

**THE SEMANTICS OF HUMAN SECURITY IN NORTHWEST
AMAZONIA: BETWEEN INDIGENOUS' PEOPLES'
'MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD' AND THE USA STATE
SECURITY POLICY FOR LATIN AMERICA**

'Human Security', Security for Whom?¹

'Security' is a contested concept. A variety of political actors seek to legitimize policy and practice in the name of national or human security. They have found support among a diverse audience of governments and NGOs seeking to defend human and/or environmental rights, which not coincidentally, aim to guarantee some form of security. In response to national and international policy, various social movements and actor networks have developed counter-discourses to support grassroots activists in their struggles to win political reform.

On 1st October 1995, the French government detonated an underground nuclear device at their Mururoa Atoll test site in the Pacific Ocean. The event was justified as a necessary component in the development the French national security system, which was perceived to be too dependent on North Atlantic Treaty Organisation-NATO capabilities. Environmentalists claimed that the risks associated with nuclear explosions under the Mururoa Atoll were too high and that testing should be abandoned. Greenpeace activists attempting to disrupt the test were arrested and their ships and helicopter confiscated.

As an immediate result of the tests, the Mururoa lagoon turned white as the blast heaved up the ocean floor and loaded the water with sediment (One World News Service - October 1995; One_World_News_Service 1995). Scientists are divided with respect to the long-term effects, but it is obvious that the powerful nuclear explosions increased the vulnerability of marine ecosystems and human health to environmental

¹ A previous version of this chapter, written in conjunction with G. Woodgate has been published in "Human Security and the Environment" (Page and Redclift 2002). The chapter has been revised to include the latest developments concerning the implementation of USA security policy in Colombia and Northwest Amazonia.

I would like to thank SLAS for the grant given to me to attend the 2002 Annual SLAS conference were I presented this work; some of the changes in the chapter reflect the criticisms made by some of the attendants to whom I am very thankful.

risks. The political instability that the action brought was expressed in an international declaration condemning the action of the French Government.

The US and British Governments claimed that the bombing of Baghdad on 16 February 2001 was necessary to diminish the threat of military attack by Iraqi armed forces. The attack on the Iraqi nation was justified as 'foreign collaboration in the country's process of democratisation'. It was carried out, however, without the consent of the United Nations Security Council and was condemned even by supporters of the 1991 attack on Baghdad (McReynolds cited by Koehnlein 2001). International political tensions ensued: Turkey and France demanded an explanation, while China and Russia, rejected and condemned the unilateral action of USA-British forces. The environmental implications of the attack did not, however, receive a mention despite clear evidence of the ecological devastation wrought by the so-called 'Gulf War'.

The 11th of September 2001 attack to the World Trade Centre has become an international icon used by the White House to justify unilateral action. At present (November 2002), the USA has initiated a new campaign to bomb Baghdad and the British government has stated that they will support the USA no matter what the European Union thinks. In fact the French and German Governments have put the brakes on the war against Iraq. And part of the success of German Chancellor Schröder re-election is due to his opposition to the USA-British war against Iraq (Schneider 2002). President Bush has been authorised by the USA Congress to take unilateral action against Iraq regardless of UN activities (News 2002). Which implies that the sovereignty of the USA is being enhanced alone at the expense of any other nation, with the UN Security Council becoming little more than a decorative institution.

US foreign policy is aimed at enhancing the security of US citizens and promoting the development of liberal democracy around the world. To these ends, within carefully selected 'friendly' countries, official US support may even be provided for military expansion, justified for example as an authentic effort to control international drug trafficking. The third case mentioned, and the one upon which this chapter will focus, provides an example.

As will be demonstrated, the pursuance of human security in Colombia involves a complex and contradictory mixture of local, national and international initiatives all of which seek to promote various aspects of human and environmental security. The actions specified under 'Plan Colombia'² include eradication of coca plantations (Chapter 5, Plan Colombia). This is being achieved by the aerial application of herbicides, leading to the degradation of large swathes of the Amazonian environment; an action that has been repeatedly denounced and rejected by farmers and environmentalists in Colombia and abroad (Vargas Meza 1999). Plan Colombia also sanctions military action within drug producing areas, where indigenous forest people are caught up in growing coca for the illicit cocaine processing and narcotrafficking industry. This case deserves particular attention, as Amazonia and its people are both highly symbolic icons employed by industrialised countries and institutions of global governance in developing international policies aimed at promoting environmental security.

Images of 'rainforest' vulnerability have long been used to promote western environmental policy (Stott 1999), while forest people have been seen as guarantors of its conservation (Hemming 1995). Ethnoscience has corroborated that indigenous peoples strategies have outstanding significance for Amazonian environmental management and their translations of indigenous ecological classification systems have contributed to dialog between indigenous knowledge and western sciences, promoting partnerships between scientists and indigenous peoples for environmental management and biodiversity conservation (Schultes 1991, 1992, 1994).

If the implementation of security strategies in South America, Plan Colombia being one of the most notable³, is placing the conservation of Amazonian biological and cultural diversity at risk, why is the USA involved? Is it that there are strong vested

²'Plan Colombia' is an anti-drug trafficking strategy. The Colombian Government has claimed that: 'Plan Colombia is made by Colombians for Colombia'. However, the strategy was designed in accordance with the USA State Security and Anti-drug Strategies. Before being ratified by the Governments of Colombia and the USA it was approved by the USA Congress. However, the Colombian Congress and public only became aware of the details of the strategy once international agreement between the two countries had been reached.

interests in promoting such outcomes? Mairovich (ex-secretary on anti-drug policy to the Brazilian Government) has stated that the most direct beneficiaries of Plan Colombia will be the weapons and drugs traffickers themselves and the associated criminal economy (CBN 2000).

It is likely that drug prices will increase with the implementation of Plan Colombia, and this is already occurring in Bolivia (DCRNet 2000) and drug production is also being pushed into other parts of Amazonia, notably Ecuador and Peru (Jones 2001; Lama 2001). It is unlikely that military action in Amazonia will do anything to stop money laundering activities in US and European financial markets, nor that it will affect the export of chemicals employed in the processing of coca leaves into narcotics from the European Union (EU) and USA (V.G. Ricardo 2000 - Colombian Ambassador's speech at Canning House 27-11-00).

The European Parliament voted 474-1 against Plan Colombia: "Stepping up military involvement in the fight against drugs involves the risk of sparking off an escalation of the conflict in the region" (European Parliament 2001). If, despite objections based on the observed outcomes of Plan Colombia and similar initiatives, the militarist policy continues successfully to be justified on the basis of 'security' gains, there must be some strong ideological grounds that render this official discourse acceptable to a significant proportion of 'civil society'. This chapter seeks to tease out these ideological underpinnings and also to explore the grounds upon which counter narratives are constructed. To do this I shall attempt to answer two questions. First, what does security – human and environmental – mean for the indigenous peoples of Northwest Amazonia, and how are they responding to international policies and official discourses? Second, what are the ideological grounds that allow significant elements of civil society to accept international policy and official discourse?

The 'Nation State' and 'Human Security'

There are good reasons for citing national governments as the main instigators of human security policy in Northwest Amazonia, this argument will be explored in the

³ Colombia is already the third largest recipient of USA foreign aid, after Israel and Egypt (Sweig 2002: 135)

context of the Colombian Amazon. Before this, however, a word must be said about the role of national governments in human and environmental security in general.

Governments in the twenty-first century are highly dependent on international finance capital and the private sector. Their economic policies are tied to the development of international markets and they do not have the same degree of autonomy in national security policy making as they did prior to the Second World War. In this sense, the sovereignty of nation states is called into question. Private finance capital seeks out opportunities in locations with limited risks and fewer environmental constraints; national policies respond accordingly. The welfare of the labour force, natural environment and public health – all customary concerns of nation states – have to be developed in ways that are not perceived as threats to free markets or foreign investment (Beck 1998; Castells 1999).

In less industrialised countries this dependency is even greater. Often reliant on the financial support of global institutions such as the World Bank (IBRD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO), any attempts at independent development planning or monetary management are restricted by international economic imperatives. Many Latin American countries find themselves caught on the horns of a dilemma; on the one side pressured to comply with structural adjustment policies, on the other, struggling to cope with the social unrest prompted by the economic liberalisation and reductions in government spending, which such policies demand. This was the case in the Bolivian insurrection (April 2000) against privatisation of water services, the two-year conflict for the exploitation of oil in the Uwas lands of Colombia, and in the indigenous rebellions of Ecuador (January 2000).

“The National Government, conscious of the existence of historical conflicts not resulting in [good] relations between the State and the Indigenous People, and that the process of structural adjustment impacts the indigenous people and poor sectors of the country, ... aims to generate state policies to overcome the historical exclusion of the people and the inequalities created by the [economic] adjustment.” (Extract from the **Agreement Between the National Government and the Native, Social, and Farmer Organizations of Ecuador**, signed by President Gustavo Novoa 9-02-01)

This is to say that local governments are located at the centre of divergent perspectives about environmental and human security. National policies, if

successful, legitimise government action. But, nation states find achieving the right balance between local/indigenous people's aspirations and global corporate demands ever more taxing. To make things worse, less industrialised nation states are now experiencing pressure to confront drug trafficking. In the case of nations with territories in Northwest Amazonia, stopping the illicit trade in narcotics has been an impossible task, largely due to the close yet clandestine links between the global criminal economy and legal financial markets (Castells 2000).

Having said something about the context in which national governments must define and deliver human and environmental security policy, we shall now turn to the first question, which concerns the meanings of 'human' or 'environmental' security for indigenous people in Northwest Amazonia.

Exploring the Local Perspective in NWA

The indigenous peoples of Northwest Amazonia have been establishing and modifying their territories for centuries. According to Reichel-Dolmatoff the Tukano have social memories of their historic journey along the Rio Negro as they moved north from present day Brazil into what is now Colombia. When they entered the Department of Vaupés (to the north of Amazonas) they intermarried with the Arawack. The Tukano and Arawack shared their different experiences of what we might call agroforestry. Apparently, the cultivation of manioc and a more sedentary pattern of life were acquired by the Tukano from the Arawack. This encounter also prompted social transformation among the Tukano: from uxorilocal residency and matrilineal affiliation to virilocal residence and patrilineal affiliation (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1996).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Tukanoan Makuna, were living principally along the Pirá-Paraná River, but oscillated between there and the Apaporis. As they journeyed along the Apaporis they entered the territories of Yahunas and Letuama. Tukanoans also interacted with the Yujup-Makú that were moving around throughout the area between the Pirá-Paraná and Ugá Rivers, and further east into Brazil.

The Yujup were said to be people of the forest, while the Tukano were said to be river people. While Tukano have been described as sedentary agriculturists, the Yujup had been described as nomadic (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1996). However, we now know that the Yujup were used to the manipulation of plants and did not rely exclusively on gathering and hunting. The Yujup share with the river people (Tukano and Arawack) a form of territorialisation that maintains the 'environment within'. The management of society and environment is integrated in what they call the 'management of the world'. According to them, the wellbeing and health of indigenous peoples depends on taking care of their 'trade' with other beings, the spiritual owners of the 'fish-people', 'game-people', 'palm-characters' and spiritual protectors of sacred places. This 'trade' is accomplished through shamanism.

We know quite a bit about indigenous management of Amazonian environments. Arawack and Tukano have developed sophisticated management systems for *chagras* (gardens planted with diverse crops), *rastrojos* (old gardens where particular species are preserved as elements of secondary and tertiary forest) and *trochas* (linear gardens along the footpaths that connect different habitats and indigenous settlements). Management is carried out in accordance with multiple agroecological factors (Forero 1999; Van der Hammen 1992). Similar patterns have been found in Brazilian Amazonia where Kayapó have been found to have knowledge of micro-climate and habitat, and refined systems of management to improve the productivity of local ecosystems (Posey 1985: 139-158). The same was shown for the Ka'apor speakers of Tupí-Guaraní (Balée and Gély 1989).

Indigenous management does not simply relate to subsistence production or the material growing of crops; spiritual and aesthetic dimensions are also involved. All these spaces (*chagras*, *rastrojos* and *trochas*) are 'humanized' and, from an indigenous perspective, plants and animals are treated as 'types of people'. The distribution of plants is therefore managed and controlled, river ecosystems are carefully observed and there are open and closed seasons for certain fish and game species. The agricultural practices are linked to shamanism: the system that deals with the trade in energy among forest beings.

Rapids and waterfalls have special sacred importance for indigenous people; this comes as no surprise as these places are also ecologically important. Rapids and waterfalls prevent some fish species from spreading up stream and therefore affect species distribution. The changes in humidity produced by the water vapor that surrounds waterfalls affect vegetation composition. When these changes combine with differences in soils the changes are even more marked: this is the case at Yuisi. Tukanoan mythology refers to this waterfall as the place where the river was born. The myth says this was the place where the Imarimakana, 'the four sons of time', felled the tree whose trunk and branches, once on the ground, formed the Apaporis and its tributaries. The place is of sacred importance to all indigenous groups in the vicinity of the Apaporis, Pirá-Paraná and Mirití Rivers.

Iañakoøea waterfall, on the Apaporis near the Tanimuka community of La Playa, is another important place within Tukanoan mythology and shamanistic tradition. Iañakoøea, not surprisingly, is also of significant relevance to ecological structure. It demarcates boundaries in terms of fish species distribution, while the height of vegetation decreases up river from the waterfall. There are numerous rapids, islands and undulations up stream of Iañakoøea until the river encounters Jirijirimo waterfall. If ecosystem changes are marked at Yuisi and Iañakoøea, they are outstanding at Jirijirimo. The site surrounding the waterfall is full of orchids and epiphytic plants. The mixture of vegetation provides a special niche, which is found nowhere else along the Apaporis.

The complexity and refinement of the growth, distribution and use of plants, and the management of the forests, mark these indigenous peoples out as accomplished agroecologists. However, they go beyond what we might consider agroecology when we take account of the spiritual and aesthetic dimensions of management discussed in the previous chapter.

Our description of indigenous 'management of the world' here is brief⁴, but when studied in greater detail it reveals a way of living through which Northwest

⁴ For more detailed description and analysis see Arhem 1990, 1996, 1998; Correa 1990; Forero 1999; Hugh-Jones, C. 1979; Hugh-Jones, S. 1979; Hugh-Jones 1999; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1996, 1997;

Amazonian indigenous peoples have created a form of territorialisation in which individual well-being relies on a close integration within both the social group and the environment. The integration of environmental, aesthetic and spiritual dimensions within the lives of Amazonian indigenous people has been referred to as 'ecosophy' (Arhem 1990) and has led ethnoscientists to write about the 'humanized rainforest' (Correa 1990). In this context, it does not make sense to attempt to distinguish between human and environmental security. The reluctance of indigenous people to separate nature from society may explain why, after years of continuous contact with western society, there continue to be numerous specialized roles associated with the health and well-being of communities and providing instruction on how to follow an indigenous way of life: shamans, healers, singers, etc.

The Management of the World and the Challenge of Extractive Economies

Extractive economies have affected the lives of hundreds of different indigenous groups throughout the Amazon. Throughout the twentieth century, there were several intrusions by white people into the Apaporis region. There were the infamous rubber camps; prospectors looking for gold and traders who attempted to build cold stores for the fishing industry. The forms of territorial expansion and territorialisation used by the white people working in extractive economies were very different to those of indigenous people and these differences resulted in conflict.

The rubber camps that were built in the area around the Caquetá, Apaporis and Mirití Rivers, and the Catholic internee schools, enforced the treatment of indigenous peoples as a generic class of people – 'Indians' – who were denied some of the fundamental rights that white people enjoyed. Their shamanism was considered superstition, they were forbidden to speak their languages and they were considered minors under civil law. The objective of the Colombian Republic was to assimilate them by eliminating their identities (Correa 1992). Indigenous peoples were driven to make new alliances in order to preserve their territories and their ways of living. Indigenous groups offered different forms of resistance. In this area of Northwest Amazonia they have always demonstrated their intention of maintaining socio-political practices, especially shamanism, which they see as fundamental to their

security. Today, the peoples of the Yaigojé Reserve continue to believe that without their 'management the world' they will be driven into extinction.

The twentieth century witnessed the development of indigenous rights. In Colombia, following the Constitutional reform of 1991 the law now recognizes their languages, their territories and their right to govern them. All citizens are equal under the law and have the right to exercise their religious and cultural traditions. However, advances in legislation do not imply that the territorial conflicts have ceased. In the Yaigojé Reserve, conflicts still arise and need to be resolved resolve among indigenous groups and, as a generic group, indigenous people have conflicts to resolve with the 'white people'.

In 1905, Grunberg reported the presence of a camp made by Colombians ('white people') in the Apaporis. He took a photograph of this camp called 'Libertad', which was located in Apaporis. The camp was situated where the pathway that connects the Apaporis with the Caquetá/Japurá begins. The path leads to the Catholic internee school of the white colonisers' town of Pedrera. Today the Yuisi (in Makuna) waterfall is known as Libertad after the first rubber camp of Apaporis.

In 1997, indigenous people from the Yaigojé Reserve received the support of the Colombian judicial system, when a tribunal endorsed their entitlement to protect their cultural and religious rights. The tribunal ruled that buildings, which had been constructed by the local government of Vaupés at Yuisi, constituted a violation of the cultural and religious rights of the indigenous people. The tribunal ordered the government to rectify this. Later on, the same tribunal supported the indigenous people's territorial rights, by forcing a governmental institution to correct failures in administrative procedures and proceed with the enlargement of the Yaigojé Resguardo reserve. Yuisi waterfall (La Libertad) was to be inside the extended boundaries of the reserve.

White peoples' ways of living compete with traditional indigenous ways of 'Managing the World'

To date, there has not been any marriage between 'white' and indigenous people within the Yaigojé Resguardo. There are, however, indigenous people from the Yaigojé that have decided to live among white people in their towns. The older generation perceives this migration as a threat to their group's survival. The youngest generations are willing to grab whatever opportunities may come their way. ACIYA, a local organisation of indigenous authorities, is looking for help from government and NGOs to provide education and employment for new generations as a way of limiting out migration.

The 'white people' with whom indigenous people associate are visitors to their territories. The relationship between them reflects indigenous notions of 'white people's power'. In the past, 'white people' ordered them to work and had the means to enforce such orders. It is through documents written in the language of white people that they are now recognised to have a territory of their own, it was 'white people's institutions that determined the procedures for recognising indigenous territories. From the perspective of ACIYA, indigenous people do not interfere with the government of white people and they should be accorded the same respect:

"Many times we have been tired of white people's government, a government that has been imposed over our lands and our lives. But we could not go to Bogotá, to demolish the building where the congress and the president work, and start ruling on our own. We could not build a *maloca* there, to start managing white people in our way. How could we manage the industry, markets and other things that belong to white peoples? The white people would not let us manage them. You want to knock down our '*maloca* of thought'. How could you take care of the world, so that sickness and evil would not visit us? ... You want to take our land from us; this is like erasing our inherited line of thought, leaving us without means to defend ourselves. It is as if we were attacking you, destroying the congress and the president, the defenses of white people" (Extract of a letter sent by ACIYA to the Administrative Director of Protected Areas - October 26 1996).

Traders, missionaries, armed groups, doctors and nurses, researchers and occasionally a government functionary visit indigenous peoples in the Yaigojé Reserve. The way these people relate to them varies from violence to paternalism and, from there, to real recognition. It is very difficult for the inhabitants of the Yaigojé to deal with the contradictions of 'white people's rule'. The conservation of indigenous peoples' territories, the autonomy of local authorities within these territories and the right to

have an education that would allow them to enjoy the same opportunities as the rest of Colombian society without losing their identity, are the aims of ACIYA.

A great deal of political negotiation has taken place since the formation of ACIYA in the mid-1990s. The complexity and long-windedness of the bureaucratic process that ACIYA has had to follow in trying to secure their territory has dumbfounded indigenous people. They waited years for the Yaigojé Reserve to be legally enlarged and hoped that the enlargement would lead to governmental protection of their fundamental rights, but ACIYA had to fight a separate battle for judicial protection of their rights. Yet, even now they have won it, the management of their territory and their future is not entirely in their hands.

The functioning of trade and extractive economies: wildlife trading, timber, mining and, more recently, the production and trafficking of drugs, usually occurs outside the law. The groups of people directing these activities escape the control of the Colombian State. Indigenous groups, like the Tanimukas from La Playa have refused to work for narcotics dealers but they have no means to prevent anyone entering the Reserve. They fear the armed groups that cross their territory and know themselves to be vulnerable to any attack. To complicate matters further, some indigenous families are willing to get involved in the business: something that has already happened in the indigenous reserves of the neighbouring Department of Vaupés. Young single males are likely to be lured by the money to be earned by growing coca and this seems to be the case in a number of communities in the Yaigojé.

ACIYA perceived a major risk when dealers offered substantial financial inducements in exchange for the clearing of an airstrip in Apaporis. Yet, when appraised of ACIYA's concern in 1994, the Colombian authorities ignored them and their plea for protection of their territories and peoples. Even though ACIYA refused the offer, they know that a single family or small group of people could turn their backs on the organisation and accept the money at their own risk. This has happened in other parts of Northwest Amazonia.

Diverging Discourses Surrounding Amazonian Territorial Ordering and Indigenous Peoples

Besides those working in extractive economies, there are other kinds of ‘white people’ that visit the Yaigojé Reserve. They come from academic institutions, NGOs, Christian churches, and occasionally, the regional government. However, there is little coherence among such groups, except for the fact that they are all considered visitors by indigenous peoples. They have diverse political ideas and different perspectives with respect to cultural and biological diversity.

As explained in Chapter Three, the conservation institutions working in NWA hold a concept of ‘rainforest management’ contradictory to indigenous organisations’ political aims⁵. In respect of environmental management, the State in Colombia has copied legislation from the USA and even the more recently adopted reforms that are in tune with USA security policy guidelines. In order to protect the environment and avoid the perceived danger of communal property, legislation appropriates conservation areas as State property limiting or prohibiting use and management by other parties.

There is ambiguity with respect to indigenous management of rainforest. Extreme preservationists still aim to create and maintain natural reserves without people and undertake enforcement to safeguard ‘natural environments’. And, although excluding indigenous peoples has been tragic for all: governments, local authorities, conservationists, wildlife and indigenous peoples; there are still some Conservationists advocating radical political position, that of protection of nature from human interference.

New agreements between conservationists and indigenous peoples need to be made. Indigenous peoples’ supporters and indigenous peoples themselves are calling the attention of conservationists to the fact that decisions cannot be taken from the top-down anymore. Indigenous people have had a long and painful experience of dealing with political conflict and, usually, are willing to make allies with other groups. Conservationists could gain much from good partnerships with indigenous peoples,

⁵ This discussion could be followed from Forero and Laborde 1997; Forero, Laborde et al. 1998.

but for now there are still huge groups of environmental radicals that prevent a general alliance between the two.

In the Yaigojé, as explained in Chapter Three, Fundación Natura and CIC became involved in a dubious agreement with some members of ACIYA for the establishment of a Conservation Area that divided the indigenous authorities of Apaporis and weakened their political institutions. One of the main points of the agreement was that no human intervention was to be made in the area between the Mosiro-Itajura lake and the Ugá river. This territory is of particular importance for the Yujup group inhabitants of the Apaporis. While Omar Yujup was repeatedly saying ‘*amombea*’ (I do not want), ‘*kenombea*’ (It is not worth) in the Tukano language, the CIC were happily taking pictures. Not surprisingly the Yujup have decided to go back to Ugá, their place of origin, ignoring an agreement they were signed up to by the Tukano.

When the FARC invaded the Yaigojé and imposed their eviction policy (Chapter Three) they argued that the establishment of the conservation area demonstrated indigenous people’s inability to manage their territory. It is an unjustifiable argument, a cover up for the territorial expansion campaign of the guerrillas, which is more evident now than the FARC is making the resumption of peace negotiation contingent on the withdrawal of military troops from Caquetá and Putumayo, an area the size of France. What is surprising is that these events never stop CIC from promoting the Conservation Area internationally. It is not surprising that no trust has developed between CIC and the indigenous peoples of the Yaigojé.

The reason that representatives of different ideologies present similar discourses is explained partially by the fact that both aim to control the territory. Biodiversity conservation NGOs usually establish links with grassroots organizations under the rhetoric of participation but maintain a top-down managerial approach, facilitating the incursion of global environmental agencies. A very similar situation has been reported for Cameroon, where the discourse of ‘participation’ provides a lens through which the environmental state can extend its gaze over natural resources and into the life-worlds of forest margin communities (Ambrose-Oji et.al, 1999).

Another perspective is that of the Churches. Catholic and Evangelical Churches have competed for missionary territory in Amazonia. Until the 1980s the USA Government financed the Summer Institute of Linguistics. The guerrillas attacked the group and they were expelled from NWA at the beginning of the 1990s. On 9 March 1999 the FARC killed three USA citizens belonging to one of these religious groups working with indigenous peoples in Colombia. That put an end to any Washington support for the peace process (Héndez 2001; Sweig 2002:129). The relationship between religious groups and the US Government has a strong influence on USA security policy, which should not be underestimated.

On the other hand, the Catholic Church has maintained an unconstitutional agreement with the Government of Colombia for the administration of education services among indigenous peoples. The desire of indigenous people's organizations to manage their own education services has been perceived by Catholic educational institutions as a menace. There is an historic relationship between the Catholic Church and the Conservative Party, the party of the outgoing President Pastrana, stemming from the Church's support for the conservative parties during the 'Violence' of the 1950s.

However, since the 1960s Catholic priests, influenced by liberation theology, have been involved in the conflict on the side of the poor. Yet, the Church is institutionally conservative and its influence among state officials is pervasive, such that it has been very influential in the formulation of security policy in Colombia.

Is Indigenous Territorial Policy Plausible?

In these multifaceted circumstances, indigenous organisation has emerged and continues to operate. It seems, however, that the groups involved, especially indigenous organisations and the NGOs that support their political aims, have yet to understand that, like 'sustainability', 'territorial ordering' is best conceived of as a continuous process of re-construction.

It is unclear whether indigenous organisations in Amazonia have realised that obtaining legal protection, based on national and international legislation, does not guarantee indigenous control over their territories. Indigenous peoples organisations would like, but cannot expect, to have a single interlocutor in pursuing their legitimate

interests. Furthermore, the various institutions with which they do interact vary their policies toward, and treatment of, indigenous organisations in function of their changing perspectives with respect to the rainforest and its indigenous inhabitants.

Images of Amazonia and its indigenous people change depending on the observer and the moment of observation. The Europeans of colonial times and then mestizos from American Republics modified their legal treatment of indigenous peoples depending on these changes of perspective. The Amazon has been seen as an impenetrable jungle, a storehouse of resources and more recently as a fragile ecosystem in need of protection. Indigenous peoples have been considered sub-human animals, free sources of labour, legal minors, 'ecologically noble savages' and even primitive communists that threaten the security of the world's most powerful nation. Similarly, shamanism has been seen as witchcraft, vernacular medicine or agroforestry practice, depending on the interests of the observer at the moment of observation. Depending on who is referring to indigenous peoples they may be guardians of biodiversity or a menace to the environment and society at large. In summary, indigenous peoples 'have been' what outsiders 'have made' of them.

With respect to national and human security, state policies directed at indigenous peoples often deal with territorial conflicts. These policies reflect the temporary pictures that nations (e.g. Colombia and Brazil) have of indigenous peoples and their territories, and regulations and codes are devised to assure the desired policy outcomes. However, in accordance with Agenda 21, the democratic systems of the twenty-first century should take note of the rights and responsibilities of all citizens and thus complex processes of territorial ordering should be subject to continuous political negotiation.

When I was first developing this chapter the Government of Colombia was holding separate peace talks with the FARC (18,000 members) and the National Liberation Front (ELN – 2000 members). Now (2002) both processes have collapsed. The Pastrana Administration of Colombia had pleaded for foreign help but only when it was too late did it allow foreign governments to serve as intermediaries.

Only the USA has agreed to support Plan Colombia, as an initiative to combat drug trafficking. For the USA, peace talks and territorial ordering in Amazonia impinge upon their own interests and they are willing to fund an initiative derived from their own security policy in order to resolve the problem. For the European Community Plan Colombia is excessively militaristic in complexion, and leaves out vital socio-political components. Europe is therefore following a different policy towards Colombia. Colombia's neighbouring states, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil and Venezuela, do not have a common stance towards the Plan. They do not want to get involved in an armed conflict like the one that has plagued Colombia, but it is obvious that the problem of the narcotics trade affects them all and that sooner or later they must reach some agreement if human security in the region is to be achieved and the rule of justice re-established. Without an internationally agreed system of justice with the power to enforce human rights, including environmental and indigenous peoples' rights, it will be impossible to resolve the complex issues related to the functioning of extractive economies that do not comply with national regulations or international agreements.

The USA and Counter-Insurgence

Plan Colombia, now re-launched by the Bush Administration as the Andean Regional Initiative represents one of the most recent phases of a long-running strategy to protect USA economic and political interests in Latin America. Direct involvement of USA troops in a guerrilla war is difficult to justify to the USA public since the Vietnam War. Only now, after the attack on the World Trade Centre has the American public swallowed USA Special Forces deployment to Georgia and the Philippines. However the training of right wing and mercenary paramilitaries has been a common USA policy for Latin America.

In the 1970s, during the presidency of Richard Nixon, the USA was being encouraged by multinational corporations with interests in Chile to fight against the election of Salvador Allende. Henry Kissinger created a covert unit within the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) whose subversive mission was to prevent Allende's election and, when this failed, to destabilise the Allende Government. The unit was eventually implicated in the assassination of General Schneider and subsequently

fostered the conditions for the military coup led by General Pinochet in 1973 (Hitchens 2001).

Perhaps the most widely cited example of USA security policy in action occurred in Nicaragua in the 1980s. In 1986, Colonel Oliver North, under instruction from high-ranking members in the Reagan administration, arranged for the sales of arms to Iran in direct violation of existing United States laws. Profits from the US\$30 million arms sales were given to the Nicaraguan, right wing, 'contra' guerrillas to procure arms for their struggle against the democratically elected Sandinista Government of President Daniel Ortega. Although the International Court of Justice determined that this was a direct violation of International Law the USA veto in the United Nations Security Council was used to reject a resolution that compelled all States to obey international law.

Another example was the invasion of Panama and arrest of General Noriega in 1989 under the authority of the first Bush administration, after which the newly elected Panamanian Government facilitated the operation of financial markets favouring USA banks and investments. The General Assembly of the UN condemned the invasion, but the USA and Britain used their vetoes to block another resolution of the UN Security Council (Chomsky 1997). By this time, anti-drug rhetoric was already in use. However, despite the indictment and conviction of Noriega in April 1992 on eight counts of cocaine trafficking, racketeering, and money laundering, there was never any serious attempt to control the financial markets implicated in money laundering.

There are many other examples that there is not space to mention here, but what they all indicate is that USA security policy is regularly enforced in Latin America through the financing of military coups, paramilitaries and corrupt national leaders that are all portrayed by US governments as allies in their fight for 'justice' and the enhancement of 'human security'. Without the assistance of such groups and individuals the USA would be unable to enforce their policies, which are often prosecuted in direct contravention of international law and even, their own national law. Recognition of this state of affairs is important to our understanding of the semantics of official security discourses.

In Colombia there are also right wing paramilitaries. Initially these arose as people who suffered extortion at the hands of left wing guerrillas organised themselves and employed military trainers in order to fight back. Human Rights Watch and other human rights organisations have denounced the links between the Colombian armed forces and these paramilitary groups (Human Rights Watch 2001). The USA Congress mindful of poor record of Colombian Army in Human Rights and aware of the links of paramilitaries with the Colombian Government conditioned the release of funds of Plan Colombia to USA president certification. The USA have monitored and confirmed links between paramilitaries and army operations but the certification has continued to be issued (Sweig 2002:130).

The Pastrana Administration pursued a process of reforms to clear the army names and, in a very important political gesture, a military court convicted J.H. Uscateguá, an army general who permitted the massacre of 49 peasants by paramilitaries in 1997 (Vargas 2001). Later Pastrana fired General Rito Alejo del Río, (a graduate of the School of the Americas), due to his paramilitary ties. Unfortunately, the new president hired Río as a campaign adviser, which certainly shows Uribe's commitment to justice.

Paramilitaries begun by selling their 'security services' to cattle ranchers and other wealthy groups of people, some of whom were involved in the trafficking of narcotics. However, the mercenaries soon realised that they themselves could take control of drug trafficking and they have since become renowned for employing the most brutal forms of coercion. In 1999, paramilitaries were considered responsible for 78 percent of the total number of human rights and international humanitarian law violations in Colombia, according to the (Comisión Colombiana de Juristas --CCJ, Colombian Commission of Jurists cited by HRW - Human Rights Watch 2001). According to the same source, the paramilitaries were linked to deaths of 3 journalists and 11 human rights monitors. The Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia –AUC (United Self-defence of Colombia), as the paramilitaries call themselves are responsible for the majority of the 201 assassinations of trade unionists. Worryingly, the new President, when Governor of Antioquia helped to create 'civil defence units' which would become the AUC fronts; now as President Uribe have started to pay civil spays that denounce suspects of terrorism. The AUC claimed to have gained 30% of the

Colombian Congress seats in the last Elections. One does not need to be very smart to notice that the dirty-war military strategy of the Reagan-Bush era has been re-created and enhanced by the Uribe – Bush Jnr administrations.

For their part, guerrillas were credited with twenty percent of Human Rights' violations. They concentrate on attacking representatives of the State, such as Ministers, Senators, Governors and Majors of cities and towns. The Colombian State forces were linked to two percent of the Human Rights' violations. However the condemnation of the USA Government and media is usually reserved for the left wing guerrillas called narco-guerrillas by Colombian and USA military officers (Human Rights Watch 2001).

Yet, what would happen in the hypothetical case of the State succeeding in its war against the guerrillas? The former peace commissioner, V.G. Ricardo, Colombia Ambassador to the UK said in a recent speech to the Colombian Society of the London School of Economics (2-27-01) that if peace is achieved with the guerrillas, the *raison d'être* of the paramilitaries will cease to exist (Ricardo 2001). Yet we must question whether an armed force of 12,000 people, which has influence over large parts of the national territory, would simply abandon one of the most lucrative enterprises of our time. The political *raison d'être* might disappear but economic motivation will remain. Not only drug trafficking, but also war itself is a lucrative business, which can pay off in political as well as financial terms. When the leader of the paramilitary AUC, Carlos Castaño, was interviewed by Y. Amad, a renowned Colombian television presenter, subsequent opinion polls reflected growth in the number of paramilitary sympathisers and political voices started to be heard calling for political talks with the AUC. Something that was reflected in the recent congressional elections.

Castaño has been implicated in the murder of numerous human rights activists. He imposed a reign of terror over the Colombian city of Barrancabermeja. The public attorney claimed this reign continued, even after the arrival of Government troops in the city. Furthermore, Castaño has opposed the setting up of demilitarised zones aimed at encouraging the development of peace talks and he did 'warn' ex-president Pastrana that he will not tolerate demilitarisation in the Department of Bolivar, where

the government planned to hold peace talks with the Ejército de Liberación Nacional – ELN (National Liberation Army), another insurgent group of about 4,000 members (Molano Bravo 2001). When the current president was campaigning, Castaño openly made a sympathising gesture by saying that he would not support any presidential candidate that attempted to resume peace negotiations with the guerrillas.

Conclusion: Plan Colombia or the Closing of a Vicious Cycle

While George Bush Senior was enforcing US security policy in Latin America his son became a consultant for the Harken Energy Corporation, a company that benefited greatly from the events and aftermath of the Gulf War. The Bush family still owns a majority share in Harken, whose principal investment is in Colombian oil enterprises. The company is part of the US-Colombian Business Partnership that started lobbying the US Congress for the approval of Plan Colombia. In 2001 the USA Congress was seeking President George W. Bush's advice on the implications of Plan Colombia for USA security policy and North American investments (Revista Cambio 2001).

Not by coincidence the Bush administration has been seeking Congressional approval of a US\$98 million budget to train the Army Brigade that will protect the Occidental Petroleum run Pipeline Caño Limón (2003 Foreign Aid Appropriations Bill). The independent “Witness for Peace” group has already sent a report to the USA Congress warning of the links between paramilitaries and the Colombian Army in Arauca (where the pipeline is located) and had warned that the funds to be provided will only serve to cement such links, contributing to the escalation of the conflict. Additionally, the group's report questions why US tax payers should pay for providing security to the corporation's operations, something that would be untenable in the long-term anyway (Witness_for_Peace 2002).

The distinction between state security policy and corporate business strategy has never been clearly differentiated by USA governments, and therefore it is unlikely that the Congress will object to continuing US support for Plan Colombia. Thus the militarist project is likely to expand. But this would not happen if the USA did not enjoy the support of conservative forces inside Colombia or if the ‘rhetoric of the fight against drugs’ were to be exchanged for real political action towards the regulation of financial markets.

National and international support for environmental NGOs such as CIC, when their projects seek to enhance environmental security by preserving pristine environments and excluding people from natural reserves, threatens indigenous peoples' security by undermining their ability to 'manage the world'. The key point here is that for indigenous peoples such as the Tukano, we cannot distinguish between environmental security and human security. They do not see themselves as distinct from the environment in which they live, they are part of the 'world' and in managing it they instinctively manage themselves. Thus, rather than translating the unipolar globalised security discourses on security into scientific, environmental terms for the world at large, we might do better to consider informing international discourses on sustainability with the Tukano concepts involved in the 'managing the world'.

Unfortunately, the future of the rainforest and its inhabitants is not in the hands of indigenous peoples: it has not been for many years. They have influenced our way of seeing and treating the forest but had no power to protest against the international security policies that have been developed so far away from their reserves. To talk of an autonomous indigenous territory, even when assured by international and national laws, is at present an illusion. Wars in Latin America are directly linked to the expansion of profitable businesses, the majority of them illegal, and none of them delivering any real benefits to the peasants or indigenous peoples of Northwest Amazonia.

Thus, how might indigenous and peasant communities, environmentalists and other grassroots and wider social movements mobilise in sufficient strength to prompt transnational corporations, Latin American governments, the USA and the EU to engage seriously in processes and agreements that would allow indigenous peoples to participate in the formulation and implementation of 'world security' policies that affect their traditional territories and the global environment? The answer, many think, is the networking of civil society through information and communication technology: however, in a world where less than 1% of people have access to such technology this remains a pipe dream. When they are granted no more than rhetorical 'participation' in the governance of their own territory, the chances of the Tukano's

and other indigenous peoples' perspectives influencing a new global semantic of 'security' seem very limited indeed

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