly affected victims of displacement during and after conflict, they are primary targets of specific forms of violence such as sexual attack and often they lack of access to basic recovery resources not being considered as the primary beneficiaries of post-conflict programmes; they also tend to lack asset security, such as land.⁶

This situation of abuse and exclusion constitutes a systemic and profound constraint on effective peacebuilding and recovery.⁷ In addition to this, failure to prosecute crimes against women in conflict and non-conflict contexts creates a

⁴Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now*, New York, 2003.

⁵World Bank, *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development*, 2011.

⁶UN Women. Position Paper on Post 2015, conflict and gender, November 2012.

⁷ Secretary-General's Report on Women's Participation in Peacebuilding, A/65/354-S/2010/466, 7 September 2010.

climate of impunity that undermines the credibility of efforts to reassert the rule of law.

In brief, development, human rights and peace and security can be viewed as interrelated dimensions of one goal whether called development, well-being or human security.

Although it has been argued that the correlation between development and security is not only conceptual but also empirical on a domestic, regional and global level; Latin America brings us a different scenario where we have a region of the world where income distribution has grown while violence and crime have also increased.

The analysis that follows considers freedom from violence and fear as a basic human right and focuses on citizen security as one of the dimensions to be included in the post 2015 agenda, and provides an overview of this challenge in Latin America.

II. VIOLENCE, CITIZEN SECURITY AND THE ROLE OF THE STATE

International and regional human rights law protects rights affected by crime which must be ensured within the framework of citizen security policies (IACHR, 2009). These rights are the right of life, the right of physical integrity, the right of freedom and the right of one's property.

CITIZEN SECURITY ENSHRINED IN INTERNATIONAL NORMATIVE

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 3:

“Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person”;

American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man:

Article 1

“Every human being has the right to life, liberty and the security of his person”;



American Convention on Human Rights

Article 7:

“Every person has the right to personal liberty and security”;

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Article 9:

“Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person”.

Convention of Belém doPará

Article 3:

"Every woman has the right to be free from violence in both the public and private spheres."

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), used to consider citizen security as an issue only in cases of violent conflicts or humanitarian crisis. Since 1994 it has been considered as a necessary condition for human security, which “consists of protecting the basic liberties or opportunities of people against the serious and foreseeable risks that threaten their enjoyment.” One of those risks is being the victim of violence or dispossession. Therefore, citizen security is a key component of human security: there is no human development without protection against violent and predatory crime (HDRCA, 2010).

Consequently, citizen security is a key challenge in the achievement of the human development progress in Latin American, and it’s defined as the “political and social situation in which the full enjoyment of an individual’s human rights has been legally and effectively guaranteed and in which there are mechanisms and efficient institutions to prevent and control the threats or coercions that might infringe those rights illegitimately” (IIHR, 2007).

Actually, in Latin America, the State is defining its legal dimension, as the main responsible for ensuring of citizen security. In this regard, the States parties to the **American Convention on Human Rights** are duty bound to respect and

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ensure the human rights therein protected, including those connected with citizen security⁸. States' duty to ensure a safe environment is inferred from the obligation to ensure the security of individuals, as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 3), the American Declaration (Article 1), the American Convention on Human Rights (Article 7) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 9).

Nonetheless, the legal framework for protecting the citizenry rights and ensure the legal States' duties is not sufficient by itself. Legal declarations and statements must be accompanied by specific policies tending to enhance citizen security. In addition, it's important to underline that citizen security policies tending to face this challenge, should be conceived in a holistic and integral way. This implies that apart from being adapted to their particular context of application, these policies must take into account the social and institutional causes of insecurity and violence, and be oriented to preventing violence and crime. States should go beyond the classic dichotomy between policies emphasizing law enforcement and the toughening of criminal codes –usually with measures affecting children's rights, such as the lowering of the age of criminal responsibility- and those focusing on structural causes of violence which risk to associate criminality exclusively to poverty (Bertranou, Calderón, 2008⁹; Escobar et. al., 2005). So, States must emphasize on the prevention and control of factors that generate violence and insecurity, rather than purely repressive or reactive behaviors towards consummated acts.

In connection with this, in recent years MDGs proved to be an effective tool to accompany national governments in the setting of specific goals in key areas linked to development. We believe that the incorporation of violence and citizen

⁸ In the same direction, the Organization of American States (OAS), in its Declaration of Montrouis of 1995, stated that States must ensure the security of their citizens and of all people under their jurisdiction. It emphasizes that in order to achieve that goal they must overcome key obstacles faced by most Latin American countries, linked to crime, impunity and inefficient judicial and political systems.

⁹Bertranou, J. Calderón, F. (2008) Introducción. En Álvarez, A., Bertranou, J., Fernández, D. *Estado, democracia y seguridad ciudadana. Aportes para el debate*. Buenos Aires: Programa de Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo - PNUD.
Escobar, S. et. al. (2005). *Seguridad ciudadana: concepciones y políticas*. Caracas: Nueva Sociedad.

security in the MDG's Global Agenda for the future could be an important incentive for the States of the region, because it could induce them to set targets and indicators and measure policy progress in a possible goal which is actually a legal duty for these States. We are confident that the setting of a MDG connected with violence and citizen security will contribute to addressing crimes committed by individuals and state agents and measuring the progresses achieved.

III. MDG's AND LATIN AMERICA

Over the last decade, Latin America and the Caribbean have made significant progress towards meeting the targets included in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). In this regard, the region has progressed 85% in reaching the goal of halving extreme poverty (MDG 1). In terms of coverage and access to primary education, most countries have registration rates close to or over 90%, even if there is still much to do in coverage and quality of high school education (MDG2). Health conditions of the population have also improved but they are still far from reaching the goals (MDG 4, 5, 6). With regard to MDG 7 referring to environmental sustainability the following improvements have been made: the consumption of ozone-depleting substances has been reduced, the surface of protected areas has increased and the provision of potable water and sanitation services has improved.

With regards to MDG number 8, referred to the consolidation of a global partnership for development, Latin America made meaningful progress in its international insertion.

Notwithstanding these achievements, there haven't been a considerable progress towards gender equality (MDG 3), and the UNDP¹⁰ is still stating that it's necessary to strength the "three pillars for attaining gender equality: economic independence, physical autonomy and participation in decision-making".

¹⁰ UNDP, officialwebsite
<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/mdg/mdg-reports/lac-collection.html>

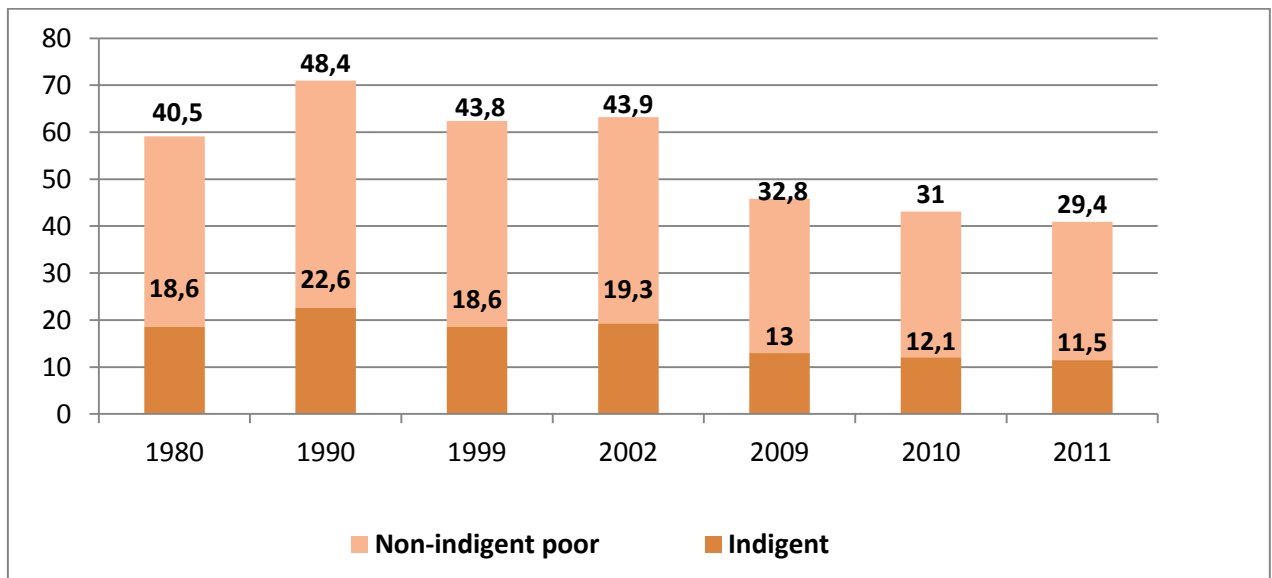
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In spite of the consequences produced by the financial crisis of 2008, The UNDP¹¹ argues that Latin America and the Caribbean have made significant progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The region has made a significant progress, particularly with regard to reducing extreme poverty.

In this setting, household surveys put the regional poverty rate at 29.4% and the indigence rate at 11.5% (ECLAC, 2012). As we may appreciate in figure 1, this rate has significantly decreased since 1990, when almost half of the Latin American population was living under the poverty line.

However, poverty is still concentrated in children and young people. In fact, children and teenagers (aged 17 or under) make up 51% of the indigent population and 45% of the non-indigent poor. We can actually say that half of those living under the poverty line are children. (ECLAC, 2011).

Fig.1. Latin America: Poverty and indigence, 1980 – 2011 (Percentage)



Source: ECLAC (2012)

¹¹ UNDP, official website

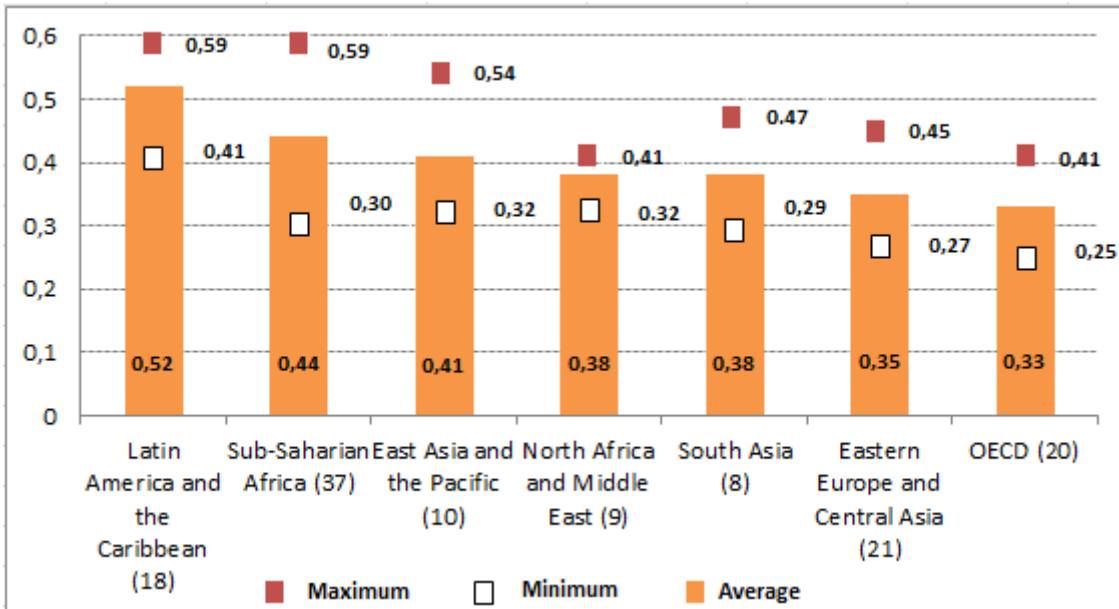
<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/mdg/mdg-reports/lac-collection.html>

As shown in international reports, since 2002, Latin America and the Caribbean not only have relatively high growth rates, but also several countries have improved their income distribution and increased their per capita social public expenditures. In addition to this, with regard to the achievement of full and productive employment and decent work, the indicators have evolved in a positive way. However, the low productivity growth and structural heterogeneity have impeded real achievements in this goal.

The latter is due, above other causes, to the structural inequality that particularly characterizes the region. Even if poverty, despite several efforts made by the countries in the last decade, is still a major problem to Latin-American development, the main social challenge remains in the unequal distribution of income and wealth.

Actually, it is internationally known that Latin America is the most unequal region of the world. At this respect, comparing the region's Gini index to the rest of the world is a useful indicator to realize the higher levels of income concentration. As we may appreciate in figure 2, Latin America presents by far the highest rates of income concentration. In addition to it, we can assert that even if Latin American countries present differing degrees of income concentration, all their individuals Gini index are above the average of any region of the world, excepting sub-Saharan Africa. (ECLAC, 2011)

Fig.2. Latin America and other regions of the world: Gini concentration coefficient, around 2009.



ECLAC, 2011

In fact, in 2011, above the surveys of the 18 Latin American countries selected by the ECLAC rapport (2012), we can infer that in one hand the wealthiest 10% of the population receives 32% of total income while, in the other hand, the poorest 40% of the population receives barely 15% of total income.

This situation, as we already suggested before, is not homogeneous. Some countries as Brazil, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras and Paraguay have the highest rates of income concentration, where a 40% of national income is concentrated in the hands of the richest 10% of the population while the four poorest deciles only receive between 11% and 15%. In Costa Rica, Panama and the Plurinational State of Bolivia, even if the poorest segment shares a similar percentage of income, the top decile receives a smaller part than the former ones. Argentina, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru present more equal distributions, in fact the four poorest deciles share between 16% and 17%, while the wealthiest one concentrates 30% of the income. Finally, income concentration is lower in the Bolivarian

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Republic of Venezuela and Uruguay, where the wealthiest 10% and the poorest 40% share between 20% and 23% each.

The highest rates of inequality and the concentration of economic, financial and political power, combined with a powerful culture of consume, social exclusion, and a recent history of violence and conflict, contribute to generate a particular social climate of social conflicts, crime, violence and abuses committed by the State agents. Nowadays, even if the economic growth rates have increased and poverty has diminished, Latin American countries haven't been able to tackle the historical level of wealth concentration and the high levels of violence and insecurity. Those are the most important challenges that must be faced in the next years to really achieve a future development and the fulfillment of human rights. In this regard, the main goal of the present inform is to state serious evidences to introduce, in an institutional way, the citizen security as a main topic in the post 2015 development agenda.

IV. CITIZEN SECURITY IN LATIN AMERICA

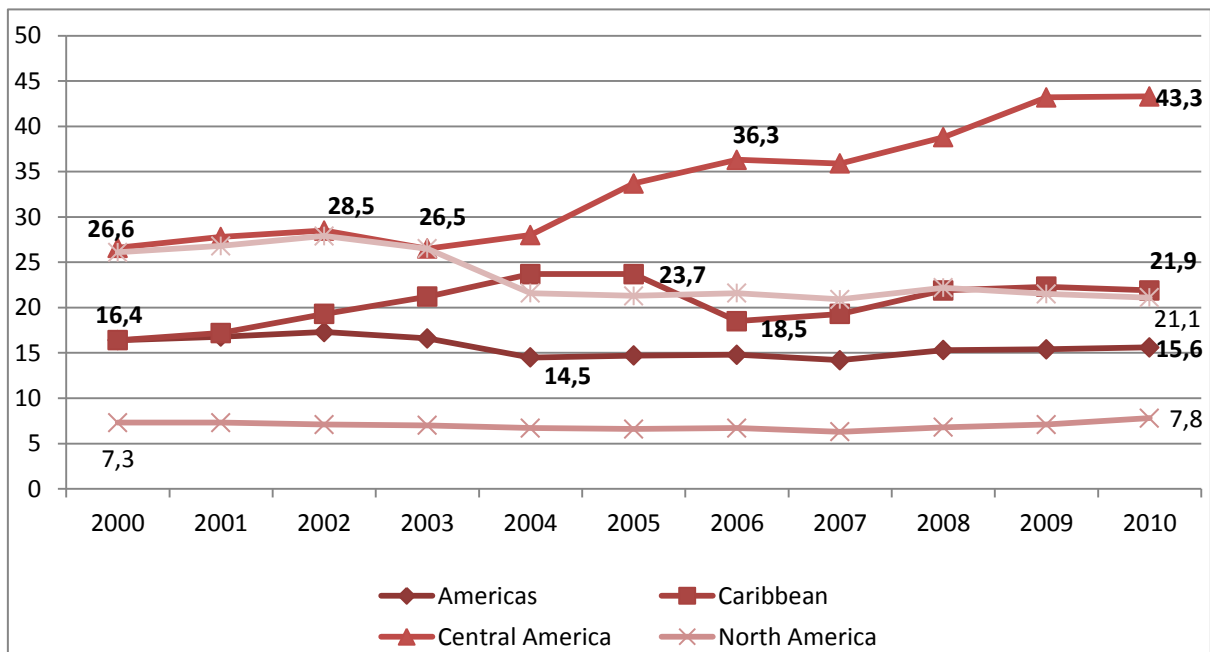
Citizen security is one of Latin America's main challenges of the early 21st Century. Despite the decades of democracy following the oppressive dictatorships that afflicted the region during the 1970s and 80s, violence is still a major problem. Organized crime, interpersonal and gender violence cause more harm and deaths in many cities and communities of Central and South America than in some of the conflicts in other regions of the globe. As homicide rates steadily raise, the issue remains at the top of the public agenda in most countries of the region. The coexistence of violence and a movement towards development in the region present us with a chance to study a singular scenario for challenges in the consideration of violence in the context of the post 2015 agenda.

There is a notorious raise on the criminality rates in recent years. It involves, particularly, violent crime with the participation of youths; a tighter relation between ordinary criminality and organized crime; and a raise on the number of overcrowded prisons in Latin America (Espinoza 2008).

A. Violent Deaths

In 2010, the global homicide rate was 6.9 per 100,000 inhabitants, however, in the Americas, it reached 15.5 per 100,000 inhabitants. When disaggregating these figures, as shown in Figure 1, they are much more alarming for Latin America, particularly for Central America, where during the last decade, homicide rates have increased continuously, reaching a 43,3 in 2010.

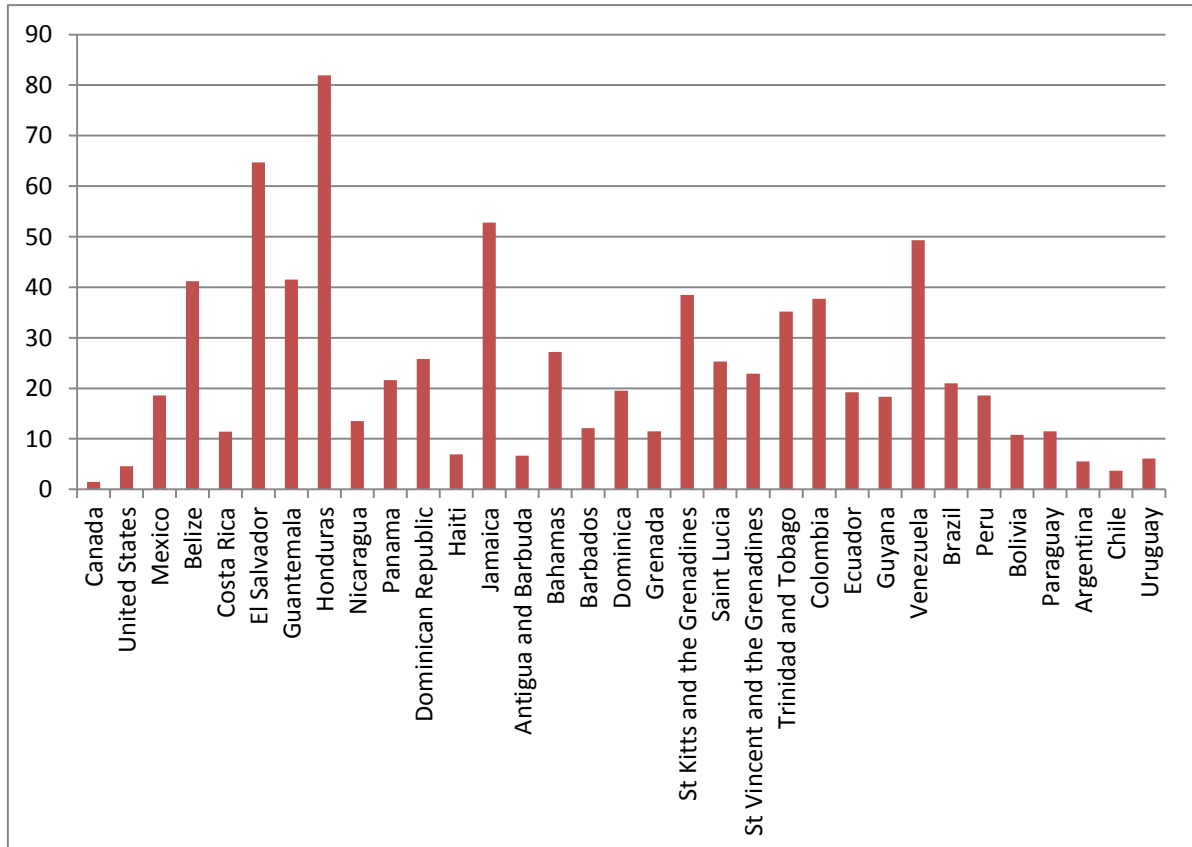
Fig.3. Americas: Intentional Homicide Rates per 100,000 inhabitants, 2000-2010 (Reported by Police Force)



Alertamerica 2012

Latin America's homicide rates are therefore the highest in the planet. Even when in some countries of the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile and Uruguay) homicide rates are closer to the global average, Honduras, El Salvador, Jamaica, Venezuela and Belize exemplify the disturbing levels of violence in the region.

Fig 4. Americas: Intentional Homicide by country 2010 (Rate)

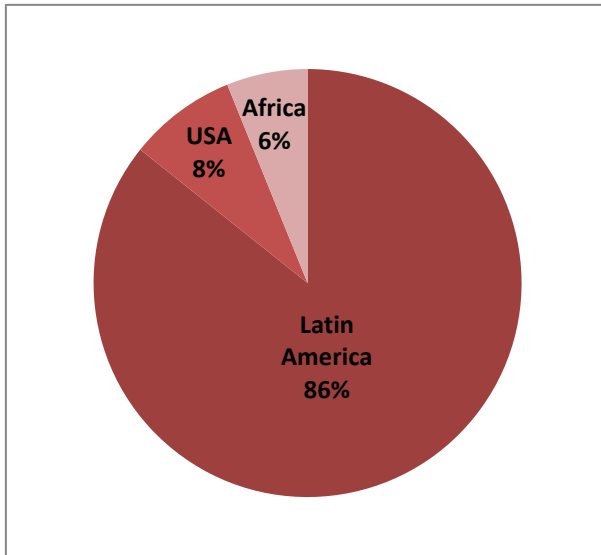


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In most of Latin American cities, the criminality and victimization rates are increasing too. At the same time, these cities are characterized by high levels of economic and social inequalities and urban marginalization.

Mexican NGO *Seguridad, Paz y Justicia* has tallied a ranking of the top 50 more violent cities in the world, comparing their homicide rate (Annex 1), where it is clear that 43 (86%) of the most dangerous cities are in Latin America. Two of the four most violent cities in the world are in Honduras, with San Pedro Sula having a homicide rate of 169.3 (the global average rate is 6.9). Twelve cities from Brazil, ten from Mexico, six from Colombia and five from Venezuela also appear in this table.

Fig. 5. 50 most violent cities in the world



Seguridad, Justicia y Paz, 2012.

Table 1. 50 most violent cities in the world

Ranking	City	Country	Rate
1	San Pedro Sula	Honduras	169.3
2	Acapulco	Mexico	142.88
3	Caracas	Venezuela	118.89
4	Distrito Central	Honduras	101.99
5	Torreón	Mexico	94.72
6	Maceió	Brasil	85.88
7	Cali	Colombia	79.27
8	Nuevo Laredo	Mexico	72.85
9	Barquisimeto	Venezuela	71.74
10	João Pessoa	Brasil	71.59

This situation has negative consequences for human development and also for the –in some cases- relatively young democracies of the region. Violence and insecurity may interfere with governability which has led to some governments to resort to the so called “*manodura*” policies that emphasize criminal law enforcement at the expense of due process guarantees, and toughening the police forces. The balance of governability, legitimate use of force, democracy and respect for human rights is another challenge to take into account when facing violent crime.

As far as the multiple causes of the complex phenomenon of violent crime is concerned, as sustained by Muggah and Aguirre (2013), “no single factor can explain why many Latin America countries and cities present spiraling levels of violence”. High levels of poverty, inequality and social exclusion, unemployment, high school dropout rates, the rapid and unregulated urban

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growth, legacies of armed conflict in the case of some Central and South American countries, the growth of youth gangs and drug-trafficking organizations, the availability of weapons, the institutional weakness of the police and criminal justice are among the multiple factors that might facilitate the raise of crime and violence (Muggah and Aguirre, 2013; Arriagada and Godoy, 1999).

“Crime, especially violent crime, is typically a male activity and homicide is no exception”(UNODC, 2012). As “globally men make up the majority of violent offenders and represent over 90% of prison populations” they represent also 82% of homicide victims all over the world. In the Americas this number raises even to 90%, being the continent where the percentage of male victims in relation to women is the highest (this doesn’t implies a lower female homicide rate in comparison with other regions). “This different sex structure indicates a different typology of homicides in different parts of the world, with greater shares of male homicide victims associated with larger shares of homicides perpetrated in the context of gang/organized crime-related lethal violence.” (UNODC, 2012).

Table 2. Intentional Homicide: Male and young adults victims

	Latest available year	% of Male Victims	Rates of Male Victims	% 15-24 years old victims	Rate 15-24 years old victims
Argentina	2009	91	10,8	21*	11,2*
Bahamas	2009	92	46,6	34*	31,8*
Belize	2010	90	73,5	18	24,4
Brazil	2008	91	42	43	52,4
Canada	2010	65	2,9	26	3,1
Chile	2009	92	6,5	36	7,9
Colombia	2010	92	70,5	36**	70**
Costa Rica	2010	84*	18,8*	23	9,2
Ecuador	2010	92*	26,1*	31	26,1

El Salvador	2008	92	100,9	31	105,6
Guatemala	2010	86	73,3	27**	60,6**
Guyana	2010	79**	23,5**	20	21,2
Mexico	2010	87	33,4	34	19,5
Nicaragua	2008	79	20,7	27	16,6
Panama	2009	91	42,8	39	24,4
Paraguay	2008	74	22,1	22	22,3
Uruguay	2010	82	10,3	18	7
Venezuela	2008	87	70,3	30	82,6

* Year 2008 ** Year 2009Alertamerica 2012

Figure 4 shows that, with the exception of Canada which has only a 65% percent of male victims, this percentage raises in most of the countries, and that in Bahamas, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and El Salvador it is superior to 90%. It is particularly interesting to focus on the homicide rates: we can identify countries as El Salvador where the homicide rate is higher than 100 per 100.000 habitants, and in Belize, Colombia, Guatemala and Venezuela this rate is over 70.

Violence and homicide victims are not only mostly males, but also young. At this point, according to the United Nations *World Report on Violence against Children*, the region suffers from the highest youth homicide rates in the world (Muggah and Aguirre, 2013). Globally, the overwhelming majority of perpetrators and victims of violence and homicide are young males of 15 to 24 years old. However, the risk of becoming a victim of homicide is even higher for Latin American young men. As indicated by Muggah and Aguirre (2013), “young males are four to five times more likely to be killed by violence than females”. The homicide risk for men declines over the course of their lifetime which is a “direct reflection of the decreasing involvement, as men age, in high-risk illicit activities such as street crime, gang membership, drug consumption,

possession of guns, knives and other weapons, street fighting and other violence-prone activities” (UNODC, 2012).

As we may appreciate, the highest homicide rates for youths are concentrated in Central American countries, particularly in El Salvador and Honduras. El Salvador has a young homicide rate superior to 100 points and Guatemala also has a rate of 60 points. Some South American countries like Colombia and Venezuela also have extremely high rates of over 70 and 80 points. When we compare the proportion of murders committed against young people, in some cases like Brazil this percentage is over 40%, which implies that almost half of the victims are on a range of age of 9 years. The proportion of young victims is also extremely high in Bahamas, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela.

It is particularly interesting to stress that the levels of violence and homicides are quite different between countries and far from homogeneous. On one hand violence in Central America represents a major problem with particular characteristics, “there is some evidence that organized crime groups, drug trafficking organizations, and gangs (*maras* and *pandillas*) play a prominent role.” The particular situation of perpetual conflict and drug traffic in Colombia also has to be taken in account to analyze the citizen security challenge in that country. On the other hand, those countries with lower general homicide rates also have the lowest homicide rates between young males: Chile, Uruguay and Argentina. Even if in the latter young homicides are over 10 points, the number is still much lower in comparison to the rest of the region.

B. Organized Crime

Zaffaroni (2011) explains that organised crime is designed to produce and reproduce a *global criminal economy* that is responsible for meeting and producing a demand for illicit goods and services, highly profitable for their seller. Characterized by an increased environmental violence, is one of the main challenges that Latin America currently faces in terms of sustainable development and the effective enforcement of human rights.

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Organized crime can be defined as the activity which primarily seeks material profits from the sale of illegal, semi-legal or licensed goods or services, done buttress on a durable structure, and by the use of threats and corruption (Miraglia, 2012 mentioned by Briscoe, 2013). Besides, Misse (2006) argues that organized crime is the type of criminal delinquency that par excellence is "capable of coopting State agents" and therefore adopting the aptitude to turn in "almost invulnerable to the rule of law ". Consequence, this type of criminal organizations not only develops around an illegal market but it is characterized by offering a "very special good": relations of force and power, which privatizes and commercializes the state sovereignty in many sectors.

It is not strange that organised crime initially appeared in well developed States with institutional structure such as Colombia, Mexico and Brazil (Kessler, 2011). The principal products that organized crime commercializes are multiple and varied: since drugs and illegal documents, including weapons and human beings, especially women and children. This type of activity takes place in illegal global dimensions markets, having serious consequences for developing of countries, both politically and economically, as well as its impact on violence and how it affects the respect for the citizenry human rights (Kessler, 2011). Indeed, organized crime is one of the social issues that most threaten the security of the American citizen. In this connection, figures 1 to 4 describe the seriousness of the matter.

The effects of these illicit activities are exponential. But the underlying causes are manifold and extremely complex. Notwithstanding, the phenomenon of organized crime is often medially simplified around two general and vague elements: a) war metaphors that reduce the problem to the idea of a war against an inconspicuous but very powerful "enemy", and b) the pessimism about the State ability to confront it (Kessler, 2011). Both elements justify the increased militarization of several areas of the continent, which usually means an attempt to fight and maintain "public order" whatever it costs and the detriment of sufficient guarantees for the exercise of citizens' rights. That is why we should not be omitting the economic and political motivations that encourage

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multiple stakeholders from different sectors of the private and public sectors to get involved in this type of crime, and thus attack the roots of the problem without losing sight of such incentives.

In connection with such complexities, Misse (2007) believes that we must understand the political dimension of organized crime as a key element in itself. This type of criminal activity always involves certain complicity with the state and that's the main reason the illicit becomes immune to repressive action of the public sector.

It is also necessary that States consider also from an economic perspective the mechanisms used by criminal organizations for marketing criminal supply and the ways that maximize their finances through: a) a logic network performance and b) the purchasing of illegal services in several strategic areas that allow criminals a greater mobility and probability expansion (OAS, 2012).

Therefore, the key point of the debate must not only include the topic of State capabilities or disabilities to end with a particular type of crime, but also the economic and political interests that lead to criminals to do this activity and induce them to permeated and co-opted key segments of the political and social institutions. Thus, groups within the state structure are also contributing to the reproduction of organized crime and it is must detected immediately.

The principal negative effects on governance and human development processes caused by organized criminal bands are: state capture, violence, the high costs for national economies and the weakness of the legitimacy of democracies (Briscoe, 2013):

Corruption and state capture

The public authority became in a negotiable, tradable and functional good for criminal activities of organized crime bands. The institutional structures characterized by high levels of corruption or bad planifieddescentralization processes are the preferred aim of criminals, and they are a common feature of weak States or post-conflict situations, as it happens in Guatemala or Colombia

(Briscoe, 2013). Thus, the strategy of such groups is primarily to co-opt local officials, and achieve collusion partnership, which is required for the development of their business and, often, to project their own power in a national scale. Such is the case of Colombians "narco-paramilitary" after 2002.

Violence

The violence is strategically dosed around Latin America. North and South Hemispheres are involved in the same kind of illicit activities but the criminals mould the strategy of violence, corruption, camouflage and partnership violence according the phase of the criminal process and where it is placed. In connection with this, Mexican cartels know that the spillover of violence in "North" is really "bad for business". In this sense, the Mexican city "Ciudad Juárez" is characterized by higher levels of violence in its territory. Nevertheless, the US town called El Paso that shares a border with Juárez, is considered a "relatively safe city" (Briscoe, 2013).

Organized crime violence is also buttress in situations of political instability, weakness of State and political conflicts. It also represents a terrible threat to human and citizen security because of the inevitable risk of neutralization of public authorities, and the impunity and corruption of them (Briscoe, 2013). In connection with this, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras are undoubtedly the countries most afflicted by violence (Figure 2 and Figure 3). The inefficiency of the judicial systems and the abuses perpetrated by police forces in these countries, are added threats to security and human rights. The judicial annulment of the trial of serious crimes perpetrated during Guatemala's civil war is an example of the challenges faced by that country and the region,¹² as is also the case with other countries in of Central America, whose levels of violence are just one of the effects of war and historical dynamics of exclusion, inequality and gender norms (UNDP, 2009), and the judicial clarification of crimes committed during the conflict in Colombia.

Economic development

¹²<http://articles.latimes.com/2013/apr/19/world/la-fg-guatemala-rios-montt-20130420>

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At present there is no consensus regarding the costs of organized crime for national economies (Kessler, 2012). But it is often conducive to criminal dilapidation of public and private resources, with absence of public goods and community spirit as one of its consequences (Torres, 2010 mentioned by Briscoe, 2013). Nevertheless, in areas of extreme poverty or marginalization, the presence of drug production and trafficking becomes in a vital source of local income and the only alternative livelihood for people.

Democracy and legitimacy

Organized crime affects democracy and state legitimacy in two fundamental ways. The first one is by “undermining public confidence in the ability of a state to achieve public security”. The use of armed groups in the provision of security services as a public good could risk the fulfilment of human rights, as was the case with Colombian paramilitary forces. The second effect is the “possible emergence of communities and territories where criminal groups are regarded as legitimate authorities”, whenever criminal leaders replace the State in its role as provider of goods, employment and social services. (Briscoe, 2013).

1. Drug Trafficking

Drug trafficking is defined by the illegal market formed by the demand and offer of narcotics made in an international enterprise scale. For Latin America, the control of this illegal activity is one of its most serious challenges. The region houses in its territory all processing phases of the activity: production, traffic and the consumption in local markets, and its northern neighbour is the world greatest consumer of drugs: USA (Kessler, 2011).

Political measures of law enforcement (in USA) and different kind of national plans (Plan Colombia) have been executed in later years but they have failed to reduce the offer or the prices of cocaine. The result of these actions was the increased power of Mexican cartels and the changed of the type of participation of Colombian criminals. The higher cost of drug business turned into necessary the existence of powerful cartels in the frontier regions with USA. Thus, the



level of violence between narco-bands is also increasing. "The emblematic cartels of the early era of transnational drug trafficking" have dispersed into "smaller service-oriented groups" which conform assembled networks to arise opportunities of trafficking (Briscoe, 2013).

Sectors which were involved in armed conflicts decades ago, are now involved in the narco-business. In Colombia, after the eradication of the Cali and Medellin cartels, paramilitaries, ex-guerrilla members and criminal bands became involved in drug trafficking. These actors and other bands are fighting for control of the territory to ensure their participation in the process.

Also, the increasing globalization in trade, shipping, technology and communications produces exceptional opportunities to forge new transnational supply chains above all for commerce drugs with African and West European networks (Briscoe, 2013). This situation turns more difficult the control of this illegal activity and shows the need of urgent cooperation between countries to stop it.

It is necessary to shed light on the issue that most of the drug (cocaine specially) that is generated in Latin America comes from the Andes mountain chain region, the reason why there is so much demand for this plant in this region in particular, is based on its traditional use, since in its pure state (as a leaf) has no harmful effects and it has an almost religious function.

Violence in Latin America is produced by multiple phenomenon and actors. As we have seen in this report, the main problematic situations are linked to high rates of homicides, organized crime and gender violence. Nevertheless, we should understand that all these topics are extremely connected one to each other, and all of them have as a transversal business the complicity of the State.

Nevertheless, in spite of the mentioned connections, we have no ignored the specificity of one this criminal actor: the “Maras” or “violent gangs”.

MARAS.

HOW DO WE DEFINE “MARAS”?

This violent and criminal groups are “spontaneous effort by children and young people to create, where it does not exist, an urban space in society that is adapted to their needs, where they can exercise the rights that their families, government, and communities do not offer them. [...] Arising out of extreme poverty, exclusion, and a lack of opportunities, gangs try to gain their rights and meet their needs by organizing themselves without supervision and developing their own rules, and by securing for themselves a territory and a set of symbols that gives meaning to their membership in the group”.

WHERE ARE THEY LOCATED?

They are principally located in Central America

CHARACTERISTICS OF MARAS:

- Basically urban,
- A public security and safety issue, rather than to do with the socioeconomic context or human rights,
- Linked to adolescents and youth, although they are a minority in violent gangs or “maras”
- Arise from conditions of poverty and exclusion,
- Linked to a lack of opportunities provided by the government, the market, and the community
- Originate among children or adolescents who come from dysfunctional families and are looking for an identity, protection, sense of belonging, and power,
- With a clear gender bias towards male domination, ranging from 2.5 - 1 to 9 - 1
- Ethnically heterogeneous, but Latin Americans and Afro-descendants predominate over white Anglo-Saxons,
- Linked to many national homicides,
- Linked increasingly to trafficking in drugs, arms, and persons, and other crimes related to organized crime.

MARAS CONSEQUENCES FOR THE REST OF SOCIETY:

- Urban violence: They maintain high levels of violence and a great number of homicides in its territory,
- Gender Violence: “Since it was primarily a male phenomenon, female gang members suffer more intensively from gender discrimination and the inequalities inherent in the dominant culture”.
- Maras contribute actively with organized criminals, as drugs traffickers.
- Violation of their own and other’s rights to exercise their “citizenship”.

FUENTE: DPC- OAS(2007).

2. Illegal Trafficking of Arms

The illegal arms’ trafficking is one of the supranational threats to security in Latin America. The continent has less than 1/5 of the global population, and currently not involved in armed conflict but despite that, almost the 4% of the small firearms are in hands of civilian in this region. This has an impact in the

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high percentage of homicides (40%) many of which are perpetrated with firearms (Kessler, 2011).

The number of homicides committed in Latin America exceeds over three and a half times those committed in Europe. More than 25% of these killings are directly linked to organized crime activities (OEA, 2012).

The number of weapons in the region is even more alarming if we compare the number of firearms with the number of members of security and military forces. In 2007 a studio showed that there were 3.6 million of modern firearms in the continent, but just only 2.3 million of them are in hands of army or public security forces. So there's an excess of 1.3 million of arms that are not being used by the public system. Also, there is not one serious policy of destruction of old armament in the whole region (Kessler, 2011).

The traffic of firearms along Latin America presents sub-regional dynamics according the countries. In South America, for example, arms are taken from Venezuela and Brazil to other countries. But, in Central America and Mexico, since the incorporation of its countries into narcotraffic activities, USA appears as the principal provider of arms.

3. Human Trafficking

The “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons” (known as the “Trafficking Protocol” or UN TIP Protocol) produced for the “Convention against Transnational Organised Crime” defines trafficking in persons as the:

Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. [...]”¹³.

¹³ “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons” of the “Convention against Transnational Organised Crime”

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The protocol also describes the kind of exploitation produced by the human trafficker and their purposes. It includes, at minimum, “exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. [...]”¹⁴.

In Latin America the dynamic of traffic varies from one region to another, but the main topics are actually the human trade and moving for slavelabour and sexual exploitation; also, the children trade. In this sense, the internal moving of persons is mostly referred to women trade destined to prostitution activities in local beaches visited by tourists from all over the world; and the international traffic of women to Europe for the same illegal activity (Kessler, 2011).

In Central America, Dominican women are destined to prostitution centres, mostly located in Costa Rica and Panama. In South America, there is a high traffic of Bolivian workers to Brazil and Argentina, which are destined to labor exploitation in urban or rural activities. In Argentina, there is also an important internal traffic of women for prostitution. In the north of the country is the rural workers who are subject to exploitation in agricultural tasks (Kessler, 2011).

C. State and Violence

Many times the most serious threats to the security dimension of human development come from the State itself. In many countries of Latin America there is popular discontent over disparity or ineffective policies to guarantee basic rights linked to citizen security, and the increase in crime rates due to economic, social and political reasons.

A social context plagued by crime and insecurity cannot be an excuse for repression and State violence instead of comprehensive responses to the problem. It also contributes to occlude the development of all social spheres which require a safe environment such as education, the right to participation or

¹⁴Op cit.

to express oneself ideas with the guarantee that life and physical integrity are not at risk.

Nevertheless, protests or demonstrations that ask for repression under the guise of protecting the rights of the collective, propose the idea that citizen security (as individual rights) is opposed to public safety, since the latter gets to be prioritized, and the preservation of public order defines a security policy from the State's interests, and not the community's. These actions adopted by State leads many to believe, or wrongly declare, that the increase in state violence can counteract criminal violence and strengthen public safety. From this position, security is arranged in terms of "war on crime", as if there were two instances of opposing firepower. The outcome is the creation of circuits that feed violence: violent responses of public forces generate greater social violence, and they do not have proven to be effective in reducing crime rates or guaranteeing basic human rights.

Some examples of this cycle of violence are the security forces abuses in street and in public institutions such as the penitentiary service or gender violence committed by the State.

We can use as an illustration the execution of Mapuche child *Alex Lemún* as a result of excessive use of force during a demonstration in support of the claim for the rights of the Mapuche in Chile. Another case is that of the 21 families of the Nonan community, in Colombia which were subject to harassment by the security forces and illegal armed groups, and who were finally displaced from their own territory thus impairing their access to food, shelter and medicine.

1. Police violence

The police play a fundamental role in any State. Whether an authoritarian regime or a liberal democracy, the police are responsible for providing domestic security, ensuring public order, enforcing laws, and channeling claims for justice. Nonetheless, police abuse is frequent against some segments of the population. Young urban males are, for example, the most frequent victims of

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police action in countries as different as Brazil, Chile, Nigeria, or Russia¹⁵. Also, police misconduct is usually more common against political opponents of the government in office. In the case of citizen participation and political engagement, the results show that those respondents who were more active in civic participation and more engaged politically turn out also to be more likely to be victims of police abuse, suggesting that there may be a political motive to the abuse.

In fact, political ideology plays a role in police abuse. In some countries, people that identified themselves as leaning toward the political left are reported to be more likely to have been victimized by the police, than those leaning to the center or the right. This finding also suggests that police behavior is still motivated by political and ideological stances in Latin America, decades after the days of right-wing military regimes. Also, as expected, youngsters are more frequently abused: people under 25 years of age tend to be victimized by the police nearly four times more than people older than 66 years¹⁶. Under that logic, most of the crime fighting efforts are directed against what is usually considered the typical delinquent profile.

The police usually limit their liability on these acts of violence claiming that they stick to regulations in force and they just follow orders. Clearly, a law-abiding police is not a sufficient condition for democratic consolidation. A corrupted police is a significant hindrance for democratic governance. Police misconduct not only affects the rule of law and hinders the provision of order, security, and justice. It also undermines the basis of a regime's legitimacy in environments already troubled by poverty, inequality, and violence.

2. Penitentiary System Violence

Most conferences and studies related to Rising Violence in Latin America neglect the issue of dimension of prisons and rehabilitation in their agenda,

¹⁵Ramos, Silvia (2006) "Young people, violence, and the police". *Boletín Seguridad e ciudadanía* 12:1-16.

¹⁶ Americas Barometer Insights: 2009 (No.11) Latin American Public Opinion Project LAPOP. Vanderbilt University.

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despite the fact that it is one of the most important manifestations of violence in the region. Yet paradoxically, the growing crisis in Latin American criminal justice systems has brought about the demand for strengthening it part of the project to promote effective governability, democracy and sustained development in the region. Democracy is illusory if it doesn't provide the means to confront corruption, the abuse of power, impunity, and offer real human rights protection and responses to the citizens' demands for an efficient public security.

Indeed, the most serious problem of the penal system is the systematic violation of the defendants human rights reflected by arbitrary practices, including those sometimes exercised in the penitentiary system. Although most countries in Latin American have ratified international and regional human rights instruments that specifically refer to the rights of persons deprived of their liberty,¹⁷ and that in most countries there is a penitentiary legal framework which follows closely the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the treatment of prisoners, there is little conformity with those rules in practice. The same is true for failure to adhere to national Constitutions, Penal Codes and other laws.

V. GENDER VIOLENCE

While violent crime seems to affect men mostly at a young age and decreases over the course of their lifetime, violence against women affects them throughout their lives. In spite of progresses committed tending to achieve the gender equality, it is still being one of the major challenging goals for Latin America and the rest of the regions.

Regarding to this, it is estimated than one in every five women faces some form of violence during her lifetime:

¹⁷ The human rights of prisoners include: the right to life and integrity of the person; the right to be free from torture or other ill treatment; the right to health; the right to respect for human dignity; the right to due process of law; the right to freedom from discrimination of any kind; the right to freedom of religion; the right to respect for family life; and the right to self-development.

Violence against women is global, systemic, and often rooted in power imbalances and structural inequalities between men and women (...) (it) can occur at home, in the street or in the workplace, and be perpetrated both by persons known and unknown to the victim. Its most common manifestation globally, however, is in the form of intimate partner/family-related violence UNODC (2012).

The consequences of such violence can be devastating, causing even death in some cases. In fact, violence against women has negative health consequences such as physical injury, unwanted pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted infections, maternal mortality, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression or suicide (UNFPA, 2013).

Violence against women takes many forms. The first article of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (“Convention of Belem do Para) defines it as “any act or conduct, based on gender, which causes death or physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, whether in the public or the private sphere.” Article 2 establishes that

Violence against women shall be understood to include physical, sexual and psychological violence:

- a. that occurs within the family or domestic unit or within any other interpersonal relationship, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the woman, including, among others, rape, battery and sexual abuse;
- b. that occurs in the community and is perpetrated by any person, including, among others, rape, sexual abuse, torture, trafficking in persons, forced prostitution, kidnapping and sexual harassment in the workplace, as well as in educational institutions, health facilities or any other place; and

c. that is perpetrated or condoned by the state or its agents regardless of where it occurs.

Violence against women: some definitions (WHO, 2005; PAHO, 2012):

Physical violence: slapped (hit with a hand), shook, threw things, pushed, shoved, twisted her arm, or pulled her hair; hit with a fist or something that could cause injury; kicked, dragged, or beat her; choked or burned (actual or attempted); threatened or wounded with a knife, gun, or other weapon.

Sexual violence: a woman forced to have unwanted sexual intercourse or to perform unwanted 'sex acts', had unwanted sexual intercourse for fear of what a partner might do if she refused.

Emotional violence: insulted, belittled, or humiliated her; scared or intimidated her (e.g. by destroying her personal things); threatened to harm her or someone she cared about; threatened to abandon her, take her children away, or withhold economic support. In this report, emotional abuse is considered a synonym for terms such as 'emotional violence' and 'psychological violence'.

Intimate-partner violence (also called "domestic" violence): a woman has encountered any of the above types of violence, at the hands of an intimate partner or expartner; this is one of the most common and universal forms of violence experienced by women.

So intimate partner violence, femicide, gang violence, and trafficking deserve special consideration.

A. Intimate partner violence

In principle, intimate partner violence can affect both, men and women. However, the overwhelming majority of domestic physical, sexual and emotional violence is borne by women in the hands of their current partners or ex partners.

The study realized by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), *Violence Against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: A comparative analysis of population-based data from 12 countries*, reveals that in Latin America the most common forms of physical intimate partner violence in the case of married woman are reported to be 'moderate' acts, such as being pushed, shoved, having an arm twisted, or hair pulled —reported by between 13.4% of women in Haiti 2005/6 and 38.6% of women in Colombia 2005 and Peru 2007/2008. The

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percentage of women who reported 'severe' physical violence ranged from 7.4% in Haiti 2005/6 to 25.5% in Peru 2007/8. In half of the countries, the percentage exceeded 15%, and in several countries (Colombia 2005, Ecuador 2004, Nicaragua 2006/7, and Peru 2007/8) it approached or exceeded 20%. (PAHO, 2012).

Poor women are more exposed to violence. However, intimate partner violence is present in all social and economic groups: rather than poverty, absence of autonomy is a key factor for gender violence. As revealed by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean's (ECLAC) Reports on MDGs and Gender Equality, there is no link between income and gender violence in Peru, Haiti, Colombia and Bolivia. In the case of emotional violence, perpetrators control their victims' schedule, movement and social life and limit it to the domestic environment. This type of violence presents high rates in Latin America, varying from 17% in Haiti to 68% in Dominican Republic and Peru (ECLAC, 2006).

B. Femicide

Defined as the selective murder for gender reasons, femicide is an expression of violence that varies along the social space in which it occurs and the nature of the perpetrator, whether it is committed by a partner or former partner in a private space or as the final act of sexual violence in the public sphere. Femicide also occurs when the State fails to provide women with guarantees and conditions of security for their lives in the community, at home, in the workplace, while travelling or in leisure facilities.

Contexts with high femicide rates demonstrate high levels of tolerance of violence against women and girls in the wider population. This behavior is shaped by norms that discriminate against some and notions of culture and patriarchy that perpetuate gender inequality. Additionally, justice systems tend to be inefficient and lack resources or political will to prosecute femicide cases.

We can distinguish intimate femicide, as "the death of women in private spaces at the hands of their husbands, partners, former partners or intimate friends and

is associated with a history of domestic violence (García-Moreno, 2000), in other words, homicides based on power relations between men and women and which could be foreseen.” (ECLAC, 2009). Most femicides occur in the domestic sphere and, as the UNODC’s global homicide report for 2011 concluded, “the home is the place where a woman is most likely to be murdered, whereas men are more likely to be murdered in the street.”

The Special UN Rapporteur on Violence against Women has made the following observations regarding Latin America:

Studies in Honduras and Costa Rica show that more than 60 per cent of femicides are perpetrated by an intimate partner or male family member. In Peru, 70 per cent of acts of femicide are carried out by a former or current intimate partner. In Mexico, 60 per cent of the women who were murdered by their intimate or ex-intimate partners had previously reported domestic violence to public authorities. In some cases in Nicaragua, while the crimes were perpetrated by persons unknown to the victim, the murders were planned and paid for by the partner or ex-partner. (OHCHR).

However, femicide can also take place in a public sphere: rape by a stranger, murder of sexual workers, death of women in the context of armed conflict. There also exist the mass femicide, defined as the mass death of women, girl children and adolescent girls, also as the result of behaviours expressing power and domination functioning as a mechanism of social control upon women to maintain the patriarchal status quo (ECLAC, 2009).

According to the WHO report (2002), Latin America has the second highest indices of death of women by violence, both in rural and urban situations. In fact, even when homicide rates for males are higher, homicide rates for women increase faster.

The growing sociopolitical phenomena of gangs, organized crime, drug dealing, human and drug trafficking chains, massive migration and the proliferation of

small arms have had a devastating impact on women's lives, particularly in Mexico and Central America. The northern triangle of Central America has the highest rates of homicide in a non-conflict context. In Guatemala, murders of women increased 141% in 2004, as opposed to 68% for men; in El Salvador in 2006 murders of women increased 111%, compared to 40% for men; and in Honduras in 2007 murders of women increased 166%, compared to 40% for men (OHCHR, 2012).

C. Gang Violence

Gang violence involves different kinds of crimes for profit, drug trafficking, arms trafficking and human trafficking. Some Central American countries, mostly those formerly afflicted by armed conflict, have high levels of violence tied to gang violence. Gangs are joined by both boys and girls but acceptance requirements are harsher for girls: initiation rituals often include forced sexual intercourse with other gang members. This reinforces the unequal power status inside the gang or *mara*.

D. Trafficking

Trafficking in women and girls violates their physical and psychological integrity by commercializing and exploiting their bodies on the sex trade, the marriage market or the cheap labor. After arms and drug dealing, human trafficking is the most lucrative illicit business. The International Labour Organization estimates that traffickers may obtain an annual income near to U\$S40 billions. The ILO estimates that 2, 45 billions of victims are being exploited. Most people are trafficked for prostitution, but others are also used for pornography or stripping. A UNODC study found that 85% of women, 70% of children and 16% of men are trafficked for sexual exploitation. 80% of the victims are women and girls and more than half of them minors (United Nations, 2006b).

Even if violence is a major obstacle to development and violence against women has been widely recognized as a human rights concern, its reduction is still has a low priority in the international agenda, particularly within the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Working towards the inclusion of

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gender violence reduction in the MDGs will contribute to identifying key challenges in terms of prevention and measure progress in their achievement. Ignoring this issue will imply a serious obstacle in the achievement the existent 8 MDG targets.



How the MDGs connect with prevention of violence against women
While the linkages are not always explicit, the MDGs and their targets afford many options for addressing violence against women.

MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Provides an opportunity to ally violence against women with poverty reduction efforts aimed at protecting the poorest and most vulnerable women.

MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education

Can be used to highlight how the drive towards universal primary education can be hindered by gender-based factors – including violence and lack of security – that prevent girls and young women from entering and completing school. Conversely, better education for girls and boys may contribute to the reduction of violence against women.

MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Provides a solid basis for promoting equality and women's empowerment as a sustainable development strategy, which at the same time is a key strategy for reducing and eliminating violence against women.

MDG 4: Reduce child mortality and MDG 5: Improve maternal health

Provide opportunities to raise the profile of violence against women as a serious obstacle to improving maternal and child health, and as a threat to the health and well-being of all women.

MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Establishes the value of anti-violence efforts in HIV prevention, highlighting the evidence that violence against women undermines HIV prevention and care efforts, and conversely that preventing this violence contributes to the prevention of HIV.

MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

Opens useful avenues for designing interventions which, in addition to preserving the environment, can empower and protect women in both rural and urban settings.

MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development

Supports arguments for the participation of women and their representative organizations in policy and programme design, thereby allowing such efforts to include issues important to women, such as violence.

E. Gender violence caused by the State or its agents

States —either through their agents or through public policies— can be internationally responsible for physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated against women. State agents include all individuals exercising state authority: members of the legislative, executive and judicial branches, as well as law enforcement officials, social security officials, prison guards, officials in places of detention, immigration officials and military and security forces. State agents may commit violence on the streets and in custodial settings, including acts of sexual violence and harassment. Some of the conducts involved could tantamount to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

States could also perpetrate violence against women through the interpretation and enforcement of domestic laws and policies. For example, those criminalizing women's consensual sexual behaviour as a means to control women; policies on forced sterilization, forced pregnancy and forced abortion; policies on protective custody of women that effectively imprisons them; and other laws and policies, including policies on virginity testing and sanctioning forced marriages, that fail to recognize women's autonomy and agency and legitimize male control over women. States may also condone violence against women through inadequate laws or through ineffective implementation of laws, effectively allowing perpetrators of violence against women impunity for their acts.

In most Latin American and the Caribbean countries, non-governmental organizations have played an important role in the designing of models which subsequently inspired the implementation of government programmes supported by international cooperation. Most governments have implemented public programmes regarding health care, police force and refuges. However, these services do not have strong structures. The move from experimental and pilot projects by civil society groups to large-scale government initiatives has not been handled with sufficient human, financial and technical resources, and the

enthusiasm and commitment of the initiators is often lost along the way. These deficiencies are worsened by persistent discriminatory practices in the police force, health services and refuges —either because demand outstrips capacity or because the relevant authorities do not pay enough attention to the problem.

Victims are often discouraged from denouncing gender violence and exercising their rights, preferring not to report these violations in order to avoid repeating the trauma and facing the incompetence of the institutions. These include: complicated procedures to certify the crime, the high administrative costs of procedures, lack of confidentiality, fear and even resistance from professionals —especially in the health sector— to investigating the causes of lesions or trauma, distrust of officials and ignorance of the laws which benefit them.

We believe that it is crucial to reduce both gender perpetrated by individuals and gender violence promoted by state agents themselves. We know that the standards and goals established at the regional and international sphere can contribute to the local debate regarding strategies and the development of principles, rules and enforcement mechanisms.

VI. CONCLUSION: MDGs Guidelines

The negotiation of the post-Millennium Development Goal (MDG) framework offers a great opportunity to develop new targets that contemplate the future challenges of human development. In Latin-America, citizen insecurity and armed violence constitute an obstacle to achieve human development and to the fulfillment of human rights.

Consequently, considering the inclusion of this new goal in the post-MDGs will constitute an important improvement for the region, as Latin American countries will be led to deal with this new challenge from an integral approach focused on the strengthening of human rights and human security, going beyond the traditional and conservatives “zero tolerance” and “manodura” policies.

These are some of the conclusions drawn from the study of the impact of violence in the achievement of MDGs^[1]:

- The far-reaching impact of violence around the world and particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, is a serious concern ;
- Many forms of violence are holding back states and societies from fulfilling their development potential, including achieving the MDGs;
- Although there has been progress toward many MDG targets – for instance in the eradication of poverty, primary education enrolment, the reduction of child mortality, or the improvements in population health conditions—violence threatens the sustainability of these gains;
- Prevention and reduction of violence can yield major dividends in terms of development;
- There is a call for addressing issues of security and justice as part of the post-2015 development agenda;
- The next generation of global development goals must contribute to improved security and sustainable peace, the fulfillment of human rights,

and the promotion of public confidence and trust.

- The Post-2015 development framework should include a standalone goal to reduce violence, and promote freedom from fear and sustainable peace and eliminate of all forms of violence against women and girls.

The targets leading to the achievement of this new goal should include:

- The prevention and reduction of all violent deaths;
- The prevention and reduction of all forms of violence with attention to specific groups such as women, youth, girls, boys and other vulnerable groups;
- The protection of all children, adolescents and youth from violence and their involvement in violent acts;
- The development of capacity in relevant security and justice institutions to be responsive and accountable;
- The increased confidence and trust in security and justice, particularly among women, youth, girls, boys and vulnerable groups;
- Addressing the indirect and direct causes that encourage social violence – as the social inequality and the lack of education; and
- Promotion of the cultures of prevention in private and public spheres.

Thus, including security-related issues in the MDGs debate must represent a clear attempt to influence the conforming of post-2015 global agenda. Our biggest challenge right now is to arrive to a consensus about the guidelines that would turn citizen security and a peaceful environment into a reality. Thereby, we have drafted some possible goals to discuss the best ways to arrive to such an important objective.



GOAL

ERADICATE ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AND ABUSES

TARGET 1: REDUCE THE PROPORTION OF VICTIMS OF ARMED VIOLENCE.

INDICATORS

1a. Number of armed-conflict death.

1b. Number of non-conflict but violent death.

1c. Number of victims of no-fatal injuries caused by armed violence.

1d. Number of children, adolescents and youth involved in violent acts.

TARGET 2: ERADICATE ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

INDICATORS

2.a. Number of deaths caused by Femicide

2.b. Number of women victims of sexual abuse..

2.c. Number of women victims of physical and emotional violence by intimate partners.

TARGET 3: STRENGTH INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS TO PREVENT AND REDUCE VIOLENCE AND THREAT OF VIOLENCE

INDICATORS

3.a. Number of effective national investments to improve effectiveness and accountability of justice and security systems..

3.b. Number of effective penalization of abuses and violent acts committed by state agents.

3.c. Number of effective national investments in armed violence prevention, including strengthen educational systems and employment.

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