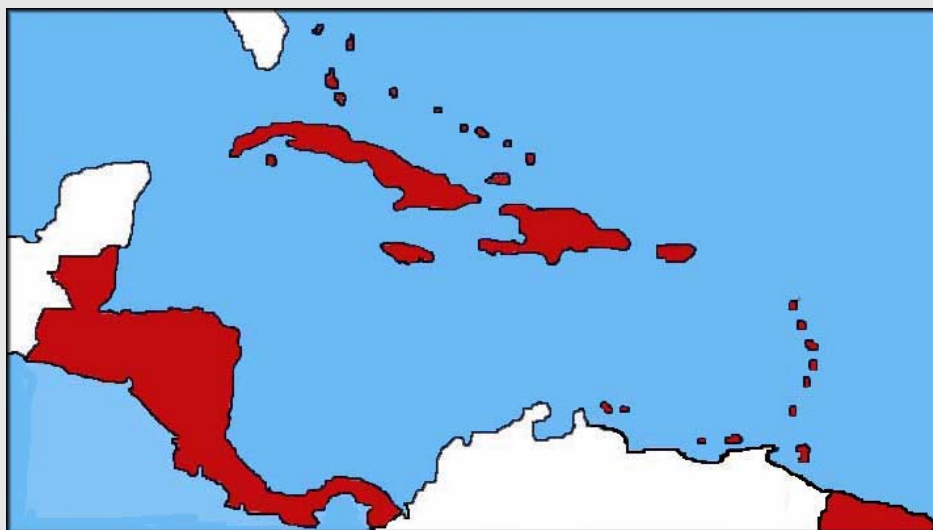


Alternative Developments in Central America and the Caribbean, 2017-2027



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1. Introduction and methodological considerations

The objective of this report is to analyze alternative developments in Central America and the Caribbean for the period 2017-2027. The analysis should consider both regional and global intra-state relations (focusing on the US, EU, China, India and Russia), in terms of political, economic, military and social issues. The domestic political development will be analyzed taking into account possible conflicts that each of the global powers could be involved in, strategic natural resources as well as colonial relations.

First of all, it is, as often, quite complicated to define the regions to be included in the report. Delimitations of regions can be done based on a range of different factors, for example geographical, geopolitical, cultural, ethnic, or linguistic.

This report will use the extended definition of Central America, including Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama.² The most important reason for this is that the regional cooperation schemes that are developing to an increasing degree include all these seven countries.

In the case of the Caribbean it is more complex. In general, here, it will include the Caribbean islands and Suriname and Guyana located on the South American mainland. The main reason for including Suriname and Guyana is that they are members of CARICOM.³ The Dutch Caribbean includes Aruba, the Netherlands Antilles and Sint Maarten. The French Caribbean includes French Guyana, Martinique, Guadeloupe, St Martin and St Barthelemy. The British Caribbean includes Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat and Turks & Caicos Islands. These islands are still administratively dependent of the Dutch, French and British state, respectively. Seven of the eastern islands, all former British colonies, have formed the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States: Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts & Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent & Grenadines (7 countries) – all members of the CARICOM. The Eastern Caribbean States have developed a high degree of formalized cooperation in security issues (www.caricom.org).

¹ This report is commissioned by the Swedish Armed Forces, Försvarsmakten.

² With a total population of 46,6 million (www.sica.org).

³ The 15 member states of CARICOM include a population of 17 million (Widfeldt 2001:219, PNUD 2006:299).

Another delimitation that is used, for example in some US-endorsed programs, is the Caribbean Basin, which then includes all countries with a Caribbean coastline (El Salvador added). However, that definition is too broad for the purpose of this report.

The supposed conflicts are analyzed according to the following *actors, structures* and *causes*. The analysis of conflicts are based on a multidimensional perspective where the security concept goes beyond its military meaning to encompass economic, social, cultural, political and political aspects.⁴ The analysis will follow an explanatory model framework that was developed in Follér and Stenman (2006)⁵, which will serve as a basis to develop different future scenarios. The model does of course not cover all the factors that could possibly affect future conflict patterns, but based on our own experience and the literature survey, we have chosen to focus on the variables that are most probable to have a decisive impact on future developments. The variable to be explained is future conflicts and security risks, and the explanatory variables are the following: i) external relations, ii) regionalization – strategies of integration, iii) inequality – distributional policies, iv) democratization – institutions, v) democratization – civil society, vi) organized crime, vii) militarization – methods of conflict resolution (see also appendix 4).

2. Theoretical remarks

The point of departure is that every society has long-term trends, at the economic, social, political and demographic level and that the world situation has a certain influence on how these trends develop. How a region, a country, a community or local actors handle a conflict situation depends on the definition of these conflicts; on their origin, nature and consequences as well as on how they are appreciated by the above mentioned actors. The origins of a conflict can be multiple and can be traced to socio-economic, political, cultural, ethnic and/or religious causes. They can also have their origin in natural or health catastrophes that provoke unrest and even stigmatization of certain groups, events which can lead to migration waves or uprisings in extreme cases resulting in the overthrow of governments or even the collapse of states.

As mentioned above, the security concept used in this study is multidimensional. This is especially important in a context where structural inequalities and hierarchies are strong and the culture of rights is weak and often contested by traditionally authoritarian institutions like the police and the military. In many of the countries in Central America and the Caribbean, the military has also had a completely different role and power in society compared to its original or traditional role of defending borders.

In the debate on security, security-related issues and transnational threats, the concept of securitization is becoming widespread. According to Acharya (2005) “securitization is an act through which policy-makers label (a “speech act”) certain non-military dangers which are seen as posing an existential threat to the survival or well being of states” (Ibid p. 4). Others have pointed out that securitization also implies that the usual ‘rules of the game’ can be offset and that emergency measures are allowed (Roe 2004:281). In the US-Latin American debate several issues are becoming securitized, for example drug trafficking, HIV/AIDS and migration (Barry 2005, Rojas Aravena 2004, Zellen 2006). However, many analysts have also pointed to the risk of securitizing. Such risks could be that militarized measures to combat

⁴ See for example Abrahamsson et al. 2001.

⁵ Title in English: Latin America 2017-2027: an analysis of future pattern of conflicts and regional co-operation.

symptoms are being prioritized before other measures to overcome the underlying causes thereby achieving a more sustainable conflict resolution (Acharya 2005, Fourie 2006, Roe 2004, Barry 2005:19-20).

Even though regional integration or the analysis of regional organizations is not the main objective of this report, it is important, both for theoretical and empirical reasons, to briefly discuss the current processes of regional integration as well as its potential role. Björn Hettne and other researchers connected to peace and development studies at Göteborg University have published studies⁶ where they emphasize the importance of a multidimensional perspective on security, conflicts and development, as well as the potential positive role that regionalism could play in promoting peace and democratization (the concept of new regionalism). Many researchers have also seen the Esquipulas process⁷ and the subsequent formation of SICA (*Sistema de Integración Centroamericana*) as, at least initially, a good example of new regionalism.⁸

3. Historical background

In a similar report from last year (Follér and Stenman 2006), covering all Latin America, a brief historical background was included. Drawing on that, this report will only point out some important factors, as well as emphasizing some characteristics that distinguish Central America and the Caribbean from the rest of the Latin American countries. One important factor that differs Latin America from Africa or Asia, and affects the patterns and origin of conflicts is the position of the indigenous peoples. When independence was gained in the 19th century it was the Creole elite that led the struggle and formed the new national governments. The indigenous population continued to be deprived of their rights and their livelihoods were even more threatened by the economic liberalization reforms in the late 19th century. In the Caribbean the indigenous peoples had become almost extinct before the 19th century. In the Southeastern islands there were still some indigenous communities of Carib origin in the 20th century. The slave trade is another factor that has deeply affected the Latin American continent, resulting in a large share of population with African descent. In the regions focused upon in this report, this is especially true for the Caribbean parts of the Central American countries, as well as the Caribbean region (Knippers Black 1998:59-90). For example in Nicaragua, this, combined with other factors, has led to the formation of an autonomous region in the southern part of the Atlantic coast (RAAS).⁹

The Caribbean countries did not gain independence at the same time as the Central American countries. Most of the smaller islands achieved independence as late as after 1960 and as mentioned earlier; some islands still belong to the US, Great Britain, France or the Netherlands. However, several of the larger islands gained independence earlier. Haiti became independent from France in 1804 after repeated rebellions by slaves (Widfeldt 2001:212-213). The Dominican Republic finally formed an independent state in 1865 after conflicts with Haiti and struggle with Spain. In Cuba the struggle for independence started in the late 19th century. However, as a result of the Spanish-US war over Cuba in 1898, the island became a US protectorate. Political independence was achieved in 1933 after a military revolt (Knippers Black 1998:415-416).

⁶ See for example Abrahamsson et al 2001 and Hettne 2003.

⁷ The regional peace process in Central America in the 1980's.

⁸ For example Bull 1999, Sanahuja and Sotillo 1998.

⁹ There is also an autonomous Northern Atlantic coast (RAAN), but that is dominated by indigenous peoples rather than ethnic minorities of African descent.

Thus, in Central America and the Caribbean, the independence process also implied severe conflicts, and even wars, both between competing Creole elites (ex Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras) and between the colonial powers including the neo-colonial power of the United States, the latter primarily in the Caribbean, as mentioned above. With the Monroe doctrine, 1823, the United States, clearly stated, directed to the European colonial powers, their intention to become a hegemonic power in the Western Hemisphere. The Roosevelt corollary from 1904 complements the Monroe doctrine, but directs itself more towards the new national governments or regimes than to the old colonial powers. The Roosevelt corollary was used to justify US interventions in Cuba (1906-1910), Nicaragua (1909-1911, 1912-1925, 1926-1933), Haiti (1915-1934) and the Dominican Republic (1916-1924). It was officially abolished in 1928, but its spirit has lived on when justifying more recent US interventions (Ibid p. 274-279). In terms of interventions, there is also a significant difference between Central America and the Caribbean compared to South America, where the former have been subject to substantially more interventions from the United States. Due to several reasons, some of them described above, the formation of nation states in Central America and the Caribbean has also been more fragile (perhaps excluding Costa Rica and post-revolutionary Cuba) compared to most other countries in Latin America.

Other processes that have had an important impact on the pattern of conflict and security in Central America and the Caribbean are the Cuban revolution 1959, the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua 1979 and the wars in El Salvador and Guatemala in the 1980's. The causes of these conflicts are discussed in other parts of this report, as well as its consequences and the external interventions. Many of the relations between military groups and the drug trafficking organizations were established during this conflictive period of little territorial control and large financial needs¹⁰. Because of the restricted extent of this study it is not possible to go into the details of these processes.

Concluding this brief section it would be important to point out some of the most important characteristics of the Central American and Caribbean countries, compared to most other Latin American countries. First, the proximity to the US affects all sectors of society as well as intra-state relations. The region includes several of the poorest Latin American countries: Guyana, Haiti, Honduras and Nicaragua. The state apparatus is, in most countries, less institutionalized and more politicized, than in many other Latin American countries. Central America and the Caribbean were one of the most conflictive areas before the Cold war ended (ex Nicaragua, El Salvador and Grenada)¹¹. The conflicts that escalated during the 1980's have left a negative legacy in terms of violence (militarization, death squads etc) but also positive experiences of regional cooperation and dialogue (for example the Contadora group or the Esquipulas process¹²).

Despite the many large and obvious differences between Central America and the Caribbean they share certain important characteristics and concerns for the future. Both regions are small compared to the rest of the continent, in terms of population, area, economies and markets.

¹⁰ See for example the Iran-Contras scandal involving the US army, the contra revolutionary forces in Nicaragua and Honduran militaries (Knippers Black 1998:614-616).

¹¹ The US intervention in Grenada was in 1983 while the US military support to and intervention in Central America was more prolonged, with its peak during the 1980's.

¹² Contadora was a mediating group that included Mexico, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela, while Esquipulas was the negotiation process between the Central American states, initially led by the Costa Rican president Oscar Arias.

They are a buffer or transport zone between the South and the North, both in terms of geopolitics and trafficking. They are comparatively poor countries where large shares of the population are forced to choose the exit option, i.e. migration in order to survive or assure improved livelihoods for themselves and their families. Due to widespread poverty and geographical characteristics they are also comparatively more vulnerable to environmental degradation, natural disasters and climate changes.

4. External relations and regionalization

The most important external actor for Central America and the Caribbean today is the United States. For many countries in the Caribbean, the former European colonial powers (Great Britain, France, the Netherlands) are still important. In the case of Central America some of the Asian countries (mainly Korea and Taiwan) are also becoming increasingly important due to their economic investments. The EU is becoming an important partner in trade, cooperation and politics. In the Caribbean, an increasing regionalization trend can be observed, but also an increased dependence of the US, compared to former European colonial powers. As long as the position of the United States as the only global power stays intact, it will remain the most powerful actor or counterpart for the countries in Central America and the Caribbean, compared to other countries, or group of countries, outside the Western Hemisphere, due to historical, geopolitical and economic reasons. If the position, policies and/or power of the United States would drastically change there is a much more uncertain future scenario.¹³

In terms of multilateral or international actors, the UN, international financial institutions and the Catholic Church (that could also be defined as a domestic actor, where the Pentecostal churches also exert certain influence but not comparable to the Catholic one in terms of individual actors) could all have a significant influence in the countries of this region. In the Caribbean context, Haiti and especially Cuba are focal points for regional as well as more global or hemispheric tensions.

The case of Cuba, and in some sense Nicaragua during the Sandinista government (1979-1990, 2007-), differs from most of the other countries in Central America and the Caribbean in terms of external relations as well as political development (not discussed here). Both the Cuban and the Sandinista revolution took place in the context of the Cold War. However, while the Cuban was almost the first of its kind in the Americas, the Sandinistas had Cuba as a role model and support. Both movements were initially primarily a national liberation movement without major support from the Socialist bloc, led by the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union did not have neither ideological nor political reasons to support these revolutionary movements. However, due to the power struggle between the US and the Soviet Union, strategic and geopolitical interests led to a negative polarization in relation to both Cuba and Nicaragua. In terms of external relations, it is interesting to see how Cuba, despite the dependence of the Soviet Union in other areas, during long periods maintained an independent position in foreign policy, sometimes causing conflicts with the Soviet Union (Maydanik 1995). Both Cuba and Nicaragua have also had strong interests to maintain good and close relations to the major European countries (Freres 2002). Cuba is still one of the most controversial issues among the American states, and it is also a question where many different Latin American governments have defended Cuba's right to self-determination against the US blockade. A possible future US military intervention of Cuba could have serious negative consequences for the security and stability in Latin America since it is

¹³ See for example Buzan and Waever 2003, Oliva and Serbin 2002, Fuentes and Álvarez 2005, Widfeldt 2002.

probable that several other Latin American countries would not passively accept such an intervention. The case of Haiti is different in this sense. The US-led intervention of Haiti in 2004 received critique from the CARICOM as well as from many other countries but there were never any risk that other countries in the region would take measures to try to counteract the intervention.

Many researchers have analyzed and theorized about the security development after the Cold War, among them Buzan and Waever (2003). They have analyzed how global security patterns have changed before, during and after the Cold War in different regions of the world and developed a theoretical model of regional security (Regional Security Complex Theory, RSCT), which is used both for area studies and for building predictive scenarios. The authors define a regional security complex: “a group of states or other entities must possess a degree of security interdependence sufficient both to establish them as a linked set and to differentiate them from surrounding security regions” (Ibid p. 47-48).¹⁴ In the case of Central America and the Caribbean, Buzan and Waever argue that they form part of the North American RSC, with Central America (Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama) as a sub complex (Ibid p. 263-267). They also emphasize that, since the North American RSC contains the only existing superpower, the US will be significantly more important to the individual member countries than the four great powers, compared to other RSC. It is interesting to see that the authors, in terms of future predictions, do not foresee any large changes in the borders of the two American security complexes (the North and the South). However, they do signal a possible expansion or overlay into the Andean region of the North American RSC due to the interventions against drug trafficking (Ibid p. 269). With the exception of the above-mentioned shift, the authors express doubt that it would exist any tendency to develop one single American security complex, despite the OAS and a possible Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) (Ibid p. 451-29).

In relation to the post cold war period, the authors mention several developments that have affected the inter-state relations in this RSC. In the case of Central America, one is the end of the armed conflicts and the reduction of US military support to the national governments. Another is the increasing transnational security threat from drug trafficking and organized crime and finally, the control of the Panama Canal, which was handed over from the US to Panama in January 2000. However, the canal continues to be an issue of concern for the US who fear that other great powers could negatively affect their own access to this important transport route (Ibid p. 288-289). Alternatives to the Panama Canal have been a concern both historically and in the present, primarily in Nicaragua and in Mexico (the Tehuantepec Isthmus). Nicaragua is currently planning to start building a canal with financial support from Venezuela, within the ALBA (*Alternativa Bolivariana para las Americas*) cooperation scheme (www.albalatinoamericana.org). In the case of the Caribbean, Buzan and Waever (2003) focus on two core issues: Cuba and transnational security issues (trafficking, money laundering, illegal migration and HIV/AIDS). Haiti is also pointed out as a special concern for the US, mainly related to illegal migration (Ibid p. 290-291).

When the Bush administration sought support for their planned invasion of Iraq in 2003 they got very little support in Latin America. In the Security Council, Mexico and Chile voted against the US proposal and when the invasion finally took place it was only Nicaragua, El

¹⁴ In relation to their RSCT, Buzan and Waever also define the post-Cold War security pattern as a “1+4+regions” model, where the United States is the sole superpower. China, EU, Japan and Russia are defined as great powers. And finally, depending on the specific security complex, different regional powers are defined (Ibid p. 36-39, 445-7).

Salvador, the Dominican Republic and Honduras that sent military troops to Iraq, and El Salvador is the only country that have not taken home their troops yet (Barry 2005, www.wikipedia.org 07/08/21). By some analysts, the US promotion of the ex-president of El Salvador as the new chairman of the OAS in 2005 was a response for El Salvador's support to the US in the Iraqi issue. However, the Salvadoran candidate did not stand a chance against the Mexican and Chilean candidates.

There is a certain rivalry, dating back to the colonial period and the Monroe doctrine, between the US and the European Union (EU), and then especially the former colonial powers Great Britain, France and Spain. Due to the colonial ties, several Caribbean countries have had preferential treatment agreements with the European Union, as part of the ACP (Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific) countries. Cuba has observer status in the ACP but has been trying to be included as full member. The rivalry shows itself primarily in economic and political interests. At the moment the EU has association agreements with the MERCOSUR countries and with Mexico (Freres 2002). They are also currently negotiating a similar agreement with Central America.

In terms of the relations to other great powers, like China, Russia and India, the future importance of especially the two latter for Central America and the Caribbean seem limited. It was only the power struggle of the Cold War that convinced the Soviet Union to engage in more extended cooperation with some Latin American countries. Today, Russia has much more important interests in other regions of the world and is not likely to want to challenge the US in the Western Hemisphere. However, China, and other Asian countries (for example Korea and Taiwan) do have an interest, primarily economic, to expand in Central America and the Caribbean.

There have been some border conflicts between the Central American and Caribbean countries; for example between Guatemala and Belize; Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua (in different constellations); and Nicaragua and Colombia. Some of them have escalated, but only one has developed into full-fledged armed conflict in the last decades: the so-called soccer war between El Salvador and Honduras in 1969 (Knippers Black 1998:363-364). Part of this border dispute were later resolved in 1993 in the International Court in Hague, which established borders in the disputed rural area as well as over two disputed islands in the Gulf of Fonseca (www.wikipedia.org). However, at the moment, there is an escalation of the border conflict between Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua over the Gulf of Fonseca. Honduras is claiming maritime territory to improve their passage to the Pacific, and is planning to take the case to the International Court in Hague. The conflict in the Gulf involves both strategic (the passage to the Pacific) and economic interests that are, among others, related to European business interests in view of the association agreement currently being negotiated between the EU and the Central American countries. Especially El Salvador has been developing a dynamic business project in the area of the Gulf, including the cultivation of shrimps and carbon production (involving Spanish companies). However, there are also other potential conflicts in the Gulf area, linked to the environmental effects of the emerging industrial production and conflicts over land titles involving lands that were given to former guerilla soldiers after the peace accords in El Salvador in 1992, as well as speculations over possible off-shore oil reserves.¹⁵

¹⁵ Interview with Leonel Búcaro, member of the Central American Parliament, August 2007.

In terms of regional cooperation, there are three organizations that currently are the most important for Central America and the Caribbean: the OAS (Organization of the American States), SICA (*Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana*) and CARICOM (Caribbean Community). Parallel to these, there are several other projects or processes of regional integration and/or cooperation which are sometimes overlapping or complementing the former three. Some of them are the economic integration processes related to the free trade agreements between countries in the region and the United States and the EU, respectively. The currently most debated is CAFTA-DR, the free trade agreement that includes the United States, the Dominican Republic and five Central American countries. There is also the opposing project of ALBA including for example Venezuela, Cuba, Bolivia and Nicaragua.

However, at the official, hemispheric level, the OAS is still the most important organization, which was also confirmed at the Special Conference on Security in Mexico 2003 where the participating states approved the Declaration of Security in the Americas, which recognizes and formalizes a number of instruments to promote dialogue and resolve conflicts in the Western Hemisphere, for example the TIAR (Interamerican Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance), the Inter-American Commission on the Control of Drug Abuse and the Inter-American Anti-Terrorist Committee (Rojas Aravena 2004:8).

SICA was founded 1991 in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, with the objective to create an institutional framework for the process of regional integration in Central America.¹⁶ Current member states are Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. The total population of the member states is around 46,6 million people (www.sica.int/miembros/sica/). The Dominican Republic, with 8,8 million people (PNUD 2006:298) is an associate member while Spain, Mexico and Taiwan have observer status (www.sica.int). SICA was formed as a result of the regional peace process, which culminated in the Esquipulas II accord in 1987. This integration project was characterized, to a large extent, by the ideas embodied in the concept of *new regionalism*¹⁷ and by the principles that guided the Esquipulas process; comprehensive regionally based solutions achieved through dialogue and negotiations (Bull 1999:961-962). Benedicte Bull has analyzed the development of the regional integration process in Central America during the 1990's and concludes that the process has undergone some important changes. The regional project has increasingly been over-shadowed by hemispheric projects like FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) or CAFTA-DR. The discourse has also shifted from focus on peace, democracy and development in the region to focus more on how to integrate Central America to the global market economy (Ibid p. 967-8). This would probably indicate a loss of momentum, in terms of the opportunities opened by the peace and democratization processes as well as the turn towards new regionalism.

CARICOM (The Caribbean Community) was founded in 1973, based on an older free trade agreement, CARIFTA, from 1968. Today, it comprises 15 member states: Belize, Bahamas, Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts & Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & Grenadines, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago and Montserrat. The total population amounts to approximately 17 million people.¹⁸ There are five associated members:

¹⁶ For a longer discussion on the history of regional integration in Central America, see for example Follér and Stenman (2006) or Bull (1999).

¹⁷ Defined by Hettne (1999) as characterized by i) regional integration in a multipolar world, ii) a spontaneous process, driven bottom-up, iii) open regionalism as opposed to inward-looking 'closed', iv) multidimensional integration that includes non-economic cooperation, v) a process where non-state actors play an important role.

¹⁸ Based on Widfeldt (2001:219) for 14 CARICOM states and PNUD (2006:299) for Haiti.

Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands and Turks & Caicos Islands (these are part of the so called British Overseas Territory, earlier called British Dependent Territory). CARICOM was initially dominated by former British colonies but have now come to include other countries, where Suriname (1995) and Haiti (2002) might be the most important new members (www.caricom.org). The expansion of CARICOM has been seen as important by many analysts in order to break with colonial patterns and promote a more locally based regionalism (ex Widfeldt 2001). CARICOM has been active in supporting a peaceful resolution of the conflicts in Haiti and opposed the US-led intervention of Haiti in 2004 leading to the resignation and exile of President Aristide on February 29 (www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/haitindex.htm). The future development of the CARICOM will probably depend on how the individual countries prioritize cooperation among the Caribbean countries, how the organization succeed in combining the different backgrounds and interests of the member states and how they can develop cooperation with other Latin American organizations (for example SICA or MERCOSUR).

5. Domestic developments

This part of the report will focus on the variables more closely related to internal factors like the socioeconomic development, democratization, organized crime and the role of the military (for the model, see appendix 4). In appendix 3, the results of a risk analysis of the countries in Central America and the Caribbean are summarized. The analysis takes into account risks associated to both individuals and business investments. Those risk ratings can be compared with the country records of corruption, democracy, violence and crime that are discussed further on in this chapter.

The different actors or stakeholders in the domestic or internal arena could be grouped based on different criteria or perspectives: social groups (where the middle class is often assumed to have a decisive role, especially in periods of crisis), sectors (the state, the economy, civil society) etc. Here, the focus will not be on a single perspective but rather trying to pinpoint what is believed to be the decisive actors in different situations and processes that could affect future patterns of conflict and insecurity. Even though the states in Central America and the Caribbean are much less institutionalized (with some exceptions, for example Costa Rica and Cuba) and more politicized, compared to the rest of Latin America, they are going to be among the most important actors in the future, also because there might arise conflicts about the legitimate power of the state. Other domestic stakeholders that probably will play an important role are the economic elite, political parties, the military, organized crime/drug cartels, social movements and the Catholic Church (mainly in social issues).

Socioeconomic development and inequality

Central America and the Caribbean contain some of the poorest countries in Latin America. The states are in general much more fragile compared to the South American countries and due to their geographical position they are the frontier between the North and the South of the Americas. This has and will continue to affect the socioeconomic development in these countries. But, there are large disparities within the region. While GDP per capita is more than 10 000 USD in Barbados or Bahamas, it is about 4 000 USD in Costa Rica and Panama, and around 1 000 USD in Nicaragua, Honduras and Guyana. In Haiti it is only 420 USD. Income inequality is high. The richest 20 percent of the population receives about 60 percent of the income in Haiti, Guatemala and Panama. The same share in Nicaragua and Costa Rica is around 50 percent. In Sweden it is 37 percent. Several of the Caribbean countries lie closer

to 40 percent (www.undp.org, see appendix 2). The most important factor behind these patterns of poverty and inequality is the unequal distribution of resources and incomes whose origins is to be found in the colonization and the establishment of the economic, political and social system of plantations during the 19th century (de Ferranti et al 2004, Knippers Black 1998:351-379). It was these inequalities and the lack of democracy that sparked the armed conflicts in Central America in the 1970's and the 1980's as well as the revolution in Cuba in 1959 (Knippers Black 1998:351-379, 413-423). As long as these structures of poverty and inequality do not change, they will continue to be a source of insecurity and conflict.

The emerging HIV/AIDS epidemic is very slowly receiving more attention by the governments in the region. The most affected areas so far are the Atlantic coast of Central America and the Caribbean countries. In 2005, AIDS was the leading cause of death among adults aged 15-44 and the Caribbean is defined as the second-most affected region in the world. The UNAIDS has had problems with governments in the region that are reluctant to publicly discuss the extent of the epidemic and possible measures. Access to treatment is generally low in the most affected (and poorest) countries (www.unaids.org). In several Central American countries, international as well as national NGO's are launching awareness raising campaigns on HIV/AIDS. Unfortunately, these campaigns are often met with resistance from dominant conservative sectors within public authorities and the Churches when it comes to policy measures including information and education on sexuality and reproductive health.

This lack of socioeconomic development, including high unemployment, has led to large migratory flows, which have increased during the 1990's. The most important destination is the US. According to US census data there are over 15 million foreign born Latin Americans in the US, 2 million of them are Central Americans. However, these data are probably underestimated due to illegal immigration. For example, official US data shows that the number of Salvadorans in the US is around 800 000, while analysts estimate that there are close to 2 million. The Diasporas send remittances back home to their families, which have developed into a major income and an important factor of macroeconomic stability for many countries in Central America and the Caribbean. In 2002, migrant remittances in El Salvador and the Dominican Republic represented 17 and 10 percent of GDP and 65 and 37 percent of exports, respectively. Remittances per capita amount to 440 USD in Panama, 361 USD in El Salvador and 257 USD in the Dominican Republic. The majority of the remittances are used cover expenses for basic needs. The migration and the development of large Diasporas in a relative close geographical distance have also implied an increase of economic and commercial relations between the two countries, in the form of telephone communications, nostalgic trade, tourism and as a direct consequence of the remittances, financial transactions (Orozco 2004). The migration has, in these different forms, had important positive effects on the economies of the source countries. However, several analysts are also critical towards a too positive view on the effects of migration stating that it is important to take into account the social costs of migration, the risk implied for many persons who migrate illegally and that migration is usually not a first-hand choice but a last resort due to unemployment and poverty (see for example Renzi 2004:132-134).

Democratization: Institutions and civil society

Most countries in Central America and the Caribbean have a weak tradition of democracy and in some cases, a short record of democratic elections. Costa Rica is the exception where, due to specific factors in the historical context, a stronger state and a more democratic society

have evolved. During the last decades, as the authoritarian regimes have become fewer and democratic elections more common, civil society organization have grown stronger, but the institutional framework is still weak and fragile in most countries. In some countries, where violent conflicts have characterized the societies during long periods, the military and the police have still a strong position of formal or informal power. In the 1980's, in the context of the high level of conflicts in the region, there were also a negative development where drug trafficking organizations increasingly cooperated or bribed state authorities, including the military and the police, in order to use Central American and Caribbean territory, as a transit area for the smuggling of narcotics to the US. This development has been especially serious in countries like Guatemala, El Salvador, Panama, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica (United Nations 2007, Peacock and Beltrán 2003). Below, some indicators will illustrate the level of corruption in some of the countries in Central America and the Caribbean, as well as the perceived levels of freedom.

The international NGO Transparency International publishes an indicator of the degree of corruption (corruption perception index – CPI). The CPI measures the degree of corruption perceived by business people and analysts. In the 2006 survey, several of the countries in Central America and the Caribbean, receives very low (negative) scores. Haiti has, by far, the worst record, followed by a group of countries that still score very bad: Honduras, Guyana, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Suriname, Panama, Trinidad & Tobago, Grenada, Cuba, and Belize (www.transparency.org/policy-research/surveys_indices/cpi/2006).

Another international NGO, Freedom House, has developed an aggregated index of freedom, based on two indicators of the level of political rights and civil liberties, respectively. The countries are divided into the categories of free, partly free and not free. The only country in Central America and the Caribbean that is defined as not free, by Freedom House, is Cuba. Five countries are defined as partly free: Haiti, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras and Guyana. The rest of the countries are defined as free but Trinidad & Tobago receives a low score on political rights while Jamaica and El Salvador receive low scores on civil liberties (www.freedomhouse.org, 2007 edition).

Organized crime and violence

It is important to take into account both the record of democratization and the socioeconomic development in the analysis of organized crime. The reports from the Truth Commissions, and similar reports, in both El Salvador and Guatemala have clearly shown the links between the military regimes, paramilitary groups, impunity, corruption and organized crime and drug trafficking in Central America.¹⁹

In the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report²⁰ for 2007 several Central American and Caribbean countries are defined as major (Guatemala, Panama, Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica) or significant (Costa Rica and Nicaragua) transit countries for drugs. Several of these are also pointed out as countries where there exist major money laundering of incomes from drug trafficking: Panama, Guatemala, Dominican Republic and Haiti. The report is also warning about the possibility of increasing money laundering in El Salvador and Nicaragua. The assassination of three Salvadoran members of the Central American Parliament in Guatemala on February 19, 2007 and the subsequent assassination of

¹⁹ See for example United Nations 2007, Loveman 2006, Peacock and Beltrán 2003, CDHES 1993.

²⁰ Published by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, US State Department.

the policemen arrested for murdering the parliamentarians highlighted the issue of drug trafficking and related corruption in Central America and especially Guatemala. These events draw attention to widespread corruption, drug trafficking and the transnational networks of international criminal organizations, both Mexican and Colombian drug cartels were mentioned in relation to the events in Guatemala described above.²¹

Another transnational, or transnationalized, phenomenon that is mentioned by many actors and/or policymakers in the region is the *maras*, *pandillas* or youth gangs operating mainly in urban areas. These urban gangs were even mentioned as a threat to US national security by the commander of the US Southern Command in 2004 (Loveman 2006:xxii). Bruneau (2005), makes important reflections on how the maras constitute a more serious threat in countries like El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua, compared to for example Los Angeles, due to the fragile status of democracy in the former countries, as well as the unclear role of the military in the post-conflict setting. The author also analyses why the maras should be considered a serious threat to national security in the Central American countries. He mentions five factors: i) the government (including the police and legal system) has not been able to counteract the rapid increase of violence and gang-related crimes; ii) a culture of democracy has still not developed in these societies; iii) in some areas, the maras have already become substitutes for the official authorities, iv) the maras are diversifying their activities into entrepreneur, using violence to compete against other firms active in the same sector or area, v) the maras have begun to develop strategies to integrate into official structures (like the police) or non-governmental organizations maintaining their use of violent methods (Ibid p.5-6). Following this, Bruneau analyses in what ways the maras could constitute a threat for US national security. The level of violence due to the maras are, in many countries, a too heavy burden for the police and the government might be forced to use the military instead, or as a complement. This has been the case in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. The mobilization of the military against the maras might constitute a threat to the democratization process due to the factors mentioned above. There is an obvious risk that the transnational character of the maras will increasingly involve them in the trafficking of people, arms and drugs. However, the author emphasize that he has not found any evidence at all linking the maras to international terrorism and despite the risks mentioned, Bruneau concludes that he does not find any strong argument to consider the maras a threat to U.S. national security (Ibid p.8-9). The author very clearly defines the maras as a criminal problem, preferably countered by human and technical intelligence bodies of the state (Ibid p. 10). The social and possible geo-political dimensions of the growth and persistence of the maras is not emphasized and rarely explored.

One method of measuring the widespread violence in societies is the estimated mortality rate from homicide, which is done for example by the Pan-American Health Organization (www.paho.org). In the Central American and Caribbean regions, El Salvador is, by far, the country with the highest homicide rate. Considerably lower rates, but still high, are found in Guatemala, Belize, St Lucia, Haiti and Bahamas. In the statistics on the number of homicides in big cities in Latin America, the capitals of El Salvador and Guatemala are usually found among the top five together with the Colombian cities of Medellín and Calí, or the Brazilian cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

Militarization and resolution of conflicts

²¹ See for example articles in Prensa Libre (www.prensalibre.com), Diario Colatino (www.diariocolatino.com) and Revista Contralínea (www.contralinea.com.mx).

Several factors increase the probability of a higher degree of militarization of the societies in the region. For example; the history of military interventions in political and social issues, by both national and external armies; the increased securitization of problems related to migration and drug trafficking; and the change in US policies after the events on September 11, 2001. There is a risk that these factors are mutually reinforcing and developing in a negative way in the societies in Central America and the Caribbean that are also characterized by very weak or incomplete democratic systems. Barry (2005) is for example pointing out a clear risk that US policy after 9/11, encouraging the building of “national security states”, contributes to a backlash where the armies in the region once again assume tasks of ensuring political and economic stability (Ibid p. 20). The US government is also financing a regional security cooperation project, including from the beginning five Central American countries, to build a regional rapid response task force against terrorism, drug trafficking and youth gangs (Ibid p. 20). Another development that has aroused preoccupation and protests from many civil society organizations is the establishment of an International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA), based in El Salvador. One critique, or fear, is that ILEA has close ties to the infamous School of the Americas (now named Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation) that trained many officials responsible for abuse of human rights during the military regimes in the 1970’s and the 1980’s (www.lasolidarity.org/ilea.shtml). There are also recent signals that the legislation against terrorism is used to penalize and/or criminalize social protests, for example in El Salvador in July 2007 (Human Rights Watch, www.hrw.org/english/docs/2007/07/31).

Environmental stress or degradation

The possible future impacts of climate changes should be an important factor and could, in many ways, alternate the security conditions in the future. Environmental changes could affect domestic and regional security by threatening the livelihoods of people, increasing conflicts due to socio-economic crises and causing migratory flows towards other countries in the region, for example the United States.

The 2007 report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC 2007)²², predicts that by the year 2022 the inter-tropical glaciers in Latin America “are very likely to disappear, affecting water availability and hydropower generation” (Ibid p. 4). They also conclude that the amount of people “experiencing water stress due to climate change” could affect as many as 77 million people in Latin America by 2020 (Ibid p. 4). The predicted sea level rise is foreseen to have severe negative impacts on low-lying coast, for example Belize, Costa Rica, Guyana, Panama and El Salvador, which are also the most vulnerable to climate variability and extreme events such as rainstorms and hurricanes. Flooding and erosion will negatively affect people, resources and economic activities in these areas. As for the impact on the Caribbean islands, the IPCC classify them as especially vulnerable due to the combination of factors. Their size and elevation make them more vulnerable, which are increased by their dependence on for example coastal tourism and agriculture (IPCC 2007).²³

One example of recent positive initiatives of regional cooperation in this area is the agreement signed by Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti, in July 2007, to create the Caribbean Biological Corridor with the objective to protect the environment and promote human development in that region (www.ipsnews.net/news.asp).

²² Press Releases April 2007 – Climate Change Hits Hard on Latin America and the Caribbean.

²³ IPCC-The Regional Impacts of Climate Change, Chapter 9.4: Small Island States.

6. Potential future scenarios 2017-2027

To elaborate scenarios about potential future trends of conflict patterns and security risks in Central America and the Caribbean, the report has used the model presented in the introduction and its explanatory variables that have been discussed in chapter 4 and 5 (see also appendix 4). The objective has been to try to crystallize the most important and decisive factors for the future development of these two regions as well as analyzing the historical and contemporary social, political and economic context.²⁴

The normative assumptions made in the following discussion are based on the earlier analysis: that diversified external relations would be more rewarding for the regions than US hegemony, a more equal distribution of resources and incomes would positively affect both human security and socio-economic development, a deepened democratization of the societies would improve the legitimacy and efficiency of state authorities and make it easier to combat organized crime. These are by no means controversial assumptions and can easily be found in international reports and well-known academic research. However, to implement policies to fulfill the goals linked to these assumptions require substantial political will and long-term commitment from many actors, not least the national governments.

Worst Case Scenario: Conflicts, insecurity, interventions and marginalization

- US political and economic hegemony increases, regional cooperation schemes, like SICA and CARICOM, have lost most of their importance since priority has been given to asymmetric free trade agreements similar to DR-CAFTA and the building of FTAA. Some of the Caribbean countries have decided to maintain their administrative links to former European former powers (United Kingdom, France and Netherlands).
- The Millennium Development Goals were never fulfilled by 2015, and most governments have not given priority to distributional policies. Poverty has increased in many countries due to increased unemployment caused by the asymmetric free trade agreements and the lack of adequate policy measures. The increased use of maize for ethanol production (exported to the US and Europe as fuel) has had a crowding out effect on the production of maize for food, contributing to recurrent regional famines, for example in Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua. The escalating AIDS epidemic, partly due to the lack of preventive and counteracting policy measures, has implied severe pressure on the states and the societies to deal with the infected as well as the large quantity of orphans.
- The democratization processes in Central America and the Caribbean stagnated and in some countries there are only sporadic elections. The state is minimal and with little control over territory in countries like Haiti and Guatemala. Socio-political mobilizations of civil society is usually met with repressions, the political party systems have lost most of their democratic content. Guerrilla groups and/or self-defense groups are becoming more and more common. There are also strong separatist movements based on indigenous and/or ethnic minorities with the objective to establish autonomous regions primarily in the Atlantic coast areas in Central America and in the Mayan highlands in Guatemala (with links to the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico).
- Due to the economic and social problems it is easy for organized crime organizations to recruit primarily young men to their activities. The lack of democratization and the

²⁴ Due to the limited extent of this report it has only been possible to very briefly discuss these issues.

subsequent degradation of the state in most countries in the regions have facilitated the building or strengthening of parallel powers or in some cases, simply immersing organized crime structures with the state bureaucracy.

- As a result of the militarized war on drugs and the anti-terrorist legislation being wrongly applied to social mobilizations of civil society, the societies has become more and more militarized, and some countries are now ruled by military regime instead of civilian, elected governments. There are sometimes clashes between national military groups and anti-drug units of the US military. There are unresolved armed border conflicts related to the Gulf of Fonseca as well as the transatlantic canals in Panama and Nicaragua (where the canal was finally ready in 2020).
- Due to the failure of democracy and weakened states few measures have been taken to counteract or prevent the deteriorating environment. Unsustainable use of land due to poverty and unregulated exploitation is rapidly contributing to an explosive ecological crisis.
- After the death of Fidel Castro in Cuba there were no larger changes in politics. This led to frustration among the extremist Cuban Diasporas in the US and they finally convinced the US government to intervene with military forces in 2017. The intervention successfully installed a new regime but social and political protests are widespread and guerilla activities are increasing. This development has had a strong destabilizing effect in the whole Central American and Caribbean region.
- The unstable political and economic development in the region has effectively hindered all concerted efforts to counteract climatic changes and environmental degradation. There is a mounting environmental crisis that affects the livelihoods of all people, but especially the poor. The soil, water resources and fishing conditions are continuously deteriorating.

Best Case Scenario: Regionalism, democratization and reduced poverty

- Regional cooperation schemes were given priority before projects like FTAA. Regionally based strategies to diversify external relations and economic dependence have been elaborated and implemented by most of the governments in the region. The US has, although critical, accepted this development but strives to maintain the influence primarily in certain countries like Honduras, Panama and Haiti. Other Latin American countries, like Brazil, Mexico and Venezuela have been important partners in the diversification strategy.
- Most governments in the region made an effort to fulfill the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, which also succeeded in most of the countries, except some of the poorest, like Haiti, Guyana and Honduras. Priority has been given to policy measures that create employment and support a diversified supply (domestic production and imports from different neighboring and other countries) of agricultural products to ensure food security to reasonable prices.
- The rapid increase of the HIV/AIDS epidemic has been stalled, it is still spreading but at a lower pace, and most governments in the region are active in national and regional efforts to contain the epidemic. Brazil, South Africa and the UN have been important partners in the struggle against the epidemic. The Catholic Church has revalued their earlier resistance to the use of condoms as one measure to contain the epidemic.
- After an intensification of the democratization processes, beginning in 2010, in Central America and several of the Caribbean countries, most countries have been able to establish reasonably efficient and transparent state authorities which have had a positive effect on the fight against organized crime as well as the democratization of

society. Healthy and diversified party system has developed and there is a close dialogue between the civil society, the political parties and the state. This was achieved through several regional initiatives backed by a key group of governments with a strong political will to advance the democratization in the region. International support was also received from primarily the UN. Some countries have advanced more, and in some other countries the democratization process is still fragile and incomplete (for example Haiti and Guatemala).

- Organized crime has decreased and is more efficiently controlled due to the successful reforms of the state and national security organs and through close regional cooperation. The social base for criminal organization has slowly decreased due to the improvements in socioeconomic conditions. Trafficking of humans for sexual exploitation has been almost eradicated while there are still problems, primarily in the maritime border areas, with drug trafficking from the Andean region to the US.
- The earlier trend of criminalizing social protest in the name of the war against terrorism was stopped during the regional democratization process. The military and the police have been reformed to stop corruption and human rights abuses. The reforms have included education, capacity-building and wage increases. The confidence of the public in these authorities has increased with the reform process and the end of impunity for military and police officials. Especially in countries like Guatemala and Haiti, large quantities of officials were replaced in order to establish trustworthy and professional institutions.
- When Fidel Castro died in Cuba, the government launched a concerted regional and global diplomatic offensive to improve the relations with the US. After some years regular negotiations were implemented and in 2020 the US blockade against Cuba was lifted. To achieve this Cuba implemented some limited political reforms in order to amplify political rights and civil liberties according to United Nations recommendations.
- The Central American and Caribbean Diaspora in the US have improved their legal rights due to changes in US immigration policies and have in decisive ways contributed to a more positive economic development in their home countries, for example through community-based development and investment programs.
- Regional cooperation has increased to deal with environmental degradation and climatic changes. Important policy measures have included the establishment of natural reserves, local sustainable development zones and improved regulations on the exploitation of natural resources.

Mixed Case Scenario: Dependency, low intensity democracies, reduced poverty

- Hemispheric economic cooperation has gained priority over broad-based regional cooperation. Regional organizations have lost in importance and organs like the OAS and the FTAA dominate the dialogue and the negotiations. In terms of economic cooperation US hegemony has increased at the cost of foreign investments from Asia and the EU.
- The FTAA project has led to a certain industrialization (both traditional and modern technology) of some countries in the region, for example Costa Rica, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Panama. But, domestic production and employment in the agricultural sector have decreased, mainly due to asymmetric free trade agreements, causing migratory flows and social unrest. Climatic changes have caused severe problems for the earlier prosperous tourist sector, especially in the Caribbean countries and Costa Rica. Poverty has decreased but not to the level of the Millennium

Development Goals and income inequality continues to be high. It is primarily the middle class that has been able to benefit from the economic development.

- In relation to the FTAA, most countries in Central America and the Caribbean have been able to reach preferential migration agreements with the US, opening up migration quotas as well as improving the legal status of migrants already residing in the US. Some countries have, for different reasons, not been able to strike such deals, for example Haiti (due to the conflict level) and Cuba.
- The democratization processes have not been given priority and so called electoral democracies reign in most of the countries. Armed confrontations occur periodically between militant social movements and the military and the police. In election periods there are sporadic negotiations between some sectors of civil society and the political parties.
- Organized crime has achieved influence in several state administrations and can easily mobilize mainly young men among the poor sectors of society. Bilateral agreements have led to that several US authorities (for example DEA and special units of the Southern Command) can operate freely against drug trafficking in many of the Central American and Caribbean countries. There are frequent social and political protests from civil society organizations against these operations and the establishment of US military bases and/or offices on Central American or Caribbean territory.
- After the death of Fidel Castro in Cuba, the political content of the public policies did not change much. This caused frustration in the extremist Cuban Diasporas in the US who mobilized and funded guerilla groups that started activities in Cuba after 2019. The guerilla groups have had problems in establishing themselves in Cuban territory but are causing conflicts and insecurity as well as extremely tense relations between the Cuban and the US government.

7. Summary and conclusions

The purpose of this study was to analyze future alternative developments in Central America and the Caribbean with respect to conflict patterns and security risks. This has been done considering the domestic developments, regional cooperation and external relations of the respective countries. The relations to the United States, the EU, China, Russia and India were of special interest.

The countries in Central America and the Caribbean have had different historical experiences, but they share certain important characteristics and challenges regarding unequal socioeconomic structures, lack of democracy and a culture of rights, the proximity to the US and a legacy of violent confrontations as well as a disadvantaged integration to the world economy and to world politics. Due to different colonial and neo-colonial experiences the countries show differences in their patterns of external relations. Assuming that the US is still the only global super power, they will continue to be, by far, the most important external factor for the countries in Central America and the Caribbean. This might, in some Caribbean countries, be counterweighted by former European colonial powers like France or Great Britain. The future role of the EU in Central America and the Caribbean will, to a large extent, be dependent on US policies and what strategies of political and economic integration the countries in the region will choose to adopt. China and some other Asian countries do seem to have a clear interest, primarily economic, to expand in the Central American and Caribbean countries.

The problems facing these countries with respect to conflicts and security risks is a combination of internal and external factors. Their lack of social, economic and political stability may affect to the surrounding countries in the region. However, in the absence of a cold-war climate it is not likely that such effects should be far-reaching. On the other hand, a possible consolidation of stability may, in the long term, have positive effects in the rest of Latin America. The countries in Central America and the Caribbean do not, and will probably not, constitute a threat to the surrounding world. Most of the security threats will be local, national or regional problems. However, some of the effects of conflicts, insecurity, poverty and inequality might have a spillover effect to countries outside Latin America, in the form of migratory flows and trafficking of drugs, weapons or humans. This is especially the case of the United States, and is one of the reasons behind the trend of securitization of traditionally non-security related issues. As we have seen in the report, this can be both positive (for example increased funding) and negative (militarized measures to combat symptoms instead of other measures to remove the underlying causes).

That is why it is important to ask, in relation to the purpose of the study: what kind of conflicts and security for whom? The report has discussed ample evidence of how most countries in Central America and the Caribbean have serious problems with widespread poverty, unjustifiable socioeconomic inequalities and large deficiencies in virtually all democratic aspects. This reality has a direct impact on the emergence of conflicts and security risks (both in the conventional sense and in relation to a more multidimensional perspective of security). There have been substantial improvements but also backlashes and deceptions.

Two factors that are different in character, to those discussed above, but interacting with the other in social, political and economic processes, are the environmental threats and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Both are long-wave events that cannot be stalled quickly, but decisive policy measures need to be implemented. If not, these two factors will have severe negative impacts on the future of the peoples in Central America and the Caribbean.

In geographical terms, it has been possible to distinguish differences in the level of future risks in the different countries, in relation to socio-economic development, conflicts and security. It seems that Haiti and Guatemala are among the worst-off countries in this period, while countries like Costa Rica and the Eastern Caribbean States are comparatively better off. Countries like Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Guyana, Suriname, Bahamas and the Dominican Republic also establish themselves as clear high-risk countries.

The idea of the scenario building has been two-fold; to think of concrete alternatives in a specific period in the future and to try to visualize how a worst-case or best-case scenario could develop.

One of the most important conclusions is that two factors are crucial in order to determine future conflicts and security threats: democracy, in all its aspects, and socioeconomic development. This is, in some sense, not controversial at all, but the experience in Central America and the Caribbean have shown that it is a very complex process to advance along that path and that it requires a lot of political will from many different actors in the society as well as from international actors. The potential future scenarios that have been elaborated in this report clearly show that a wide variety of options are available, and most of them can to a large extent be chosen and developed through social, political and economic actions.

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SICA: <http://www.sica.int/>

Appendix 1: Acronyms

FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas
CACM	Central American Common Market
CAFTA	Central American Free Trade Area
CAN	Andean Common Market
CARICOM	The Caribbean Community and Common Market
CARIFTA	The Caribbean Free Trade Association
MERCOSUR	Common Market of the South
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Area
OAS	Organization of the American States
PPP	Plan Puebla Panamá
SICA	Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana

Appendix 2: Some selected indicators

HDI Rank	Country	GDP per capita USD 2004	GDP per capita % growth 1990-2004	Income Distribution 20% richest	Gini coeff.	Public Exp. Health % of GDP	Public Exp. Education % of GDP
	<i>High:</i>						
31	Barbados	10401	nd	nd	nd	4,8	7,3
48	Costa Rica	4349	2,5	54,8	49,9	5,8	4,9
50	Cuba	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
52	Bahamas	16728	0,2	nd	nd	3,0	nd
57	Trinidad & Tobago	9640	3,3	45,9	40,3	1,5	4,3
58	Panama	4325	2,2	60,3	56,4	5,0	3,9
59	Antigua & Barbuda	10794	1,5	nd	nd	3,2	3,8
	<i>Medium:</i>						
68	Dominica	3794	1,4	nd	nd	4,5	nd
71	St Lucia	4663	0,4	nd	nd	3,4	nd
85	Grenada	4135	3,1	nd	nd	4,9	5,2
88	St Vincent & Grenadines	3412	1,6	nd	nd	4,1	11,1
89	Suriname	2484	nd	nd	nd	3,6	nd
94	Dominican Republic	2130	4,2	56,8	51,7	2,3	nd
95	Belize	3870	2,6	nd	nd	2,2	5,1
101	El Salvador	2340	1,8	55,9	52,4	3,7	2,8
103	Guyana	1047	1,5	nd	nd	4,0	5,5
104	Jamaica	3352	-0,1	46,0	37,9	2,7	4,9
112	Nicaragua	847	0,1	49,3	43,1	3,7	3,1
117	Honduras	1046	0,2	58,3	53,8	4,0	nd
118	Guatemala	2233	1,3	59,5	55,1	2,1	nd
	<i>Low:</i>						
154	Haiti	420	-2,2	63,4	59,2	2,9	nd
	<i>Comparison:</i>						
5	Suecia	38525	1,8	36,6	25,0	8,0	7,0
8	USA	39883	1,9	45,8	40,8	6,8	5,9
	Latin America		1,1				
	Medium HDI countries		2,9				

Source: Human Development Report 2006 (www.undp.org)

HDI (human development indicator) is based on life expectancy, literacy rate, gross enrollment rate and GDP per capita.

nd=no data available

Appendix 3: Risk analysis of Central American and Caribbean countries

Ranking	Current Overall Risk (May 2007)
Very high	Haiti
High	Cuba
	Nicaragua
Significant	Guyana
	Honduras
	Suriname
	Guatemala
Medium	Jamaica
	El Salvador
	Dominican Republic
	Grenada
Moderate	Belize
	Panama
	Dominica
	Trinidad and Tobago
	Antigua and Barbuda
	Costa Rica
	Martinique
	St Vincent and the Grenadines
	French Guyana
Low	St Kitts and Nevis
	St Lucia
	Netherlands Antilles
	Barbados
Negligible	Aruba
	Bermuda
	Bahamas
	Anguilla
	Cayman Islands
Medium	Latin America and the Caribbean

Source: Global Insight

Appendix 4: A sketch of the explanatory model (Central America & Caribbean)

Security & Future Conflicts	= External Relations	+ Regionalization/ Strategies of Integration	+ Inequality/ Distributional policy	+ Democratization Institutions	+ Democratization Civil Society	+ Organized Crime	+ Militarization/ Methods of Conflict Resolution
a) <i>worst case scenario</i> - Increases the risk for conflicts	a) US hegemonic, interventionist, weak external relations with others	a) globalization, integration based solely on market economy principles, assymetry and imbalances increase	a) minimal policy measures	a) "electoral democracy", institutional framework cracking down	a) confrontation, conflict	a) organized crime widespread and transnational, parallel power with equal strength as the state	a) conflicts are resolved by force/coercion
b) <i>best case scenario</i> - decreases the risk for conflicts	b) US non-hegemonic, wide range of relations with others	b) regional integration from below, objective to balance assymetries and decrease socio-economic differences	b) active policy for more equal distribution	b) participative democracy, institutional framework strengthened	b) active policy to improve social and civil rights, active dialogue	b) organized crime succesfully hindered through reform and cooperation	b) conflicts are resolved by dialogue and negotiations
c) <i>mixed scenario</i>							