

IReflect – Student Journal of International Relations



www.ireflect-journal.de

Colombian Peacekeepers abroad? Civil-Military Relations in Colombia as Rationale for Future UN-Peacekeeping Missions

RAFAEL DAVID URIBE-NEIRA

IReflect – Student Journal of International Relations 2019,
Vol. 6 (1), pp 75-91

Published by



IB an der Spree

Additional information can be found at:

Website: www.ireflect-journal.de

E-Mail: board@ireflect-journal.de

Website: www.ibanderspree.de

E-Mail: vorstand@ibanderspree.de

Berlin, March 2019



Colombian Peacekeepers abroad? Civil-Military Relations in Colombia as Rationale for Future UN- Peacekeeping Missions

Rafael Uribe-Neira

Abstract

The Colombian security apparatus has been subject to a slow but steady modernization in the last two decades. But only since 2010, one of multiple initiatives encompasses the deployment of up to 5000 troops as part of international UN peacekeeping missions. Which rationales can explain this turn to participate in UN missions? By analyzing key foreign and security policies in Colombia and assessing the main milestones in security cooperation through document review, this article contends that civil-military relations as proposed by Sotomayor (2010, 2013) for Latin-American countries are key to understand Colombia's interest in international peacekeeping missions, that is to reorient its military towards new tasks in the face of changing security threats and to change its international standing from "troublemaker" to reliable security-provider. However, this governmental effort may not be sustainable considering the still omnipresent internal threats and the weakness of the diplomatic corps, let alone the dissonance between the discursive framing and reality.

Keywords: Colombia, United Nations, Peacekeepers, Military Doctrine, Security Policy.

Introduction

This article seeks to explain the Colombian government's interest in participating in UN peacekeeping operations. It contends that civil-military relations are key to explain what appears to be an exponentially growing interest in peacekeeping operations. It argues that the potential participation in UN missions is a way to redirect the internally focused military doctrine of Co-

Colombian security forces towards a mixed doctrine which not only focuses on insurgency as the main internal security threat, but on international security threats as well. This outcome is intended by integrating both diplomatic and military doctrines in order to consolidate the strategic change from inward-looking towards an outward-looking security policy through several strategies: Firstly, by introducing the military to international doctrines and customs; secondly, by sharing the experience and the battle-proven know-how acquired after a long internal conflict with other countries where Colombian experience could be useful. The participation in the naval operations *Atalanta* and *Ocean Shield* represents one of the most important examples of how this mechanism could work. The article suggests that peacekeeping operations constitute a diplomatic asset to boost Colombia's prestige abroad, in this case, to project an image of a stable nation capable of providing security and being a reliable partner in international disputes.

In order to understand the Colombian interest in peacekeeping, this article reviews key foreign and security policy documents produced during the two terms of President Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018). Firstly, it offers an overview of both foreign and security policy in Colombia since 2012, as they change back and forth between what has been called *respice polum* and the *respice similia*. Next, it develops a certain subset of thinking from liberal approaches in IR invested in the relationship between bureaucratic processes and peacekeeping as the theoretical framework. The argument therefore covers the main domestic reforms in civil and military cooperation as examples of civil-military integration since 2010, the tendencies in military cooperation abroad and to what extent the interest in peacekeeping is a genuine expression of change in the Colombian military doctrine. Finally, it is debated whether those changes may lead to a better international standing in times of transition, the plausibility of doctrinal changes and why the international signaling of bureaucratic change is based on a rather lean discursive basis.

In conclusion, the article contends that, although the reasons for the participation of Colombia in peacekeeping are understandable, the doctrinal transformation may only partially take place, as internal threats to national security will continue in the so-called *post-conflict era*. In other words, the persisting internal conflict in Colombia will most likely compel the security forces to keep their traditional inward-looking security tasks. Former president Santos's initiative of branding Colombia as a "non-troublemaker" at an international level may fail in the face of a poorly professionalized diplomatic corps unable to implement Colombian foreign policy.

The context: looking for the Northern star and looking for your similars

Colombian foreign security policy historically oscillates between what has been called the *respice polum* (Latin for "gaze up at the polar star") and the *respice similia* (Latin for "look for your similars"). This is to say between a

tendency to follow US American guidelines or to look for an integration process among peers in the region (Tickner 2011: 258).

President Alvaro Uribe's two terms (2002-2010) was characterized by the former principle and a strategy to represent drug trafficking in Colombia as a threat for US security out of self-interest. In this way, it was possible for President Santos' predecessor to obtain funds from security assistance programs for anti-narcotics policies (Tickner 2011: 252). In fact, Uribe's success in foreign policy, according to Tickner, lies in the skillful embedding of Colombia's internal conflict within the crusade against terrorism initiated after the 9/11-attacks, by presenting the country as both a hemispheric threat and as incapable of managing the internal conflict by itself (Tickner 2011: 266). Uribe's foreign policy thus kept the funding obtained during *Plan Colombia* to fight both drug trafficking and guerrillas. A US commitment facilitated the allocation of 4 billion US dollars between 2000 and 2006 as part of the Plan Colombia-policy (Tickner 2011: 269). Uribe expanded the security component which evolved into what was called the *Democratic Security and Defense Policy*. This strategy transferred at least 6 billion US dollars from the US to Colombia between 2000 to 2008 (Dilshika et al. 2010: 54). While this alignment strengthened the compatibility with US policies, it hampered the ability of Colombia's foreign policy to integrate into the Latin-American context. This was best seen during the diplomatic tensions with Ecuador and Venezuela, the weakening of sub-regional issues, the securitization of the Andean relations and the erosion of cooperations. Additionally, it created further a dependence on diplomatic ties with the US for taking vital decisions on security and political levels (Tickner 2011: 272).

However, the *respice polum* approach in Colombia's foreign policy experienced a drastic change during Juan Manuel Santos' term (2010-2018) towards a *respice similia* approach. The main changes can be characterized as a diplomacy based on seeking an agreement with the Latin-American neighborhood resulting in the stabilization of relations with Venezuela and Ecuador (Ramírez 2011: 80), the active participation in multilateral institutions and more leadership responsibility in regional disputes without directly confronting the existing ties with the US (González Parias et al. 2016: 287). This can be observed through growing exports to non-traditional partners such as China and India and a trade reduction with natural partners such as Venezuela and the US (González Parias et al. 2016: 285) as well as the consolidation of triangular and south-south cooperation agreements. In this sense, activities such as deepening cooperation ties with Central America, participating in UNASUR and MINUSTAH¹, as well as assisting in anti-narcotics, security and border protection should be understood as strategies of international insertion. At a diplomatic level, the declared intention of being part of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the

¹ UNASUR stands for Unión de Naciones Suramericanas; MINUSTAH is the acronym for the United Nation's Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

CIVET countries² signals a commitment to act in multilateral organizations in several dimensions of cooperation (González Parias et al. 2016: 286-287).

The United Nations (UN) thus represent an important forum for international participation neither exclusively related to the US nor completely new to Colombian foreign policy. In the UN, Colombia has had a historical role in the participation processes. It was part of the founding members and participated seven times as a non-permanent member in the security council (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2017). There, Santos led the discussion about counternarcotic policies, committed to and pled for a greater engagement of other countries in Haiti. For instance, in April 2011, Colombia assumed the presidency of the UN Security Council and used the platform to support the reconstruction of Haiti (Bermúdez Torres 2013: 80). It is in this context that the announcement of the intended participation of Colombia in future peacekeeping missions on September 2015 took place (Valero 2015). How can the willingness to contribute up to 5000 troops abroad be understood? To address this question, this article focuses on civil-military relations to understand the willingness to participate in peacekeeping.

Civil-military relations and their link to peacekeeping

Although accounts of peacekeeping participation encompass several approaches, among them realist and those based on the production of impure goods, this article will be based on a subset coming from liberal thinking focused on bureaucratic processes involved in the participation in peacekeeping (Bellamy & Williams 2013: 5-17), as suggested by Sotomayor (2010, 2013).

Civil-military relations are key for understanding the involvement of security forces in peace operations. In order to understand how they work, some considerations must be made about the role of military doctrine as an element of participation in peacekeeping. Military doctrine constitutes a key factor which defines if a country will participate in peacekeeping operations. It prioritizes if the military should be focused on internal or external menaces or even a mix of both (Sotomayor 2010: 173). Military doctrine will here be understood as a chain whose ends and means are intertwined and become part of what is called *grand strategy* (Posen 1984: 33). The ultimate goal of a military doctrine is the survival of the state in which it operates. Besides that, doctrines work efficiently when both political and military ends harmonize, otherwise states are prone to fail in times of war. For this reason, military-political integration proves to be vital to the survival of states (Posen 1984: 24-25).

² The CIVET group are emerging market countries composed by Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt and South Africa.

Sotomayor (2010) and Posen (1984) differentiate three types of military doctrines: Externally oriented, internally oriented and mixed doctrines. Externally oriented doctrines are seen in militaries whose priorities lie in the defense against external threats. Such militaries are willing to participate in peacekeeping deployments specifically if the state they are tasked with protecting faces rather few external threats. In this sense, peacekeeping missions are a way to gain experience and foster promotions among the ranks (Sotomayor 2010: 174). Additionally, peacekeeping missions become more relevant if no war is expected to be fought, and they are considered a compensation for the potential deterioration of combat skills (Miller 1997: 447). For Sotomayor, an externally focused doctrine will soon harmonize with foreign policies as it must be coordinated in order to meet common goals.

In internally focused doctrines or national security doctrines the military is not mainly focused on the defense against external threats. It is rather commissioned with combatting counterinsurgency, anti-drugs or anti-narcotics missions and the control of strikes. In other words, it has public and enforcement functions. Militaries acting under such doctrines are concerned with political stability and internal warfare. In consequence, politics and national security affairs merge and become indistinguishable, as military scrutiny is required for almost every policy issue. National security doctrines thus politicize soldiers (Sotomayor 2010: 175). Politicization also occurs when civil policy makers call on the armed forces to contain the opposition, direct the production of wealth and conduct diplomacy. Thus, the monopoly of the military forces on security doctrines will make the civil-military relations unstable as they have a bargaining leverage at disposal. The use of force for domestic purposes does not foster integration efforts with civilian sectors and, therefore, does not lead to the participation abroad (Sotomayor 2010: 175).

In mixed doctrines the military must execute internal and external duties. The inherent risks lie in overburdening produced by the multiple loads and the unclear orientation, and often in the potentially unclear duty of civilian control. Semi-integrated doctrines often occur when states experience democratizing processes. They imply a transition in which militaries must assume new roles as they partially keep the old ones (Sotomayor 2010: 176). Militaries with mixed doctrines are prone to participate in peacekeeping operations because they fit with their doctrinal approach, but they will do so in limited amounts and in selected missions. However, armed forces may risk deploying more units than usual as a way of coping with political transition and uncertainty. These decisions can be strengthened by the perception that the transition to a new doctrine will not cause dramatic financial or operational cuts. Additionally, politicians may be prone to advocate for peacekeeping deployments as they see an opportunity to integrate domestic civil-military policies by transferring the policy-making process outside the domestic spheres (Sotomayor 2010: 177-78).

In Latin America, domestic democratization seems to be one key factor motivating states to commit to peacekeeping missions. Sotomayor (2013) identifies three key rationales behind the deployment within democratizing nations in the region: *International signaling*, *domestic reforms*, and the seeking of *economic benefits* from participating in peacekeeping operations. *Domestic reform* will be understood as the initiative of civilian leaders to promote changes within the military institutions by exposing them to new social roles, norms and doctrines. In this sense, peacekeeping operations have the function of re-educating the troops through new duties. *International signaling* is understood as the act of demonstrating that changes in both domestic and foreign policy took place. This leads to the construction of a new international identity which permits access to international organizations and security communities. Additionally, although these missions can be used to fund operation costs, personnel salaries and acquire military gear in periods of financial uncertainty (Sotomayor 2013: 46), the seeking of economic benefits, though a relevant issue in the analysis of peacekeeping, will not be taken into account as the scope of my analysis does not take into account financial reports from the Colombian government.

Methodology

In order to analyze the interest of the Colombian government in peacekeeping, this article selects and reviews key documents coming from the Colombian presidency, the foreign service, the ministry of defense, and the legislative body related to the formulation of security policy. This includes, among others, the National Plan of Development, the guidelines of strategic planning and the National Strategies of International Cooperation. In a second step, the policy integration is contrasted with the outputs in security cooperation as received in specialized media.

Rationales for potential peacekeeping contributing in Colombia

First rationale: The integration of civil and military policies for peacekeeping (2010-2018)

The document analysis suggests a positive integration of civil and military policy for contributing to peacekeeping. In a parallel track to the changes in foreign policy seen above, the Colombian government has undertaken measures in order to foster and modernize military capabilities since 2012. Under president Juan Manuel Santos, the military has continued the modernization initiated by his predecessor, Álvaro Uribe. In absence of a strategic white paper, the National Development Plan of 2010 states that Colombia actively seeks cooperation within international organizations such as the UN

with the purpose of contributing to the interests of the international community (República de Colombia & Departamento Nacional de Planeación 2010b: 685). It plans for the participation in at least four peacekeeping operations, two more than in 2010 (2010a: 516), it establishes a central agency for cooperation, the export of security in defense affairs, and the implementation of exercises which allow the military to face new strategic threats (2010a: 508).

On the civilian side, the National Strategy of International Cooperation 2012-2014 and the Strategy of International Cooperation on Integral Security offer technical cooperation in security matters to other states (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia, & Departamento Nacional de Planeación 2012: 51; Cancillería 2012). These documents highlight three areas of cooperation: Citizen security and coexistence, war on drugs and the fight against transnational crime and terrorism (pp. 52–53). Such policies are complemented at other levels by the International Strategy of International Cooperation on Integral Security of Colombia (Niño González 2016: 91), which proposes four areas of services abroad. These include citizen security, anti-corruption; human rights and international humanitarian law; and operative capabilities.

The second National Plan of Development (2014-2018) expands this trend by introducing the so-called *multidimensional peace operations*, joint peace and humanitarian relief operations. (República de Colombia & Departamento Nacional de Planeación 2015: 475). The guidelines of strategic planning from the Ministry of Defense set as a first objective the strengthening of the armed forces in order to end the internal armed conflict and subsequent peacebuilding duties (Ministerio de Defensa 2016: 15). Its seventh (out of eight) strategic objective calls for a realignment of the defense sector towards an international outlook by signing bilateral, multilateral and triangular cooperation agreements with allies and strategic partners (p. 16). This should be achieved by those agreements and by participating in international missions with the purpose of contributing to world security and peace (pp. 75–76).

Law 1794 by the Colombian National Congress of 2016 ratifies the framework agreement between the UN and the Colombian Government in order to regulate future contributions of troops and resources to UN operations (2016: 2). The document justifies the need of getting involved in UN operations by giving three key arguments. Firstly, the need to adapt to the challenges of the future, for instance transnational crime, by developing a portfolio of demands and offers. In other words, participating in cooperation in order to exchange know-how. Secondly, the document declares the use of international cooperation as a means to reshape the course of the Colombian military as a strategic objective. Finally, the document emphasizes the need to share the acquired and internationally recognized know-how in counter-terrorism, anti-narcotics and fighting transnational crime with the purpose of fostering security, peace and both regional and international stability (2016: 8). As result of Santos' two presidential terms, both defense and foreign poli-

cies have facilitated the exchange of military capabilities and the reorientation towards peacekeeping operations, two objectives which are intimately linked to each other. Moreover, the review of policies in both branches highlights the efforts of integrating the military and the foreign service by making them pursue the same objectives on security issues.

Second rationale: The outcomes in security policy. Colombia as a know-how exporter

As a result of the changes made in security and foreign policy, Colombia transformed from a traditional receptor of assistance towards a center for security export (Tomaselli 2014). By mentoring neighboring nations like Panama, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, Colombia played a key role in the Southern hemisphere (Petraeus & O'Hanlon 2013). For instance, through triangular cooperation – which provides experience and cultural sensibility from Colombian security forces for a third-party country with financial back up from the US – Central American countries have benefited from Colombian know-how (Webinfomil & Prensa Armada Nacional 2015). Mexico is one of the main security importers as the country is experiencing a relatively similar conflict with drug cartels as Colombia did in the 1990's (Tomaselli 2014). Additionally, the participation in international military exercises adds to this trend. The Colombian air force participated in *Red Flag* (Skinner 2012) and *Maple Flag* exercises (Webinfomil 2013) and the navy has taken part in multinational sea exercises such as RIMPAC (*Rim of the Pacific Exercise*) in 2012, 2014 and 2016 (Webinfomil 2012).

Another significant example of the export of security know-how was the deployment of the frigate *ARC 7 de Agosto* in March 2013, in order to reinforce naval operations as part of the EU Naval Force operations *Atalanta* and *Ocean Shield* (Saumeth 2015; Webinfomil 2015). The operations' mandate was to counter Somalia-based pirates, monitor fishing activities and support other international missions, which contribute to maritime security and protect vessels belonging to the UN World Food Program and the African Union Mission in Somalia. Colombia was the first South American country operating a vessel at the Somali coast (Villarejo 2015), which was interpreted as an involvement in preventive diplomacy within a multinational military effort (Niño González 2016: 93). *Atalanta* and *Ocean Shield* represented a favorable example of Bogotá assuming and achieving a high degree of interoperability, communications and crisis management in the field (Niño González 2016: 94). Furthermore, it was possible to deploy military capabilities in Somalia with some degree of success. This success can be attributed to the experience with interdiction and interception of boats and custom-made submersible vessels used by drug traffickers to transport narcotics from Colombia to Mexico. In the case of *Atalanta* and *Ocean Shield*, interdiction and interception – two proven capabilities of the Colombian security forces –

were suited for a crisis region such as Somalia (Niño González 2016: 97). Moreover, *Atalanta* and *Ocean Shield* showed Colombia's capacity to perform joint and combined operations. The former refers to the ability to work among several branches of the armed forces (air, naval and ground forces), the latter to the capacity to work with distinct staff commands, that is with militaries from other states. Once again, these capabilities have been fostered within the framework of counternarcotic operations which often require close cooperation with neighboring countries. Additionally, this capacity has been systematically trained in the naval exercise UNITAS. In 2013, Colombia even acted as host for 14 nations participating in the exercise (Niño González 2016: 99-100).

The Colombian navy's participation in UNITAS, *Atalanta* and *Ocean Shield*, the participation of the country's air force in *Red Flag* and *Maple Flag* and the commitment to triangular cooperation are therefore examples of how the military's experience and capabilities gained during the internal conflict may be exported. And it is precisely in this context that UN operations may have the potential to make Colombia's transition to higher levels of democratic control easier by facilitating the exchange of know-how and capabilities, thereby modernizing the armed forces

Does Colombia consolidate doctrinal changes?

The perspectives of a successful peace agreement with the FARC guerrilla have raised concerns over future missions the armed forces should assume. A discussion has emerged about which type of normative peace approach the country should embrace in peacebuilding (Rettberg 2003: 25). That includes approaches to security, the reallocation of funds from defense to other sectors which contribute to peacebuilding, and the redefinition of the roles police and military should adopt in light of the new scenario (Rettberg et al. 2002: 31-32). The challenge for Colombian security forces may consist in reconfiguring the roles military and police forces should take, since they got blurred in a long war against an internal threat (Caicedo 2009).

As can be seen from the strategic plan, the current priority for the Colombian armed forces is still to secure the end of the conflict in the country and to adapt to the security changes (Ministerio de Defensa 2016: 9-10; 13), in other words, to guarantee the prevalence of state institutions in the country. Law 1706 clearly states that the participation relies on the need to improve the internal security (Congreso de Colombia 2016: 16). Caicedo (2009) proposes that the military's capabilities should be used *within* the country to sustain the actual roles they already have such as combating criminal gangs and drug traffickers. Besides that, he proposes military forces should take up internal peacebuilding duties such as securing the return of displaced populations into rural areas, demining, and building infrastructure in remote areas. However, for other voices, the insertion of the military in

international organizations, such as the UN, is a proof that the military is gaining gradually importance as an element of foreign policy (Cancelado 2016: 173; Castro Alegría & González 2016: 309). Furthermore, such participation in international organizations is the result of the strategic changes the military has experienced in the last years (Cancelado 2016: 171). To sum up, the multiple interpretations of the reorientation of the Colombian army seem to be inconsistent. The intended reforms may or may not prepare the military to face external threats.

If the participation in UN missions is an effort to modernize the armed forces and find a legitimate objective for the military abroad, it may confront serious difficulties in the country. For instance, Cancelado (2016: 172) argues that the drug economy and the uncertainty of the internal conflict may intensify because the current conflict focuses on economic rather than ideological interests. Proof for this is the increase of coca crops by 39 percent from 2014 to 2015 (UNODC 2016 & Gobierno de Colombia: 13) and the persistent presence of criminal activities (Unidad Investigativa Indepaz 2017). At this point, the question is raised whether the national police will be able to face the challenges of internal security in a setting where a clear division between police and military competences – and therefore, the respective civil oversight (Schultze-Kraft 2012: 426-427) – is sometimes difficult to draw (Cancelado 2016: 156-157; Castro Alegría & González 2016: 309).

Facing these difficulties, it is not foreseeable to what extent the intended doctrinal transformation will take place. They could lead at most to a semi-integrated doctrine model, that is a security doctrine in which the military should be able to share its know-how and socialize its members in international procedures and doctrines. Simultaneously, this doctrine should also be able to discourage opponents in their ranks to the democratic transformations the country must undertake.

The lean basis of the international signaling

Based on the reviewed documents and literature, we could assume that the interest of the Colombian military in UN missions relates to the interests of international insertion, and specifically, to the image of a professionalized military respecting human rights and capable of providing security to current national and international threats. However, considering the previous analysis, these explanations could face some drawbacks.

First, the Colombian diplomatic arm faces structural problems which could make it even harder to facilitate a doctrinal change. Some authors are highly skeptical as to whether the Colombian diplomatic service was actually democratized and professionalized after Santos' first term. This problem is inevitably related to the historical fact that the diplomatic service has always been at the whim of changing administrations and subject to lacking consistency. This is related to the fact that in the Uribe administration, three-

quarters of ambassadors abroad were appointed personally by the president without being career diplomats (Tickner 2011: 260). It is often argued that the diplomatic service should foster the participation of national actors involved in Colombia's relations abroad (Ramírez 2011: 95) as well as other stakeholders such as academics and business representatives (Bermúdez Torres 2013: 85). Finally, an acknowledged challenge for the Colombian government in the coming years of post-agreement is to achieve a "bigger coherence between discourse and praxis" in multilateral organizations, among them, the UN (Castro Alegría & González 2016: 300). The absence of a professionalized state foreign service may hamper a coherent formulation and implementation of a foreign policy that ensures a sustainable contribution of Colombian peacekeepers in the future.

Secondly, signaling for peace has a communication component which should also be considered. One observer argues that the attempt to influence Colombia's image abroad is not necessarily based on a tangible transformation of reality. Strategies of perceptual transformation are part of what the author calls an *issue-reframing*, which was successfully employed during Santos' first European tour (Duarte García 2013: 681). Others discuss the former president's skillful use of discourse to focus the attention on the peace process and the possibility of achieving peace in the country (Dießelmann and Hetzer 2016: 200-201). Common discursive tropes such as *peace dialogues* or *post-conflict* have helped reframe foreign policy in order to present the country as a promoter of peace (Dießelmann and Hetzer 2016: 215). Thus, the announcements of future deployments of Colombian peacekeepers reinforce the dominant discourse during Santos' term. It is yet to be seen if peacekeepers will be able to underpin a more peaceful prospect of Colombia abroad.

Conclusion

This article has explored the Colombian government's interest in further contributing to UN peacekeeping. The findings presented above suggest that a civil-military approach that takes into account bureaucratic state processes provides meaningful insights into a state's motivation to engage in peacekeeping as well as into the relationship between the need for security reform in a post-conflict setting and the interest in peacekeeping.

Colombia's interest in UN missions under former president Santos correlates with the effort of inserting the country as part of the *respice similia*-trend in Colombian foreign policy. The international performance of the military can easily be traced to a certain degree of integration of both military and diplomatic policy. This is done to signal an international commitment on behalf of world peace/security to the international community and thus change Colombia's international reputation as a "trouble maker". It is in this context where the participation in UN missions

offers a subsidiary platform to channel the military know-how that Colombian security forces have gained during years of internal conflict and to modernize their doctrines to international standards. The current and active participation in international military exercises and multilateral scenarios could constitute an incentive to find new missions for the military in a post-agreement scenario. The examples stemming from the navy and the air force in Somalia are indicative for the advantages of deploying the military in international operations.

However, several reasons suggest that the so-called *doctrinal integration* may not work in the expected way. First, the ongoing internal conflict after the FARC demobilization and the challenge of counternarcotics may hamper the complete orientation of the military towards external threats. A higher degree of commitment in international communities, though, can help socialize and even “tame” the military and introduce them to new doctrines and international procedures. But there is no guarantee *per se* that the military can modernize as much as required in order to re-orientate towards external threats. In consequence, the military risks being deployed again within the country, which would recreate the problem of a politicized armed force watching and interfering in domestic concerns. Further, the absence of both a democratized foreign policy and a diplomatic service have the potential to weaken the commitment to UN missions, since the bureaucratic diplomatic arm does not operate as the result of long-term state policy, but rather as the expression of particular and limited interests under the respective administration. Thus, the foreign service is not able to fully implement policy as expected. The discursive projection of Colombia abroad is also a good example of issue-reframing and may, to a certain degree, lead to a changed perception of Colombia as security provider, not solely defined by the current pressing issues within the country.

In the future, more research is needed to explore the historical interest of politicians in troop deployment or the participation of the national police in peacekeeping at the beginning of the 1990s just after the introduction of a new constitution in 1991 and amidst the fight against the drug cartels. Further potential research tasks include exploring the expectations among politicians and military leaders in peacekeeping or the analysis of other tools of international insertion by single military branches. The navy may be a relevant contributor due to specific initiatives such as the participation in *Atalanta* and *Ocean Shield*, the Colombian Antarctic Program or even the maritime industry in the production of warships in joint projects with regional partners.

- I reflect -

This article is the result of my struggle to understand the transition the military is imbedded in after the peace agreement in Cuba in 2016. I wish to share two personal concerns. A political one and a rather ethical one.

The political concern refers to my own skepticism towards peacekeeping in Colombia. In fact, I highly doubt that the first Colombian peacekeeper will be deployed in the coming years. I recently learned that only 205 out of 5088 planned peacekeepers completed their basic certification as of September 2018. That's barely 4 percent. In addition, in a private conversation with a high officer of the Colombian navy, I was told rather unenthusiastically that peacekeeping constitutes a kind of a „new little arm“ the military gained. Finally, the current administration led by president Iván Duque seems to be trapped by a curious dilemma, at least in military diplomacy: While it still signals interest in deepening the trend of security export, it manifests an ambivalent discourse towards peacebuilding which constitutes the very normative core of sending boots abroad. How the administration will solve this dilemma is yet to be seen in the second half of 2019 when the legislative body ratifies the new National Plan of Development.

The ethical concern relates to the consequences of peacekeeping in the face of the current political situation in Colombia: What will happen when the first Colombian peacekeeper falls in a foreign country? What will Colombian society's response be to the loss of mostly young and poor but battle-hardened males in foreign conflicts? On behalf of which values – and interests – would the Colombian state dispatch soldiers and policemen who would have ironically survived the perils of their profession in their own country but would die in a foreign one? Still on behalf of peace?

Rafael Uribe-Neira
Otto-von-Guericke-Universität Magdeburg (at time of writing)
Contact: rafael.uribe@ovgu.de

References

- Bellamy, AJ & Williams, PD 2013, 'Introduction: The Politics and Challenges of Providing Peacekeepers', in AJ Bellamy & PD Williams (eds.), *Providing peacekeepers: the politics, challenges, and future of United Nations peacekeeping contributions*, OUP Oxford, Oxford, pp.1–22.
- Bermúdez Torres, CA 2013, 'La política exterior colombiana en el marco de la integración latinoamericana', *Analecta política*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 67–91.
- Caicedo, JP 2009, 'Las Fuerzas Militares del Post-Conflicto: Perspectivas y Desafíos para Colombia', *Air & Space Power Journal*, no. 1: n.p.
- Cancelado, H 2016, 'La política exterior y el nuevo rol de las FF. AA. en el contexto de la nueva estrategia y doctrina de defensa con miras al posconflicto', in E Pastrana Buelvas & H Gehring (eds.), *Política exterior colombiana: escenarios y desafíos en el posconflicto.*, Editorial Pontificia Universidad Javeriana: Fundación Konrad Adenauer, Bogotá:155.
- Cancillería 2012, 'Estrategia de Cooperación Internacional en Seguridad Integral de Colombia', viewed 15 March 2017, <http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/sites/default/files/politica_exterior/estrategia_de_seguridad_integral.pdf>.
- Castro Alegría, R & González, P 2016, 'Las organizaciones de la arquitectura global y el posconflicto colombiano: el caso de la cooperación de la ONU, el Banco Mundial y la OCDE', in E Pastrana Buelvas & H Gehring (eds.), *Política exterior colombiana: escenarios y desafíos en el posconflicto.*, Editorial Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Fundación Konrad Adenauer, Bogotá, pp.293–315, <https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=50548dcb-1b2e-937a-580a-a7f400d6ee19&groupId=252038>.
- Congreso de Colombia 2016, *Ley 1794*, viewed 21 February 2017, <<http://es.presidencia.gov.co/normativa/normativa/LEY%201794%20DEL%2011%20DE%20JULIO%20DE%202016.pdf>>.
- Dießelmann, A-L & Hetzer, A 2016, 'Außenpolitische Darstellung der Regierung Santos und deren Resonanz im medio-politischen Diskurs in Europa und Kolumbien', *Papel Político*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 197–223.
- Dilshika, J et al. 2010, 'Lessons Learned from US Government Law Enforcement in International Operations', viewed 14 March 2017, <<http://publications.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/1276.pdf>>.
- Duarte García, J 2013, 'La Unión Europea dentro del "giro" de la política exterior colombiana', *Papel Político*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 679–706.
- González Parias, CH, Mesa Bedoya, JC, & Londoño Ossa, GA 2016, 'Política exterior colombiana 2010-2014: ¿giro a la autonomía?', *Revista de relaciones internacionales, estrategia y seguridad*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 267–291.
- Infodefensa 2016, *Colombia anuncia la ampliación paulatina de su contingente en Haití*, *Infodefensa.com*, viewed 28 March 2017,

- <<https://www.infodefensa.com/latam/2016/04/06/noticia-colombia-envia-policias-cascos-azules-haiti.html>>.
- Miller, LL 1997, 'Do soldiers hate peacekeeping? The case of preventive diplomacy operations in Macedonia', *Armed Forces & Society*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 415–449.
- Ministerio de Defensa 2016, 'Plan estratégico del sector defensa y seguridad. Guía de planeamiento estratégico. 2016-2018.', viewed 26 March 2017, <https://www.mindefensa.gov.co/irj/go/km/docs/Mindefensa/Documentos/descargas/Sobre_el_Ministerio/Planeacion/Políticas/Guia_Planeamiento_Estrategico_2016-2018.pdf>.
- Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 2017, *Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU)*, *Cancillería. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores*, viewed 2 April 2017, <<http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/organizacion-las-naciones-unidas-onu>>.
- Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia, & Departamento Nacional de Planeación 2012, 'Estrategia Nacional de Cooperación Internacional 2012-2014', viewed 15 March 2017, <https://www.cancilleria.gov.co/sites/default/files/politica_exterior/enci-2012-2014.pdf>.
- Niño González, CA 2016, 'Exportación de conocimiento: Colombia como proveedor de seguridad para la lucha contra el terrorismo y el crimen internacional', *Vlél*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 87–104.
- Petraeus, D & O'Hanlon, M 2013, 'The success story next door', *Politico*, viewed 14 March 2017, <<http://www.politico.com/story/2013/09/general-david-petraeus-michael-ohanlon-the-success-story-next-door-097316?o=1>>.
- Posen, B 1984, 'The Importance of Military Doctrine', in *The Source of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, <<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=843731&site=ehost-live>>.
- Ramírez, S 2011, 'El giro de la política exterior colombiana', *Nueva Sociedad*, no. 231, pp. 79–95.
- República de Colombia & Departamento Nacional de Planeación 2010a, 'Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2010-2014. Tomo 2', viewed 2 April 2017, <<https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/PND/PND2010-2014%20Tomo%20II%20CD.pdf>>.
- República de Colombia & Departamento Nacional de Planeación 2010b, 'Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2010-2014. Tomo 1', viewed 2 April 2017, <<https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/PND/PND2010-2014%20Tomo%20I%20CD.pdf>>.

- República de Colombia & Departamento Nacional de Planeación 2015, 'Plan nacional de desarrollo 2014-2018. Tomo 2', viewed 16 March 2017, <<https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/PND/PND%202014-2018%20Tomo%20%20internet.pdf>>.
- Rettberg, A et al. 2002, *Preparar el Futuro: Conflicto y Post-conflicto en Colombia*, Universidad de Los Andes. Fundación Ideas para La Paz, Bogotá, viewed 20 March 2017, <<http://www.ideaspaz.org/publications/posts/63>>.
- Rettberg, A 2003, 'Diseñar el futuro: una revisión de los dilemas de la construcción de paz para el postconflicto', *Revista de estudios sociales*, no. 15, pp. 15-28.
- Saumeth, E 2015, *Colombia se une a la operación multinacional Atalanta-2015*, *Infodefensa.com*, viewed 15 March 2017, <<http://www.infodefensa.com/latam/2015/03/10/noticia-armada-comlombiana-operacion-multinacional-atalanta2015.html>>.
- Schultze-Kraft, M 2012, 'La cuestión militar en Colombia: la fuerza pública y los retos de la construcción de la paz', *Construcción de paz en Colombia*, pp. 405-433.
- Skinner, K 2012, 'La Fuerza Aérea Colombiana en Red Flag', *Air & Space Power Journal*, vol. 24, no. 4: n.p.
- Sotomayor, ACS 2010, 'Why some states participate in UN peace missions while others do not: an analysis of civil-military relations and its effects on Latin America's contributions to peacekeeping operations', *Security Studies*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 160-195.
- Sotomayor, ACS 2013, 'Democratization and Commitment to Peace. South America's Motivations to Contribute to Peace Operations', in KM Kenkel (ed.), *South America and Peace Operations: Coming of Age*, Cass Series on Peacekeeping, Routledge, New York, pp.45-63.
- Tickner, AB 2011, 'Intervención por invitación. Claves de la política exterior colombiana y de sus debilidades principales', in S Borda & AB Tickner (eds.), *Relaciones Internacionales y política exterior de Colombia*, Colección Conmemorativa de los cuarenta años del Departamento de Ciencia Política de la Facultad de Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad de los Andes, Universidad de los Andes, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales, Departamento de Ciencia Política-CESO, Bogotá, pp. 249-277, viewed 21 March 2017, <<https://appsciso.uniandes.edu.co/sip/data/pdf/relacionesinternacionales4.pdf>>.
- Tomaselli, W 2014, 'Colombia's Security Export', *Ozy*, viewed 10 March 2017, <<http://www.ozy.com/fast-forward/colombias-security-export/31788>>.
- Unidad Investigativa Indepaz 2017, 'XII informe sobre presencia de grupos narcoparamilitares 2016', viewed 16 March 2017, <<http://www.indepaz.org.co/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/XII-INFORME.pdf>>.

- UNODC & Gobierno de Colombia 2016, 'Colombia. Monitoreo de territorios afectados por cultivos ilícitos 2015.', viewed 15 March 2017, <https://www.unodc.org/documents/colombia/2016/Julio/Censo_Cultivos_Coca_2015_SIMCI.pdf>.
- Valero, D 2015, 'Colombia entra a la legión de las misiones de seguridad de la ONU', *El Tiempo*, viewed 8 March 2019, <<https://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/CMS-16389837>>.
- Villarejo, E 2015, 'Colombia, primer país suramericano en enviar un buque de guerra contra la piratería en Somalia', *Blogs ABC | Por Tierra, Mar y Aire*, viewed 15 March 2017, <<http://abcblogs.abc.es/tierra-mar-aire/public/post/colombia-pirateria-somali-18865.asp/>>.
- Webinfomil 2012, *Armada Nacional Participará en Ejercicios RIMPAC Por Primera Vez.* | *Webinfomil, Webinfomil.com. Actualidad, seguridad y defensa*, viewed 28 March 2017, <<http://www.webinfomil.com/2012/03/armada-nacional-participara-en.html>>.
- Webinfomil 2013, *Se da inicio a Maple Flag 46 con la participacion de la Fuerza Aérea Colombiana*, *Webinfomil.com. Actualidad, seguridad y defensa*, viewed 28 March 2017, <<http://www.webinfomil.com/2013/05/se-da-inicio-maple-flag-46-con-la.html>>.
- Webinfomil 2015, *El ARC 7 de Agosto finaliza las operaciones de seguridad marítima en África*, *Webinfomil.com. Actualidad, seguridad y defensa*, viewed 28 March 2017, <<http://www.webinfomil.com/2015/10/el-arc-7-de-agosto-finaliza-las.html>>.
- Webinfomil & Prensa Armada Nacional 2015, *Colombia exporta entrenamiento militar a través de la Infantería de Marina* | *Webinfomil, Webinfomil.com. Actualidad, seguridad y defensa*, viewed 15 March 2017, <<http://www.webinfomil.com/2015/05/colombia-exporta-entrenamiento-militar.html>>.