

Role of the army in selected countries of global south

The army, the totality of a state's military forces, has always played an important role for every state in the world. Indeed, it is mainly through their armies that states fight over territories or exercise their domination over their population and even outside their borders. To study the army is to understand the rivalries of power over territories, explains Yves Lacoste, a French geopolitician. The most developed and powerful armies today are those with a strong heritage in terms of power, are the Western countries. The purpose of the army in the West is to be a tool to serve the democratic regime and international law.

Also, the UN has an army, the blue helmets, which consists of national armies from all over the world. According to the UN, the role of armies is to promote stability; security and peace processes; protect people and property; and work with local communities and security forces towards a sustainable peace.

Established by developed countries and assisted by UN troops, the military's roles today range from security, including terrorism, to illegal trade such as poaching, to human rights abuses and humanitarian crises such as disease control. Today, the military remains engaged in development missions, a historical legacy from the 1970s and 1980s. Development remains embedded in the military's national strategies.

However, the militaries of the South, the developing countries, do not have armies as radiant as the hegemonic countries such as the United States or the members of the European Union. Although the military forces of these countries are increasingly involved in the implementation of their governments' foreign policy, taking part in peacekeeping operations, military exercises and humanitarian relief missions.

There is no homogeneity among the countries of the South, the developing countries. Each region exhibits different armed behaviour. The countries of the North, the United States and Europe, wanted to reproduce their model on the armies of the South, but their difference in development does not lead to the same end.

It is thus possible to distinguish 4 Souths, 4 styles of army among the southern states, corresponding to 4 regions: South and Central America, Africa, Asia and Oceania.

The armies of South and Central America are based on Western influence. In Africa, they are post-colonial armies, which often serve the interest of the chief, power, tribal interests and enrichment. In Asia, the army sometimes seems to be close to the government, because of its communist past, even if there is a deprofessionalisation of the military profession. Oceania represents a more developed South that is included in globalisation.

The Australian and New Zealand armies have the same purposes as in the West, they are a tool to serve the democratic regime and international law.

Today I would particularly like to address in the Role of the army in selected countries of global south, the case of South America.

Firstly, South and Central America has been strongly influenced by Western countries, first Europe and then the United States.

The South American armies were based on a European and North American military model. Indeed, the Latin American military has been influenced by Europe in its structure. As former European colonies, these armies are heirs to a certain military tradition. Thus, they respond to Western criteria, based on hierarchy. Defence training is also an important criterion, which is why the United States has for some time shared its military training with the armies of the American global south. Moreover, Europe, which is established in the Caribbean, intervenes for and with the armies of the South, as in Brazil.

Secondly, the Latin American armies are closely linked to the US. The US has made the South its zone of influence against the left and communism.

During the Cold War, right-wing dictatorships were seen by American presidents as allies against the USSR bloc, which is the source of their aid and the transposition of their military model, according to Hugues Esquerre. In 1961, President Kennedy created the Alliance for Progress to strengthen cooperation between North and South America. Although it ended in 1973, it demonstrates this mechanism of economic aid for defence. Presented with the objective of dynamic economic and social development in Latin America, it was in the background a strategy to contain the rise of social movements seen as a growing communist threat and felt by the United States since Fidel Castro took power in Cuba.

Following the fall of these dictatorships and that of the Eastern bloc, a political transition operation took place. The defence policies of governments are now entering a more democratic culture, based on the North American model. Defence is now aimed at ensuring governability.

The United States, after having played a major role in the fall of military dictatorships, gradually readjusted its assessment of the situation and proposed new missions to the armed forces of the American Global South. It is clear that the proposed cooperation is strangely similar to the anti-communist struggle during the Cold War years. The only difference is that the supply of equipment, the training offered and the joint manoeuvres are now conditional on respect for human rights and democratic values. With the communists forgotten, the focus was first on fighting drug traffickers and then terrorists. In

this respect, the Colombian conflict was used as a continental laboratory by the US. Plan Colombia, the essentially military aid provided to the Colombian authorities by the United States in the summer of 2000, gave a concrete face to the post-communist adversary, thereby demonstrating the scope of the US commitment in the region and encouraging the rest of Latin America to mobilise behind Colombia against drug trafficking and terrorism. Modelled on the democratic and ethical model of the United States, the role of the Latin American military is a social function. These armies are thus in transition, which accompanies the development of these countries in the global south.

Thirdly, Latin American armies retain a strong power to intervene with regimes. The maintenance of democracy in Argentina and Chile is due to military intervention. In internal wars, in the fight against corruption, the army is necessary. Latin America has still not emerged from this military system, which has a key role to play in political stability.

The army in general in this region has experienced a strong decline after the cold war. The army in general in this region has experienced a strong decline after the Cold War and is confronted with the quest for professional and social recognition by the military. Some are looking for new civil-military alliances of a populist nature, as was the case in Venezuela under President Chavez, and working conditions and salary levels have led to strikes in the partly militarised police force in Brazil. Fear of collective indictments and worsening living conditions were also a major cause of armed discontent in Argentina in the 1990s. Similarly, Chile's army, while denying any political interventionism, grew increasingly discontent with the arrest in London and house arrest of General Pinochet.

This is why, since the end of the 1990s, the army has been reconsidered and reintroduced to a place of choice in the democratic system.

Olivier Dabène observes that "the military is returning to the Latin American political scene." In October 2000, the Panamanian Minister of Defence did not hesitate to define "a new role for the armed forces of the Americas: Defence of territorial integrity, the fight against smuggling, drug trafficking and terrorism are today the missions presented in the Colombian and Mexican armies. These armies are directly involved in the fight against drug trafficking. The Brazilian army is directly involved through its military police in the maintenance of order and the fight against delinquency. The weakened civil powers have resorted to the military to ensure their continuity. Public opinion, as well as various sectors of civil society, have increasingly made urgent appeals to their soldiers to restore order, trust and justice. Very often, the military intervenes because it has been asked to stop a political dynamic that appears to be a danger or a threat to traditional social power. Ecuadorian professor Fernando Bustamante notes, for example, that « the military and the

clergy are the only groups in Ecuador with a high prestige rating, while Congress and the political parties are completely devalued ».

In Ecuador in 2000, Venezuela in 2002 and Honduras in 2009, opposition parties also applauded political military interventions, according to Nueva Sociedad, because they perceived the governments in power as inept, corrupt or authoritarian.

The support of the now politicised military (and Donald Trump's government) allowed Hernández to remain in power despite the increase in repression and the clearly autocratic direction that Honduras has taken. The Chilean army was deployed in the streets to put an end to social protest. Evo Morales was forced to resign by the Bolivian army. In Brazil and Venezuela, the military remains influential...

It is difficult for stable democracies to emerge, since deep social conflicts are not resolved and compromise is not established on how to resolve them without resorting to armed force.

This legitimacy factor has been received positively by the military, which ensures political and moral pre-eminence that does not undermine the democratic order.

The role of the army is somewhat different depending on whether you have a solid, constituted state or a more informal, much less constructed state.

Civil-military relations in the development of Latin American states are important. They still have this role of defending national unity, especially in complex, and fragmented countries, even if it is not in the constitution.