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United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research  
Geneva

# **National Security Concepts of States: Argentina**

*Julio C. Carasales*



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# Foreword

From the very outset I considered it an honour and a challenge to be asked by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) to prepare a study on the ideas and policy of the Argentine Republic with regard to security.

I undertook the task with keen interest, for the subject is not one on which much is being written in Argentina. This is partly because the collaboration and interaction between the academic and the military sector that occur in other communities do not happen in this country; but perhaps in larger measure the explanation lies in the undeniable fact that, in matters of this kind, the specialists' attention has tended to focus directly or indirectly on the vast problem presented by the history of active participation by the armed forces in Argentine political life and the need to find the right way to integrate them properly into the democratic institutions of which they should be the prop and stay.

Moreover there could be no more propitious time than the present at which to tackle a study of this kind. The external setting, both global and regional, has undergone sweeping changes that are accepted by everyone. What is especially stimulating is that Argentina itself is undergoing a process of profound transformation which will have significant consequences both domestically and internationally.

It is a fact that information about Argentina's historic past whether remote or recent is not plentiful, or at any rate not generally known, abroad. Even less, obviously, are people in touch with what is happening at the present time. This explains why this book has been written primarily with the foreign reader in mind; indeed it is largely intended for that reader. At many points, therefore, material is included which would have been left out as superfluous or repetitive if the work had been published in Argentina.

In addition to documentary sources of various kinds, I wish to acknowledge the wealth of assistance in the preparation of this study which I received from continuing conversations with officials and friends in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the Joint General Staff. These dialogues were especially profitable to me, *inter alia* on the many occasions when our views did not coincide. Responsibility for the views expressed in the book rests, of course, entirely with the writer.

While on this subject I should make it clear that, although the writer is a serving diplomatic official, the preparation of the present study has been a purely personal activity, and the ideas, opinions and thoughts expressed in it should at no point be construed as expressing official Argentine thinking or as reflecting a government position except, of course, where they are specifically attributed to a national authority.

Lastly I wish to express the hope that this study will make a useful contribution to a better understanding of the situation and concerns of the Argentine Republic, not on security matters alone, in an especially interesting period of its history.

*Julio César Carasales*  
Buenos Aires  
December 1990



# Preface

Research into the national security concepts of states has been an important component of UNIDIR's research programme for many years. After the early monographs that were published UNIDIR has now begun to publish research reports describing and analyzing the basic concepts that shape and influence the foreign and security policies of states including their approaches to disarmament. We are convinced that this series of research reports will engender a greater understanding of national policies in the international context facilitating the discussions and negotiations that go on.

The epochal change in international relations that we have witnessed, from the bipolar confrontation of the Cold War to the more co-operative global system with the United Nations being empowered to perform its Charter functions, has affected all countries. The contours of the new world situation have still to be defined. In this transitional period several research reports on the national security concepts that were being written have had to be revised or delayed. Thus UNIDIR hopes to publish more reports in this series in the future.

This research report on the National Security Concepts of the Argentine Republic is a comprehensive description and analysis of the security and disarmament policies of a major country. Ambassador Julio Carasales is excellently equipped to write on the subject with his long diplomatic experience which included being the head of his country's delegation to the Geneva based Conference on Disarmament. The views expressed in the book are of course his own and not necessarily those of his Government.

Ambassador Carasales describes the basic legislative and decision-making features of his country's security policy and proceeds to analyze Argentina's security concepts in the regional and global contexts. The positions of the country on specific disarmament issues are also explained. This book undoubtedly fulfils an important role in explaining the national security concepts of the Argentine Republic to the world.

The views expressed in the book are the responsibility of the author and not of UNIDIR. We do, however, commend it to the attention of our readers.

*Jayantha Dhanapala*  
Director



# Chapter I

## Introduction

The Argentine Republic is situated at the southern end of South America and occupies almost all of it, the exception being a relatively narrow strip between the Pacific Ocean and the Andes mountain chain that belongs to the Republic of Chile. The two countries share more than 5,000 kilometres of frontier which in some sectors has not yet been clearly marked, especially in the south - a fact that has led to major frontier disputes on various occasions. Although the vast majority have been settled, sometimes after the two countries have been on the verge of armed confrontation, there are still a few points of contention that constitute a potential source of problems.

The mainland part of Argentina has an area of nearly 2.8 million square kilometres, making it the eighth largest country in the world. The Argentine Republic also regards as subject to its sovereignty what is termed the Argentine Antarctic Sector, which lies between the meridians of 25 and 74 west longitude, extends from the parallel of 60 south latitude to the Pole and covers roughly a million square kilometres, and which at the same time belongs to the Antarctic Treaty system; Argentina is a founding Contracting Party to that Treaty.

The greater part of Argentine mainland territory lies in the temperate zone, between a hot far north and a very cold far south. Its land is highly fertile in the so-called "wet pampa", an area lying roughly within a radius of 500 kilometres around the city of Buenos Aires. The quality of the land and climatic conditions have enabled it to maintain agricultural and livestock production of an exceptional standard. Outside the region just described, the land diminishes in quality, and this combines with a relative shortage of water to make production less fruitful, except in certain areas where local factors predominate.

Argentina has about 4,000 kilometres of South Atlantic coastline, but the lack of good natural harbours along most of the shore and the remoteness of such harbours as do exist from the main centres of production and consumption have meant that the Argentine Republic is not the "maritime" country it could and should be. Again, despite its closeness to one of the richest fishing grounds in the world, its fishing industry has not, for various reasons, developed to the extent that could have been expected, although the existing industry is one to reckon with. Fishing fleets from other countries work in the area, and their activities create a risk of overexploitation of the living resources of the sea.

The country's mineral resources are in general slender, although in a few cases - such as gas - they are extremely abundant. There is oil, but only enough to cover national consumption, not to provide any significant amount of exports.

Argentine industry is on a large scale and accounts for 43 per cent of gross national product. In many sectors it covers the national market adequately but its export potential is limited, at least until such time as it is rid of certain domestic conditioning factors that detract considerably from its international competitiveness.

According to 1980 figures, the Argentine population totals 27.8 million, which works out at a density of 10 inhabitants per square kilometre. Argentina is thus a relatively underpopulated country. In reality the situation is worse, because more than one third of the population, or some 10 million people, are concentrated in Buenos Aires, the capital, and its surroundings. The inhabitant of Argentina has a per capita income of \$2,390 and a life expectancy of 71 years. The population is growing at an average rate of 1.4 per cent per

annum and is 85 per cent urban; 39 per cent of the people attend a university and there is a doctor for every 370 inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> Some of these figures are higher than those for various Western countries, a fact which makes it even more difficult to explain the stagnation and even deterioration exhibited by the Argentine economy in recent times.

The population is homogeneous, without the racial or social problems that beset other countries. Almost the entire population is regarded as belonging to the white race; the vast majority stem from a heavy influx of European immigration that took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> The indigenous population was never large in what is now Argentine territory, and the proportion that can be considered "pure" is insignificant nowadays; most of the indigenous population vanished during the era of Spanish conquest and colonization or mixed with the colonizers, giving rise to a "creole" population that is still sizeable in Argentina. There are virtually no inhabitants of African origin because the River Plate never had a plantation economy that would have necessitated bringing in slaves. Most Argentines profess the Catholic faith although the number of actual practising Catholics is much smaller. There are social classes, as there are all over the world, but the problems arising in that sphere have never been acute because social mobility is high and there is a wide-ranging middle class.

Various objective circumstances - territorial vastness; abundant resources; a population with levels of education and culture comparable to those of highly developed countries; an absence of corrosive social conflicts; and a hundred years of peace - would have warranted the expectation of a prosperous Argentina with a thriving present and an even more promising future. At the beginning of the twentieth century there seemed no doubt that the Argentine Republic was "a country of the future".<sup>3</sup> It held fifth place among the States of the world in per capita income at a time when its extraordinary potential for development was just beginning to be realized. In 1937, the per capita GDP of Argentina was \$510, when Austria's was \$370, France's \$540, Germany's \$685, Italy's \$260 and Japan's \$185.<sup>4</sup>

Things did not work out that way, however, and today Argentina has moved down to a place which varies according to the criteria applied but which is not far from fortieth. Economists, political scientists and sociologists have racked their brains for the explanation of such a relative decline and have certainly not found a common answer.<sup>5</sup> We shall return to this subject later in this chapter, but in the meantime it might be helpful to give a brief account of the historical and political development of the Argentine Republic, drawing attention as we go along to some characteristic features of that development.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *World Development Report 1989* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 165 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Juan G. Beltrán, *Geografía natural y humana de la Argentina* (Buenos Aires, F. Crespillo editor, vol. II), pp. 19-42.

<sup>3</sup> Anton Zischka, *Países del futuro* (Barcelona, Editorial Omega, 1950).

<sup>4</sup> Figures from A. Maizels, *Industrial Growth and World Trade* (Cambridge, 1963), quoted by Carlos Escudé, *Gran Bretaña, Estados Unidos y la declinación argentina 1942-1949* (Buenos Aires, Editorial de Belgrano, 1983), p. 17.

<sup>5</sup> "Given its almost total self-sufficiency in energy and food, the lack of racial confrontations, the existence of a strong middle class and a tolerable standard of living, and in the absence of the burden constituted by the population explosion of other countries of Latin American, it is inconceivable that Argentina should occupy a lowly place among the nations in respect of its development", quoted from Mario Quadri Castillo, *La Argentina descentralizada* (Buenos Aires, Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires, 1986), p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> More information is to be found in English in: Henry Ferns, *Argentina* (New York, Praeger, 1969); Arthur Whitaker, *Argentina* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall Inc., 1964); James Scobie, *Argentina, a city and a nation* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1971); and Gary Wynia, *Argentina in the postwar era* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1978).

What is Argentina today was discovered and colonized by Spain, and formed part of its colonial empire from the beginning of the sixteenth to the early nineteenth century. It was not an important part of the Spanish empire because it lacked the precious metals that attracted the interest of the conquistadors and because the indigenous cultures occupying the territory were relatively backward, especially in comparison with the Aztec, Inca or Maya civilization, for instance. The territory of the River Plate was a rather poor part of the Viceroyalty of Peru until, in 1776, it was made an autonomous Viceroyalty with Buenos Aires as its capital. This, however, was done mainly for political and strategic reasons and not because it was warranted by any economic or social considerations.

For more than two centuries the River Plate region was the subject of constant struggle, repeatedly of a warlike nature, between the Spanish colonial empire and that of Portugal, whose capital was Rio de Janeiro. Military actions were followed by peace treaties that never brought the problems to final solution. As time went on, this conflict continued into the relations between the Argentine Republic and Brazil, in forms which naturally varied in the course of history. Only since 1980 can it be said that, after some frustrated previous attempts at political and economic *rapprochement*, the two countries have entered a period of frank and resolute cooperation which, if it continues as there is every reason to expect, will have - and in reality is already having - tremendous effects on the political scene in Latin America.

When in addition to Portugal a third country, the United Kingdom - much more dangerous to the Spanish empire's interests - made its appearance in the South Atlantic as we shall see later on, Spain at last decided to pay closer attention to this part of its dominions and resolved to establish nothing less than a new Viceroyalty, that of the River Plate.

The new Viceroyalty covered an enormous area, more than double the Argentine territory of today. It included in addition what are now Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay and some parts of Brazil. It would obviously go beyond the limits of this study to recount the historical episodes through which Argentine territory arrived at its present dimensions; but it is worth pointing out that, perhaps inevitably, this highly complex and varied process was regarded by some Argentines of past generations as a gradual dismemberment of the Argentine territorial heritage, which was identified with that enclosed by the old frontiers of the Viceroyalty of the River Plate. There would then have been, according to this historical view, a splitting-off of portions of Argentine territory which should therefore, perhaps, be recovered.

It may be stated in all objectivity that this alleged design of "reconstitution of the Viceroyalty of the River Plate" never prompted the actions of any Argentine national Government of the past century, much less of any in the twentieth century. The question would not even be worth mentioning in these pages were it not that, nowadays, it crops up from time to time in foreign publications, as a rule - there is every reason to suspect - in bad faith. Unhappily such rash affirmations may arouse something of an echo in uninformed opinion, even though nobody can in all honesty take them seriously, especially when intentions of this kind are attributed to the Argentine rulers in power at the time when such comments appear.

Two events connected with Great Britain which occurred at that period left a lasting imprint. The first happened in 1770, a few years before the establishment of the Viceroyalty of the River Plate, when a Spanish expedition under the command of the Governor of Buenos Aires expelled the British who had settled at a point in the Malvinas Islands. In 1806 and 1807 Great Britain, in another attempt connected with the control of the South Atlantic, twice tried to occupy the city of Buenos Aires, its forces being defeated by local rather than Spanish

elements on both occasions. This gave the River Plate population a self-confidence that was bound to have its effect when, a few years later, liberation from Spain was planned.

The first revolutionary movement in the city of Buenos Aires took place in 1810; six years later, in 1816, independence from Spain was proclaimed. The struggle with the mother country lasted about a decade, during which the nucleus of the liberation movement, despite experiencing some difficult times, was never really in danger. In this respect, Argentine history has differed from that of other Spanish American countries, which at one time or another have seen their revolutions suppressed and their capitals reconquered. On the contrary: Argentine forces under the command of the Liberator José de San Martín brought independence to Chile and Peru.

The triumph over Spain was followed by years of anarchy, civil strife and misgovernment. Twenty years of dictatorship by Juan Manuel de Rosas, the Governor of Buenos Aires, brought relative order but also the suspension and curtailment of public freedoms. Disputes with France and Great Britain ended honourably for what was then known as the Argentine Confederation.

The Rosas tyranny ended in 1852 and Argentina began a process of "national reorganization" which, especially in its initial stages, was not free from controversy or even civil strife, in particular between the powerful Province of Buenos Aires and the rest of the country. In alliance with Brazil and Uruguay, a bloody war was waged against Paraguay between 1865 and 1868. This was the last warlike conflict in which Argentina was involved until the 1982 hostilities with the United Kingdom in connection with the Malvinas and other islands in the South Atlantic.

It is thus worth emphasizing the extraordinary significance in Argentine history of an international reign of peace that lasted more than a century, and that remained unimpaired either by the technical state of war in which Argentina found itself with Germany and Japan in 1945 or by various tense situations which arose with Brazil and especially with Chile in the course of that century of unbroken peace.

The last third of the nineteenth and the first third of the twentieth century witnessed a hitherto unknown expansion of Argentine economic potential. The country's capacity for agricultural and livestock production was utilized, taking advantage of the extraordinary natural conditions; European capital and settlers flowed in at an increasing rate, joining in a spiral of progress that seemed unending. This was the time, coincident with the celebrations of the first centenary of Argentine liberation, when the country seemed bound to occupy a leading place in the concert of nations.

In broad outline it may be said that, at this vital period of history, the Argentine Republic was well placed in an economic order centring on the Old World and on the United Kingdom in particular. Argentina's commodity production ultimately reached the European markets, especially that of Britain, from which it received capital, technology and manufactures. Cultural influence stemmed mainly from France; manpower was supplied by immigration that was largely Spanish and Italian, although other European countries made a significant contribution. One country was conspicuous by its absence from this picture: the United States.

This political and economic order could not, of course, last for ever and it began to change at the time of the First World War, more particularly during the great slump of the 1930s. The world in which Argentina had been so comfortably placed was no longer the same, and it was up to its rulers to find another international setting that would allow the country to continue developing, albeit with different characteristics, at the rate to which it was

accustomed. This did not happen, however, and it seems to be generally agreed that even today Argentina is still looking for its real place in the world political and economic spectrum. As to the reasons why it has not yet found that place, rivers of ink have flowed; in these pages, alas, there is no room even to summarize them.<sup>7</sup>

It is a fact that the outside world became more complex. The United States made its appearance as a top-level Power on the world scene, obviously stepping up its influence on its southern neighbours. Argentina, situated at the opposite end of the Americas, faced up to it from the start. It could do this because its prop and stay were then to be found in Europe; but the political, economic and military might of the Old World was gradually shrinking as that of the United States grew. The Argentine Government stayed neutral during the First World War and tried to take the same attitude during the Second. This time the United States was not prepared to tolerate it, and for years brought tremendous pressure of every kind to bear on Argentina to compel it to change its position, not understanding that, above and beyond such personal sympathies as some of its leaders might have, the policy of neutrality was prompted by traditional historic motives. Argentina had to pay a high price for its attitude, even after the struggle was over, when it was excluded from the abundant direct or indirect economic aid that other countries received.<sup>8</sup> Since then Argentine-American relations have passed through a series of stages, some better and some worse; but they have never been easy and never excessively cordial.<sup>9</sup>

The fact is that, although the Argentine Republic regards itself as a "Western and Christian" country belonging to Western civilization, it has never been a member of the Western political and military bloc. It maintains friendly relations with the countries of the East and is an important trading partner of the Soviet Union. Since 1973 it has been an active member of the Non-Aligned Movement.

At home, the mishaps and losses of direction that marked Argentina's search for a new place in the world from the third decade of this century onwards were accompanied by a political history plagued with ups and downs, in which the democratic constitutional process that had governed Argentine institutional development up to 1930 was henceforth interrupted at intervals by military insurrections that brought to power *de facto* Governments which, all told, ruled the country's destinies for more than 20 years. In the 1970s, political violence hitherto totally unknown made its appearance in Argentina. The subversive activity of urban guerrilla movements, replete with acts of terrorism, unleashed bloody military repression whose consequences are disturbing Argentine society to this day.

There is no doubt that up to 1916 the upper class dominated Argentina politically. With the institution of universal, secret and compulsory suffrage, the middle classes came to power;

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<sup>7</sup> On this topic see: Aldo Ferrer, *The Argentine economy* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1975); Roberto Aleman, *Breve historia de la política económica argentina 1500-1989* (Buenos Aires, Editorial Claridad, 1989); José García Vizcaíno, *Tratado de política económica argentina* (Buenos Aires, Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires, 1974); Raúl Prebisch, *La crisis del desarrollo argentino* (Buenos Aires, Editorial El Ateneo, 1986); Hugo Raúl Satas, *Una política exterior argentina. Comercio exterior e ideas en sus orígenes y consolidación* (Buenos Aires, Hyspamérica, 1987); and Carlos Pérez Llana, *La inserción argentina en el mundo* (Buenos Aires, Edición Fundación para la Democracia en el Mundo, 1983).

<sup>8</sup> This topic is dealt with at length in: Carlos Escudé, *Gran Bretaña, Estados Unidos y la declinación argentina 1942-1949*, *op. cit.*

<sup>9</sup> See: Harold Ver Peterson, *La Argentina y los Estados Unidos 1810-1960* (Buenos Aires, Hyspamérica, 1985). The English original, *Argentine and the United States*, was published in 1964 by the State University of New York.

and the final stage, the integration of the urban proletariat in political life, was reached in 1945.

This process of growing participation by the Argentine population in the country's political life, which was described earlier in brief and simplified terms, coincided with the fragmentation of the prevailing economic system based on taking extensive advantage of natural conditions in the country for agricultural and livestock production, for which the logical market was Europe.

Argentina's fruitless efforts to adjust to the new world economic and commercial situation also had consequences at the domestic level. The policies of protectionism and economic nationalism which were pursued by many countries during the slump, and which were then watered down or abandoned, in Argentina became a permanency and indeed were taken to extremes. A pro-control and pro-nationalization mentality came to prevail in the main political parties and among the majority of the Argentine population, which had come to expect everything or almost everything from the State. State participation in the economy became, in Argentina, the heaviest in the world, outside the socialist States.

Not the only reason but certainly one of the main reasons, if not the main reason, for the deterioration in the Argentine economic situation was the inefficiency of State intervention in the management of the economy. Sloppy management of public enterprises (electricity, gas, telephones, railways, etc.) and the instability and inefficiency characteristic of participation by politicians in economic and commercial activities which are by nature foreign to them were the main reasons why the Argentine economy deteriorated further and further, to levels unguessed at 20 or 30 years earlier.

By 1989 Argentina's external public debt had grown to \$61.9 billion, or 60.5 per cent of GNP.<sup>10</sup> The rate of investment fell from 23.4 per cent for the period 1973-1980 to 14.4 per cent for 1980-1987. Industrial production fell 9 per cent in 1989, and declines of 30 per cent were recorded in some sectors. The number of workers employed in industry is now 65 per cent of what it was in 1970. The unemployment rate was 7.5 per cent of the economically active population in 1989, and more than one quarter are underemployed.<sup>11</sup> The GDP diminished by about 7.4 per cent in 1989 and is estimated to be some 2.5 per cent less in 1990. The mean annual rate of inflation was 298.7 per cent over the period 1980-1987; in 1988 inflation reached 387.5 per cent and in 1989 the astronomical figure of 3,713 per cent.<sup>12</sup>

The Argentine Republic is experiencing an economic crisis of extraordinary proportions, as is demonstrated beyond all doubt by the many facts instanced in the previous paragraph. About half way through 1989 Argentina entered upon a period of hyperinflation, and the crisis ceased to be purely economic and became both political and social. President Raúl Alfonsín, the first democratically elected Head of State, who, since taking office in 1982, would have completed his full term of office as President on 10 December 1989, found himself obliged by force of circumstances to advance the handover of power to his successor, Carlos Menem, to 9 July, six months beforehand.

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<sup>10</sup> *La deuda: Crisis del desarrollo* (United Nations publication, Department of Public Information, DPI 1032, March 1990), p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> Information from *Clarín*, 16 May 1990, quoting data of the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses of the Argentine Republic.

<sup>12</sup> The latest figures reflect the striking efforts made by the Argentine authorities to reduce inflation, particularly since March 1991: 1,344 per cent in 1990, 84 per cent in 1991 and a projected figure for 1992 - probably somewhat unrealistic - of 7 per cent.

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The present Government of Argentina is occupied with the hard task of attempting to emerge from this difficult period. To that end, it has initiated an economic policy that constitutes a basic shift from the policy followed, with some variations, throughout four decades. It seeks essentially to reduce State intervention in economic activity and, conversely, to favour private initiative to the greatest extent. Important public undertakings (such as the State airline and the telephone company) are in the course of being privatized, and others will follow along the same path. In that endeavour the Government appears to be carrying along with it the greater part of public opinion, which has become increasingly mistrustful of the efficiency of the State as entrepreneur.

In the international political order, the present Government of Argentina also appears to have decided to distance itself from the third-world and non-aligned approach that, once again with variations, has prevailed throughout lengthy periods of Argentine foreign relations. Open support for the United States will, if it continues, constitute a momentous break with the past.

In general, it can well be said that the Argentine Republic finds itself at present in a period of "transition" from a centralized and nationalizing economy to an economy of the market and private initiative; from a turbulent period of political history in which military and civilian régimes alternated, to a different period that, it is hoped, may be one of lasting democratic consolidation; from an uncommitted and abstentionist foreign policy to a policy that is aligned and definite.

It is within this historical, political and economic context, and with all the natural errors inherent in all generalizations, that the attempt has been made in these pages to summarize what the Argentine Republic is determined upon in seeking to find its appropriate place in the world. It is also within this context that the subjects dealt with in this study are treated.



## Chapter II

### Views on Security

#### What Meaning is Attached to Security

Not too many authors, either civilian or military, have written on security in the Argentine Republic. To quote Montserrat, "Civilian contributions in a field that extends beyond technically military concerns are practically non-existent"; and he further adds, "for many people defence policy has been an intellectual area reserved to the military".<sup>1</sup>

Roque Carranza expressed himself in a rather similar manner when he became Minister of Defence of Argentina: "It is a subject that we have to begin to examine in Argentina, where problems of this kind have not succeeded in arousing the same intellectual interest as in other countries. In the United States, Britain, France and Sweden, university centres are interested in the subjects of national defence and overall strategy. There are military specialists and civilian specialists. This does not happen in Argentina, perhaps because civilians and the military have gone their separate ways for quite some time; what we need are academic circles outside the institutions connected with the army, where it may be a subject of discussion and interest; we need integration in the intellectual life of the Nation."<sup>2</sup>

The result of the situation noted above is a dearth of academic studies on matters of security. The military authors and thinkers who analyse and go into detail on the matter do so in the context of their institutions and specific responsibilities, with the result that it is rare for their works and thoughts to become known to the public. When military men write in reviews and periodicals on matters of security, they are naturally accustomed to be extremely cautious in dealing with specific problems, which is why in their commentaries and thoughts they normally keep to the level of principles and the consideration of what are in general hypothetical situations.

Consequently, research on the ideas prevailing in Argentina concerning security has to rely less on the examination of specialist professional and academic works, which are not plentiful, than on the study of legal texts, conferences and speeches and on knowledge of the fluid realities of the internal and international political situation of Argentina.

In this latter respect, although in all countries the *internal* political context affects the way in which the international scene is viewed and the State's security itself, that influence is undoubtedly much greater in the Argentine Republic than is usual in the developed countries.

That fact was fully apparent in connection with the preparation of the National Defence Act currently in force (No. 23,554 dated 13 April 1988) and the parliamentary discussion on it. Before, however, making specific reference to the legal precepts that regulate the topic of security at the present time, it might be helpful to make a brief summary of the existing precedents in the matter.

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<sup>1</sup> Marcelo Montserrat, "Ideas de la actual política de defensa de la Argentina", presented at the seminar on the national security of the countries of Latin America in the context of contemporary international relations (Querétaro, México, 6-9 March 1987).

<sup>2</sup> Roque Carranza, "Doctrina de defensa y modernización de todas nuestras estructuras", *Geopolítica* (Buenos Aires), Vol. 12, No. 34 (1986), p. 31.

## The National Constitution of the Argentine Republic

It is worth mentioning that the clauses of the Argentine Constitution concerned with defence matters have not been altered since its approval in 1853. It is laid down in the preamble to the Constitution that "the representatives of the people of the Argentine Nation" met in the General Constituent Congress for the purpose, *inter alia*, of "providing for the common defence".

Article 21 provides that "every Argentine citizen is obliged to arm himself in defence of the country and of the Constitution, in accordance with whatever laws Congress shall enact for the purpose and the decrees of the National Executive Power".

In accordance with the provisions of article 67, the Congress of the Nation has a series of powers relating to defence, with the sole stipulation that it is exclusively the province of the Chamber of Deputies to initiate legislation on "the recruitment of troops" (art. 44). The Congress may "authorize the Executive Power to declare war or make peace" (clause 21); "grant commissions for privateering and authorize reprisals, and make rules concerning captures" (clause 22); "fix the strength of the land and sea forces in time of peace and of war"; and "provide regulations and rules for controlling them" (art. 23); "authorize the raising of the militia in all the provinces, or parts of them, when so required in enforcement of the laws of the Nation or when needed to contain insurrections or to repel invasions. To arrange the organization, arming and discipline of this militia" (clause 24); whereas the provincial States may not, under the terms of article 108, "fit out warships or raise armies, except in case of foreign invasion or of a threat so immediate as to brook no delay, reporting immediately thereafter to the Federal Government".

In accordance with article 67 of the Constitution of 1853, the Congress may "allow the introduction of foreign troops into the territory of the Nation and allow national troops to leave the country" (clause 25) and "establish forts and arsenals" and other establishments in the territories under federal jurisdiction (clause 27), as well as, in exercise of a function of any legislative body, "make all laws and regulations that may be necessary to execute the above powers and all others granted by the present Constitution to the Government of the Argentine Nation" (clause 28).

The powers that correspond to the Executive Power are laid down in article 86 of the Constitution, according to which the President of the Nation "is commander-in-chief of all the sea and land forces of the Nation" (clause 15); "concludes and signs peace treaties" (clause 14), although it is for the Congress "to approve or reject treaties concluded with other nations" (art. 67, clause 19); "fills the military posts of the Nation; with the agreement of the Senate, in designating the posts or ranks of senior officers of the army and the navy; and on his own initiative on the battlefield" (clause 16); "disposes of the armed forces, by sea and on land, and is in charge of their organization and distribution in accordance with the needs of the Nation" (clause 17); "declares war and grants commissions for privateering and authorizations for reprisals with the authorization and approval of the Congress" (clause 18) and "proclaims a state of siege in one or more parts of the Nation in the event of attack from outside" (clause 19).

As may be seen, the allocation of powers relating to national defence is in line with the criteria prevailing midway through the nineteenth century, the period when the Constitution of the Argentine Republic was approved, a Constitution, moreover, that was heavily influenced by the precepts of the United States Constitution, both as regards the republican

system of government and as regards the allocation of powers between the Congress and the President of the Nation.

The term "national defence", which is in general use at the present time, came into current use in Argentina towards the end of the nineteenth century. Draft laws proposing the establishment of a National Defence Council, or a Ministry of National Defence, or both, were submitted in the Chamber of Deputies from time to time, but were never successful. One may conclude, with Goyret, from the discussions on these matters that took place within and outside the Congress that the term "national defence was basically understood as being related to the provisions for the Constitution, organization and coordination of the armed forces", and that "it was claimed, in some not very clear way, to include, as a problem of national defence, an adequate relationship with foreign policy and economic policy".<sup>3</sup>

The idea of "national defence" as having a purely military content was gradually modified until it came to mean that in reality all the activities of the State could find some place within the concept. Thus it was that in 1941 the Act on the Organization and Powers of National Ministries, which had been in force since 1898, was amended to allocate to "each and every one of the ministries of the National Executive Power the responsibility to examine, encourage and protect the interests and progress of the Nation, and to *pay attention to the problems of national defence in the sphere of concern to them*" (author's emphasis). National defence then became a problem for all, and not merely for the Ministry of War and the Naval Ministry.

It was in 1948 that the Argentine Republic adopted the first law worthy of the name of National Defence Act although strange to say, it was not given that name, but "Organization of the Nation in Time of War". It was based mainly on French legislation from before the Second World War and the term "national defence" was used many times in its articles, but it was never stated what was meant by "national defence".

### **The National Defence Act of 1966**

The Act of 1948, No. 13,234, was in force for nearly 20 years, before being replaced on 6 October 1966 by Act No. 16,970, the first National Defence Act properly so called, and one that, although now repealed, still has an undeniable influence, although it is not appropriate to examine it further in the present context.

It is worth emphasizing that Act No. 16,970 was not approved by the Congress of the Nation, which had been dissolved in January 1966 by a revolutionary movement that overthrew the Government of the constitutional president, Arturo Illia. The leader of that revolution, General Juan Carlos Onganía, assumed power as President of the Nation and, in accordance with article 5 of the so-called Statute of the Argentine Revolution, was empowered to exercise "all the legislative powers that the National Constitution allocates to the Congress, including those powers that are exclusive to each of the Chambers". By virtue of this power, which has been traditional in all military governments, Act No. 16,970 was issued by the Executive Power, but it is to be noted that it remained in force throughout the civilian Government of 1973-1976 and also under the civilian régime that governed Argentina from December 1983 until the Congress repealed it in 1988.

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<sup>3</sup> General José Teófilo Goyret, "Equívocos de la seguridad nacional", presented at the seminar referred to in note 1 above.

It may also be mentioned that another of the main documents to come from the revolutionary movement of 28 June 1966 was the so-called "Act of the Argentine Revolution", which set out its "Political Objectives (Purposes of the Revolution)". The Act distinguishes between a General Objective and Special Objectives and, within the latter, sets out those that correspond to the spheres of foreign policy, internal policy, economic policy, labour policy and social welfare policy, and concludes with a final brief objective "in the sphere of policy on security", set out as: "to achieve the integral ability necessary to ensure that the objectives in the other spheres are achieved". It is worth stressing the actual concept of security revealed by the last quotation, since it would bear the definition "the ability to achieve the fundamental objectives of the State". That was not the way in which the same Government defined security three months later in promulgating the National Defence Act (No. 16,970).

When the text of this Act was published in the *Boletín Oficial*,<sup>4</sup> it was preceded by a message to the President of the Nation from those who submitted the draft for his consideration, namely, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship, Mr. Nicanor Costa Méndez (who held the same office 16 years later, in 1982, when the South Atlantic conflict broke out), and the three commanders-in-chief of the army, the navy and the air force.

This message stated that Act No. 13,234 of 1948, on "Organization of the Nation in Time of War" is "inadequate and incomplete because it: (1) legislates exclusively on wartime situations, while failing to give adequate consideration to the needs of national security at all times; (2) ignores such a fundamental fact as the interdependence between the aspects of national security and development; and (3) has ceased to be applicable".

The same message goes on to set out the basic concepts underlying the new Act, among which mention should be made of the need to foresee not only the possibility of external attack, but also *situations of internal disturbance*; that "the services demanded by national defence are not required merely to repel and protect themselves against the attacks of the enemy, but also to act with foresight to avoid the effects on the Nation of natural forces and of internal disturbances caused by human actions, lessening or eliminating their consequences"; that "defence of the country and of its fundamental laws requires an effort not only from the active combatant, but from all the inhabitants of the Nation"; that "the survival of the Nation" may justify restrictions on certain rights, and that "the war effort is not exclusively confined to the action of individuals, but extends to all potential factors", which requires "the adoption, as appropriate, of permanent provisions to ensure efficient and prompt mobilization".

It has seemed appropriate to give, word for word, some of the basic ideas expressed by the authors of the draft that subsequently became the National Defence Act (No. 16,970), because they reveal a point of view firmly in favour of the so-called "reasons of State" as a basis for the adoption of policies and actions that, if necessary, may even turn out to be arbitrary. One ought not, perhaps, to be surprised by this perception of reality, or rather this way of understanding the action that society represented by the State should take in response to a specific reality, in a government of a military nature such as that which ruled over the destiny of Argentina in 1966.

Nor should it come as a surprise that a non-democratic government should attach equal importance as a potential national security threat to "internal disturbances caused by human

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<sup>4</sup> *Boletín Oficial*, No. 21,043 (10 October 1966).

actions" and to attacks from outside the country. In this connection, it cannot be forgotten that since the beginning of the cold war, the larger part of Argentine society - and above all the military - regarded the activities of international communism, together with its ramifications within the country, as the main danger to Argentina. The above-mentioned Act of the Argentine Revolution of 1966 did indeed include the following sentence in the paragraph headed "General Objective": "To strengthen our spiritual tradition based on the ideals of the freedom and dignity of the human being, which are the heritage of Western and Christian civilization".

Although it was frequently pointed out that the values of Western and Christian civilization did not coincide exactly with the strategic interests of the United States and NATO, international communism, with its power centre in the Soviet Union and its regional agency in Cuba, was in fact regarded as the great enemy and as the source of the biggest threats to the Western and American communities, to which Argentina certainly belonged. This view of the world was found not only in Argentina but throughout the Americas, as can be seen from resolution 93 of the Tenth International Conference of the Organization of American States (OAS) (Caracas, Venezuela, 1954), which "condemns the activities of the international communist movement as constituting intervention in American affairs", adding that, if that movement was successful in any country in the Americas, it would "constitute a threat to the sovereignty and political independence of the American States, which would jeopardize the peace of the Americas".<sup>5</sup> Given this outlook, the measures taken against Cuba by OAS in 1962 were not surprising.

As the possibility of a direct attack on American territory by the Soviet Union became increasingly unlikely, the main risk for the security of the American countries shifted to what were called "subversive movements" inspired by communist ideology. In connection with their activities the success achieved in Cuba in 1959 constituted a worrying precedent.

Against the background of this concept of national security, it comes as no surprise - as stated above - that the National Defence Act of 1966 should attach more importance to the dangers stemming from a state of internal disturbance than to the dangers of an attack from outside the country, although paradoxically, at the time of the adoption of the Act, the possibility of any major subversive movements emerging in Argentina seemed remote indeed. Rather unexpectedly, in view of Argentina's political history, the urban guerrilla movement burst bloodily on to the scene in the early 1970s and led to violent repression by the armed forces, repression which, although it was intensified from 1976 when the armed forces seized power, had already started in 1975 on the orders of the then constitutional Government of Isabel Perón.

It is common knowledge that the action taken by Argentina's military government to wipe out the subversive movements, primarily the People's Revolutionary Army and the Montoneros, generated serious domestic and international criticism of the methods used and the many violations of human rights. It is not the purpose of this study to analyse this distressing period in Argentina's history, but it must be emphasized that, rightly or wrongly, broad sectors of social and political opinion believed that the repressive actions of the Argentine Government were based on the philosophy underlying the spirit and letter of the National Defence Act of 1966 and, more specifically, on what was called the "*doctrine of*

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<sup>5</sup> John C. Dreier, *La Organización de los Estados Americanos* (Buenos Aires, Editorial Indice), pp. 73-79.

*national security*". In 1988, this outlook had a decisive influence on the repeal of Act No. 16,970 and its replacement by Act No. 23,554, a topic to which we shall return below.

What cannot be denied to Act No. 16,970 is the clarity of its definitions and consistency of its provisions. It begins by stating in article 1 what its purpose is, namely, to establish "the fundamental legal, organic and functional bases for the preparation and conduct of national defence, with a view to achieving and maintaining the national security necessary for the country to engage in its activities, in pursuit of its national objectives".

The Act draws a clear distinction between these two concepts, which have often been used as synonyms or equivalents both in legal texts and in doctrinal statements: *national security* and *national defence*. Article 2 of the Act states that "national security is the situation in which Argentina's vital interests are protected against substantial interference and disruption".

Article 4 stipulates that "national defence includes the body of measures adopted by the State in order to achieve national security". In other words, "security" is a state of affairs or a situation, while "defence" is a body of actions and measures which the State has to take in order to achieve that state of affairs or situation, i.e. security.

In the Act, both "security" and "defence" are "national", i.e. what is naturally envisaged is the security of the Argentine Nation, not the security of other countries or what is called, in the Charter of the United Nations, for example, "international security". It is obvious that international security has a substantial influence on the national security of each of the States of the international community and that, at the same time, the actions which a State has to take in order to preserve its national security are often international in nature or have international repercussions. The United Nations study on concepts of security puts it very well when it says that "national and international security are becoming increasingly interrelated" and that "security is not divisible ... as between its national and international aspects".<sup>6</sup>

Article 6 explains the fundamental requirements of national security, and they are indeed enormous: "(a) Formulation, planning and programming of defence measures related to national development; preparation and procurement of the resources of the armed forces, and planning and conduct of military operations; (b) Determination of the functions, powers and obligations of all the national, provincial and municipal authorities with a view to the coordinated performance of the tasks necessary for the achievement of national security; (c) Determination of obligations of natural or juridical persons, public or private, resident in the country and of Argentine nationals resident abroad with respect to the requirements of national security; (d) Strengthening of the national awareness of the importance of the problems of national security".

It seemed appropriate to quote this passage in full in order to give a clearer picture of the all-embracing nature of the concept of national security in 1966, which was supplemented by the establishment, in the same Act No. 16,970, of the national system of planning and action for security. The system's main function was to "draw up policies and strategies directly concerned with national security". A "National Security Council" was established, with the

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<sup>6</sup> Document A/40/553, United Nations, New York, 1986, p. 19. An Argentine specialist has a more restrictive view: "National security is *sometimes* interwoven with collective security" (author's emphasis), in Lt. Col. Venancio Carullo, *Ideas y problemas sobre seguridad nacional* (Buenos Aires, Círculo Militar-Biblioteca del Oficial, 1974), p. 153. The definition of "national security" to be found in Act No. 16,970 is analysed in an article by Juan Carlos Puig, "Seguridad nacional y política exterior", *Revista de la Escuela de Defensa Nacional*, (Buenos Aires), No. 6 (December 1974), pp. 47-50.

President of the Nation as its chairman and its membership consisting of the ministers of the Executive Power, the commanders-in-chief of the armed forces and the head of the National Intelligence Agency, but it was clear that the actual work would be performed by a powerful secretariat of the Council.

The National Defence Act of 1966 requires one last comment. This concerns the importance attached to the relationship between security and development. The very breadth of the concept of national security, which went totally beyond the military sphere and covered virtually all areas of society, made the attainment of a satisfactory level of security inconceivable without increasing and sustained development. Article 5 provided that "executive precautions and measures of national defence shall be coordinated harmoniously with those relating to the country's overall development, and shall be formulated in conjunction with them in the various plans and programmes which are drawn up". In accordance with this provision, a national system of planning and action for development was also set up, with a National Development Council and its secretariat.

The operational machinery envisaged in Act No. 16,970, together with the two systems and their Councils and secretariats, did not outlive the period of military government which created them, a further demonstration of that lack of continuity and durability characteristic of most of the bodies and entities established in Argentina, no matter how grand and solid they might have seemed at the time of their creation. The principles and provisions of the Act did live on, however, and became confused, in many people's minds, with the so-called "doctrine of national security", concerning which much has been written and disputed, and indeed there is still debate as to whether it actually existed.

### The Doctrine of National Security

There is no clear consensus about the true content of the "doctrine of national security", for it has meant different things to different people, despite a common substratum in most of the interpretations. The constitutional expert Jorge Vanossi, who was a reporting member of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs of the National Chamber of Deputies, argued during the 1985 debate on the draft National Defence Act submitted by the Executive Power that "the so-called "doctrine of national security" was nothing more and nothing less than the ideological-juridical presentation of the argument against popular sovereignty", i.e. "the source of justification of acts and actions which reverse the tenets of constitutional democracy and establish situations of power free of any control by the governed". It is for this reason, Vanossi says, that "the so-called doctrine of national security occupies a position separate from and standing above the true requirements of defence; and in the same way the worthy connotations of the word "security" are shunted aside and debased". This is "the new version of the doctrine of *raison d'état*".<sup>7</sup>

Somewhat different, although not overly so, is an international concept, not focused on Argentina alone, of the "doctrine of national security" included in the Puebla Document produced by the Second General Conference of Latin American Bishops in January 1979, in which this doctrine is mentioned as one of the "unsatisfactory visions of man in Latin

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<sup>7</sup> Jorge Vanossi, "La doctrina de la seguridad nacional: su inconsistencia jurídica", submitted to the Inter-American Legal Committee and included in the book by Dr. Vanossi, *El estado de derecho en el constitucionalismo social*, 2nd ed. (Buenos Aires, Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires, 1987), pp. 477-483.

America", and described as "Statist" and "pressing the individual into the unrestricted service of a supposed total war ... against the threat of communism".

Senator Antonio Berhongaray, speaking in the National Senate as a reporting member of the National Defence Committee during the debate on the National Defence Bill, stressed another element which has also often been associated with the "doctrine of national security". On that occasion he said: "Unfortunately, through cultural distortion, attempts were made to get us to confuse matters of defence with matters of domestic security. While the developed countries were perfectly clear about which areas belonged to defence and which to security and debated them and legislated on them separately, attempts were made to get us to mix everything up in a single subject. Then, with that celebrated doctrine of national security we were made to believe that our armed forces ought to be our domestic police forces, and that the problem of external security was taken care of by the hegemonistic Powers, in this case the United States". He went on to say: "This whole doctrine of national security serves no purpose. It is rejected by the civilian camp because of its consequences and because it is an ideology rather than a doctrine. It is also rejected by the military camp, because when the armed forces are assigned functions which are not properly theirs, they neglect their fundamental role as the first line of fire in defence".<sup>8</sup>

Many more examples could be given of various references to the "doctrine of national security", examples always associated with authoritarian régimes, impairment of human and civil rights, attacks on democracy, and the role of the armed forces in the maintenance of the internal security of the Nation.

It is remarkable, therefore, that some people maintain that such a "doctrine" never existed.<sup>9</sup> No less a person than Humberto Romero, the Defence Minister, was able to say on 12 February 1990, as reported in the press on 13 February: "The day I find some clear exposition of the content of this doctrine (of national security), then I shall be able to give an opinion about it"; he added that he had never succeeded in finding anybody who could "explain to him clearly what the doctrine of national security meant".<sup>10</sup>

It is true that no one has ever been able to cite with certainty any act, document or statement as the origin and source of the "doctrine of national security"; as a result, it has been likewise impossible to establish a clear and unambiguous definition of its content and scope.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, there is no doubt that for many people this doctrine existed or, what may be the same thing, that there was a common thread connecting various important and traumatic episodes in Argentina's political life in recent decades which, rightly or wrongly, was attributed to the doctrine of national security.

So much so that when the Executive Power sent to the National Congress on 17 April 1985 a National Defence Bill to replace Act No. 16,970, it could assert, in the Message

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<sup>8</sup> *Cámara de Senadores de la Nación, Diario de Sesiones*, 22, 23 October 1986, p. 3516. The opinion of Senator Berhongaray seems to be confirmed by American scholars, e.g. G. Pope Atkins in *Latin America in the international political system* (New York, The Free Press, 1977), p. 181.

<sup>9</sup> The most specific statement on this matter is that given by General Osiris Villegas, former Secretary of the National Security Council set up by Act No. 16,970, in an article entitled "La llamada doctrina de Seguridad Nacional", published in *Revista Militar* (Buenos Aires), No. 271 (January-July 1989), pp. 22-26.

<sup>10</sup> "Clarín", 13 February 1990.

<sup>11</sup> The address given on 6 August 1964 at West Point by General Juan Carlos Onganía, the then Commander in Chief of the Army and from 1966 the Head of the Military Government, at the Fifth Conference of American Armed Forces has often been referred to as the origin of the doctrine. It does not, however, emerge from a reading of that address that there are sufficient grounds for regarding it as the basis of the doctrine of national security. The text of the address is to be found in *Geopolítica* (Buenos Aires), Vol. VIII, No. 25, (1982), pp. 61-66.

signed by President Raúl Alfonsín and Defence Minister Raúl Borrás, that "perhaps the most harmful effect of Act No. 16,970 was the institutionalization of the so-called "doctrine of national security", through the "national system of planning and action for security", a system conceived and developed in order to support an authoritarian régime which defined *per se* Argentina's "vital interests", given the low level or complete absence of participation by society, and which, by confusing the security of the State with that of the Government, ended up by using the national defence system to maintain the security of the political régime of the moment".

In the parliamentary debate, Senator Berhongaray, a member of the governing party, argued along the same lines that Act No. 16,970 contained "ethical distortions" and that "as the bishops concluded at Puebla, ... it is an ideology rather than a doctrine".<sup>12</sup> A similar statement was made by Senator Liliana Gurdulich de Correa, a member of the party then in opposition and today in power, when she referred to "the need to overturn the current legal order, which was tailored to the doctrine of national security and based essentially on Decree-Law No. 16,970 of 1966".<sup>13</sup>

The references to the "doctrine of national security" in this study may appear to be unnecessary or excessive or to place too much emphasis on a topic of the domestic politics of the Argentine Republic. The latter point is true, but the reason is that the drafting and subsequent parliamentary discussion of the National Defence Act currently in force, i.e. Act No. 23,554, demonstrated clearly that the whole business was strongly influenced by domestic political considerations and, more precisely, by recent events in the political history of Argentina, together with the participation of the armed forces in those events.

This is, moreover, evident when it is remembered that three of the four main objectives of the new Act are concerned with domestic issues: abolition of the doctrine of national security; subordination of the military authorities to the civilian authorities; and restriction of the role of the armed forces to combating exclusively external attacks, i.e. the armed forces cannot be used by the authorities in disturbances of an internal character. Only the fourth objective, the strengthening of the joint planning and operations of the armed forces, regarded as inevitable following the experience of the conflict in the South Atlantic, has a direct connection with matters proper to a National Defence Act. All this leads to the conclusion, which the writer believes must be underlined, that the defence and security legislation currently in force in the Argentine Republic was drafted and approved in the midst of *domestic political anxieties resulting from the past rather than in the light of future considerations* more closely related to matters which should be covered by this kind of substantive legislation.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Cámara de Senadores de la Nación, op.cit.*, p. 3520.

<sup>13</sup> *Cámara de Senadores de la Nación, op.cit.*, p. 3529.

<sup>14</sup> There are naturally some people who do not share this opinion. Thus, Eduardo E. Estévez maintains that "to distinguish between the external and the internal in matters of security should not and may not be seen as a fashionable idea arising from a particular political situation" in his article entitled "Aspectos y perspectivas sobre doctrinas de defensa y educación militar", included in *Defensa y democracia*, Gustavo Druetta *et. al.* eds. (Buenos Aires, Puntosur editores, 1990), p. 404. See also Augusto Varas, "Democratización y reforma militar en la Argentina", in *La autonomía militar en América Latina*, Augusto Varas, ed. (Caracas, Ediciones Nueva Sociedad, 1988), p. 60. There is a critical analysis of Act No. 23,554 in Colonel José Luis García, "Análisis de la Ley de Defensa", *Defensa y Sociedad* (Buenos Aires), No. 2 (September 1988), pp. 11-20.

### The National Defence Act of 1988

Act No. 23,554 could be described as having an all-pervading concern about the problem of *national security* or, more accurately, about the "doctrine of national security", to the extent that, although this might seem surprising in a National Defence Act, it mentions the word "security" in only one of its 49 articles, with the statement in article 4 that "in order to elucidate issues of national defence, the fundamental difference between national defence and internal security shall be kept constantly in mind. Internal security shall be governed by a special act".

As far as Act No. 23,554 is concerned, the word "security" means exclusively "*internal security*", a matter expressly excluded from the National Defence Act which moreover, as has just been indicated, does not mention the word "security" in its other articles.

Accordingly, in the words of article 2, "national defence is the integration and coordinated action of all the forces of the Nation in resolving those conflicts which require the use of the armed forces, as a deterrent or operationally, to *counter attack of external origin*" (author's emphasis).

The plan was perfectly clear for the drafters of the Act: their problem was aggression of external origin, the confrontation of which required action by the armed forces. A different Act was to regulate the problem of the maintenance of internal security, which was not a matter for the armed forces. For this purpose there were the so-called security forces (Federal Police, Gendarmeria Nacional, Prefectura Naval, provincial police forces).

The concern was obviously that the armed forces should have nothing to do with internal security or should, therefore, have no excuse for interfering in domestic politics. The third paragraph of article 15 of the Act states this clearly: "Matters relating to the country's domestic politics shall in no circumstances constitute a ground for action by military intelligence bodies".

The Internal Security Act, which at the time of the 1986 parliamentary debate was expected to come into force quickly, has still not been promulgated. The draft is still under preparation by the Executive Power, and great difficulties are apparently being encountered. Meanwhile, Argentina has fortunately not witnessed any significant internal disturbances and certainly no sign of the equivalent of the subversive movements of the 1970s, except for a few isolated incidents. However, the question persists. Will events similar to those of 15 years ago be repeated some day, especially as the hardships, resulting from Argentina's critical economic situation are seriously affecting a large part of its population? If there are any major developments of this kind which grow in scope and geographical extent, will the security forces be capable of maintaining order? These forces are large in number, being some 165,000 strong, with 40,000 in the Federal Police, 15,000 in the Gendarmeria, 10,000 in the Prefectura Naval (Coastguard), and about 100,000 in all the provincial police forces, but their standard of training is very uneven and it will be very difficult to establish coordination among them. Small but well trained armed groups may prove very difficult to control.

Already during the debate on Act. No. 23,554 there had been an extensive discussion of the participation of the armed forces in the maintenance of internal security, and it was argued that what the Act sought to prohibit was intervention in matters of internal security as a "normal" activity of the armed forces, without that meaning that in exceptional circumstances the President of the Nation, acting pursuant to article 86 (15) and (17), of the Constitution, could not, in his capacity as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, order their use when

necessary. Furthermore - it was said - the future Internal Security Act would cover those specific situations.

As already stated, this act had still not been approved, and the very Government which promulgated Act No. 23,554 saw fit, when faced with grave events, to issue Decree No. 327 of 10 March 1989, which provides for the "preparation, implementation and supervision of measures to prevent and terminate the formation or activities of armed groups capable of jeopardizing the rule of law under the Constitution or endangering the lives, freedom, property or safety of the inhabitants of the Nation".

Article 6 (b), of this Decree No. 327/89 provides that "the President of the Nation shall order the intervention of the armed forces in cases in which the magnitude or nature of the events or the materials in the hands of the aggressors so require, and he shall appoint the officer commanding the operations".

On 26 February 1990, a new Decree, No. 392, signed not by President Alfonsín but by his successor and former opponent President Menem, introduced a number of structural changes in the implementation mechanisms of Decree No. 327/89, in fact endorsing them.

These changes of direction prompt questions about the real usefulness of the efforts to orient the National Defence Act in a specific direction - not questions about the motives, which are clear and indisputable, for the reality seems to involve erasing with one hand what was written with the other.

In any event, there is no alternative but to recognize that little of permanent value can be learned from the parliamentary debates on the specific topic of security and defence when the general concerns are focused elsewhere. The discussions do not seem to have very much to do with the ideas which ought to be discussed, and the definitions ultimately formulated do not seem to be the outcome of mature reflection or of profound convictions about the substantive issue.

Act No. 23,554 states that national defence "is intended to provide a permanent guarantee of the sovereignty and independence of the Argentine Nation, its territorial integrity and capacity for self-determination, and to protect the lives and freedom of its inhabitants" (Art. 2, second para.), and that "it is given concrete form in a body of plans and actions designed to prevent or resolve the conflicts which such aggression (from outside the country) may generate, both in time of peace and in time of war, to direct all aspects of the life of the Nation during the hostilities, and to consolidate the peace once the fighting is over" (art. 3).

As can be seen and as stated earlier, the Act does not define security. National defence is "a body of plans and actions", which is not very different from the "body of measures" referred to in Act No. 16,970.

Although the National Defence Act eschews any elaboration of the concept of security, its scope is determined by the limitation that the dangers and threats to be countered must arise from "attacks of external origin". Although it is not stated explicitly, it would seem that the Act is referring to attacks of a *military* nature.

The values which national defence is designed to guarantee are, according to article 2, "the sovereignty and independence of the Argentine Nation, its territorial integrity and capacity for self-determination, and to protect the lives and freedoms of its inhabitants", and it is unlikely that such values would actually be endangered except in the event of an armed attack or threat of an imminent armed attack.

The foregoing would logically lead to the conclusion that, as long as those hypotheses do not materialize, the country enjoys *security*, although it does seem to be generally agreed that

security is a much broader concept and certainly not restricted exclusively to the military field.

The United Nations "Study on concepts of security" defines it as follows: "In principle, security is a condition in which States consider that there is no danger of military attack, political pressure or economic coercion, so that they are able to pursue freely their own development and progress ... security is a relative rather than an absolute term."<sup>15</sup>

Whatever the National Defence Acts may say, there do not appear to be many Argentines, whether civilian or military, who would disagree with the substance of the definition transcribed above. In reality that definition does not differ in any essential way from that embodied in Act No. 16,970, which defined national security as "the situation in which the vital interests of the Nation are safe from substantial interference and disruption". The disadvantage of this last definition lay not so much in the vagueness of its terms, for in the last analysis everything depends on the person interpreting them, as in the failure to identify the authority which was to decide what the Nation's "vital interests" were. Problems arose because that was decided not by democratic means but *de facto*.

### External Security

We have seen that, despite the predominant concern with problems of home security, the perception of security as a situation of the country that might be endangered from abroad remained at all times in the consciousness of those who drafted the National Defence Act and of those levels of government having special responsibility in the matter.

The actual terms of the Act, which refers to the "sovereignty and independence of the Argentine Nation", to its "territorial integrity" and to its "capacity for self-determination", can be understood only in an international context, in which any threats to those values would come from outside sources: that is to say, essentially from other States.

Any review of Argentine history over the last hundred years demonstrates clearly that those vital interests have rarely been at risk and that, when there was any danger, it was dealt with without force having to be used. There is nothing remarkable in the fact that, in conformity with this individualist thinking, Argentina stayed out of both World Wars, for it could very well be maintained that in neither case was the independence or integrity of the Argentine Republic directly threatened.

The result of this way of perceiving Argentina's security was that its armed forces were always ready to repel an attack from abroad but, at the same time, never cherished any ambitions of conquest. Argentina would react to an attack; it would never launch one.

The occupation of the Malvinas in 1982 should not be considered a departure from that policy. The act might be deemed mistaken or counter-productive, but anyone regarding it as an act of aggression, as the expression of an expansionist purpose, would be profoundly mistaken. In Argentina this act was seen as precisely the application of the principle of territorial integrity, as the recovery of a portion of native soil which had been forcibly seized 150 years before and whose return had been patiently claimed ever since. So untypical was this military action of 2 April 1982 that not a single member of the British garrison or a single one of the settlers on the islands was hurt and not one drop of British blood was spilt. This was certainly not the result of chance or of the good luck of those concerned.

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<sup>15</sup> Study, *op.cit.*, p. 2, para. 3.

With this clarification given and the defensive nature of the security policy pursued by Argentina demonstrated, the logical conclusion is that the role of its armed forces is deterrent rather than combative. This was firmly emphasized by the Head of the Argentine State in the Message which he addressed to the Congress of the Nation on 10 May 1990 on inaugurating the parliamentary session, when he said that "the objective of our military strategy is deterrence".<sup>16</sup>

Students of the topic have a similar assessment of the role of the Argentine armed forces in mind, for example Rodríguez Giavarini, when he says: "The external scenario makes it unavoidable that the exercise of political sovereignty should entail being able to rely on deterrent military power to back up the efforts of diplomacy and thus contribute to the attainment of the country's foreign policy objectives".<sup>17</sup> Angel Tello makes this more explicit: "Military doctrine must be eminently deterrent and defensive, because our country is not of an aggressive or expansionist disposition and because we must deter any potential aggressor through the reprisals to which he would be exposed if he attacked us".<sup>18</sup>

This approach to the security and defence of the Argentine Republic, centred on the country's frontiers and on the deterrent objective of its military policy, has been in effect for many decades. Just lately, however, signs have appeared that this traditional approach may be changing. If the trend now emerging should gain strength and become entrenched, there would be an innovation of vital importance not only to defence policy but to foreign relations in general.

In a lecture delivered at the National Defence School on 13 August 1990 Domingo Cavallo, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Religion of Argentina, stated that: "The perception of defence as an isolated national territorial exercise is gradually giving way to the realization that there are common security interests in the Southern Cone, and that it is therefore necessary to respond with one accord to risks and problems which are also common. The traditional conception of boundary-dispute situations will be supplanted by more comprehensive and more up-to-date approaches, together with an integrative and shared conception of security" (my emphasis).

In other words, the Foreign Minister pleaded the case for scrapping individual and nationalist views of security and, on the contrary, envisaging more up-to-date and regional approaches to problems, first of all with the Southern Cone neighbours.

Some days later Humberto Romero, the Minister of Defence, maintained in the same forum that: "Today the notion of national defence is taking on a new dimension; it is no longer confined to the field of application of force. Quite the contrary: we assert that this notion should be viewed as the coordinated and uninterrupted action of all the human, moral and material resources of the Nation to find the channels leading to the integration or convergence of interests in common with other countries, at the same time not neglecting to safeguard the vital interests of the Nation and striving to diminish and if possible eliminate the factors that might lead to conflict situations".

The two Ministers' words convey the idea that national defence now has another dimension, which makes it necessary to look beyond the scenarios of the past and seek the

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<sup>16</sup> Presidential Message of Mr. Carlos Menem to the Honourable Legislative Assembly at the opening of the 108th ordinary session, 1 May 1990. Presidencia del H. Senado, Dirección de Prensa, Buenos Aires, 1990, p. XXX.

<sup>17</sup> Adalberto Rodríguez Giavarini, "Planeamiento de defensa, fuerzas armadas y recursos económicos", in *Defensa y democracia, op.cit.*, Gustavo Druetta *et al.* eds., p. 143.

<sup>18</sup> Angel Tello, "Algunas reflexiones sobre teoría, doctrina e hipótesis de conflicto", *ibid.*, p. 485.

means of tackling the problems of security, which are different from those of other periods, jointly with neighbouring countries.

The resolute support of the Argentine Government for the measures taken by the United Nations in the Persian Gulf crisis is obviously a further demonstration of Argentina's apparent desire to abandon the isolationist spirit, aloof from major world issues, that characterized it for so long.

If any doubt remained on that subject, it was dispelled by the speech that Foreign Minister Cavallo made on television on 18 September 1990, when he announced the dispatch of Argentine military forces to the Gulf, in particular the destroyer *Almirante Brown* and the frigate *Spiro*. His actual words were: "The challenge to world peace issued by the Republic of Iraq is of direct concern to every Argentine. Anyone who thinks that the remoteness of the Gulf or the lack of an Argentine presence in the region can save us from suffering the consequences of these events is mistaken. Such people do not understand that our country is already an active partner in the management of the new world of peace, progress and détente that is trying to establish itself. They do not understand that the attitude of the Baghdad régime seriously threatens this new scenario. In the face of such a situation, indifference implies retreat. It implies backwardness. It implies isolation. ... If Argentina wishes to share in the benefits of this unstoppable process, it must of necessity also take on the responsibilities of those who wish to shape the common destiny of all mankind."

If this way of thinking is compared with that which has dominated Argentine foreign policy so far this century, more particularly during the two World Wars, there is no mistaking the substantial change it represents. It would appear that Argentina - or at any rate its present Government - no longer wishes to go on being a witness who is more or less attentive or more or less indifferent, as the case may be, to world events. It wants to be a participant. Unfortunately for the Argentines, that participation, which was never negligible, nevertheless does not today have the importance it could have had at other moments in history, when the relative weight carried by Argentina was on a different scale.

At all events it is clear that we are at the beginning of a sweeping change in Argentine foreign policy, of a duration and with consequences on which it is too early to speculate. It is also clear that Argentine ideas about the country's security and the best way to protect it are undergoing a review that is just starting. However it develops and whatever its results are, it seems to this writer that the exercise will take a considerable time and that several years will pass before we have a clear picture of the way we are going.

### **The Main Security Problems at World and Regional Level as Perceived in the Argentine Republic**

So far as security is concerned, the Argentine Republic faces in 1990 a scene which in general outline is reassuring.

At the world level, Argentina has never taken an active part in the conflicts waged on a global scale, or played an important role on the international political stage beyond the regional sphere. Even its current dispute with a major European Power, the United Kingdom, about sovereignty over the Malvinas and other islands of the South Atlantic has in practice no direct repercussions beyond the regional compass.

The dispatch of a nucleus of armed force to the Persian Gulf, which was decided upon in September 1990, marks a radical departure from Argentina's traditional international

behaviour and may indicate the start of a new era in the history of Argentine foreign relations. It is still too soon, however, to regard this trend as a firm one.

The Argentine Republic stayed neutral during the First World War and, had it been possible, would have taken the same attitude throughout the Second. Different political circumstances and, in particular, the participation of the United States in the War from 1941 onwards, when the system of inter-American solidarity had developed further than it had in 1917, led Argentina firstly to break off diplomatic relations with the Axis countries and then, in the closing stages of the conflict, to declare war on them. For practical purposes, the Argentine Republic kept out of both conflagrations.

The initial decades of the post-war period found Argentina in the camp of the Western Powers and confronting communism in the context of the cold war. In the Organization of American States there was a genuine ideological community; and in 1947 there was concluded a treaty - the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, signed and ratified by Argentina - for the purpose of giving effect to the principle of mutual aid between members of the American community in the face of acts of aggression or threats to peace of extra-regional origin (which could only come from the centres of international communism) or of regional origin (the setting in which, in practice, the Treaty was principally applied).

While the climate of relations between the two great ideological and political blocs was changing and hostile rivalry yielding place to a dialogue that was sometimes difficult and sometimes easier, passing through periods of relaxation and even détente, Argentina was making substantial changes in its ties with the rest of the world. It was the first South American country to establish diplomatic relations with Moscow as soon as the Second World War was over<sup>19</sup> and, after a couple of decades of correct but essentially empty relations, became a very important supplier of food, chiefly cereals, to the Soviet Union, to the point where that country became in some years the leading customer for Argentine exports. When the United States promoted the so-called grain embargo against the Soviet Union at the time of the invasion of Afghanistan, the Argentine Republic did not join in. The friendly Argentine-Soviet relations withstood the tension created by the activities of subversive organizations during the 1970s, although the authorities battling them understood that they had connections of an international leftist ideological nature centred on various capitals, including Moscow, from which they received direct and indirect support.<sup>20</sup> The good relations of the Argentine Republic with the Soviet Union continue unobstructed in 1990, although perhaps not with the warmth of previous years.

With the United States Argentina has no security problems and has not had any. For various reasons, to explain which is beyond the scope of this study, the relations between the two countries have never been too easy or too cordial. On the contrary, periods of difficulty and even of bad terms have not been infrequent. Perhaps their ties reached their lowest point in the 1940s, when the United States entered the Second World War and did not receive from Argentina the all-round support to which it believed itself entitled. The effects of this disagreement lasted a number of years after the War was over; and it may be said that to this day, more than 40 years later, some prejudices and ill-will that cloud Argentine-American

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<sup>19</sup> Mario Rapoport, *Política y diplomacia en la Argentina Las relaciones con EE.UU. y la URSS*, (Buenos Aires, Editorial Tesis, 1986), pp. 24-41.

<sup>20</sup> Mario Rapoport, "La posición internacional de la Argentina y las relaciones argentino-soviéticas", in *Argentina en el mundo (1973-1987)*, Emilio Perina and Roberto Russell eds. (Buenos Aires, Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1988), pp. 171-207.

relations can be explained only as surprisingly persistent sequels of a particularly unhappy period in those relations.<sup>21</sup>

President Carter's human rights policy led to several years of frequently difficult episodes in relations with the Argentine military Government of the day, difficulties which were finally dispelled only by the reinstatement of a democratic Government in Argentina.

This, however, did not happen until the conflict in the South Atlantic and the firm support given to the United Kingdom by the United States at that time had had a further adverse effect on relations between the two countries. That adverse effect, although superseded by the steady development of international politics, left latent resentment likely to re-emerge in any future situation in which, whatever the issue at stake, the United States might again appear to side with Argentina's rival, competitor or enemy.

We are bound to mention, especially since it bears some relation to the subject of this study, a question which has been a factor in disturbing the Argentine-American dialogue: Argentina's nuclear policy. The Argentine Republic has pursued a nuclear programme which is among the most advanced of those of the developing countries, but has not ratified either the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons or the Treaty of Tlatelolco. This has not been to the liking of the United States Government, which regards as insufficient the repeated declarations by the Argentine authorities affirming the purely peaceful nature of the national nuclear programme and which does not accept the grounds whereon the Argentine Government bases its refusal to ratify the international instruments in question, although in the case of the Treaty of Tlatelolco the position is certainly not irreversible. Continued American mistrust has been reflected in the repeated exercise of pressure for a change in Argentina's attitude, and in this country's refusal to abandon its policy of complete nuclear autonomy.

Having said this, we must return to our original affirmation inasmuch as, even at times when Argentine-United States relations were at their lowest ebb, the security of the Argentine Republic has never been threatened by the United States, at least directly. The last qualification is bound up with the fact that, during the conflict in the South Atlantic, there can be no doubt that the support of various kinds provided by the United States to the United Kingdom inevitably assisted the United Kingdom's position in the war and was obviously prejudicial to the security interests of Argentina.

Viewing matters from the standpoint of 1990, when the Malvinas war is almost 10 years behind us and diplomatic relations have been renewed between the two countries that fought it; when the firm decision to settle the dispute by peaceful means has been repeatedly expressed by the Argentine Republic; when there is consequently no reason why this problem should affect Argentine-United States relations either directly or indirectly; when there is a determination on the part of the Argentine Government to improve relations with the great country to the North; and when in response to that country's will it has abandoned the independent technological development it was pursuing with regard to outer space (the so-called Condor II project), there seems to be no reason why any serious dispute should arise between Argentina and the United States, nor is any threat to the security of Argentina foreseeable from that source.

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<sup>21</sup> Joseph A. Tulchin, *La Argentina y los Estados Unidos - Historia de una desconfianza* (Buenos Aires, Editorial Planeta, 1990).

In a situation in which Argentina has no security concerns with either of the super-Powers and no security problems with other world-scale Powers, this reassuring picture is rounded off by the atmosphere of *rapprochement* and *détente* that now prevails in the world. Although the changes taking place have, of course, no direct connection with Argentina, the new relationship that has been established between the two super-Powers and its vitally important consequences in other areas are bound to strengthen the degree of security prevailing in the world, which has made it possible to absorb the substantial changes taking place in Eastern Europe, and primarily the reunification of Germany, with a minimum of ill-effects. It is obvious that a safe world means a safe Argentina.

The foregoing is especially pertinent because, however aloof Argentina may have held itself from the great problems of world politics and from the conflicts between the two great military alliances, an outbreak of war, even in areas utterly remote from Argentina, may directly affect its security and, more than its security, its actual survival. That would happen in the event - which seems to have become less likely but which can never be ruled out altogether so long as the arsenals of certain countries include such weapons of mass destruction - that hostilities should lead to the use of nuclear weapons. A great deal has been written about the consequences of a nuclear war and it is easy to imagine the effects that a nuclear holocaust, virtually inevitable in that event, would have on the Argentine Republic.

Despite the series of encouraging facts emerging today with regard to the prospects for world peace and for a steady and sustained improvement in relations between the chief contenders in the international arena, the optimistic view of the future is clouded because there will always be a possibility of nuclear weapons being used, if only through human error or by accident. Until such time as those weapons are prohibited - indeed, until they disappear from the face of the earth - the world will never be able to relax completely, however promising the international horizon may look.

In this context, consistent with the fact that neither Argentina nor anyone else will escape the consequences of a nuclear war, successive Argentine Governments of the most varied political stamp have always been in the forefront of countries that have categorically condemned the very existence of nuclear weapons and called for their prohibition and elimination.

In conclusion, it may be stated that today the Argentine Republic does not recognize any perceptible threats to its security on the world scale, beyond those inherent in the possibility of mass use of nuclear weapons - a concern which, furthermore, it shares with many other countries.

If we turn to the regional level, the situation is not the same. Certain problems are discernible which, although they do not imply any possibility of serious clashes in the near future, are nevertheless sources of anxiety for the longer term inasmuch as efforts to keep them under control and perhaps reach final solutions to them are proving inadequate or fruitless.

Although these questions will be considered in more detail in chapter IV of this study, I am bound to point out that the problem of the Malvinas and other islands of the South Atlantic has long been a disturbing factor in the region and will remain so until it is solved; and that, depending on the options open for dealing with the problem, it may give rise to threats to the security of the Argentine Republic. This is a possibility which it would be unrealistic to ignore, despite the fact that the intention of the Argentine authorities is to recover what it regards as part of the national territory solely by peaceful means. There is now on the Malvinas Islands a British fortress which did not exist before 1982. Whatever

the origin of the decision to build it, and for all that its purely defensive purpose is proclaimed, the fact is that there are now powerful forces in the South Atlantic with the capacity to cause considerable damage in Argentina's mainland territory if the occasion should arise. The existence of this centre of power and the possibility of its use cannot be ignored by the agencies responsible for the planning needed to face potential threats to the security of the Argentine Republic.

Another possible source of threats to Argentine security may lie in Chile. With this neighbour, with which it shares more than 5,000 kilometres of frontier, the Argentine Republic has had many boundary problems: some of great magnitude, which have led the two countries to the brink of war on various occasions in the past. Fortunately, good sense has prevailed and the problems have been solved by peaceful means, often after prolonged and complicated efforts and sometimes after incidents in which blood was shed.

This history of problems, misunderstandings and near-hostilities, of a type which Argentina has not experienced with its other neighbours, has inevitably left its mark. Although a very important treaty of peace and friendship was signed in 1985, there are still various points on the border which may give rise to new problems. Past history makes it impossible to rule out the possibility that they might prompt other unintended incidents and a chain of events which might prove difficult to control. There is no doubt that what is viewed in Argentina as an arms build-up on the part of the Chilean armed forces is not conducive to peace of mind or to ruling Chile out as a possible source of threats to Argentina's security.

The situation *vis-à-vis* Brazil, Argentina's traditional rival over the years, is different. Long decades of competition, mistrust, conflicting ambitions and striving for hypothetical leadership in South America appear to have come to an end in the 1980s, when the leaders of the two countries acknowledged that the imperatives of the modern world made a change of attitude vital. Cooperation and integration are now the order of the day, especially since the highly important Act of Integration adopted on 31 July 1986.

The process of integration with Brazil is in full swing, and has continued despite changes of government in both countries, in Argentina in 1989 and in Brazil in 1990. Much remains to be done and the road to be covered is still long, but the process has got off to a promising start and the decision of the Governments of the two countries has proved solidly and firmly based.

The problems between two powerful countries with long borders, facing both common and individual difficulties, have not totally disappeared. But there is no doubt that the climate reigning today in relations between the two is very different from that which prevailed for the major part of their history, and that problems which exist or are foreseeable are not or will not be of a nature likely to create large-scale conflicts or generate serious threats to the security of either side. At all events, it seems reasonable to state that in 1990 Brazil is not viewed in Argentina as a probable source of security threats, in contrast to the prevailing assessment in earlier times.

Argentina's three other neighbours, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay, are considerably smaller States in terms of their area, level of development, population and influence. None of them constitutes a source of insecurity for Argentina. Possibly the only event which might occur in one of them and might cause Argentina serious concern would be a domestic political and social situation leading to a collapse or deterioration in public order to an extent likely to have repercussions in the neighbouring countries, and first and foremost Argentina.

Currently this appears unlikely, but at certain times in the past there have been fears that events of this kind might occur in a neighbouring State.

Lastly, we might mention the situation in the Antarctic, where Argentina, Chile and the United Kingdom claim sovereignty. All three are parties to the Antarctic Treaty, whose extension is due for discussion in 1991. This important international treaty, and others signed recently relating to the exploitation of the Antarctic continent, form a régime which, though incomplete, guarantees that problems which cannot be solved satisfactorily will not arise between the countries pursuing activities in the zone. The use of force in the Antarctic is inconceivable, and for the moment at least, conflicts in the Antarctic, notwithstanding the overlapping claims of Argentina, Chile and Great Britain, would not appear to constitute either a serious or a likely source of threats to Argentina's security in this region.

The issues mentioned in these pages and those that follow will be discussed at greater length in chapters IV and V.

## Outlook for the Argentine Security Scene Over the Next Few Years

Some of the elements involved in the security situation facing the Argentine Republic have already been indicated in previous paragraphs. The text below refers to the short-term outlook.

For Argentina the picture has two aspects, one negative and one positive. Beginning with the former, it cannot be denied that the country is experiencing a very serious economic crisis, which has been worsening in recent years, reaching a peak in 1989, when the annual inflation rate reached the unbelievable figure of 3,713 per cent.

When a country's productive system is in a poor state, when almost all the indicators of the country's economic and social development are negative, when the overall situation facing the Republic is incontestably unfavourable, the inevitable conclusion as far as security is concerned is that the country is not, nor will be in the short term, in a position to withstand an armed conflict of any intensity for more than a few days.

The armed forces, or the "military instrument of the nation", as they are known, have been unable to escape the overall state of affairs. The civilian Government which took office in 1983 halved the share of the budget earmarked for defence-related expenditure. The curbing of government expenditure, which was vital in order to restore order to the public finances and eliminate the principal cause of inflation, did not spare the armed forces.

The words contained in the Message that President Carlos Menem sent to Congress at the beginning of the regular annual session in 1990 are very vivid. He said: "We must point out that the Administration that began on 10 July 1989 (beginning of President Menem's term) faced a state of affairs which was marked by a definite deterioration in the military instrument. The armed forces stood *at the nadir of their operational capability, both from the point of view of organization and in terms of deterioration in their equipment*" (author's emphasis).

Although the Message points out that the Government planned to "restore the efficiency of the military instrument" in order to overcome the "resulting defencelessness", it would be illusory to believe that matters changed much amidst the prevailing economic and social crisis. The efforts undertaken to solve it, if successful, will take a number of years before they achieve tangible effects. Meanwhile, the Chief of Staff of the air force (formerly known as Commander-in-Chief), Brigadier Major José Juliá, declared on 1 May 1990, on the eighth anniversary of the Argentine air force's "baptism of fire", when it covered itself in glory in

the South Atlantic conflict, that there were now "many combat pilots who are currently not being trained because our budget is inadequate".<sup>22</sup>

Thus the situation is clear. Currently the Argentine Republic is not in a position, and will not be in a position in the immediate future, to engage successfully in a large-scale conflict. It is certainly not in a position to embark on any offensive action. Fortunately, government policy harbours no such objectives. On the contrary, as pointed out in the presidential Message of 1 May 1990 already referred to, the aim of "rationalizing our military instrument in order to bring it into line with the requirements of modern warfare and the degree of likelihood that our conflict scenarios will be realized" is based on the premise that "the objective of our military strategy is *deterrence*". However, it cannot be forgotten that the essence of "deterrence" lies in the possession of sufficient power to effectively deter the potential enemy from initiating any action which might in the long run cause him more damage than benefits. Argentina does not appear to be in such a position, and consequently one cannot avoid the conclusion that, from this viewpoint, its security situation is unsatisfactory.

One element throws a little light on the picture outlined above. Of all the countries of the region, the Argentine Republic is alone (except, of course, for the United Kingdom, whose occupation of the Malvinas islands makes it a participant on the south-west Atlantic regional scene) in possessing armed forces with direct experience of combat in the present generation. This experience is appreciated and respected in neighbouring countries in which it is lacking, and there is evidence to this effect. The Argentine armed forces faced up to those of a major Power, and the impression exists that, bearing in mind the huge differences in training, equipment and logistics between the two sides, they did quite well. In certain cases the conduct of elements of the three armed forces, especially pilots, earned international recognition. This may serve as a deterrent factor that can make up for shortcomings in other areas.

The positive aspect of the Argentine security situation at the beginning of the 1990s lies in the absence of acute conflicts threatening the current peaceful situation in the short and even the medium term.<sup>23</sup> Generally speaking, the Argentine Republic has good relations with all countries in the world, and it may be assumed that any difficulties which may arise from time to time with any one of them will not degenerate into conflicts which could pose genuine security problems.

A clarification is, however, necessary. While the concept of "security" transcends the traditional international politic and military sphere to encompass "economic shortages" or "social injustice", in the words of the United Nations study on "Concepts of security", it must be agreed that the present situation in the Argentine Republic leaves much to be desired.

At the same time, certain exogenous factors exist which have the potential to evolve in an unfavourable direction in the future, and this makes it necessary to warn that the rather reassuring picture facing Argentina is not complete and is subject to some exceptions.

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<sup>22</sup> Statements published in *La Nación*, 30 April 1990.

<sup>23</sup> Rodolfo Terragno, former Minister of Works and Public Services and an influential adviser to President Alfonsín, even stated, in excluding a military solution to the problem of the Malvinas Islands: "Once the problem of the Beagle has been resolved, the country has no other conflicts of any magnitude. The Argentine armed forces cannot build up their strength on the basis of preparation for war. *War is not seen as a possibility, and even less as a necessity*" (author's emphasis); in "El rol de las fuerzas armadas en la transformación y modernización de la Argentina", *Geopolítica* (Buenos Aires), Vol. XIII, No. 36 (1989), p. 8.

The major exception has to do with the problem of the Malvinas and other islands in the south Atlantic in the possession of the United Kingdom, over which Argentina has claimed sovereignty since 1833, when the islands were occupied by force by the British. Following the 1982 war, consular relations between the two countries were restored in 1989 and diplomatic relations in 1990, while other steps have also been taken to normalize links of various kinds between the two States. All these steps have been taken and continue to be taken under what is known as a "sovereignty umbrella" agreed upon at a meeting of the two parties in Madrid on 19 October 1989.

However positive they may be, the measures adopted cannot and must not obscure the fact that the underlying conflict, the dispute over the sovereignty of the Malvinas, whose existence, accompanied by an appeal for a peaceful solution, was recognized by the United Nations in 1965 through resolution 2065 (XX), remains unchanged. Sooner or later it will have to be tackled, and a satisfactory settlement reached.

In the meantime, the situation in the area will remain delicate and unstable. The potential for incidents remains, however much goodwill is invested in avoiding them. The United Kingdom, which is in *de facto* possession of the islands, is in a position to carry out activities affecting the present and future of the islands which, in the Argentine view, may constitute extremely serious actions capable of causing a marked deterioration in a state of affairs which the "sovereignty umbrella" seeks somehow to place in suspense. The risk of a crisis breaking out is ever-present, and no one can be sure that common sense, prudence and diplomacy will ultimately prevail.

In any analysis of security not only in the Argentine Republic but throughout the south-west Atlantic zone, one axiom must always be borne in mind: *there will never be full security in this region until the problem of the Malvinas is solved*. This is not a problem which will vanish with the passing of time, nor one that the Argentines will ever forget. When the current President of Argentina, whose term runs until 1995, took office on 8 July 1989, he declared formally before the Legislative Assembly: "I will devote my greatest and most important efforts to a cause that I will pursue on the basis of the law. This will be the great Argentine cause: the recovery of our islands, the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich." Six years previously, President Alfonsín had made a similar statement when he took office. It is not hard to foresee that future heads of State will make the same undertakings on this matter.

This is not a case of territorial expansion, nor of a struggle of minor importance for a few square kilometres of land, whatever their economic or strategic value. For Argentines it involves the recovery of part of the motherland, occupied by force over 150 years ago; it is a question of finally making the territorial integrity of the nation complete. Until this problem is viewed in this manner in other parts of the world, and as long as this wound remains open in the Argentine breast, there will be no lasting peace in the South Atlantic, there will be no full security. There will be a *modus vivendi* that will continue indefinitely until it is disturbed by some event that may be unexpected and unintended by any of the parties.

The risk of a worsening of the situation in the South Atlantic, to which reference has just been made, is complicated because in specific circumstances, if the conflict takes a serious turn, students of possible conflict scenarios cannot rule out the possibility that, in the event, the United States might once again intervene in some way in support of the United Kingdom. It is thought that the existing "special relationship" between the two countries, which has been

in evidence so many times, would once again ultimately prevail over the New World interests of the United States.

Nor can one rule out the possibility, on the same assumptions, of some involvement by Chile, probably but not necessarily covert, in support of the United Kingdom. It is no secret that Chile's support for the Argentine cause in international forums has often been lukewarm and limited to words, while in the practical field it has developed cordial relations with the United Kingdom in the far south of the continent, where British possession of the Malvinas has always benefited from logistic support from southern Chilean ports.

As we shall see in another part of this study, the likelihood of a direct conflict with Chile, and to a lesser degree Brazil, though small, cannot be completely ruled out by any defence planner of average competence. No one can assert that Argentine security will be at risk from any of these countries in the coming years, but one cannot discard the possibility that certain potential centres of conflict may reach a point of crisis and place the countries in question in situations where their security is at stake.

As mentioned above, the prospect of conflicts with Argentina's other neighbours is practically non-existent, and threats to Argentine security ought not to originate from them. Any such threat would probably originate in a serious domestic political social conflict in one of them which assumed extremely serious proportions and had an impact beyond the borders of the State directly involved. In theory at least, a situation of this type could arise, with consequences for Argentina's security if the disturbances - or, *a fortiori*, armed confrontations - occurred close to Argentine territory, giving rise to a flow of refugees, political exiles and other consequences difficult to avoid.

To conclude this chapter, mention should be made of three new problems which are gradually evolving as factors of growing concern in the Argentine Republic's security outlook: environmental quality, drug trafficking and population trends.

The three subjects were dealt with in the major lecture delivered on 13 August 1990 by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic, Domingo Cavallo, who has already been referred to in the first part of this chapter. He pointed out that "at this stage in history, the security and defence agenda is acquiring new outlines and new elements. Our country and our region face risks and problems which hitherto merited secondary attention or none at all". He continued: "The protection, mobilization and rational use of natural resources is an essential objective of the strategy of growth and integration. And consequently, the availability of energy, food, water and key materials must be preserved from external and internal disruption which might affect it or harm it in one way or another. Environmental damage, climatic disruption and change, pollution and degradation of the atmosphere, the land and the sea, the greenhouse effect, deforestation, the depletion of the ozone layer, and the uncontrolled dumping of toxic and radioactive wastes are also serious risks which call for urgent and concerted responses at the regional level".

"The drug issue", he went on to say, "calls in question the values, the institutions and the quality of life of the peoples of the region", so that, pending a lasting and substantive solution, "drug trafficking and drug-related terrorism call for a firm and coordinated response on all sides".

It is true that the drug problem is essentially economic and social in nature, but no one can ignore its serious political and security implications, linked with the involvement of the armed forces. The matter has not been raised, so far at least, within the Argentine armed forces, probably because the drug problem has not acquired the same dimensions in Argentina as in other Latin American countries. Nevertheless, one cannot neglect the elements

surrounding this issue, in respect of which Argentina has no assurance that it will continue to be able to stand aside indefinitely. They have been correctly pinpointed by Pérez Llana: "In this context, the adoption of a scenario of regional conflict associated with drug trafficking is a clear United States demand which prompts serious resistance in many countries, and in military circles in the region. On the one hand, some military figures reject it on the grounds that this is a matter for the security forces (police, etc.), and also because of the fear aroused by the possibility of involvement in corrupt dealings (characteristic of drug trafficking) that would ultimately affect morale in the armed forces. Other circles might be ready to accept the hypotheses involved, to the extent that, as realists, they are not unaware of the difficulties involved in defining new hypotheses, in the light of current political momentum in the region and the problems related to the acquisition of military equipment in a context of widespread shortages."<sup>24</sup>

In fact, the efforts of the United States to "promote a viewpoint similar to the growing domestic consensus in the United States regarding the status of drugs as an issue of military security" are well known. However, for their part, "Latin American armed forces are sympathetic to the argument concerning the linkage between subversion and drug trafficking, as well as the critical nature of the problem, but are by no means ready to accept that the solution involves a kind of domestic war in which they would be the main protagonists".<sup>25</sup>

The views reported above classify the drug issue and drug trafficking as a Latin American regional problem, and that is indeed what they are. For that reason the attitude ultimately adopted by Argentina and its armed forces in this matter will be influenced and must fall within a context which goes beyond the exclusively national sphere.

Lastly, Mr. Cavallo's lecture referred to population issues as elements of the future security and defence agenda. He pointed out that "today the demographic element is acquiring features within this problem area which cannot be disregarded. Both slow-growing and rapidly-growing populations cause imbalances that have strategic consequences, to which our countries must give serious consideration".

It has already been noted that Argentina is a thinly populated country, with border areas that constitute veritable demographic deserts *vis-à-vis* neighbours whose populations, in contrast, tend to concentrate in areas close to the Argentine border or to settle, legally or illegally, on Argentine territory. This situation, which in itself gives cause for concern, will be exacerbated, when, with the scheduled establishment of a common market among the countries of the Southern Cone in 1995, there will be free movement of goods and persons between the various member States. That will lead to an accentuation of the "imbalances that have strategic consequences" mentioned by Mr. Cavallo, the implications of which on the Argentine security scene will have to be kept under constant study.

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<sup>24</sup> Carlos Pérez Llana, "El capítulo Este-Oeste de la agenda internacional", in *La agenda internacional en los años '90*, Roberto Russell, ed. (Buenos Aires, Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1990), p. 56.

<sup>25</sup> Fernando Bustamante, "La droga y la evolución reciente de la agenda internacional", *ibid.*, pp. 223-224.



# **Chapter III**

## **The Domestic Foundations of Security**

### **The Decision-Making Process**

#### **Structure and Functions of the Competent Government Bodies**

As has been pointed out previously, the President of the Nation, that is to say, the citizen who exercises Executive Power in accordance with article 74 of the National Constitution, "is the supreme leader of the Nation and responsible for the general administration of the country" (art. 86, clause 1, of the Constitution), in addition to being "the commander-in-chief of all the sea and land forces of the Nation" (clause 15 of the same article), and, on this basis, "assigns military posts", "disposes of the sea and land forces, and is responsible for their organization and distribution, in accordance with the needs of the Nation", "declares war", and "concludes and signs peace treaties" (clauses 14, 16, 17 and 18). More generally speaking, he is responsible for "the maintenance of good relations with foreign Powers (clause 14). There is obviously a presidential system in existence in the Argentine Republic that is undoubtedly stronger than the system existing in the country whose Constitution served as a model for the Argentine Constitution, namely, the United States.

So much is this the case that the ministers who make up the presidential cabinet do not need parliamentary approval. The President is fully at liberty to appoint and discharge them. The number of ministers in Argentina is limited to eight by the Constitution, the 1898 reform of which increased the original number from five. Although the need for a larger number has repeatedly made itself felt, the unavoidable requirement to amend the Constitution for that purpose has been an insuperable obstacle.

The obligation of keeping to the number of ministers laid down by the Constitution explains why an effort has been made to distribute all those functions that the modern world lays on each ministry by creating, within the sphere of competence of each one, a specified number of Secretariats of State, which are, of course, answerable to their minister. We shall see subsequently what has recently happened to Secretariats of State in the Argentine Government.

The eight ministries that collaborate with the President of the Republic include the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship. This was not always the case as, by virtue of the fact that the Constitution laid down the number but not the duties of the ministries, their designation and their workload varied over time, always through a legal instrument called for by the Constitution itself (art. 87), the so-called Ministries Act. There has always been a Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and for many years there were a separate Ministry of War and a Naval Ministry. The advent of the air force created problems, as did recognition of the need to upgrade the branch of government called upon to look after the demands of what may, in general, be termed "social welfare". In the matter of concern to us, this signified the disappearance of separate ministries for each of the armed forces and the creation, in their stead, of a Ministry of Defence.

The Ministries Act currently in force in the Argentine Republic dates from 1983. Curiously enough, it is in fact a decree (No. 132), one of the first to be signed by President Raúl Alfonsín when he took office on 10 December 1983. This decree arranged the various earlier legislative provisions adopted by the previous military government, especially Acts No.

22,520 and No. 23,023, in a coherent and clear manner, without changing their text. Article 1 of the Decree stipulated that the document would subsequently be referred to as "Ministries Act - codified text, 1983". That document will be the legal text to which reference will be made in this chapter.

To begin with, it may be stressed that the final clauses of the Ministries Act include two articles that are worth quoting: "Article 27. The President of the Nation, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, assumes the functions that are currently incumbent on the commanders of each branch of the armed forces. His powers with regard to war and his constitutional functions in the matter shall correspond to the post of Minister of Defence, to which shall be made subordinate such bodies under the jurisdiction of the commanders-in-chief of the armed forces as the National Executive Power may determine." It should not be forgotten in this context that, until 10 December 1983, the Government of the Argentine Republic was constituted by a military junta consisting of the commanders-in-chief of the three armed forces, who in their turn designated the member of the armed forces who would act as President of the Republic.

Article 28 of the Ministries Act, in line with the previous article, states: "All statutory provisions that require serving or retired members of the armed forces to perform functions of management or leadership in organs of the centralized or decentralized national public administration and in associations, whatever their legal form, as well as in security or intelligence bodies not coming under the armed forces shall be without effect."

The duties of the Ministry of Defence are, in general, the same as those of equivalent ministries in any other country. In accordance with article 19 of the Ministries Act, the task of the Ministry is to "assist the President of the Nation in all matters involved in national defence and relations with the armed forces within the institutional framework in force". The final clause of this latter quotation - to maintain "relations with the armed forces within the institutional framework in force" - highlights what is undoubtedly the main responsibility of the Minister of Defence in a country such as Argentina, in whose political history, especially during the last six decades, the armed forces have intervened so consistently and directly as to bring about the downfall of six constitutional Governments, to seize power for themselves on various occasions and, in any case, to be an almost constant active protagonist in the country's internal political developments.

Democratic civilian Governments have to carry out a policy that is both firm and subtle in order to ensure the permanent subordination of the armed forces to the civil power, as is proper. It is an auspicious circumstance that relations between civilians and the military seem, at last, to have begun to follow the proper course that the provisions of the Constitution and common sense require. At all events, there is no doubt that the work that must be carried out by the Minister of Defence in the difficult day-to-day handling of relations between the Executive Power and the armed forces will never be sufficiently brought out. It is certainly the matter to which the Minister must devote his greatest attention and his greatest efforts.

Various clauses of article 19 of the Ministries Act set out the specific functions and powers of the Ministry of Defence. The mere statement of them, in general employing the same words as are used in the Act, gives a clear idea of the diverse tasks allocated to this Ministry, beginning with the most important: "to deal with determination of aims and policies in the sphere of its competence" (clause 1), and "to carry out plans, programmes and projects in the sphere of its competence" (clause 2). Although these two functions do in fact apply to all ministries, each within its sphere of activity, the tasks that are then enumerated in article

19 are already those specific to the Ministry of Defence, beginning with "to deal with determination of the requirements of national defence" (clause 3).

Before continuing with references to the powers of the Ministry of Defence, it is appropriate to take account of the sense in which certain verbs are used in the Ministries Act. Thus "to deal with" is used in the sense of being directly involved in a matter as a primary responsibility, while "to intervene" signifies to have a part to play in a matter without being primarily responsible.

It is also the Ministry of Defence that deals with the drafting of the budget of the armed forces and the coordination and distribution of the corresponding credits (clause 4); with coordination of the logistic activities of the armed forces in all matters concerned with the supplying, standardization, listing and classification of assets and the end results of joint military planning (clause 5); with the planning, management and implementation of research and development activities of relevance to national defence (clause 6); with the formulation of mobilization policy and the national plan for mobilization in case of war, and its implementation (clause 7); with the registration, classification and allocation of the manpower resources assigned to the armed forces reserve and with the promotion of activities and skills of relevance to national defence (clause 8); with coordination of the aspects common to all the armed forces, particularly in the administrative, legal and logistic spheres (clause 9); with the planning and coordination of civil defence (clause 10); and with the management of the joint bodies of the armed forces that come under it (clause 11). The Ministry intervenes in the appointment process for the higher offices of the joint bodies subordinate to it (clause 12); deals with the administration of military justice and discipline through military courts answerable to it (clause 13), and with proposals on the size of the armed forces and their distribution (clause 14); intervenes in the planning, management and execution of those production activities in which it is appropriate for the State to participate in the interest of national defence (clause 15); deals with technical studies and projects of relevance to national defence (clause 16); with the formulation and execution of national policies in matters specifically to do with national defence (clause 17); with formulating and proposing plans with a bearing on implementation of the purposes of national defence in frontier areas and their execution (clause 18); with the planning, management and execution of Antarctic activity (clause 19); with joint military planning, with determination of the demands arising therefrom and with control of their implementation (clause 20); with the formulation and application of the principles and rules for the operation and use of the armed forces (clause 21); and with the recording, financing, control and technical direction of actions and activities connected with navigation by water and by air when they are within its competence (clause 22).

In this fairly haphazard list of duties and powers, it may be noted that there are some that obviously relate to the essentials of the Ministry's task: those that are concerned, for example, with joint military planning and with the coordination of other operational aspects of the three armed forces (clauses 5, 8, 9, 11, 12 and above all 20); those that are concerned with research, development and the production of materials of relevance to national defence (clauses 6, 15 and 16); those that are concerned with some aspects of the operation of the armed forces (clauses 4, 7, 13, 14 and 21), and those that are related to civil defence (clause 10) and to security in frontier regions (clause 18). On the other hand, other duties are less directly connected with the normal work of a Ministry of Defence, for example, the reference to the planning, management and execution of the activity of Argentina in the Antarctic (clause 19) or the clause concerning the regulation of some aspects of navigation by water and by air (clause 22).

There were three Secretariats of State that came under the Ministry of Defence of the Argentine Republic: for defence, for defence production and for technical planning. The verb is in the past tense because an overriding order of the Argentine Government in March 1990, applicable to all national Ministries, stated that all existing Secretariats of State in the State Administration were abolished, with the exception of those relating to the Office of the President of the Nation. The measure had nothing to do with the appropriateness or otherwise of the existence of the Secretariat of State as a category in the administrative system of the State, but solely had the aim of decreasing public expenditure and scaling down the machinery of State.

It was left to the judgement of each Ministry to propose how many Under-Secretariats it wished to have in lieu of the eliminated Secretariats of State, but an upper-limit was set on the total number of Under-Secretariats that the various ministries could propose.

The Ministry of Defence established three Under-Secretariats to replace the three Secretariats eliminated, retaining the same name, which means that what was done in fact was to downgrade the departments concerned. Most of the other Ministries did more or less the same, with the result that what in fact disappeared in the end were those Under-Secretariats that had previously come under each Secretariat.

Although there is a provisional structure of the Ministry of Defence currently in force (Decree No. 1455 of 30 July 1990), it ought not to be assumed that the tasks and functions of each Under-Secretariat in the final structure now taking shape will be much the same as those that were incumbent on the former Secretariats that they are replacing, as made clear in Decree No. 1960 of 29 December 1988.

Let us begin with the Under-Secretariat (former Secretariat) of *Defence*, the main task of which is to deal with "determination of general policy relating to management of the armed forces and the security forces", and with "formulation of the appropriate plans and coordination of joint aspects in their operation so as to enable the powers allocated to the Ministry of Defence to be employed".

In particular, it falls to the Under-Secretariat of Defence to concern itself with formulation of the objectives, policies and strategies of national defence, as well as with its planning; with the identification of conflicts scenarios, and war scenarios and, as a contributor, with elaboration of strategy for the resolution of conflicts; with the studies needed to determine the potential capacity of the Nation in relation to the policies and strategies of national defence; with war planning at the national strategic level; with the formulation of mobilization policy and the mobilization plan in the event of war; with the conditions of military service and civil defence service; with the classification, distribution and registration of the manpower potential for the reserves of the armed forces; with the logistics policy of the armed forces and the security forces, and with the coordination of their activities as regards doctrine, plans and logistic programmes; with formulation of the military industrial mobilization plan and with determination of the national industrial potential of relevance to mobilization; with the formulation of civil defence plans and the coordination of civil defence; with the formulation and implementation of plans of relevance to national defence in frontier regions; and with education for national defence and the development of studies and research on policy and strategy.

It is also a responsibility of the Under-Secretariat of Defence to plan, direct and execute the Antarctic activity of the Argentine Republic, in line with the objectives, policies and strategies of national defence, and to deal with the administrative aspects of the legal tribunals and courts of honour subordinate to the Ministry of Defence; to deal with matters of joint

interest relating to sport in the armed forces and other tasks already referred to concerning navigation by sea and by air.

There are also other tasks in which the Under-Secretariat of Defence is not exclusively involved, such as its contribution to the preparation of directives for the authorities responsible for carrying out measures relating to national defence; its role in studies and work relating to joint military planning, and preparation of the budget and distribution of credits for the armed forces; its participation in the approval of the plans of the armed forces and security forces for training, education and instruction, and its managerial supervision of joint forces training courses; and its role in the designation of the commands and posts of the armed forces, security forces and joint bodies, promotions, the conferring of rewards and honours, retirements and discharges, etc.

Lastly, there can be no doubt that the Under-Secretariat of Defence is *primus inter pares*, because it bears responsibility for "coordination of all the tasks within the competence of the Ministry" (of Defence).

Although the internal structure of the Under-Secretariat of Defence may be subject to changes, it is to be expected that a number of offices and bodies subordinated to it will survive: the Directorates-General of Policy, Planning, Logistics and Legal Affairs, as well as the National Directorates for the Antarctic and Civil Defence.

Bodies that operate within the sphere of competence of the Under-Secretariat of Defence are the Supreme Court of Honour of the Armed Forces, the Military Prosecutor-General's Office, the Court of Honour for Commanders and Officers of the Armed Forces, the Standing Council of War for Commanders and Officers of the Armed Forces, the Auditor-General's Office of the Armed Forces, the Military Bishopric of the Armed Forces and the Argentine Military Sports Federation.

The Under-Secretariat of *Technical Planning* is the second Under-Secretariat within the Ministry of Defence; it is entrusted with the centralization, coordination and control of the budgetary needs of national defence, for which purpose it has to ensure the rational distribution and utilization of the credits allocated to this sector of the government; it must likewise handle the coordination of personnel policy and manpower requirements relating to national defence.

Obviously, this is the budgetary and financial branch of the Ministry of Defence. Its main function is to concern itself with the preparatory studies and work on determining the resources, including manpower resources, required for the plans, programmes and projects that the Ministry of Defence has to carry out, and with preparation of the national defence estimates, as well as supervising the application of the budgets of the various areas corresponding to the Ministry of Defence, the armed forces and the security forces, with the exception of the enterprises that come under the Under-Secretariat of Defence Production.

The Under-Secretariat of Technical Planning has under it such important directorates as the Directorate of Budget Programming, the Directorate of Investments and Planning, and the Directorate of Manpower Resources, as well as the National Arms Register and the Institute of Financial Assistance for the Payment of Retirement Pensions and Military Pensions.

Lastly the functions of the Under-Secretariat of *Defence Production* are general policy formation and planning in the defence production sector, high-level coordination of the enterprises operating in the sector, and the planning and coordination of research and development activities of relevance to defence.

This Under-Secretariat has to formulate the objectives and policies to be applied by the enterprises, production agencies and companies forming the sector, and at the same time to promote the development of industries that will meet national defence requirements and to identify measures calculated to encourage industrial activities connected with this branch of production. It has to coordinate the industrial policy of the sector with those of other State areas and is responsible for the association, merger, closure, privatization, establishment and winding-up of enterprises, companies and agencies in this field of State activity.

The Directorates-General of Coordination and Entrepreneurial Relations, of Technological Defence Planning and of Labour and Trade Union Activities, the Armed Forces Institute of Scientific and Technical Research and, on a decentralized basis, the powerful Directorate-General of Military Manufactures are directly subordinate to this Under-Secretariat.

There is a whole group of industrial enterprises subordinate to the Ministry of Defence and "characterized by the variety of their production lines, the heterogeneous nature of their legal status and the varied composition of their capital".<sup>1</sup> There are more than 20 enterprises, including limited-liability companies in which the State holds a majority of the capital and others in which it holds a minority share. There are also mixed companies, one State company and one decentralized agency of the public administration.

This last, by virtue of its importance, leadership and share in the capital of other enterprises, forms the nucleus of the State's defence production machinery. This is the Directorate-General of Military Manufactures, which produces in 15 establishments everything from guns and mortars to disc harrows, from machine-guns and rifles to electric cables and hand-signalling lamps, from armoured vehicles and munitions to bogies and blades for bulldozers, from nitrocellulose and sulphuric acid to sheet steel and billets, from explosives to charcoal.

The other great component of the State industrial apparatus is the big steelworks SOMISA (Sociedad Mixta Siderurgia Argentina), 99 per cent of which belongs to the Directorate-General of Military Manufactures.

The other enterprises with State majority shareholding are: Astillero Ministro Manuel Domecq García (produces type TR 1700 and TR 1400 submarines); Astilleros y Fábricas Navales del Estado (AFNE - produces naval and merchant ships, locomotives, nuclear power station components, etc.); Empresa de Desarrollos Especiales (EDESA produces weapon systems, "Albatros" air-ground, sea-sea and ground-ground missiles, sea mines, etc.); Hierro Patagónico de Sierra Grande S.A.M. (HIPASAM - produces iron-ore pellets); Tecnología Aeroespacial S.A. (TEA produces and markets goods and services connected with aircraft technology and industry, etc.); Petroquímica General Mosconi (produces hydrocarbons); Petroquímica Bahía Blanca (produces ethylene); SISTEVAL (ships' electronic equipment maintenance services); and FORJA (wheels; steel and other metal forgings). Tanque Argentino Mediano (TAMSE - produces fighting vehicles, personnel and mortar carriers, etc.) is a State company.

Enterprises in which the Ministry of Defence has a share, but only a minority share, in the capital or which are mixed companies include: Petroquímica Río Tercero (miscellaneous chemical products); SATECNA (cleansing of watercourses and refloating of ships); Fabrica

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<sup>1</sup> Roberto Oscar Tafani, "Producción para la defensa", in *Defensa y democracia, op.cit.*, Gustavo Druetta et al. eds., p. 355.

Argentina de Materiales Aeroespaciales S.A. (FAMA - produces an advanced training aircraft, the IA 63 Pampa, which it is trying to sell on the American market, and has in development the CBA 123, a light transport aircraft, in cooperation with Embraer, Brazil); Integradora Aeroespacial S.A. (INTESA, which is responsible for the development of the Condor missile); Sistemas Tecnológicos Aeronáuticos S.A. (SITEA - produces air-launchable weaponry); Carboquímica Argentina (tar, creosote, etc.); INDUCLOR (chlorine, caustic soda); Monómeros Vinílicos (monomeric vinyl chloride); POLISUR (polyethylene); and PETROPOL (high-density polyethylene).

The enterprises mentioned vary in size and some are on the small side, but two general comments may be made about them: first, that their production covers civilian rather than specifically military requirements, and second, that the enterprises in civilian production are active mainly in the fields of steel and petrochemicals.

Although it is the backbone of the State defence industries and was established more than 50 years ago, the Directorate-General of Military Manufactures has not developed satisfactorily. It never had enough of a market for purely military products, and this compelled enterprises to move increasingly into civilian production. Nowadays those enterprises which did so, and the SOMISA steelworks in particular, are economically the most viable or at any rate those that make the smallest losses and require the least help from the national treasury. In this context reference has been made<sup>2</sup> to four adverse features: (a) the limited export activity of the Argentine defence industry; (b) the limited growth of sales over the years: these industries are selling at the same rate as decades ago; (c) insufficient input by Argentine technology: generally speaking, the factories are producing under foreign patents; and (d) limited participation by private capital, making it necessary to depend overwhelmingly on State capital and investment. It may be added that just lately, in keeping with government policy favouring the privatization of State enterprises in general, a process on these lines has begun in the defence industry field.<sup>3</sup>

Lastly there are three institutions reporting directly to the Minister of Defence, i.e. outside the jurisdiction of any of the three Under-Secretariats: the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, the Frontier Surveillance Service and the National Defence School.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Argentine Republic has the normal duties and functions of any Foreign Ministry, the only difference being the addition to its title and competence of matters relating to "Worship"; this means dealing, in the words of the Ministries Act (art. 18, clauses 20 and 21), with "the Government's relations with the Roman Apostolic Catholic Church and the centralization of such actions as the Church, religious persons and religious bodies may take *vis-à-vis* the public authorities and those concerning the issue of ecclesiastical credentials", and also "relations with all religious organizations functioning in Argentina in order to guarantee freedom of worship and the registration of those organizations".

The assignment to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the conduct of relations, first with the Catholic Church and then with all other faiths, is a long-standing tradition whose origins go back to the functions and powers of the Spanish Crown in the matter of patronage: i.e. intervention by the national authority in giving effect to certain measures adopted by the Supreme Pontiff, such as bulls and the appointment of bishops.

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<sup>2</sup> Néstor Cruces, "Comentario general", *ibid.*, pp. 377-380.

<sup>3</sup> "La privatización será total en el área de defensa", article in *La Nación*, 23 July 1990.

Furthermore it should not be forgotten that in Argentina the State has a special tie with the Catholic Church. Although article 14 of the Constitution recognizes the right of every inhabitant of the country to "profess his faith freely" whatever it may be, article 2 of the Constitution, following directly on article 1 which proclaims the representative, republican and federal form of government for the Nation, goes on to affirm that "the Federal Government shall support the Roman Apostolic Catholic faith". Article 76 lays down among the mandatory conditions for eligibility as President or Vice-President of the Nation "membership of the Roman Apostolic Catholic communion".

The "religious" competence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been called into question more than once and serious attempts have been made to transfer it to other Departments of State, in particular the Ministry of the Interior. Tradition, however, has proved strong enough to withstand all onslaughts and it is perhaps worth pointing out in this connection that the Catholic Church itself has always been in favour of maintaining the present situation, i.e. leaving the management of affairs relating to religion in the hands of the Foreign Ministry.

The fact is that the competence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in matters of "Worship" represents a marginal sector of its activities and neither distracts from nor interferes with the normal functions of every Foreign Ministry in the field of foreign policy.

Article 18 of the Ministries Act provides that it shall be the duty of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship "to assist the President of the Nation in all matters concerning the foreign relations of the Nation with foreign Governments, the Holy See and international bodies".

Article 18 contains many clauses spelling out in detail the various functions to be performed by the Foreign Ministry, which *mutatis mutandis* are those current in all countries. Some paragraphs are particularly relevant to this study, such as those assigning to the Ministry competence "to intervene in the declaration of a state of war, peace settlements or other acts provided for in international law" (clause 8); "to intervene in the introduction of foreign forces into, and their passage through, the territory of the Republic and the departure of national forces therefrom" (clause 9); "to deal from the standpoint of foreign policy with the application of treaties of settlement concerning international boundaries, and the registration and dissemination of the official map of the boundaries of the Republic" (clause 10); or "to intervene in the formulation of policies for the development of frontier areas and zones, and to proceed with their execution within its field of competence" (clause 22).

As to its structure, until March 1990 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Religion had four Secretariats of State; since that date, following the general practice, they have been converted into four Under-Secretariats. Each of these in its turn supervises many Directorates-General, National Directorates and Directorates.

Before the functions of each one, or at least of those relevant to this study, are briefly described, it ought to be said that the structure of the Foreign Ministry has in recent years undergone an extraordinary - it might almost be called excessive or abnormal - number of changes for which it is not always easy to find a rational justification. Political considerations of the moment and even purely personal motives have prompted changes in the Ministry's machinery, which for that very reason has often lacked both the clarity and the permanence that it would be reasonable to expect in the Ministry responsible for the conduct of the State's international relations.

For many years, the Foreign Ministry was divided essentially into three branches: political, economic and financial-administrative, to which was added a fourth, somewhat detached from the main body, to deal with matters concerning "Religion".

There is at the present time an *Under-Secretariat for Foreign Relations* whose head is a kind of *primus inter pares* inasmuch as he is regarded as the second authority in the Foreign Ministry. This is the Under-Secretariat with a relatively wide field of competence, since many agencies are subordinate to it. It includes a National Directorate of Foreign Policy and Economic Negotiations which conducts bilateral political and economic relations with the countries in its sphere of competence through several Directorates: for Western Europe, for Central and Eastern Europe, for North America, for Africa and the Middle East, for Asia and Oceania, and of Consular Affairs.

The Under-Secretariat for Foreign Relations also includes a Directorate-General of the Malvinas Islands, South Atlantic and Antarctic; a Directorate-General of International Agencies (the political ones, primarily the United Nations, minus the inter-American ones); a Directorate-General of Human Rights and the Status of Women; a Directorate-General of Security and Strategic Affairs; a Directorate-General of Multilateral Economic Affairs (which deals with multilateral economic agencies other than Latin American ones); a Directorate-General of Cultural Affairs; and lastly the Legal Council of the Foreign Ministry.

There is also an *Under-Secretariat for Latin American Affairs*, which has under it the National Directorate of Latin American Policy and Integration and three Directorates: for South America, for Central America and the Caribbean, and for Western Hemisphere Agencies and Forums. The National Directorate deals essentially with a matter of high priority for Argentina: integration with the neighbouring countries; and the competence of the three Directorates lies, in turn, in the field of bilateral relations with States situated in the two areas of Latin America and in the field of multilateral political relations, in particular within the scope of the Organization of American States.

The *Technical and Administrative Under-Secretariat* deals with the management and coordination of administrative support agencies and general services. It includes three Directorates-General of Personnel, of Accounts and Administration, and of Legal Affairs - and three Directorates: of Communications, of Electronic Data Processing and of Infrastructure.

Lastly there is an Under-Secretariat of Worship, whose title is self-explanatory.

To conclude this brief review of the structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Argentina, there are a few agencies reporting directly to the Foreign Minister, such as the Higher Council of Ambassadors, the Institute of the Foreign Service of the Nation (diplomatic school), the National Directorate of Ceremonial, the Directorate-General of International Cooperation (which is concerned with the technical assistance Argentina renders or receives), the Directorate-General of Institutional Affairs (which is responsible for relations with other national agencies and with the federal States) and the Press Directorate.

Although in any Ministry of Foreign Affairs there are obviously many areas which are or may be concerned with questions of the State's national security, there are a few whose activity is of major importance. This applies first of all to the agencies dealing with political relations with other countries and with those in the South American region in particular. In this connection, mention should of course be made of the Directorate for South America, which reports to the Under-Secretariat for Latin American Affairs.

Among the offices subordinate to the Under-Secretariat for Foreign Relations, two are worthy of special mention. The Directorate-General of the Malvinas Islands, South Atlantic

and Antarctic deals with problems which, as repeatedly pointed out in this study, form a source of possible threats to the security of the Argentine Republic. Barely eight years ago a war took place in the South Atlantic which has left its mark, and the dispute from which it originated, although under control, continues to exist.

There is also the Directorate-General of International Security and Strategic Affairs, which has recently been set up and whose exact scope has yet to be defined. Perhaps the best way to understand its functions is to know that it originated from the former Directorate-General of Nuclear Affairs and Disarmament. This last-mentioned Directorate-General came into being in about 1980 as a result of the importance of Argentine participation in multilateral discussion on disarmament topics, especially since Argentina's inclusion in 1969 in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva, which then became the Committee on Disarmament and is now the Conference on Disarmament. Argentina held the chairmanship of the Preparatory Commission and then of the General Committee at the United Nations General Assembly's First Special Session on Disarmament in 1978; it established a Special Embassy to the Conference on Disarmament in 1982, and President Alfonsín was a member of the so-called Group of Six with effect from the initial Declaration of 22 May 1984.

In the past, disarmament topics, together with all questions relating to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including those connected with the International Atomic Energy Agency, were handled within the United Nations Division, which came under the Directorate of International Agencies. As already mentioned, the growing importance of these matters, whose interconnection was in some degree imposed upon Argentina by the mistrust felt in some developed countries at its growing and significant progress in the nuclear field and the possibility dismissed countless times by successive Argentine Governments - that that progress would be utilized to produce nuclear weapons, led the Foreign Ministry to establish a special office, the Directorate of Nuclear Affairs and Disarmament.

Recently, in 1989, a new element was added to the Directorate, space-related affairs, and its name was changed to the Directorate-General of International Security and Nuclear and Space-Related Affairs. The word "disarmament" was dropped and the concept of "international security" was introduced in its place. The actual scope of this latest change is still not very clear. Even less so is the even more recent change in 1990, when the Directorate was renamed the "Directorate-General of International Security and Strategic Affairs". The new element, strategic affairs, has not so far involved any change in competence, since the decision to change the name makes it clear that the mission and functions of the new Directorate-General "coincide with those of the former Directorate-General of International Security and Nuclear and Space-Related Affairs". "Strategic affairs" would thus appear to be the same as "Nuclear and Space-Related Affairs", which is obviously a very debatable point.

There is every indication that the changes in the name of this Directorate-General, and especially the introduction of the concepts of "international security" and "strategic affairs", should be viewed with caution. They give the impression that the titles have been changed, at least seemingly, without a thorough study of the extremely significant way in which the functions of the former Directorate were being altered. At the same time, the tasks of the Directorate may in fact be expected to extend to new fields, although not so far as to put into practice the mission implied by its title. Although in principle the words "international security" appear to be given a general meaning, as in the Charter of the United Nations, in

fact special participation by this Directorate in the specific area of the national security of the Argentine Republic is increasing.

In any event, it appears obvious that the Foreign Ministry delegates to the meetings (to which we shall refer later) held under the aegis of the Ministry of Defence with representatives of various State bodies to plan Argentina's short, medium and long-term security policy will come chiefly from the three areas mentioned, namely, the Directorate for South America, the Directorate-General of the Malvinas Islands, South Atlantic and Antarctic, and the Directorate-General of International Security and Strategic Affairs. Naturally, this does not exclude occasional representatives from other branches of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or representatives who are higher-ranking than the officials of the three above-mentioned Directorates.

Mention should be made of one last Ministry body that may possibly participate in security issues: the Higher Council of Ambassadors. Although it was established by the Foreign Service Act (No. 20,957 of 22 May 1975) with the mandate of "advising the Ministry in foreign policy matters and matters of special relevance to the general management of the Ministry" (art. 26), it was recently activated in 1990, with the appointment, as members, of eight ambassadors with long experience in foreign service. The possibility naturally exists that among the matters concerning which the Minister for Foreign Affairs requests the opinion of the Higher Council of Ambassadors, there may be and this in fact has occurred - issues relating to the security of the Nation.

The other national ministries do not have functions specifically connected with national security, unless one takes the view that in practice all State activity relates, to a greater or lesser degree, to defence. Even from this point of view, however, it does not appear necessary to describe in detail the responsibilities and functions of each Ministry or to explain their organization charts.

In the case of the Ministry of the Interior only, it should be mentioned that the Ministry's Act gives it the competence to "deal with matters involving the exercise of internal security police authority, and the coordination of functions and jurisdiction of the national, provincial and territorial police forces" (art. 17, clause 6), and to "act to create favourable conditions for establishing population units in areas of low demographic density and geopolitical interest" (clause 18).

### **Principal Legislative Provisions on Security and Essential Characteristics of the Decision-Making Process in this Area**

Reference was made in chapter II, section The National Defence Act of 1988, to the most important legal instrument on security currently existing in Argentina, namely, the National Defence Act (No. 23,554). We shall again refer to this instrument in this section.

Before doing so, however, it should be emphasized that State action regarding questions relating to national security is not as far-reaching as it should be, perhaps because of the sensitive nature of the matters involved, or perhaps because the economic crisis besetting the country takes up most if not all of the Government's energy.

Two years after ratification of the Defence Act, the Executive Power has not yet established its consequential regulations. The Special Internal Security Act, provided for in article 4 of Act No. 23,554 in the context of the controversy over the limitation of the concept of national defence to dealing with attacks of external origin, has not yet been referred to

Congress. Doubts as to whether the bill has even been drawn up have been dispelled,<sup>4</sup> but what is certain is that, at the time these lines are being written, the text has not yet been submitted to Parliament.

The President of the Republic himself, in his Message to Parliament on 1 May 1990, had to acknowledge that "devoted work has been done on the formulation of the regulations relating to the Defence Act, the Internal Security Act, the Defence Production Organization Act, and the Territorial Organization and Mobilization for Defence Act, and on the reform of the organization acts relating to the Gendarmería Nacional and the Prefectura Naval Argentina (Coastguard), the State Secrets Act, and the Information and Intelligence Act". The Message simply states that those issues are being worked on, but there is no indication of when they will be ripe for action or when the respective bills will be submitted to Parliament. Furthermore, most of the above-mentioned Acts are covered by the preliminary texts which Act No. 23,554 (transitional arts. 45 and 46) orders the National Defence Council, to which we will refer later, to prepare "within a period of not more than 365 days".

It is paradoxical that this relative inertia should exist at a time when, generally speaking, there is a consensus to the effect that the broad issues discussed in the preceding paragraph have recently undergone extensive changes, as a result of experience at the world level and the experience of Argentina itself, which has suffered an armed conflict for the first time in 100 years and entered a stage of democratic civilian governments which, one assumes, are here to stay. All this requires adaptation of the legislation currently in force, or, when such legislation does not exist, the enactment of completely new provisions. Current legislation is insufficient, outdated or simply deficient.

The fundamental law, the National Defence Act, establishes what it terms a *national defence system*, with defined purposes and structural mechanisms.

The *aims* of the system are the following:

1. To identify conflict scenarios, including those which will have to be treated as liable to give rise to war;
2. To elaborate on war scenarios, establishing the means to be used in each case;
3. To formulate plans for the appropriate preparation of the entire Nation for the possible armed conflict;
4. To prepare plans for conducting national defence at the military and operational strategy levels;
5. To prosecute the war in all its aspects, from the national strategy level;
6. To lead the armed forces and the effort of the sectors of the country affected by the armed conflict, at the military and operational strategy levels;
7. To prepare and execute the national mobilization measures;
8. To ensure execution of joint military operations by the armed forces and, if necessary, any combined operations that might take place;
9. To identify common interest scenarios in order to pave the way for the necessary and adequate alliances, so as appropriately to meet the possibility of an actual outbreak of war;
10. To monitor post-war actions.

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<sup>4</sup> Comments published in *Clarín*, 27 July 1990.

In short, it can be seen that the system provides for all stages of planning for possible conflicts, national mobilization if necessary, the prosecution of the war in all its aspects and the monitoring of post-war actions.

To achieve all the objectives mentioned above, the National Defence Act establishes a structure comprising:

1. The President of the Nation;
2. The National Defence Council;
3. The Congress of the Nation, exercising the powers conferred upon it by the Constitution for dealing with defence-related issues, and, on an ongoing basis, through the Defence Committees of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Nation;
4. The Ministry of Defence;
5. The Joint General Staff of the armed forces;
6. The army, navy and air force of the Argentine Republic;
7. The so-called security forces, i.e. the Gendarmería Nacional and the Argentine Coastguard;
8. The people of the Nation, through their active participation in essential defence matters, both in peacetime and wartime, in accordance with the provisions governing mobilization, military service and civil defence service.

Some of the institutions mentioned above have already been referred to in this study, while others have not. In any event, an explanation should be given of how the National Defence Act intends them to participate in the national defence system.

It is the responsibility of the *President of the Nation*, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, to direct national defence and lead the armed forces, as established in the Constitution.

With the assistance of the National Defence Council, the President will determine the content and guidelines for national defence planning, monitoring its preparation and execution, and should the situation arise, will be responsible for the overall prosecution of the war.

The military prosecution of the war, on the other hand, is the responsibility of the President of the Nation with the aid and advice, not of the National Defence Council, but of the Minister of Defence, the Chief of the Joint General Staff and the Chiefs of the General Staff of each branch of the armed forces, meeting as a *Crisis Committee* (a term that is perhaps inaccurate given the "political" nature of crises; a more appropriate term would have been Military Committee or War Committee).

The *Minister of Defence* is given extensive residual competence, the National Defence Act stipulating that, without prejudice to the powers already conferred on him under the Ministries Act, the Minister of Defence shall direct, order and coordinate defence activities not reserved for, or directly carried out by, the President and not explicitly attributed by the Defence Act to another official, institution or body.

The Ministry of Defence has to act as a working body of the National Defence Council and to appoint an official to serve as Secretary of the Council.

The *National Defence Council*, an institution specifically established under Act No. 23,554, has not in fact played the leading role conferred on it by the Act, having met rarely, if at all.

The Council has a purely advisory role, since the Act explicitly states that its President, the President of the Nation, "who shall adopt the decisions in all cases" (art. 14). The

Council is composed of the Vice-President of the Nation, all the cabinet ministers and "the head of the highest-ranking intelligence agency", a description that does not specify who that official shall be, since this will depend on the final reorganization of the State's intelligence services.

In addition to the *ex officio* members indicated above, others, such as the Chief of the Joint General Staff and the Chiefs of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, may accompany the Minister of Defence "whenever the Minister deems necessary". And the Presidents of the Defence Committees of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, as well as two members of each of these Committees, "are authorized to be members of the National Defence Council", i.e. to be participating members on certain occasions, but the Act does not indicate who decides when this should happen.

There is no doubt, however, about who decides on participation in meetings of the Council by other authorities, or, by invitation, by members of other bodies or persons whose knowledge or competence is of value for dealing with specific matters, all of which, according to the Act, is decided on by the President of the Nation.

The basic function of the National Defence Council is to assist and advise the President in identifying conflicts, conflict scenarios and war scenarios, and adopting strategies, identifying possible common interests and preparing plans and coordinating actions required to meet such situations. As indicated above, the National Defence Council has not, at least so far, performed the tasks assigned to it under the National Defence Act.

As stated in a previous chapter, the National Defence Act, adopted in 1988, had two main goals above all: to eliminate, in the aftermath of Argentina's recent political history, the possibility of participation by the armed forces in the country's internal affairs, and to strengthen the planning and joint operation of the armed forces, as a result of the harsh lesson learned during the South Atlantic conflict in 1982. We shall return to the first goal later.

The National Defence Act attaches great significance to the role of the Joint General Staff, which will be responsible, as stated in the Act (art. 17), for formulating joint military doctrine; elaborating joint military planning; directing joint military training, and monitoring operational strategic planning and the effectiveness of joint military action. The Joint General Staff also assists and advises the Minister of Defence, to whom it reports, in matters of military strategy.

The military strategy planning incumbent on the Joint General Staff may involve the establishment of joint operational strategic commands, separate or combined, and territorial commands, whose commanders will be appointed by the President of the Nation, to whom they will report in the event of war or armed conflict. For planning and training purposes, the Act adds, they will report to the Minister of Defence, but through the Chief of the Joint General Staff of the Armed Forces.

The Joint General Staff constitutes the working body of the Crisis Committee, which, as stated earlier, is the body that is established to assist and advise the President of the Nation when there is a state of war and the President is responsible for the military prosecution of the war.

The Joint General Staff constitutes a body composed of personnel of the three armed forces and headed by a high-ranking officer appointed by the President from among those with the most seniority.

The *Argentine armed forces* are, naturally, made up of the army, the navy and the air force, but it should be pointed out that the National Defence Act stipulates that their composition, size and deployment shall be the outcome of joint military planning. At the

same time, their organization and functioning will be based on the criteria of joint organization and efficiency, the functions, activities and services that are not specifically linked to a particular branch being unified.

The Chiefs of the General Staff of each branch of the armed forces govern and administer each one and report to the Minister of Defence. They are required to maintain a working relationship with the Joint General Staff, for the purposes of "joint military action", as stated in the Act.

It is perhaps unnecessary to point out the frequency with which Act No. 23,554 uses the word "joint". There is no doubt whatsoever that the Act places the greatest possible emphasis on the need for military planning and action to be carried out jointly and to put an end once and for all to independent or badly-coordinated operations by each branch, to which much of the responsibility for the results of the South Atlantic conflict was attributed.

Obviously, it may be thought that the purposes of the Act, or, at any rate what is desirable in theory, is one thing, and the way in which those goals are achieved is another very different thing, especially if they go against decades in which each branch acted for itself, separately and often in competition and even rivalry with the other two. There is, however, every indication that determined efforts are being made to achieve joint planning and that the goals of the Act are on the way to being attained. Unfortunately, the most convincing evidence that those goals have been achieved would be provided by the armed forces' performance in another armed conflict, which certainly nobody wants. There are, however, other ways of judging to what extent the strengthening of the Joint General Staff is actually being achieved. So far, the signs are that satisfactory progress is being made towards the objective sought.

The National Defence System also comprises the so-called *Security Forces*, the Gendarmería Nacional and the Coastguard. The former was established in 1938 as a federal militarized police force, but over the years its competence has gradually been modified through numerous decrees and laws. It is basically a security and judicial police force with federal authority, controls and supervises borders, acts as an auxiliary police force in Customs, migration and health matters, and guards strategic objectives throughout the country (such as nuclear facilities), etc. It has always had close ties with the army and at various times has been directly subordinate to it. At other times it has come under the Ministry of the Interior and it is currently subordinate to the Ministry of Defence, in all matters relating to its organization, deployment, staff, resources, training, administration, system of justice, management and discipline. Nevertheless, the Gendarmería Nacional continues to be functionally subordinate to the respective administrative commissions of the Army General Staff in the areas of finance, logistics, resources and accounting.

Just as the Gendarmería Nacional is responsible for the control and supervision of land frontiers, the Argentine Coastguard has a similar responsibility with regard to territorial seas and rivers. Its characteristics are similar to those of similar bodies in other countries. The history of the Coastguard's position within the pattern of authority is not much different from that of the Gendarmería Nacional, except that in this case the special link was always with the navy, although it is currently subordinate to the Ministry of Defence.

The Defence Act stipulates that, without prejudice to the organizational and functional subordination of the two security forces to the Ministry of Defence, in the event of war their human and material resources may be totally or partially allocated to operational strategic commands and territorial commands, in accordance with the relevant planning.

In the National Defence System provided for in Act No. 23,554 the *people* of the Nation, to whom various duties are assigned also have a role to play. The Act stipulates that "all natural and/or legal persons subject to Argentine law may be called on for the purposes of fulfilment of obligations intended to ensure national defence" (art. 25). This so-called "national defence service" may take different forms, which are indicated below.

*Military service* is service performed by Argentines who have entered the armed forces by conscription or are in the reserve, when they have been summoned by the Government in accordance with article 21 of the Constitution, or when they have joined up voluntarily. At present the entire system of compulsory military service is being seriously questioned. Although it is acknowledged that this system has in the past, brought major benefits which have not been of a military nature only but have had an impact on the "Argentinization" of a country of immigrants and in bringing literacy and education to young people with serious deficiencies in those fields, a major school of thought maintains that the requirements of modern warfare are now different, that it requires specialized knowledge which is not normally within the reach of conscripts enlisted temporarily but is within the reach of professional forces, smaller in number but better trained, technically qualified and, therefore, much more efficient. According to this point of view, the system of national conscription is too complicated, cumbersome and slow, and should therefore be eliminated in favour of volunteer armed forces. Others believe that, without going as far as a wholesale change, military service should be substantially revised. It could be said that there is a consensus in Argentina that the current system should be thoroughly revamped. The consensus disappears when the question is what must be changed, which model must be aimed at and when this must be done. This is one of the issues that must be dealt with by the bills which, in accordance with article 46 of the National Defence Act, the National Executive Power was to prepare, with the help of the National Defence Council, within a period of not more than 365 days.

*Civil defence service* consists of the obligation on the inhabitants of Argentina to perform non-military services, in order to help prepare the country for the possibility of a war or, if conflict has been declared, to support the war effort.

*Civil defence* is understood to mean the various non-aggressive measures and activities aimed at avoiding, eliminating or diminishing the impact of war, the forces of nature or any other disaster on the general public and their property, helping to restore the normal rhythm of life in the affected areas.

The National Defence Act enables the National Executive, in the event of war or imminent war, to requisition services or goods to meet national defence needs.

The inhabitants of the Nation and legal entities with headquarters in Argentina are obliged, within the limits of national defence needs, to supply information, provide goods and perform services as may be required by the competent authorities. These obligations are an unavoidable public responsibility, which will be compensated or remunerated as the case may be; if there is disagreement, the amount will be set by the courts.

The previous paragraphs have contained a summary of the basic features of the National Defence System in force in the Argentine Republic, as provided for in the relevant Act, No. 23,554.

As stated above, one of the essential purposes of the Act was to make impossible the organic participation of the armed forces in the country's internal affairs. Thus, article 2 of the Act links national defence exclusively with "attacks of external origin". Similarly, article 15, which refers to the production of information and intelligence required for the national

defence strategy, contains an explicit prohibition: "questions relating to the country's internal policy may in no circumstances constitute working hypotheses for military intelligence agencies".

It should be made clear that the drafters of the Act themselves made a point of stating that the Act in no way prevented the President in a situation of national emergency, from exercising his powers as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, conferred on him by article 86 of the Constitution, to decide that the armed forces should be used in internal conflicts. What the Act seeks to prevent is that this possibility should be provided for, in the context of national defence, as a *normal* activity of the armed forces. For this reason it was established that internal security would be governed by a special law.

Less than one year after approval of Act No. 23,554, and as a result of a subversive attack on a military barracks at La Tablada on 23 January 1989, the Executive Power found itself obliged to establish, by Decree No. 83 of 25 January, a *Security Council*, within the purview of the Office of the President of the Nation, with responsibility for advising the President "on any matters he may submit to it for consideration in connection with measures to be adopted in order to forestall any act of organized violence which endangers the security, life, property or liberty of the inhabitants of the Nation or places at risk any of its institutions or property, and to submit to the Federal Courts any information that might be useful for the investigation and trial of such acts".

This Security Council was composed of the Ministers of the Interior, Defence, and Foreign Affairs and Worship, the Secretary for State Intelligence, and the Chiefs of the Joint General Staff and the general staffs of the Armed Forces.

With the adoption of this decree, the participation of the armed forces in dealing with internal security problems, at least in an advisory capacity became a fact, despite the firm intentions underlying the National Defence Act.

However, this was not enough, and in March 1989 more vigorous steps were taken to deal with matters of organization. The purpose of Decree No./327/89 was to establish "the organizational and functional bases for the preparation, implementation and monitoring of measures to prevent and forestall the formation of, or activities by, armed groups capable of endangering the application of the Constitution or threatening the lives, freedom, property or safety of the inhabitants of the Nation" (art. 1).

As for the implementation of Decree No. 327, the measures provided for in article 1 are the responsibility, in the first place, of the police forces or the security force (Gendarmeria Nacional or Coastguard); the latter is able to respond in a more prompt and well-prepared manner in order to deal with aggression and control the situation. Nevertheless, "where the magnitude or nature of the events, or the equipment possessed by the aggressors, so require", the President may order the use of the armed forces and appoint an armed forces officer as head of the operation, whose orders will also be followed by the security and police force personnel assigned to the operation.

The preamble to the decree and article 7 make reference to intervention in situations of this kind by agencies in the National Intelligence System, despite the ban on participation by military intelligence agencies in domestic policy matters, which is set out in article 15 of Act No. 23,554 and expressly referred to in the decree. The fourth preambular paragraph of Decree No. 327 provides, in particular, that domestic policy matters are "quite distinct from those covered by the present decree". Hence the authorization granted by the decree for intelligence agencies to cooperate to "prevent and neutralize" the activities of the armed groups referred to in article 1.

Where machinery is concerned, Decree No. 327 sets up an *Internal Security Committee*, with variable membership depending on the crisis situations which arise. Its members must also be members of the Security Council set up under Decree No. 83/89, referred to above, but the initial membership of the Internal Security Committee was as follows: Minister of the Interior, Minister of Defence, Chief of the Joint General Staff, Secretary for State Intelligence and two other officials - the Attorney-General of the Nation (whose participation in the Security Council was at the discretion of the President) and the Secretary of the Council (appointed by the President).

Decree No. 327/89 opened up the possibility of institutionalized participation by the armed forces in internal security matters - the very development that the National Defence Act was particularly concerned to avoid. A bloody episode involving an armed group was enough to shatter the structure so carefully built up by Act No. 23,554 against the background of a past which it was thought had been left behind.

It would seem that reality ultimately prevails over plans devised with the best of intentions. This at least has proved to be the case in the Argentine Republic. One cannot even invoke the argument that the Government had changed, or that the passage of time had rendered the arrangements under the Act obsolete. The Act was adopted in 1988 and Decree No. 327 in 1989, and, more importantly, Executive Power was in the hands of President Alfonsín throughout. He was the author of the Message to Congress accompanying the National Defence Bill; his party, with a majority in the Chamber of Deputies, played an active part in drafting the Bill; but it was also he who promulgated Decree No. 327. There is no reason to doubt that he did so because he deemed it necessary in the circumstances.

On 26 February 1990, a new President, Carlos Menem, promulgated another decree on this subject, No. 392/90, introducing further changes in the implementation machinery and adding to the eventualities mentioned in article 1 of Decree No. 327 the possibility of "a state of internal disturbance so serious" as to endanger the property referred to in article 1.

Decree No. 392/90, amending Decree No. 327/89 and the earlier Decree No. 83/89, abolished the Security Council set up under the latter and entrusted its functions to the National Defence Council set up under Act No. 23,554 in other words, the circle is completed through the allocation to a body set up under the National Defence Act of tasks which the Act specifically excluded from its scope by stipulating that they would be the subject of a future Act.

At the same time, Decree No. 392/90 reorganized the Internal Security Committee, and provided that it be composed of fewer members - only the Ministers of the Interior and Defence, the Chief of the Joint General Staff and the Secretary for State Intelligence, though the President may authorize attendance by any other official who, in his view, should participate in the Committee's meetings.

In order to prevent occurrences such as those referred to in article 1, the Internal Security Committee may draw up plans coordinating possible joint actions by the police forces, the security forces and the armed forces.

It seems clear that if in the future the Executive sends to Parliament an Internal Security Bill, its content will be based, at least in part, on the provisions of the decrees just mentioned.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Some time after completion of the draft of this publication, the Argentine Congress, on 18 December 1991, finally adopted Act No. 24,059 on Internal Security, based on Bills that originated in the legislature itself and not in the Executive Branch. The Act defines *internal security* as "a de facto situation based on the law, involving respect for the liberty, life and property of the inhabitants, their rights and guarantees, and the full operation of the institutions of the representative,

*The process of planning and decision-making in defence and security matters* takes place principally within the Ministry of Defence, with inputs from other ministries. Higher-level decision-making is the prerogative of the President.

This process, briefly described, begins with the work of two groups operating within the Ministry of Defence - the Working Group on National Defence Strategy (GRUTEN) and the Action Group on the National Defence Strategy (GAEN). The former deals with the medium term (2 to 6 years) and the long term (6 to 10 years or more), and the latter with the short term (1 to 2 years).<sup>6</sup>

The Working Group on National Defence Strategy (GRUTEN), which was set up under Ministry of Defence decision No. 229 of 10 August 1989, has the following tasks:

1. To study and identify conflicts or conflict scenarios deemed to be of relevance to defence, and foreseeable common interests (or convergent positions) or possible common interests, especially those related to the former;
2. To study and identify crisis scenarios which might stem from the conflicts or conflict scenarios referred to in the preceding paragraph;
3. To study and identify war scenarios which might stem from the conflicts and crises referred to above, including the purpose and war aim of the hypothetical war option;
4. To study and identify the national strategic concept for defence, in the medium and long terms, designed to prevent and, where that is not possible, to surmount all the conflicts and conflict scenarios and their possible consequences in the hypothetical crises and wars, in the light of the likelihood of their occurrence;
5. To prepare the National Strategy Directive for Defence (DENAC) and, as a component of it, in particular, the Directive for Military Planning (DPM);

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republican and federal system established by the National Constitution" (art. 2). On two occasions the Act identifies as its subject-matter the regulation of the "national *police* effort" (arts. 1, 6 and 8) and the use for that purpose of "*police and security forces*" exclusively. The above words have been underlined by the author in order to emphasize the particular nature of the forces to be used in the interior of the country, excluding, at least in principle, the participation of the armed forces.

Despite that ideal, the Act itself provides (art. 27) that "the armed forces will be used in the re-establishment of internal security within the national territory in those exceptional cases in which the system of internal security described in this Act proves inadequate, in the judgement of the President of the Nation, for fulfilling the objectives laid down in article 2".

To advise the Minister of the Interior, who is responsible for leading the "national police effort" (art. 8), an Internal Security Council is created, its chairman being the Minister of the Interior himself and its members, the Minister of Justice, the Secretary of Planning for Prevention of Drug Addiction and Struggle against Narcotic Traffic, the Under-Secretary for Internal Security of the Ministry of the Interior, the chiefs of the Argentine Federal Police, Argentine Naval Prefecture and National Gendarmerie, and five chiefs of provincial police forces to be rotated annually. The above will be *permanent* members of the Council but, depending on circumstances, meetings may be attended, as *non-permanent members*, by the Minister of Defence, the Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, other provincial police chiefs and Provincial Governors who so request. Owing to the recentness of the adoption of the Internal Security Act, it is impossible to express an opinion on the efficacy of the functioning of this Council, which has hardly been constituted and which replaces the Internal Security Committee governed by Decrees 327/80 and 392/90 of the Executive Branch.

Lastly, worth noting is a chapter of the Act to which great importance has been given, namely the chapter entitled "Parliamentary control of internal security and intelligence organs and activities". The Act establishes a "Bicameral Oversight Commission", composed of six members of the Senate and of the Chamber of Deputies (arts. 33 and 34), whose mission will be to verify that the functioning of the competent organs and bodies "strictly conforms to what is laid down in the constitutional, legal and regulatory norms in force, and to ascertain the strict observance of, and respect for, the individual guarantees enshrined in the National Constitution as well as the provisions contained in the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights" (art. 35).

<sup>6</sup> Col. Felix Antonio-Aguar Moreno, "Introducción al planeamiento estratégico nacional en el ámbito de la defensa nacional", *Revista Argentina de Estudios Estratégicos*, Year 7, No. 12 (January-June 1990) (Buenos Aires), pp. 89-98.

6. To monitor the national strategic situation for defence in the medium and long terms, in order to ensure feedback into the system.

The work entrusted to GRUTEN is conducted, in the first place, by what is known as Level 2, which is coordinated by the Director-General for Planning in the Ministry of Defence and composed of officials from the Ministry of Defence itself, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Worship, the Interior, Economic Affairs, and Public Works and Services, the Planning Secretariat in the Office of the President, the National Intelligence Agency and the Joint General Staff.

It is undoubtedly the work done by Level 2 that provides a basis for the entire process. The work is founded on a search for consensus among all the parties represented in Level 2. The members of the Group must not only be specialists in the subjects dealt with, but must also maintain close and constant contact with their superiors in their departments, up to and including the minister or department head in cases of special importance or significance.

Above Level 2 in GRUTEN is Level 1, whose function is to guide, direct and ultimately approve the work done by Level 2. Level 1 is chaired by the Under-Secretary for Defence in the Ministry of Defence and composed of the same bodies as Level 2, except that the members must hold the rank of Under-Secretary or at least Director-General in their departments, or, in the case of the Joint General Staff, Deputy Chief or Chief of an Intelligence or Planning Area. The Director-General for Policy and the Director-General for Planning in the Ministry of Defence are also members of Level 1.

In the terminology quoted above, there is no need to define the concepts of conflict or war, which are only too well known. It is perhaps necessary to define the scope of the concept of "crisis". This is a stage in the development of a conflict at which a hitherto familiar situation is disrupted, some form of intervention on the part of the military occurs, and it becomes necessary to take decisions with great urgency in order to preserve or achieve advantages related to a political objective; all this occurs in the context of an increasing risk of escalation into war.

Modern treatment of conflict makes it necessary to study crisis scenarios within the probable overall scenario in question, in order to plan the strategy for tackling them and, within that strategy, the possible use of the full range of capabilities of the military instrument. In view of the fact that, in time of crisis, decisions must be taken urgently, there is an obvious advantage in early planning and preparation wherever possible.

As mentioned above, the output from the work of GRUTEN will be the draft National Strategy Directive for Defence (DENAC), which includes the Directive for Military Planning (DPM). After approval by Level 1, this draft is placed for consideration before the Minister of Defence, who in turn submits it to the President. The President, as Supreme Leader of the Nation and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, is responsible for decision-making, in accordance with the National Defence Act, on the advice of the National Defence Council set up under the Act.

In his Message to Parliament on 1 May 1990, the President stated: "GRUTEN has already prepared, for approval and signature by the President, the National Strategy Directive for Military Planning oriented towards the medium and long terms. This governs the work of the Joint General Staff of the Armed Forces, and establishes the bases for future military budgets, peacetime deployment of units and general training of the armed forces".

The Action Group on the National Defence Strategy (GAEN) also operates under the Ministry of Defence, as will be remembered, with functions relating exclusively to the short

term. Its organizational structure is similar to that of GRUTEN, except that, at the basic Level 2, coordination is carried out by the Director-General for Policy in the Ministry of Defence instead of the Director-General for Planning.

The principal tasks of GAEN are: (a) to assist and advise at the national strategic level on all aspects of the activities of the national Government which relate to issues relevant to the defence of the country; (b) to monitor the national strategic situation for defence on the basis of the conflicts and conflict, crises, war and common-interest scenarios predetermined by GRUTEN; (c) to assist and advise in national strategy planning and activities designed to overcome the conflicts, crises and wars mentioned above.

Under its terms of reference, the task of the Joint General Staff, who are responsible for implementation of the Directive for Military Planning, is to "assist and advise the highest leaders of the State in the preparation and use of the military instrument, in order to contribute to achievement of the objectives of national strategic management".

Its functions are: (a) to deal with assistance and advice to the President in the military conduct of war as a member of the Crisis Committee; (b) to serve as a subsidiary body of the Crisis Committee; (c) to deal with advice and assistance to the Minister of Defence in matters of military strategy, with the duties of: (i) developing joint or combined military planning; (ii) formulating joint military doctrine; (iii) overseeing joint military training; and (iv) monitoring operational strategic planning and the effectiveness of joint military action; (d) to deal with the planning of combined exercises; (e) to deal with joint planning for military mobilization; (f) to deal with the development of plans for, and the management of, inter-force courses and joint exercises; (g) to participate in the formulation of policies for joint military instruction and training; (h) to participate in drawing up the budget for the armed forces, and in the coordination and assignment of budget allocations on the basis of needs indicated in military strategic planning; and (i) to deal with public information matters specific to the Joint General Staff and to joint activities of the armed forces.

The Joint General Staff, as has already been stated, is made up of personnel from the three branches of the armed forces, as far as possible in equal numbers, and is structured as follows: an office of the chief and an office of the deputy chief, a general secretariat, a legal adviser's office, and five specialized central offices dealing with resources, doctrine and instruction, intelligence, operations and planning.

## **Resources for Security**

The resources available to the Argentine Republic for all matters relating to the maintenance of its security come in different forms: specifically military, economic in general, and those which, without having any particular connection with security, help in one way or another to strengthen it or conversely to weaken it.

### **Military Resources**

In this section mention must be made first of all of the part of the national budget which the Argentine Government allocates each year to its armed forces and to security. It is not easy to establish the exact amount of money which the Argentine State allocates annually to its armed forces, for the figures decided upon prior to the budget year, in local currency, rapidly become outdated because of a high inflation rate, so that the budget figures have to be

periodically adjusted upwards. Since the rate of exchange against the United States dollar also varies, it is difficult to determine the figures in stable currency terms.

Furthermore, the national budget includes among the Ministry of Defence items a considerable number of expenditures which do not actually relate to the active armed forces, such as those generated by the so-called "defence industries" (almost all in deficit) or by the payment of retirement and pension benefits to retired military personnel and members of their families.

In any event, the defence expenditure in the years indicated is listed below in millions of dollars:

|      |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1975 | 1,581 |       |
| 1976 | 2,318 | 3,851 |
| 1977 | 2,511 | 3,952 |
| 1978 | 2,245 | 4,020 |
| 1979 | 2,550 | 3,975 |
| 1980 | 2,891 | 3,936 |
| 1981 | 2,794 | 4,178 |
| 1982 | 4,467 | 8,784 |
| 1983 | 3,257 | 6,537 |
| 1984 | 2,676 | 5,633 |
| 1985 | 2,295 | 4,506 |

The first column contains data from the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and the second contains data from the *SIPRI Yearbook*. Some of the figures are estimated. The discrepancies demonstrate the difficulty of obtaining accurate information.

It would therefore seem more useful to refer to the percentage of Argentina's gross domestic product allocated to defence expenditure or to the percentage of such expenditure as a part of total State expenditure. The figures are as follows for gross domestic product:

|      |     |      |     |
|------|-----|------|-----|
| 1970 | 2.5 | 1980 | 4.3 |
| 1971 | 2.2 | 1981 | 4.7 |
| 1972 | 2.1 | 1982 | 4.2 |
| 1973 | 2.3 | 1983 | 4.2 |
| 1974 | 2.4 | 1984 | 2.8 |
| 1975 | 2.9 | 1985 | 2.4 |
| 1976 | 3.3 | 1986 | 2.5 |
| 1977 | 2.9 | 1987 | 2.5 |
| 1978 | 3.8 | 1988 | 2.5 |
| 1979 | 3.8 |      |     |

As a proportion of total State expenditure, the figures range from about 15 to 30 per cent between 1970 and 1980, and from 1980 they begin to fall, to a little over 10 per cent by 1986-1988.

It could thus be said that "as a proportion of GDP, defence expenditure averaged 2.3 per cent between 1970 and 1974 and was influenced by the low probability of armed conflict both

under the *de facto* Government and during the period of constitutional Government. From 1975, as a result of increased anti-subversion activities, expenditure rose up to 1977, averaging 3.1 per cent of GDP. Between 1978 and 1983, there was a further increase in defence expenditure to an average of 4.2 per cent. Regional developments (conflict with Chile) and the Malvinas war were important in that period".<sup>7</sup>

It has been noted in this connection that "as a result of the lack of democratic rules, the national budget has played a secondary role as a management tool, and the issue, like all issues relating to the allocation of resources in society, was resolved by means of the political power of the groups which make up society. And since the military formed the Government at different periods, there can be no doubt that they overvalued and advanced their own role, for it is difficult for those who govern not to do so in their own political interests".<sup>8</sup>

The figures given in the preceding paragraphs have recently declined as a result of Argentina's profound economic crisis. The armed forces have not been able to escape the budget constraints and even shortages affecting the whole State. Sometimes the frustration of the commanders of the armed forces has been made public. On 5 June 1990, the most outspoken commander, Brigadier José Juliá, Chief of the Air Force General Staff, stated to the press: "In 1989 the armed forces received 0.34 per cent of GDP, whereas historically they received 1.5 to 2.7 per cent", and added: "We are in the country's service, but we want the whole country to understand that it cannot keep the armed forces in their present state without mortgaging the future. For a country without a national defence is a country which has signed a short-term promissory note which will have to be paid in full".<sup>9</sup>

These words of Brigadier Juliá were not uttered by way of criticism or questioning of the Executive Power. Already in February 1990, the Defence Minister himself had stated publicly that the armed forces must be allocated their historical level of GDP (1.3 per cent) instead of the current level of barely 0.45 per cent.<sup>10</sup>

There is no doubt that the budget problems are currently affecting the standard of readiness and equipment of Argentina's armed forces. A former Defence Minister has described the situation as follows: "There seems to be no option: Argentina needs well-paid and well-equipped armed forces with a budget commensurate with their needs, but the Nation is not in a position to allocate them amounts of money substantially greater than the amounts currently allocated". It is a dilemma: either to weather the difficult period by cutting everything to a minimum, in the hope of a hypothetical better future which will probably not be realized, or "finally to accept the need for a profound restructuring of our armed forces, as another of the roads which must necessarily be travelled in the task of modernizing our country".<sup>11</sup>

*The Army:* Although the figures have been much higher in the past, at present the strength of the Argentine army is estimated at about 55,000 men, of whom some 5,000 are officers, 23,000 non-commissioned officers and about 30,000 other ranks, recruited by

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<sup>7</sup> Adalberto Rodríguez Giavarini, "Planeamiento de defensa, fuerzas armadas y recursos económicos" in *Defensa y democracia, op.cit.*, Gustavo Druetta *et al.* (eds.), p. 144.

<sup>8</sup> Raúl E. Cuello, "Fuerzas armadas y economía" *Boletín del Centro Naval*, Year 105, vol. 104, No. 745 (April-June 1986) (Buenos Aires), p. 100.

<sup>9</sup> *Clarín*, 6 June 1990. It should be added that the 0.34 per cent figure for the armed forces should be seen in the context of total expenditure of 2.4 to 2.5 per cent for the Ministry of Defence and that the reference to 1.5 or 2.7 per cent corresponds to a percentage of 3.5 to 4.5 per cent for defence.

<sup>10</sup> *Clarín*, 4 February 1990.

<sup>11</sup> Horacio Jaunarena, "Fuerzas Armadas y modernización del Estado", article published in *La Nación*, 21 May 1990.

mandatory military service. This means that the body of ordinary soldiers is not made up even partially of professionals, but entirely of conscripts, who generally receive inadequate training, and that the quality of these troops depends largely on the time they have spent in uniform.

The army is organized into four corps, whose respective areas of operation cover practically the whole country. The First Army Corps, with its headquarters in the city of Buenos Aires, has been disbanded. The Second, headquartered in the city of Rosario, controls the central and north-east region of the Republic, i.e. the areas bordering on Uruguay, Brazil and Paraguay. It has an infantry brigade, headquartered in the city of Curuzú Cuatiá and consisting of three regiments, an artillery group and a logistics battalion; a second infantry brigade with its headquarters in the city of Posadas and consisting of four regiments and two artillery groups; and an armoured brigade headquartered in Paraná and consisting of three tank regiments, an armoured artillery group, and a logistics battalion. Under the direct control of the Army Corps Command there are three battalions of engineers, a reconnaissance unit, an anti-aircraft artillery group, a heavy artillery group, a logistics battalion and a communications battalion.

The Third Army Corps has its headquarters in the city of Córdoba, in the centre of the Republic, and covers the central and north-west region, i.e. the areas bordering on Bolivia and northern Chile. It has an airborne infantry brigade based in Córdoba, consisting of two regiments and an airborne artillery group, and an infantry brigade based in the city of Tucumán, consisting of four regiments, an artillery group and a logistics battalion. Under the direct control of the Corps Command there are a reconnaissance unit, an artillery group, a logistics battalion and a communications battalion.

The Fourth Army Corps covers the central and western region of the country, i.e. the area bordering most of the frontier with Chile running along the Andes range. It has its headquarters in the city of Santa Rosa, La Pampa Province. It has two mountain infantry brigades, one based in Neuquén and made up of three mountain infantry regiments, one mountain cavalry regiment, a mountain artillery group and a logistics battalion. The second mountain infantry brigade has its headquarters in the city of Mendoza and consists of two mountain infantry regiments, one infantry regiment, a mountain artillery group and a logistics battalion. Under the direct control of the Corps Command there are a communications battalion, an artillery group, two battalions of engineers, a reconnaissance unit and an anti-aircraft artillery group.

Lastly, the Fifth Army Corps has its headquarters in the city of Bahía Blanca and controls the Atlantic coast and the southern region of the country. It has an armoured brigade based in the city of Tandil, with three tank regiments, an armoured artillery group and a logistics battalion; an infantry brigade based in Comodoro Rivadavia, consisting of three regiments, a tank regiment, an artillery group and a logistics battalion; and a mechanized infantry brigade based in the city of Rio Gallegos, with two infantry regiments, a tank regiment and an artillery group. Under the direct control of the Corps Command there is a reconnaissance unit, an artillery group, a battalion of engineers, a communications battalion and three anti-aircraft artillery groups.

Under the direct control of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army there are a number of units located in the vicinity of the capital of the Republic, such as the Tenth Mechanized Infantry Brigade, with three regiments, the Army Flying Group, a heavy artillery group and a logistics battalion, together with the military institutes, communications battalions, and the "Patricios" mounted grenadier and infantry regiments, whose functions are mainly ceremonial.

Some figures concerning the equipment of the Argentine army are given below, with the warning that there are wide discrepancies in the information sources. In some cases the lower and upper figures published for each type of equipment have been given. The information is as follows:

Tanks: TAM (Medium Argentine Tank), 160/350; Sherman M-4, 100/235; AMX-13, 60/120.

Armoured vehicles: VCTP-TAM, 150/200; VCTP-M-113, 125/250; AMX-CVI, 180/300; half-track SO M-3, 85/140; Mowag Grénadier (modified Roland), 70/80; Panhard reconnaissance, 50 (AML-90).

Field artillery: 100 105-mm M-56 and M-101; 60 M-114, 100 CITEFA models, 77/81 and 50 155-mm M-59; 24 MKF3 155-mm self-propelled guns; and 6 105-mm M-109 self-propelled guns.

Mortars: 200 81-mm and 120 120-mm.

Multiple rocket-launchers: 105-mm SALM Pampero and 127-mm SAPBA-1.

Anti-tank guns: 140 105-mm Kuerassier self-propelled.

Recoil-less guns: 75-mm M-20; 90-mm M-67 and 105-mm M-968.

Rocket launchers: 89-mm M-65.

Anti-tank missiles: SS-11/12, Cobra, Mamba, Mathogo (Bantam).

Anti-aircraft guns: 20-mm Rh-202 twin-barrelled HSS-669; 30-mm HS-83/4; 35-mm K-63; 40-mm L-60 and L-70; and 90-mm M-117.

Surface-to-air missiles: Tigercat, Blowpipe, Roland, SAM-7.

Aircraft: Cessna 182, Cessna 207, Cessna 500, Commander 690-A, De Havilland DHC-6-300, Aeritalia G-222, Fairchild Merlin III-A and IV-A, Sabreliner, Pilatus Turbo-Porter, Beech Queen Air and Twin Otter.

Helicopters: A-109, SA-315 "Lama", SA-330 "Puma", AS-332-B "Super-Puma", Bell 205 and UH-1H.

It has rightly been pointed out that the hardware supplied to Argentina's armed forces - not only the army - is very heterogeneous, and it has been stressed that "this chaotic heterogeneity of sources of hardware, with the consequent increase in the cost of procurement, maintenance and final disposition with respect to its service life, is one of the results of inefficient organization and institutions which has caused the country great harm".<sup>12</sup>

*The Navy:* The Argentine navy has about 28,500 men, of whom 24,000 serve in the naval forces as such and 4,500 in the Marines. These 24,000 men include 3,000 officers, 16,000 non-commissioned officers and 5,000 conscripts.

The main naval facilities are in Buenos Aires (Navy General Staff, Rivers Group, Antarctic Group and Hydrographic Service), Río Santiago, Buenos Aires Province, Puerto Belgrano, Buenos Aires Province (headquarters of the sea-going fleet), Mar del Plata, Buenos Aires Province (headquarters of the submarine fleet), and Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego Province (Southern Naval Group). All these places are on the Atlantic, except for Buenos Aires, the headquarters of the Rivers Group, which is on the River Plate.

The Argentine navy has the following vessels:

<sup>12</sup> Norberto Ceresole, "Doctrina, hipótesis de guerra y organización", *Defensa y Sociedad*, No. 3 (December 1988) (Buenos Aires), p. 9.

An aircraft-carrier (British "Colossus" class), with a capacity of 18 fixed-wing planes and seven helicopters. The following aircraft operate from this carrier: Super Etendard, A-4Q Skyhawk, S-2E Tracker, S-61D Sea King and A-103 Alouette.

Two type-42 destroyers (British), with one helicopter, four Exocet MM 38 launchers, one Sea Dart MK 30 launcher, and two triple-tube torpedo launchers.

Four type-Meko-360 destroyers (German), with two helicopters, four Exocet MM 40 launchers, and two triple-tube torpedo launchers.

Four type-Meko-140 frigates (German), with four Exocet MM 40 launchers, and two triple-tube torpedo launchers. Two other frigates of this class are being built at Astilleros y Fábricas Navales del Estado (AFNE).

Three type-A-69 frigates (French), with four Exocet MM 38 launchers and two triple-tube torpedo launchers.

Two type-209 submarines (German), with eight 21-inch torpedo tubes, and two type-TR-1700 submarines (German), with six 21-inch torpedo tubes. A further two submarines of this type are being built in Argentine shipyards.

Two type-TNC-45 fast gunboats, with two torpedo launchers.

Two "Dabur"-type fast patrol boats.

Other vessels: one tank landing-craft, one squadron of minelayers and minesweepers (six vessels), two river patrol boats, one ice-breaker, three transports, and a number of other auxiliary vessels.

The Naval Air Arm has some 2,000 men, about 50 combat aircraft and a score of helicopter gunships. The aircraft include the Super Etendard, the S-2E "Tracker", the Aer Macchi MC-32 and the Mentor T-34-C. The helicopters include the Alouette H-103 and the Sea King H-3. By way of transport aircraft there are the Electra L-188 and L-188E and the Fokker FK-28.

The Marines, which have about 4,500 men distributed among five marine battalions, two logistics battalions, one field artillery battalion, one anti-tank company, one reconnaissance company, one amphibious commando group, one amphibious vehicle battalion, one anti-aircraft battalion, one communications battalion and one amphibious engineers company.

The Marines have 105-mm field artillery; 60-mm, 81-mm and 106-mm mortars; 20-mm, 30-mm and 35-mm anti-aircraft artillery; Panhard ERC-90 armed reconnaissance vehicles; LVT-3/4 amphibious vehicles; LVTP-7; LARC-5; Mowag "Roland" and Panhard VCR/TT; and Bantam, Blowpipe and Tigercat missiles.

*The Air Force:* Argentina's air force has approximately 15,500 men: 2,000 officers, 9,500 non-commissioned officers and 4,000 conscripts.

There are nine air brigades, each with its own base located in a different part of the country. There are three in Buenos Aires Province (Palomar, Tandil and Moreno), one in Santa Fe Province (Reconquista), one in Entre Ríos (Paraná), one in Mendoza (city of Mendoza), one in San Luis (Villa Reynolds), one in Chubut (Comodoro Rivadavia), and one in Santa Cruz (Río Gallegos). There is also a military airbase in the city of Mar del Plata (Buenos Aires Province), concerned mainly with anti-aircraft defence, and another in Chamental (La Rioja Province), used for the experimental launching of rockets designed by the National Space Research Commission.

As to the aircraft of the Argentine air force, the following summary information adequately reflects the currently known data:

Attack groups, combat/interceptors: five squadrons (two with 14 Dassault Mirage III EA and 19 Mirage III CJ, and three with nine Mirage 5P and 30 "Dagger" (Nesher). Attack groups, combat: two squadrons with 24 A-4P "Skyhawk".

Bombers: one squadron with five BAe Canberra B-62, and two T-64.

Counter-insurgency: three squadrons (two with 60 IA-58A "Pucará" of Argentine manufacture, and one helicopter squadron with 12 Hughes 500 M and eight Bell UH-1H).

Search and rescue: one squadron with four AS-315 "Lama".

Transport: five squadrons with six Boeing 707, eight Lockheed C-130 E/H and KC-130H, three Learjet 35A, four C-47 (Douglas DC-3), five Fokker F-28 and 12 Fokker F-27, five DHC-6 "Twin Otter", ten IA-50 "Guaraní II" of Argentine manufacture, and two Fairchild Merlin IV-A.

Antarctic Group: one squadron with one DHC-6 and one LC-47; helicopters: two Sikorsky S-61 R/NR, two CH-47C ("Chinook"), and 11 Bell (four UH-1D and seven 212).

Communications: one squadron with one Sabreliner, 35 Cessna 182 and 14 Aero Commander.

Training: 24 SM-760 "Paris", 45 Beech T-34C, being replaced by 28 EMB-312 "Tucano" and 18 IA-63 "Pampa" of Argentine manufacture.

Missiles: ASM-2 "Martin Pescador", AIM-9B "Sidewinder", R-530 and R-550 "Shafir".

*Security Forces:* There are two military or paramilitary institutions known as "security forces", and it is open to discussion what their correct title should be: the Gendarmeria Nacional and the Coastguard. Elsewhere in this work, when discussing the organization of the national defence system and the decision-making process, we referred briefly to the characteristics and functions of these security forces. Both come under the Ministry of Defence, although there is no doubt that the Gendarmeria Nacional still maintains links with the Army, and the Coastguard with the Navy.

The Gendarmeria Nacional is about 15,000 strong and is equipped with "Shorland" armoured reconnaissance vehicles and M-113 armoured personnel-carriers. It has about 20 light aircraft and helicopters (Avo Piper, Cessna, PC-6, Hughes 500, SA-315 and Bo-105).

Argentina's Coastguard is about 13,000 strong and is equipped with five class-24, 18 class-64 and one class-13 coastguard vessels, together with some 400 auxiliary vessels. It has SA-330 "Puma" helicopters and CASA multi-purpose and sea-watch aircraft.

### Economic Resources

It should be borne in mind first of all that a short war does not require the mobilization of all the nation's major resources. It can be waged using only the military units. A State's shortcomings in respect of its economic potential, this term being understood in its broadest sense, are not fundamental, provided that the conflict comes swiftly to an end.

The maximum period during which a conflict of this kind can be maintained depends logically on the stocks of equipment and supplies and on the speed of their consumption; in other words, the length of the war will be directly proportional to the volume of supplies available and inversely proportional to their rate of consumption.

If the war is of intermediate length, it can no longer be kept going exclusively by drawing on stocks and some *ad hoc* production is required during the conflict, i.e. there must be partial mobilization. In a war of this length it is assumed that the basic installations and facilities, the manpower and the supplies will remain largely unaltered.

The longer the war continues, the more the war effort will be determined by the level of output. It will finally become necessary to mobilize resources totally, even to construct new production plant.

The reason for including the preceding paragraphs is that the conditions do not seem to obtain for the Argentine Republic to maintain any long-term widespread conflict or even one of intermediate length. The only war in which Argentina has actually taken part in the past 100 years was the war in the South Atlantic which, although it lasted for about three months, was waged in a limited theatre remote from Argentina's mainland territory, and only part of the country's armed forces were called into action. Except in the coastal regions of Patagonia, there were no concrete signs in the country that a war of such importance was being fought.

It can be argued that Argentina is capable of coping, if necessary, with a brief conflict. In this connection, as has been pointed out in earlier chapters in this work, it seems unlikely that Argentina will be involved in serious conflicts with neighbouring countries, and even in the case of the United Kingdom the likelihood is more of incidents than of large-scale hostilities. But even in the unlikely event of a conflict breaking out, it will probably be brought swiftly to an end in some way through intervention by international bodies of world or regional scope. Furthermore, the new global context which now exists makes the emergence of regional conflicts endangering international peace and security even less likely.

The unlikelihood of medium or long-term conflicts requiring the partial or total mobilization of Argentina's resources would explain the peculiar situation existing at the time of writing, a situation in which the Republic lacks legislation regulating this area. The National Mobilization Act (No. 17,649) was repealed on 13 April 1988, with the adoption of the national defence Act (No. 23,554). Among the bills which the Executive Power is supposed to prepare and send to Parliament within a year there is one on "territorial organization and mobilization for defence", but to date no such bill has been submitted to Congress, although information about some of the characteristics of the bill under preparation has appeared in the press.<sup>13</sup>

If some emergency arose, which is unlikely but can never be entirely ruled out, making it necessary to adopt measures which might be construed as "mobilization", it is not clear on what legal basis the Argentine authorities would act or even which authorities would act, for it would appear illogical to assume the prior existence of institutions designed to implement a non-existent law.

In any event it is worth outlining briefly some features of Argentina's situation with regard to its economic resources.<sup>14</sup> It can generally be said, with Roccatagliata,<sup>15</sup> that "Argentina is a country moderately-to-well endowed with natural resources, with some strengths and some weaknesses" and that "despite the generally good endowment of natural resources, none of them is of sufficient size to permit the generation of major economic activities, except those on which foodstuffs production is based" and, we would add, natural gas.

<sup>13</sup> *La Nación*, 21 May 1990.

<sup>14</sup> The most comprehensive work on this subject is that of Col. Carlos J. Martínez, *Economía y defensa* (three vols.) (Círculo Militar-Biblioteca del Oficial, Buenos Aires, 1965), but its facts are not up to date. The topic has also been adequately covered by Emilio Isola-Angel Berra, *Introducción a la geopolítica argentina*, (Editorial Pleamar, Buenos Aires, 1983).

<sup>15</sup> Juan A. Roccatagliata, *Argentina: Hacia un nuevo ordenamiento territorial* (Editorial Pleamar, Buenos Aires, 1986), pp. 102-103.

As already emphasised, if there is a sector in which the Argentine Republic is in an extremely favourable position it is foodstuffs. The country is well known as a very important producer of grains and edible oils, and of meat as well. It produces much more than it consumes and has a substantial share of international trade in these items. Sixty-five per cent of Argentina's exports consist of farm products.<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, there is no doubt that in the event of an armed conflict Argentina's security will hardly be threatened by a shortage of food for its people.

The country is not rich in minerals. Those which it does have are mostly of poor quality, and the deposits are located far from the main consumption centres. A study of the relationship between domestic demand and domestic output divides the main minerals into those for which the domestic output fully satisfies domestic demand, those for which the demand is satisfied only partially, and those for which almost the whole demand must be met from imports.

The domestic requirements are fully satisfied for: clays, fine sand for construction and glass-making, sandstone, asphalt, barytes, basalt, bentonite, beryllium, borates, calcite, limestone, boulderstone, ceramic kaolin, celestite, quartzite, quartz, dolomite, feldspar, fluorite, granite, lithium, various marbles, volcanic substances materials, mica, salt, serpentine, aluminium sulphate, iron sulphate, manganese sulphate, sodium sulphate, common talc, peat, uranium, vermiculite, tungsten, gypsum and zeolite.

The demand is met partly from domestic output and partly from imports for: asbestos, special clays, coarse sand for construction, bismuth, paper-grade kaolin, zinc, copper, columbium-tantalum, graphite, iron, manganese, ochres, gold, silver, lead and tin.

Lastly, the following minerals must be totally imported: aluminium, andalucite, antimony, arsenic, sulphur, bauxite, bromine, tourmaline, zirconium, cobalt, corundum, cryolite, chrome, piezoelectric quartz, diamonds, phosphorus, magnesite, mercury, molybdenum, nickel, sodium nitrate, platinum, potassium, selenium, special talc, titanium, vanadium and iodine.

The Argentine Republic is a country which has oil but it is not a petroleum-exporting country. It will never be a big exporter but it does have sufficient deposits for its own needs and, potentially, the export of small quantities. As of 1980 it had proven reserves of about 400 million cubic metres. Oil deposits were discovered in Argentina in 1907 but their exploitation proceeded slowly because the issue was always linked to nationalist sentiments. A powerful State enterprise, Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales, was set up to exploit the oil but it fell far short of the necessary efficiency for proper exploration and extraction of the resource. Participation by Argentine and foreign private companies was always resisted and, when such companies did receive authorization in 1960, the enabling measures were annulled by the following Government in 1963. More recently, towards the end of the 1980s, the Argentine Government embarked with determination on a policy of liberalization, which has been further developed by the Government which took office in 1989. This has opened up prospects for a considerable increase in oil output, but this increase will be absorbed by revival of Argentina's industrial activity, which is at present in recession. Whatever happens, Argentina's oil supplies would not enable it to meet the demands of an armed conflict which lasted for some time, although this statement does not imply that its more powerful

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<sup>16</sup> International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *World Development Report 1989* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1989), p. 195.

neighbours and potential rivals, Brazil and Chile, are not in an even worse situation than Argentina in this respect.

Argentina has very large deposits of natural gas, and more are being found. In 1980, proven reserves were in excess of 500 billion cubic metres and exceeded storage and transport capacity (there have been times when, for this reason, 25 per cent of the gas accompanying extracted oil had to be burned off). Argentina has become an exporter of natural gas to neighbouring countries.

The steady increase in proven reserves and the encouraging possibilities of new discoveries have prompted implementation of a policy to promote greater use and consumption of natural gas, in order to replace liquid petroleum derivatives, particularly the medium and heavy ones. The aim is to reduce oil imports and secure total self-sufficiency, and even to establish surpluses in order to swell exports. This hydrocarbons policy is also designed to provide an element of security by eliminating dependence on the imported part of the supply.

Coal reserves are almost entirely concentrated in one place, Río Turbio, in the far south of the country on the frontier with Chile. This coal is low-grade and expensive to mine. In the case of another energy source - uranium, used by Argentina's two nuclear power stations - the proven reserves, in the order of 30,000 tons, are sufficient to supply the two existing stations and a further eight which could be built, each with a capacity of 600 MW.

Electricity generation in Argentina is in a state of crisis as a result of the lack of investment and defective maintenance, particularly at the thermal stations. On top of this there is the lack of continuity in the supply of hydroelectric power, which declines substantially when the flow of the rivers where the dams are located falls, and the shutdowns at the two nuclear power stations, Atucha I and Embalse, which in recent years have encountered unprecedented operating problems. The result has been the need, on several occasions since 1988, for periodic power cuts. These cuts did not recur in 1990, but the explanation should be sought not in an improvement in generating capacity, which continues to be a precarious, but rather in a fall-off in demand, as a result of the industrial recession in Argentina.

The industrial take-off of the Argentine economy dates from the 1930s, but its driving-forces became considerably more effective, although not more efficient, during and after the Second World War, especially in the case of light processing industry.<sup>17</sup>

Actual protection increased with the discontinuation of competitive imports and with a supply of inputs which were still cheap. Many textile, metal-working and related factories were established, especially in the country's capital, Buenos Aires, and in neighbouring areas, in order to supply the domestic market.

The industrialization of the 1960s opened up new fields. The automobile and tractor plants prompted a vast demand for suppliers. The chemical and petrochemical industries and the manufacture of machinery, equipment, and electronic and other items complemented the output of the processing industries.

Where the so-called heavy industries are concerned, iron and steel received official encouragement and increased its installed capacity to 4 million tons of crude steel in 1981, with part of the output later going for export. New cellulose and paper mills were built. At

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<sup>17</sup> This paragraph and the following ones are based on the excellent summary by Roberto Alemann, *Breve historia de la política económica argentina 1500-1989* (Editorial Claridad, Buenos Aires), 1989, pp. 262-265.

Puerto Madryn in Chubut Province, a plant produced aluminium using imported ore and electricity generated by a dam on the Futaleufú river 500 kilometres away.

The foodstuffs industry, long established in Argentina, diversified and took on new life, making its contribution to exports. The export of manufactured goods in significant volumes was made possible by the exchange-rate, tax and credit incentives with which the State promoted such exports.

Expanding and diversifying for more than three decades under the stimulus of various incentives, Argentina's industry satisfied the needs of the domestic market and contributed to exports. State participation played a considerable role not only by way of incentives and a continually adjusted industrial policy, but also through the activities of State enterprises and organs in the sector.

Steel, petrochemicals, shipbuilding, mechanical engineering, sugar, wine and other industrial branches were controlled with varying levels of intervention by public enterprises. The contribution of subsidiaries of United States and West European companies was also significant and was concentrated in certain industrial branches such as automobiles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, electronics, and the sectors supplying their components. Most of the industrial enterprises operating on a large scale in terms of sales, capital and numbers of employees belonged to the State or to foreign multinational corporations. Manufacturing companies with Argentine capital predominated among the medium-size and small enterprises.

Only in recent years has Argentina's manufacturing industry exported large volumes. In 1988, exports of manufactures accounted for \$2.5 billion out of total exports of \$9 billion. This represented about a half of all manufacturing inputs, whereas a few years earlier the proportion had been considerably lower. Iron and steel, aluminium and textiles are the main export items, together with machinery, vehicles, etc.

All of this shows clearly that the Argentine Republic has a considerable industrial capacity. An earlier chapter of this study stressed the importance of the activities of the Directorate-General of Military Manufactures as a driving force in areas relevant to national defence - in petrochemicals, for example - when private business shows no initiative in the matter. At present virtually all the companies under the control of this Directorate which are not concerned specifically with arms manufacture are being transferred to private hands.

Argentine industry is developing in sectors which would be of special significance in the event of an armed conflict. Iron and steel, petrochemicals, automobiles, tractors, railway rolling-stock, machinery, etc. could in theory be switched to war production without too much difficulty. As pointed out earlier, however, it seems highly unlikely that the Argentine Republic will be involved in a conflict requiring such a move.

Lastly, Argentina has a railway network totalling about 45,000 kilometres. It has more than 25,000 kilometres of surfaced roads. A State airline, Aerolíneas Argentinas (in the process of privatization), and several private airlines fly the country's skies, and there are sufficient airports to meet their needs. The land and air communications seem to be sufficient to cope with an emergency, but this is not true of the telephone and telegraph services or, in general terms, of the whole telecommunications system, whose efficiency leaves much to be desired.

## Social Resources

Although the appropriateness of the heading of this section may be questioned, we will use it to designate those resources which, while neither military nor economic, may have some relevance to a country's security.

Generally speaking, these resources depend on the characteristics of a State's people, for the greater the cohesion and homogeneity of the people, the more effective will it be in the defence of the national interest when the need arises.

The Argentine Republic has 30 million inhabitants, although obviously not all of them are Argentines. It can be said with some certainty that the Argentine people has its own identifying characteristics. The bulk of the people are of European origin, mostly second or third generation. There are very few inhabitants of pure indigenous stock, but there are some who are called "criollos", descendants of the union of Spaniards with Indians. But in any event there is no clear division between these groups, and in fact they all see themselves as forming part of one single group. Argentina has no minorities of any kind or any discrimination, perhaps precisely because there is no population group of different colour which might feel itself the object of different treatment as well.

Most of Argentina's population is Catholic, but not all are practising. In any event there are no problems with other religions, nor has Argentine history known any religion-motivated confrontations. On occasion there have been outbreaks of anti-Semitism attributable to racial or religious causes, but they have been very few in number and in any case no more than in almost all the developed countries of the West, except of course for Nazi Germany. It should not be forgotten that Argentina has a large Jewish community numbering about 500,000, the second largest in the Western hemisphere, and that far from being isolated from the rest of Argentine society it is fully integrated and many of its members have held senior posts in the Governments which have guided the country's destiny.

It may be added in this connection that Argentina also has a community of Arab origin, of similar strength, about which exactly the same comments can be made. The present President of the Republic is of Syrian origin. It is worth emphasizing, and it is convincing evidence of the climate of tolerance and peaceful coexistence prevailing in Argentina, that despite the long history of tensions, hostilities and even wars which have marked the Arab-Israeli conflict, those problems have not had any local repercussions.

Another characteristic of the Argentine people is its great social mobility. There are no stratified social classes from which it is difficult to escape. Argentina has been a country of immigration, with equality of opportunity for all. It has not had a closed upper class, and access to higher living standards has been open to everyone. Examples of the upward social mobility of persons of humble origin achieved by dint of their hard work and their success in business or in intellectual endeavours are commonplace and have never seemed exceptional.

In other words, Argentine society is not divided against itself. The political battles have never been bloody nor have they led to the virtual outbreaks of war seen in other developing countries. The activities of the urban guerrilla movements in the 1970s were an exception in a political history which has been bumpy and certainly not free of difficult moments or of attacks on democracy, but which has seen very little bloodshed.

The Argentine people are nationalistic and patriotic. In contrast, they do not have a well-developed feeling of social solidarity, and tend to be individualistic and egoistic, preferring their own advantage to that of the community. They have always had a high

opinion of themselves, harbouring knowingly or unknowingly a feeling of superiority over other countries, especially the other Latin American countries. Perhaps the explanation for this should be sought in the period of extraordinary progress and prosperity which the Argentine Republic experienced during the first third of this century, a period in which, according to a number of indicators, it achieved a much higher level of development than all the other Latin American countries. The stagnation and even deterioration of Argentina's economic and social situation in recent decades have radically altered that picture, but social perceptions are generally much more difficult to change than are economic indicators. In any event there is no doubt that the average Argentine's belief in himself has taken some very heavy blows in recent times.

Argentina's standard of education is high. The proportion of students graduating from secondary school and going on to university is higher than in several European countries.<sup>18</sup> Intellectually, Argentine students and professionals have always performed well abroad. Its scientists have won Nobel Prizes. Most of its industrial workforce is skilled and adapts easily to the new requirements of changing technology.

If we agree with Tandurella<sup>19</sup> that "a country's population is the key structural element, not only in the economic factor but also in all the other factors which make up a country's power", and that "therein lies the basis of its moral and material strength", then all the elements mentioned in the preceding paragraphs have joined together to create a situation in which the contributions which Argentina's people can make in a conflict affecting the Republic's security are generally positive. The quality of the people is relatively high, as are its standard of training and its social cohesion. The negative factors which may be found in this area have to do not with the personal qualities of the country's inhabitants, but with their numerical weakness in relation to its vast size and their excessive concentration in certain areas, especially in Buenos Aires and its vicinity, with the relative underpopulation which holds the frontier regions back, and with the current lack of opportunities for work and advancement which frustrates a large proportion of Argentine youth.

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<sup>18</sup> International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-221.

<sup>19</sup> Alberto Tandurella, "Economía, política económica y seguridad nacional", *Revista de la Escuela de Defensa Nacional*, No. 18 (December 1977) (Buenos Aires), p. 24.



# Chapter IV

## The Regional Outlook

### Geographical Characteristics Connected with Security

The Argentine Republic is situated at the southernmost tip of South America, in other words, in an area far removed from the main centres of world conflict today. Naturally, in the nuclear era, the situation is radically different from that of earlier times. If a nuclear war were to occur - and there is a consensus that such a war would never be minor or localized - no region of the world would be spared its consequences. As experience has shown, however, the nuclear holocaust is neither the only possible nor the most likely scenario. Conventional weapons are still being used in the hostilities which are taking place constantly in one part of the globe or another. Argentina's security in the case of a conventional war should be seen from the point of view of its geography.

Argentina's territory is vast - almost 3 million square kilometres excluding the Antarctic, over which the country has a claim of sovereignty. Most of this territory is flat or made up of plateaux (in Patagonia) but in the west it is mountainous with very high peaks and in other regions of the country, the centre in particular, there are sizeable mountain ranges.

The total perimeter of the Argentine Republic is about 14,000 kilometres, of which slightly over 4,000 are on the coast and the remainder on land and along rivers. It shares some 800 kilometres of common border with Uruguay, 850 with Brazil, some 1,800 with Paraguay, 900 with Bolivia and over 5,000 with Chile.

These frontiers have varying characteristics, which may be briefly considered from the perspective of possible conflicts with neighbouring countries. The border with Uruguay is virtually all riparian, and stretches along the River Plate and the River Uruguay.<sup>1</sup> Apart from the fact that an armed conflict between Argentina and Uruguay is simply inconceivable, the River Plate, which is 40 kilometres wide at the confluence of the Paraná and Uruguay Rivers and 185 kilometres wide at the point where it flows into the Atlantic Ocean, has no bridge across it. The possibility of building a bridge between the two banks (the average depth of the river is not very great), has been under consideration for years and has been gaining increasing support. Should that project materialize, not only would there be a physical link between Argentina and Uruguay across the River Plate but also links of various other kinds would be strengthened by the bridge between the two countries, with political consequences for the area.

The River Uruguay forms the boundary between Argentina and Uruguay for a distance of 480 kilometres. The treaty to that effect was signed in 1961, and it defines the dividing line in respect of the waters and the islands in the river, but the River Uruguay has always marked the limit of the two countries' sovereignty ever since they became independent. The Salto Grande, a very large hydroelectric development project, is operated jointly by the two countries, and there are three bridges, one of which crosses the river at the upper level of the dam. All three were built less than 20 years ago and have contributed significantly to the integration of the two countries. Consideration is currently being given to the possibility of

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<sup>1</sup> Edison González Lapeyre, *Los límites de la República Oriental del Uruguay*, (Ediciones Jurídicas Amalio Fernández, Montevideo, 1986), pp. 71-93 and 261-275.

building a pipeline across the river which will supply Uruguay and Brazil with gas from Argentina.

In short, while it could be said that the existence of rivers which serve as borders between Argentina and Uruguay affords a measure of security, since existing bridges could easily be put out of action, the difference in size of the two States and, above all, the absence of any major disputes between them, and on the other hand the atmosphere of cordiality and cooperation in their mutual relations, have virtually dissipated any fear of the rivers being used for possible attacks or of representing threats to security. From the purely speculative point of view, it is conceivable that threats might come, not from Uruguay, but from a third State, which would obviously be Brazil, and if that assumption were true, Brazil would first have to invade Uruguay. It is in that context that the following paragraphs are important.

Brazil is a neighbour, which has been Argentina's rival and competitor for decades. For many years, in the early part of this century, the threat of armed conflict between the two nations, was seen as an assumption to be taken into account, perhaps not a probable assumption but still not a preposterous one. Later on in this study we shall refer to this topic at greater length, but for the present we would like to note that, unlike what was stated previously about Uruguay, the frontier between Argentina and Brazil was, in fact, regarded as a line that could conceivably be crossed by an invader.

Argentina has a river frontier with Brazil of around 850 kilometres but, unlike its frontier with Uruguay, the rivers involved are by no means large. The River Uruguay makes up 375 kilometres of this frontier but as one approaches the river's source the flow at the point where it separates Argentina from Uruguay downstream diminishes. The river becomes narrower and navigation becomes more and more difficult until it is virtually impossible. Three other small rivers constitute the border between the two countries in the Misiones area.

As already stated, because of the long-standing rivalry between Argentina and Brazil, it was feared that if Brazil should one day attack Argentina, after crossing its own border it would have to traverse the Argentine region known as Mesopotamia, in other words the area lying between the Uruguay and Paraná Rivers, which includes the appropriately named province of Entre Ríos and the Corrientes and Misiones provinces. The first hurdle which the possible Brazilian invader would have to clear was the River Uruguay and then the River Paraná.

Although it has been denied repeatedly, one result of the assessment just made was that for a very long time, there were absolutely no bridges across the two rivers and no reasonably satisfactory road network in the three provinces of Mesopotamia. There is no doubting the fact that this region was largely isolated from the rest of Argentine territory and that communication between the two parts of the country was difficult and costly. A number of economic and bureaucratic reasons were advanced to justify the neglect or abandonment of that region of the country, but everyone was well aware that at least part of the explanation for that state of affairs was to be found in security considerations which were reflected in an attempt to make as difficult and problematic as possible the passage through this Argentine territory by an invading force.

This theory has changed, not just overnight of course, but gradually. In the 1960s new perceptions of Latin America as a region and of the relationship that should exist between Argentina and its neighbours led to a growing abandonment of, or in any event, a substantial change from, previous scenarios. Brazil and Argentina began to regard each other with different eyes and a new process was started which, despite ups and downs, is still being

actively pursued today. The spectre of a possible Brazilian operation across the rivers of the Mesopotamia area no longer justified keeping this territory isolated.

Bridges were built across the River Paraná as well as a tunnel under the river to link the Argentine provinces; bridges were also built across the River Uruguay not only between Argentina and Uruguay but two others between Argentina and Brazil, between Paso de los Libres and Uruguayana and between Port Iguazu and Foz do Iguazú. The construction of another bridge between Argentina and Brazil, linking Santo Tomé and Sao Borja, is to be considered shortly. In addition to the Salto Grande dam between Argentina and Uruguay, another dam will be built on the River Uruguay itself between Argentina and Brazil, at Garabí. There is already an extensive river communication network in the Misiones region, because there has been joint development of the outstanding tourist attraction of the Iguazu Falls. The rivers, of course, continue to flow as before, but they no longer separate but link.

However, an important qualification is in order here. The River Paraná does not form part of the Argentine-Brazilian border but is, rather, a river flowing successively in different States. Its source is in Brazil and it crosses a large expanse of Brazilian territory before constituting 600 kilometres of the border between Paraguay and Argentina. It then flows completely in Argentine territory. Argentina is thus the country which has the downstream part of the River Paraná and Brazil the country which has the upstream part. A few short kilometres from the Argentine-Paraguayan border, Brazil (with Paraguay's consent) has built the gigantic Itaipú dam. There is no doubt that the manner of operating this dam has consequences downstream. The scale of these ramifications is open to debate but there is no denying that they exist. As will be mentioned elsewhere in this study, the possibility of a conflict is real and, to that extent, the geographical location of Argentina as a downstream country can certainly harm its security.

The border with Paraguay is also a river border but the rivers in question are of a different size and have different features. For 600 kilometres, from east to west, the River Paraná forms the border; the binational Yaciretá hydroelectric power station is being built along this stretch and a second such power station in Corpus is under consideration. From north to south, the River Paraguay, which empties into the River Paraná, forms the border for more than 300 kilometres. Within the framework of the River Plate basin machinery (which includes Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) a project is under way to develop the River Paraguay-River Paraná route in order to facilitate navigation along these two rivers and thus permit access by maritime traffic to the production of a vast area situated in the heart of South America.

For almost 1,000 kilometres, until it empties into the River Paraguay, the River Pilcomayo forms the border between Argentina and Paraguay. It is a shallow river with only a slight incline, its course is irregular and it has an abundance of swamps and marshlands and separates territories which are inhospitable and sparsely populated.

Both Paraguay and Bolivia, Argentina's other neighbour, are comparatively weak countries and have never been regarded as possible threats to Argentina's security. The two countries have no frontiers close to Argentina's most highly developed areas, which, furthermore have traditionally been a magnet for citizens from the two adjoining States, who migrate there in search of better living conditions.

Consequently, neither the border between Argentina and Paraguay nor, still less, the border between Argentina and Bolivia would be very important for Argentina's security, except in the hypothetical case that very serious internal disturbances occurred in one of the two countries which spilled over into Argentine territory. Furthermore, the border area

between Argentina and Bolivia is mountainous, far up in the Andes, and can only be reached through certain valleys and passes.

Lastly, there is the border with Chile, a country with which Argentina has had and may continue to have problems of sovereignty as we shall see later. Approximately two thirds of the border also passes through the high peaks of the Andean mountain chain which can only be crossed through infrequent passes and in some instances only at certain times of the year. A tunnel also crosses the mountain chain. In this case, geography has given both Argentina and Chile extraordinary protection because it is not easy for modern armies to cross such a natural barrier in either direction.

At about latitude 40°S there is a change in the features of the Andean mountain chain. It becomes much lower, there is no main chain, transverse valleys appear one after the other and, at least in theory, it would be much less difficult to cross at that point. However, this is cancelled out by the virtual non-existence of any good communication links and by the fact that the desert plateaux of Patagonia lie on the Argentine side. At this parallel, on the Chilean side, the territory is extremely narrow and therefore, hypothetically, an invasion from Argentina could easily reach the Pacific Ocean. The strategic advantages, however, would be few, since although the Chilean territory would be cut in two, communication between the South of Chile and the central and most important part of the country, is by sea. The point which it is sought to stress here is that the fact that it is easier to cross the southern part of the Argentine-Chilean land border does not, for different reasons, mean that one side or the other has operational advantages.

Although it constitutes an area which has been the source of much conflict with Chile, the southern maritime region is essentially part of a larger problem, which is the maintenance of security in the South Atlantic, along which Argentina has 4,000 kilometres of coastline and, unfortunately, very few natural ports.

The consequences of Argentina's geographical location on the shores of the South Atlantic are naturally related to the strategic importance accorded to this ocean. Since the 1982 conflict, international interest in this part of the world has intensified, but this should not be attributed solely to the Malvinas episode. Traditionally, the South Atlantic was not regarded as a priority area by the great Powers, but a number of events have brought about a change in thinking: the closure of the Suez Canal and the consequent increase in sea traffic, especially oil tankers, along the Cape of Good Hope route, which did not change very much after the canal was reopened; the growing Soviet naval presence in the region; the possibility of exploiting mineral resources, including oil, at great depths; fisheries exploitation; international concern over the Antarctic; the possible destabilization of southern Africa and the undeniable strategic importance of the British military base in the Malvinas all these factors have caused increased importance to be attached to the South Atlantic and created an awareness of the need to maintain security in that area. The United Nations General Assembly has declared the South Atlantic to be a Zone of Peace and Cooperation.

Argentina's status as a coastal State and its very long South Atlantic shoreline have undoubtedly given it an important role to play in this context. At the same time, the presence in the area of protagonists who did not exist before or, if they did, had other means and

intentions, has introduced new factors into the situation which the Argentine Republic now has to deal with, in respect of security.<sup>2</sup>

## Ideas and Policy on Security in the Regional Setting

Broadly speaking, the security concerns of the Argentine Republic in the region could be said to relate to two types of protagonists: its neighbouring countries and a Power from outside the region, the United Kingdom. In addition to present conflict with the United Kingdom over the Malvinas and other neighbouring islands, the vast surrounding oceanic mass, the South Atlantic, also represents a security concern. We shall address the three topics in turn.

For a long time, indeed for almost a century, Argentina had concentrated its security precautions on two neighbouring States, Brazil and Chile. The former was always viewed (and the feeling was mutual) as a rival and competitor for leadership in Latin America, or at any rate in South America. This constant political struggle made for often tense and on the whole unstable relations, even in periods of relative cordiality. Paradoxically, there were never any territorial disputes between the two countries because border issues were settled by means of an arbitral award made by President Grover Cleveland of the United States in 1895.

Chile, on the other hand, was not regarded by Argentina as a rival on the regional scene. There was never any kind of bid for possible leadership. There was on the other hand a reality, which has already been referred to several times in this study, namely a common border of over 5,000 kilometres, one of the longest in the world, with many points of discord that have given rise to repeated incidents and even minor armed clashes. The southern tip of the South American continent and the southern maritime region (the Strait of Magellan, the Beagle Channel and the Drake Passage) are too important to permit calm, peaceful discussion of who should control them. The many years of disputes and tension have engendered a deep-seated distrust and the belief that armed conflict between the two countries can never be ruled out completely.

Argentina's other three neighbours - Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay - do not in themselves constitute a source of insecurity for the larger State. They have little power and cannot represent any kind of danger to Argentina. Their own political history has been one of upheaval, and therefore the risks that they may present are that their ideological or political internal movements may one day become extremely serious and even prevail, or at least cause major repercussions beyond their borders with Argentina.

It stands to reason then that it is vital for the Argentine Republic that these three neighbours should be politically, economically and socially stable. At the same time, it cannot be overlooked that all three, in the context of Argentine-Brazilian rivalry, constitute what are known as buffer States. Fortunately, this rivalry, which is now being overcome, traditionally served to help the three smaller countries, each with its own characteristics in their efforts to preserve their decision-making authority as much as possible and to take

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<sup>2</sup> Bernardo Quagliotti de Bellis, "Geopolítica del Atlántico Sur" and Vicente Palermo, "Latinoamérica puede más: Geopolítica del Atlántico Sur", in Rear Admiral Fernando Milia, ed., *La Atlantártida: Un espacio geopolítico*, (Editorial Pleamar, Buenos Aires, 1976), pp. 19-52 and 163-194 respectively. For an analysis of the subject after the South Atlantic conflict, see María del Carmen Llaver, "Incidencias del conflicto Malvinas en el subsistema del Atlántico Sur", *Geopolítica*, Year X, No. 28, (Buenos Aires, 1984), and "Atlántico Sur: Situación actual y perspectivas futuras", *Geopolítica*, Year XIII, No. 36, (Buenos Aires, 1987).

advantage of the competition between the two more powerful countries, so that, with the predictable swing of the pendulum, they could obtain maximum advantage for themselves.

### Brazil

Spain and Portugal colonized South America. Their colonial empires were separated by vast unexplored expanses of forest, except in the region which is now called the River Plate Basin, in other words, the area watered by the Plate, Paraná, Paraguay and Uruguay Rivers. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries this area was the scene of an incessant and often violent rivalry which led to wars and subsequently to peace treaties which included arrangements that were always fleeting and subsequently challenged. One of Portugal's ambitions had always been to establish itself on the east bank of the River Plate, and naturally that ambition was always opposed in Buenos Aires. Partly to strengthen its position in the area, Spain created the Viceroyalty of the River Plate in 1776.

The process of emancipating what is now Argentina began in 1810 and it took several years to obtain the surrender of the last forces loyal to Spain in the areas near Buenos Aires. These forces were concentrated in Montevideo, the present capital of Uruguay. At that time, Brazil was the seat of the Portuguese monarch, who had taken refuge there after Napoleon's occupation of the Iberian Peninsula.

The old struggle continued. Brazil intervened several times on the east bank of the River Plate and succeeded in gaining control of the whole area to which it gave the name of Provincia Cisplatina. Patriotic Uruguayans revolted against the occupiers and succeeded, as they had during the viceroyalty, in keeping the eastern strip as part of the provinces which were then called "Provincias Unidas del Río de la Plata". In 1825, Brazil declared war on these provinces and although the latter were on the whole successful in battle, in the end a treaty was signed in 1828 which stipulated that the eastern strip would belong neither to Argentina nor to Brazil. It was to be an independent State, the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

Fortunately, the Brazilian-Argentine conflict of 1825-1828 was the only war fought between the two countries. Brazilian forces supported the revolt of several Argentine provinces that in 1852 led to the overthrow of the dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas, and in 1865, following the signing of the Triple Alliance, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay joined forces to fight Paraguay. That war, which ended victoriously, was the last one fought by Argentine troops until the South Atlantic conflict in 1982.

For the rest of the nineteenth century, Argentina and Brazil continued their own course, each determined to pursue its development in every way and to assert itself internationally. The problems then existing, which were normal between neighbouring, bordering countries, did not give rise to serious conflicts. Border issues were resolved through arbitration, without there having been any prior incidents, much less armed clashes.

With the advent of the new century, the situation began to change. Needless to say, the two young, rapidly expanding countries were bound to collide. Mistrust from a troubled colonial legacy, which in the nineteenth century had by no means been forgotten, resurfaced. Increasingly, each viewed the other as a competitor, a rival and an opponent in many areas, and even as a possible enemy.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Just over a decade ago views such as those held by Edward S. Milenky were still widespread. See Edward S. Milenky: "Conflict with Brazil is Argentina's Greatest Political and Strategic Problem", in *Argentina's Foreign Policies* (Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1978), p. 221.

The two were clearly the most powerful States in South America. Brazil was much bigger and had a much larger population than Argentina, but the latter compensated for that comparative inferiority with superior economic and social development, the areas and inhabitants in Brazil that were truly productive being much less than overall numbers suggested. It was not until the beginning of the 1960s that Brazil began a period of extraordinary economic development that enabled it to draw even with and then to overtake Argentina in the figures, which, until then, had generally been in the latter's favour.

What is certain is that a rivalry and distrust quickly arose between the two countries which need not be detailed in this work. Suffice it to say that, apart from occasional rhetorical expressions of fraternity and good-neighbourliness, relations were cool, if generally correct. Even during discussions of the most innocuous subjects in international forums, the delegations of Argentina and Brazil eyed each other with suspicion and speculated about each other's ulterior motives; everything was seen from the perspective of an ongoing struggle to stay ahead, to demonstrate greater power and efficiency and to be the leader, in particular of the other Latin American countries.

Likewise of concern was how the two countries were viewed and treated by the great Powers. As the United States became a leader in world politics and began to play an indisputably dominant role in the Western Hemisphere, the type of relations that it maintained with each of the two South American competitors assumed particular importance.

In that area, Brazil clearly came out ahead, especially after it declared against the Axis Powers in the Second World War and sent troops to the European theatre. Its attitude contrasted with the neutrality maintained by Argentina and not only earned Brazil the gratitude of the United States but also, of much more concrete and far-reaching importance for Argentina, made it eligible for participation in the programmes under the Lend-Lease Act. That assistance perceptibly increased the operational capacity of the Brazilian armed forces and altered, to Argentina's disadvantage, the relative balance of power that had existed until then. Brazil's emphatic tilt into the United States orbit and the considerable benefits that that meant introduced a new factor into Argentine-Brazilian relations that was to have a powerful impact in the decades to come.

Despite their normally complex and difficult relations, there were also moments in which matters seemed to take a more promising turn; attempts were made to improve relations, but unfortunately could not be consolidated, perhaps because they were premature and circumstances were not yet such that the traditional rivalry could be overcome once and for all.

The year 1915 saw the signing in Buenos Aires of the so-called ABC Treaty between the Foreign Ministers of Argentina, Brazil and Chile, a year after the efforts made by the three countries, in 1914, to mediate in the conflict between the United States and Mexico. The ABC Treaty was a simple agreement on the peaceful settlement of disputes and was never ratified by the signatories, but it is mentioned because it marked an exceptional period in the diplomatic history of the three countries, which were much more given to differences than to harmonious relations. At the time, the treaty was greeted somewhat suspiciously by the United States and the countries of northern South America, because they believed that Argentina, Brazil and Chile, united and acting with one accord, would constitute a powerful bloc capable of bringing pressure and influence to bear on the political scene, if not at the international, then certainly at the regional level. Even decades later, at the slightest hint of coordinated action by the three countries, there is immediate talk of a "resurrection" of the spirit, if not the substance, of the ABC Treaty.

The early 1950s saw the first serious attempt at broad cooperation between the two countries, when Juan Perón was President of Argentina and Getulio Vargas of Brazil. It should be borne in mind that Argentina had taken the initiative but that the effort was not directed exclusively at Brazil; rather, it was part of Perón's policy of promoting political and economic relations with neighbouring countries which, for a moment, even took concrete shape with Chile. Vargas' support was lukewarm, and his death put an end to the project. The experience failed, it has been said, because "it was a tenuous improvement of relations tied to domestic political projects that did not have a more solid basis at the diplomatic and economic level".<sup>4</sup>

The second instance of a global *rapprochement* came during the presidencies of Arturo Frondizi in Argentina and Juscelino Kubischek and Janio Quadros in Brazil. The main documents to emerge from this effort were signed during the Frondizi-Quadros meeting in Uruguayana on 21 April 1961, but it also came to naught when President Frondizi and President Quadros were overthrown a year later.

Nevertheless, the climate was changing. "Each positive phase undoubtedly had a beneficial impact. In this case, the possibility of war was virtually ruled out in both countries, and the need to cooperate, temporary set-backs notwithstanding, was seen to make sense and, from that time on, began to constitute a cause for concern for many Brazilians, and for many Argentines as well".<sup>5</sup>

In 1969, the then Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Antonio Azeredo de Silveira, was able to say: "The prospects for integration between Brazil and Argentina are virtually ideal. Such integration is becoming natural and must proceed globally. Clearly, it can be speeded up or delayed, depending upon whether or not leaders realize that it holds the key to many of the development questions affecting the economic and social structures of the two countries".<sup>6</sup>

One problem that delayed what had increasingly come to be perceived as an essential new reconciliation effort was the controversy surrounding the utilization of shared natural resources, specifically the harnessing for hydroelectric power of the rivers of the River Plate Basin, and above all of the River Paraná. It will be recalled that Brazil had decided to build, in conjunction with Paraguay, a huge dam at Itaipú, a scant 13 kilometres from the Argentine border. The project, the world's largest, brought with it a number of dangers, problems and drawbacks for the downstream countries and was on a collision course with the possible Argentine-Paraguayan development at Corpus.

In all international forums, in particular the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement, Argentina fought insistently and successfully for recognition of the principle that downstream countries on international watercourses must necessarily be consulted before construction projects that may affect them are carried out. For its part, Brazil stubbornly opposed this idea, maintaining that its obligations only extended to taking all necessary precautions to avoid damage to the downstream countries and, should such damage occur and be appreciable, to providing the appropriate compensation and indemnification.

For almost a decade, in what for other reasons was a promising period of history, Argentine-Brazilian relations were clouded by the question of the use of shared natural

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<sup>4</sup> Mónica Hirst, "Las perspectivas del diálogo bilateral", in *Argentina-Brazil: El largo camino de la integración*, Mónica Hirst, ed., (Editorial Legasa, Buenos Aires, 1988), p. 193.

<sup>5</sup> Carlos Muñiz, *Las relaciones entre la Argentina y Brazil*, (Mitre Museum, Buenos Aires, 1979), p. 45.

<sup>6</sup> Address to the Palermo Rotary Club, Buenos Aires, June 1969, quoted by Muñiz, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

resources. Not until 1979 could the problem be overcome through a tripartite agreement between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, a compromise not totally satisfying to anyone, but which made it possible to clear the way for a fresh start. Yet the operation of the Itaipú dam still gives rise to difficulties from time to time. It is blamed for floods that occur downstream, and popular protests and at times mishandled official complaints can lead to most unnecessary conflicts. More serious is that, once all its turbines are installed, the dam's operation may constitute a real and tangible threat to the regions downstream.

A new phase made possible by the 1979 agreement, began in 1980, when during a visit by the President of Brazil to Argentina, a number of agreements and treaties were signed in several areas, the most important of which, given its nature, was in the field of nuclear cooperation. It appeared that a new era had truly dawned in relations between the two countries. But what had transpired was hardly more than a trial run. The *rapprochement* of 1980 had neither the depth nor the desired impact, no doubt because the domestic situation in the two countries, which were ruled by military Governments but had embarked upon a process of transferring power to civilian hands, was not propitious to an undertaking of the magnitude of the Argentine-Brazilian integration.

Suitable conditions emerged recently when democratically elected presidents took office in the two States, Alfonsín in Argentina in December 1983 and Sarney in Brazil in March 1985, Sarney replacing the deceased President-elect Tancredo Neves. It would appear that the popular support they received gave them the mandate to undertake major projects, one of the most visionary of which was certainly the beginning of a new era in relations between the two nations.

On 30 November 1985, the two Presidents met at Foz do Iguaçu to inaugurate a programme that took concrete form on 31 July 1986 with the signing in Buenos Aires of a document of historic importance, the Argentine-Brazilian Integration Act, together with 12 protocols for cooperation and mutual assistance in various areas, including nuclear energy. Other protocols were signed at later presidential meetings, and their number reached 24 in June 1990.

It is important to underscore that the integration process has been maintained despite various difficulties, due largely to the extremely complex economic situation that the two countries have been encountering. It easily survived the transfer of power in July 1989 from President Alfonsín to President Menem, whose first visit abroad one month after taking office was, in fact, to Brazil, a clear demonstration of his firm and resolute support for the integration effort upon which the two countries have embarked.

President Collor de Mello had hardly taken office when he announced a like-minded readiness to maintain and pursue the ongoing process. When, several months later, on 5 and 6 July 1990, he made an official visit to Buenos Aires, the first point of the joint statement issued by the two heads of State emphasized "the firm and irrevocable determination of the two Governments to achieve ... the definitive establishment of a common market between the two countries", which clearly constitutes the closest form of integration, apart from political union, of course.

No one expects the road to be easy or free from problems, difficulties or even occasional reverses in one area or another. The existing problems, above all in the economic and commercial spheres, are too evident to be disregarded or ignored; on the contrary, they require constant energetic and imaginative measures if they are to be overcome. It is encouraging that the results have been positive and that trade between the two countries has increased substantially in recent years.

Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that the integration process between the two biggest States of South America is gradually becoming irreversible. That stage may not yet have been reached, but it will be soon. At the current time, it is not easy to say precisely what the actual scope and implications of this integration process will be. A page has been turned in the history of South America. With Argentina and Brazil united and no longer separated by suspicion, bickering and rivalry, but, on the contrary, coordinating their political and economic policy to face the stimulation, challenges and difficulties of the outside world, it appears clear that in the future, this part of the globe will set out upon a new path that will bring greater benefit to its peoples and to the entire region in general.

Perhaps the picture just described seems too optimistic. Perhaps the integration process will lose speed and bog down and its future will be jeopardized. Perhaps. But it does not seem likely. Even with an awareness of the difficulties, the past accomplishments, current efforts and future goals are so important that it is virtually impossible to conceive of a return to the relations of decades past, when conflict and cooperation merged in a climate of rivalry and suspicion.

Not only have the ruling classes in the two countries changed their way of thinking, the international context has also evolved. Rivalries which, in other periods, made sense to an extent, no longer do. Today's challenges are different, as are the expectations and desires of the two peoples. The internal and external problems and difficulties are more serious. In these circumstances, returning to the past or seeking petty, inglorious victories would be inexplicable. On the contrary, everything points to the need to face up to the complexities of the modern world united and with a coordination of efforts, to overcome narrow-mindedness and selfish concern and to focus on positive elements, the resources and potential of South America's two largest countries, which, through joint, integrated action must make their views felt with greater weight in the international community, where the weak and the isolated tend to be ignored.

An area closely associated with security that constitutes an important aspect of the Argentine-Brazilian cooperation and integration process is that of nuclear energy.<sup>7</sup> Six joint statements on nuclear policy have been signed by the heads of State of the two countries since 1985. One of the protocols that mark the integration process, No. 11, on "Prompt provision of information and reciprocal assistance in cases of nuclear accidents and radiological emergencies", was signed in Buenos Aires on 31 July 1986, before the relevant conventions pioneered by the International Atomic Energy Agency; two annexes thereto were signed in Brasília on 10 December of the same year.

On the same date, Protocol No. 17 was signed in Brasília on "nuclear cooperation", which defined the areas of joint cooperation and development in that field. On 23 August 1989, an agreement was signed in Brasília, as an annex to Protocol No. 17, on "promoting broad industrial cooperation in the nuclear sector".

A brief analysis of the documents signed between the two countries since the first statement issued on 17 May 1980 reveals a number of constant and common elements that have inspired close nuclear cooperation between Argentina and Brazil. The following points deserve mention:

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<sup>7</sup> The subject is elaborated upon by Julio César Carasales, "A Unique Component of the New Argentine-Brazilian Relationship: Nuclear Cooperation", a paper commissioned by the Nuclear Control Institute, Washington, D.C., for discussion at the seminar on Latin American Nuclear Cooperation: New Prospects and Challenges (Montevideo, Uruguay, 11-13 October 1989). The documentation of the seminar will shortly be published by Macmillan.

1. Reaffirmation of the exclusively peaceful character of the Argentine and Brazilian nuclear energy programmes. This commitment, contained in successive bilateral documents issued at the highest level, should not be ignored or underestimated.
2. Strengthening of mutual confidence. As seen in the joint projects, regular visits, contacts of every kind at political and technical levels, exchange of information etc., the two countries programmes are being made more transparent in order to promote complete confidence in each one about the nuclear-programme goals of the other. Visits have even taken place at the presidential level, President Sarney having inspected the uranium enrichment plant at Pilcaniyeu and, later, the facility for processing radioactive materials at Ezeiza, and President Alfonsín the enrichment plant at Aramar. Reference has been made on numerous occasions to the unique importance of these confidence-building measures for two developing countries in the same region.
3. Use of advances in the peaceful use of nuclear energy for the benefit of the population of the two countries.
4. Potential for expanding cooperation in the nuclear field to other countries in Latin America.
5. Coordination of a common foreign policy in the nuclear energy sphere. To that end, a working group on nuclear policy (now a standing committee) established in 1985 meets periodically, alternating between the two countries, and reports to the respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs, although staff from the technical services are also involved. The committee operates with three groups: one on technical cooperation, a second on coordination of foreign policy and a third on legal and technical cooperation requests. There is also an Argentine-Brazilian management committee in the nuclear field (CEABAN) at industry level.
6. A concern for peace and security in the region. The enterprise in which Argentina and Brazil are engaged in the nuclear field is truly unique. It has economic aims - industrial complementarity, avoidance of duplication and conduct of joint efforts, leading to reduced costs, and so on - but the distinguishing feature of this process is a striving for mutual trust, so as to give each side an assurance of the other's intentions in such a delicate and sensitive area as the uses of nuclear energy. The spectre of the development of nuclear weapons by one of the two parties has been a matter for concern not only to those directly involved but to the entire world, notwithstanding the steady stream of public denials. Rather than checks and safeguards, the two countries opted initially for the encouragement of permanent contacts of all kinds and at all levels in pursuit of the objective that neither should be able to engage in any covert activity without the other becoming aware of it in one way or another. This process has yet to be completed, it is true, but much progress has been made and an acceptable degree of mutual trust has been generated.<sup>8</sup>

On 28 November 1990 a new step of the greatest importance was taken in this process. In a Declaration on Common Nuclear Policy signed by the two Presidents at Foz do Iguaçu, they adopted a Joint Accounting and Control System for application to all the nuclear activities of the two countries, and decided to undertake, within 45 days, an exchange of lists describing

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<sup>8</sup> John R. Redick, "Argentina and Brazil: An Evolving Nuclear Relationship", Programme for Promoting Nuclear Non-proliferation, Occasional Paper Seven, Southampton, U.K., 1990.

all the nuclear facilities on either side and the statements of the initial inventories of nuclear material existing in each country, as well as the first reciprocal inspections of centralized records systems. At the same time, it was decided to enter into negotiations with IAEA with a view to the conclusion of a joint safeguards agreement based on the Joint Accounting and Control System, and subsequently to secure the full entry into force for the two countries of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, following "action to update and improve its wording".<sup>9</sup>

The above description of the present state of relations between the Argentine Republic and Brazil undoubtedly presents a positive picture. It can be said that the situation between the two countries has never been better this century. This state of affairs is indisputably favourable not only to the two of them but also for the security of the entire region. A war between the two countries, had one occurred, would, because of the size of the participants, have been a disaster for South America as a whole, from which no country would have been spared. This eventuality, which was always remote,<sup>10</sup> appears to have vanished - it is to be hoped, forever. Any other conflict in Latin America would be much more manageable insofar as it did not involve the major powers.

Should Argentina cease regarding Brazil as a possible source of threats to its security? In all logic, the response should be in the affirmative. To expect Brazil to have been eliminated in practice from all studies of possible conflict scenarios would be to expect a great deal. And this is, perhaps, reasonable. Brazil remains there, beside Argentina, with its vast human and material resources, its continental scale, its spectacular development, its historical tradition, its ambitions to wield power on the world stage, its high level of industrialization, its substantial arms output - in short, all the characteristics of a powerful neighbour which cannot be ignored. It is a giant which, even without wishing to do so, can threaten and cause harm.

Moreover, the study of conflict scenarios is an indispensable exercise in all defence ministries and among all general staffs, without this meaning that conflicts are wished for or

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<sup>9</sup> Implementing what was foreshadowed in the 28 November 1990 Argentine-Brazilian Declaration of Foz do Iguacú, the Presidents of the two countries signed an Agreement (ratified in Argentina by Act No. 24,046 of 5 December 1991) on 18 July 1991 at Guadalajara, Mexico, which, in essence, contains the firm undertaking of the two States to use exclusively for peaceful purposes the nuclear material and installations under their jurisdiction or control and, consequently, to abstain from "carrying out, promoting or authorizing" the production and or storage of any nuclear weapon. At the same time, the carrying out of so-called peaceful nuclear explosions is renounced for as long as it remains technically impossible to distinguish them from detonations of nuclear weapons. A Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC) is created, with headquarters at Rio de Janeiro, with the mission of ensuring that no materials in any nuclear activities of the two countries are diverted to nuclear weapons or other explosive nuclear devices. Expressly excluded from the prohibition is "the propulsion of any type of vehicle, including submarines, since propulsion is a peaceful application of nuclear energy".

On the basis of the above-mentioned Agreement, negotiations were intensified with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in order to arrive at an agreement on total safeguards. They were concluded on 13 December 1991 with the signing in Vienna by the Heads of State of Argentina and Brazil, and the heads of IAEA and the Brazilian-Argentine Agency (ABACC) of a quadripartite agreement which provides for the application of such safeguards to the two countries, to be implemented cooperatively and without duplication by the Vienna Agency and the Agency of Rio de Janeiro.

The promises made in November 1990 at Foz do Iguacú, have been kept with rather surprising rapidity.

<sup>10</sup> There was one factor which invariably discouraged any inclination which might have existed in any sector in Argentina or Brazil to go to war against the other country. As has been said, "Some form of extracontinental intervention would quickly result if a war broke out between the two biggest and most highly developed countries of South America. Since it would be most unlikely for the élite of both countries to approve of such intervention in their war, that possibility might act as an effective deterrent". See Alexandre Barros, "The Diplomacy of National Security: South American International Relations in A Defrosting World", in *Latin America: The Search for A New International Role*, Ronald Hellman, H. Jon Rosenbaum, eds., (Sage Publications, New York, 1975), p.147.

sought, or that they are considered likely. The aim of such studies is to ensure preparedness for any eventuality, however remote it may seem.

In this context, the author of this study is certain that, in the appropriate area, scenarios relating to conflict with Brazil are under study, just as he is certain that, in the corresponding offices in Brazil, scenarios relating to conflict with Argentina are also studied. Yet he is also certain that in both cases the likelihood attached to these scenarios is small, very small. The new era in Argentine-Brazilian relations seems too solid and irreversible to justify belief in the outbreak of conflicts likely to endanger the security of either side. It is to be hoped that the future will show that rationality and consistency will rule over the management of affairs of State.

## Chile

The second country with which Argentina has had and may continue to have security problems is Chile, but the nature of its frequently conflictual relationship with its neighbour beyond the Andes is different from its relationship with Brazil. With Chile there has been no rivalry or competition of a political nature; rather, the disputes have been specific and concrete, relating to particular areas of land and sea. Although there was a border dispute in the northern part of the shared border, in Puna de Atacama, settled through arbitration in 1899, the extended and difficult Argentine-Chilean conflict has always had to do with the southern region of the South American continent.

The Captaincy General of Chile formed part of the Vice-Royalty of River Plate. It gained independence from Spain with the help of an expedition dispatched by the Government of Buenos Aires, organized and headed by General San Martín. The two nations spent the first decades of their independent life trying to overcome the problems involved in organizing themselves as new sovereign States, and could spare little attention for the vast areas in the south stretching to Cape Horn. This enormous region, which from the eastern foothills of the Andes bore the name of Patagonia, was largely in the hands of the indigenous people. Only the coastal areas were accessible for attempts at control and settlement originating from the two capitals.

The moment arrived when the drive south began, and in this undertaking, perhaps because of the narrowness and strange shape of its territory, Chile generally took the initiative. If a date can be cited to mark the beginning of problems with Argentina, the year 1843 might serve, when Chile founded Fuerte Bulnes on the Strait of Magellan, a settlement moved to a nearby site in 1849 and rebaptized Punta Arenas. The Argentine protest was the first of a long series exchanged by the two States over the 150 years that followed.<sup>11</sup>

It is not appropriate for this study to recount the many incidents and attempts to reach satisfactory solutions which marked the passing years, still less to embark on an examination of the titles either country invoked to justify a wish to draw the border in one place or another. Suffice it to mention that Chile claimed various parts of Patagonia, to be met always with a categorical Argentine refusal. The disputes finally focused on the Strait of Magellan and adjoining areas, Tierra del Fuego and other nearby islands.

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<sup>11</sup> Isidoro Ruiz Moreno, *Historia de las relaciones exteriores argentinas*, (Editorial Perrot, Buenos Aires, 1961), pp. 199-253.

A period of exacerbation of the conflict, which brought the two countries to the brink of war in 1878, finally led to the signature of a border treaty in 1881, by which, in exchange for Chile's renunciation of its claims in Patagonia, Argentina gave up its rights to the Strait of Magellan, which was declared neutral in perpetuity, with freedom of navigation guaranteed for ships under all flags. The island of Tierra del Fuego was divided in half.

Contrary to what might have been expected, the border treaty did not bring an end to the problems which continued, making it necessary to sign an Additional Explanatory Protocol in 1893, which laid down what came to be known as the "bioceanic principle". It was pointed out that, under the provisions of the Treaty, "the sovereignty of each State over the corresponding coastline is absolute, so that Chile cannot lay claim to any point on the Atlantic side, just as the Argentine Republic cannot lay any such claim on the Pacific side".

The disputes over demarcation continued, however, and the climate between the two countries worsened once again. As the end of the century approached, they appeared increasingly close to war. Not even a request for arbitration addressed to the King of Great Britain in 1898, under the provisions of the 1881 treaty, defused the situation.

In a highly symbolic gesture, Presidents Errázuriz and Roca met on a warship off Punta Arenas, in the middle of the Strait of Magellan, in what went down in history as "the Strait embrace". Nothing specific was agreed, but the mere fact of the meeting had a calming effect, which unfortunately gave way to high passions shortly afterwards. In 1901 the two countries were once again on the brink of war.

Intense diplomatic efforts were once again necessary. On 28 May 1902, in Santiago, the two Foreign Ministers signed the "May Agreements", which are composed of three documents: (a) an instrument setting out an amicable solution to pending problems; (b) a General Treaty of Arbitration, under which all issues which could not be settled directly would be submitted for arbitration to His Britannic Majesty; and (c) a Convention on the Limitation of Naval Armaments, the first intergovernmental disarmament agreement, to which tribute was subsequently paid as a pioneering instrument on the occasion of the Naval Conference in London in 1930.<sup>12</sup>

In the same year, 1902, King Edward VII made his arbitral award in response to the 1898 request, and went so far as to dispatch a mission to demarcate the border decided upon on the ground. But the problems continued. In 1929 there was talk of the existence of plans in Chile for an invasion of Patagonia.<sup>13</sup>

Curiously, the man who governed Chile in 1929, General Carlos Ibáñez del Campo, returned to his country's leadership in 1952. In him, Perón found a suitable partner for his plans for Latin American economic and indeed political integration. In 1953 a Treaty of Argentine-Chilean Economic Union was signed in Buenos Aires, marking a regrettably brief moment of marked improvement in the relations between the two countries.

Yet shortly afterwards, the situation had returned to normal and new incidents occurred to throw a shadow over relations. From 1955 onwards difficulties arose in the area of Río Encuentro, which were resolved through British arbitration in 1966. But by then a further problem had arisen in Laguna del Desierto, with shots exchanged and bloodshed.

However, the greatest difficulties arose in the Beagle Channel area to the south of Tierra del Fuego, involving the islands of Picton, Nueva and Lennox. The Argentine town and naval

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<sup>12</sup> Carlos Alberto Silva, *La política internacional de la nación argentina*, (Ministry of the Interior (Office of the Undersecretary for Information), Buenos Aires, 1946), pp. 380-1.

<sup>13</sup> Miguel A. Scenna, *Argentina-Chile: Una frontera caliente*, (Editorial de Belgrano, Buenos Aires, 1981), pp. 157-163.

base of Ushuaia is located on the channel, and Argentina could not accept arguments which threw doubt on its right to navigate to and from the town or placed its exercise under Chilean control.

The dispute needed to be solved once and for all, but efforts in that direction failed time and again, until a favourable opportunity unexpectedly arose. Two leaders whose political philosophies could not have been more different - General Alejandro Lanusse and Dr. Salvador Allende - took power in Argentina and Chile. While the entire world expected that, with a left-wing régime on one side of the Andes and a military régime on the other, Argentine-Chilean relations, which were never excellent, would become worse than ever, the very opposite happened. General Lanusse abandoned the policy of "ideological borders" followed by his military predecessors, and decided to establish cordial relations with Chile, on the basis of absolute respect for the principle of non-intervention. In Allende he found a suitable partner who was anxious to avoid being hemmed in by hostile forces, further complicating the difficult domestic political situation he faced.<sup>14</sup>

On 22 July 1971, in London, the two countries signed the Arbitration Agreement or Accord, under which, in pursuance of the provisions of the 1902 General Treaty of Arbitration, the Beagle dispute was submitted for arbitration to Her Britannic Majesty who, in turn, designated for the purpose a Court of Arbitration composed of five judges of the International Court of Justice. This overcame the reluctance of Argentina to agree to arbitration by Great Britain, with which it was involved in a variety of disputes relating to the Malvinas Islands and the Antarctic.

The Court sat in Geneva and its conclusions were accepted by the Queen of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (who could accept or reject them, but not modify them), who rendered her arbitral award on 2 May 1977.

The award was favourable to Chile and provoked a tremendous negative reaction in Argentina, which questioned not only the validity of the grounds for the award and what it considered a misinterpretation of the Argentine positions, but above all the court's attitude in ruling on matters which had not been put before it, with important consequences for the islands of the far south of the continent and the neighbouring sea areas.

It is not appropriate in this study to deal with the various aspects of the arbitral award. The important fact is that the Argentine Government eventually decided to reject it, as it announced on 25 January 1978. A conflictual situation had not only not been resolved, as had been hoped, but had been exacerbated and made more complicated. There were meetings between the two heads of State, General Videla and General Pinochet, in Mendoza (Argentina) and Puerto Montt (Chile), in a search for a solution to the crisis.

These efforts came to nothing, and by the end of 1978 the two countries were once again on the brink of war. Of the various international efforts to prevent the worst from happening, the most successful was the initiative pursued by His Holiness John Paul II. His special envoy, Cardinal Samoré, was in the region at Christmas on a fully-fledged peace mission, which ended happily when, on 8 January 1979, in Montevideo, the Foreign Ministers of the two countries signed an agreement accepting papal mediation. Chile sought to preserve the essence of what it had received from the 1977 arbitral award, Argentina to attenuate its consequences as far as possible.

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<sup>14</sup> General Alejandro Lanusse, *Mi testimonio*, (Lasserre Editores, Buenos Aires, 1977), pp. 242-3.

The negotiating process in Rome lasted a number of years, and was neither simple nor easy. The final result was a Treaty of Peace and Friendship between the two countries, signed in Rome on 29 November 1984. A few days previously, on 25 November, the Argentine Government had assessed the wishes of the people of the country by means of a referendum, which produced a result of 81 per cent in favour of the Treaty and 17 per cent against.

The first clause of the Treaty formally reiterates the agreement of the two parties to preserve, strengthen and develop their ties of unchanging peace and eternal friendship. Next, they confirm their obligation to refrain from the direct or indirect threat or use of force in any form or from any other step which might disrupt harmony in any area of their mutual relations, as well as their obligation always and exclusively to use peaceful means to solve all disputes of any kind which for any reason may have arisen or may arise between them.

For that purpose, the Treaty establishes a three-stage procedure for seeking a solution: firstly, direct settlement between the parties; if this fails, resort to a Conciliation Commission; and, if this does not meet with success, submission of the dispute to an Arbitral Tribunal composed of five members selected by joint agreement. If there is no agreement, they are to be nominated by the Government of the Swiss Confederation. In the event of a similar disagreement in respect of the Conciliation Commission, the choice is to be made by the Holy Father. As can be seen, the figure of the British monarch, who had rendered so many arbitral awards in the past, has completely disappeared from the text.

The Treaty delimits the sovereignty of the two sides in the Beagle area and adjacent sea areas. All the southern islands remain in Chilean hands and the neighbouring sea area is delimited in such a way as to reduce Chilean incursion into the Atlantic. In this area, known as the Sea of the Southern Zone, the territorial sea of the two countries is limited, in their relations with each other, but not *vis-à-vis* third States, to 3 nautical miles.

The purposes of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship are not restricted to the delimitation of borders and the peaceful settlement of disputes, but extend to the promotion of economic cooperation and physical integration, to which end a standing Binational Commission is set up.

The final provisions of the Treaty formally declare that it "constitutes the complete and definitive settlement of the matters to which it refers" and that the limits laid down in it "constitute a definitive and unshakeable boundary between the sovereignty of the Argentine Republic and that of the Republic of Chile".

How far this Treaty of Peace and Friendship represents the final response to more than a century of conflict and disagreement, resentment and hostility, only the passage of time will tell. It is to be hoped that it will do so, in keeping with the wishes and needs of both peoples. Total optimism is not universal. "On the conclusion of the conflict in the south - it has been said - problems will continue as long as the border markers are 20 or 30 kilometres apart; tensions will persist while Chileans continue to immigrate clandestinely into Patagonia without becoming integrated; friction will recur as long as this Patagonia is not settled, developed and exploited by Argentines, and ultimately integrated with the rest of the country. And if ever differences along the border in the Andes or at sea are settled, they can reappear the next day in the Antarctic."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Miguel A. Scenna, *op. cit.*, p. 319.

The words quoted above refer to a problem which has always caused concern to any Argentine official responsible for his country's security, namely, the presence within its borders of a substantial population of Chilean origin, which has settled in the very area - Patagonia - which is most exposed and hardest to defend against possible enemy attack.

The Argentine far south is a region which is potentially rich but barely exploited or settled. Argentines and their rulers have always preferred to direct their attention to the central belt of the country, more fertile and close at hand, better developed and supplied with communications, at the expense of the distant south, which is generally inhospitable and offers harsh living conditions. There is clear awareness of the dangers represented by empty spaces, but all the efforts that have been made to develop this vast area, including President Alfonsín's abortive attempt to transfer the country's capital to the southern town of Viedma, have been insufficient.

The activities carried out in the area, in the sphere of livestock-raising (mainly sheep-raising) and minerals (mainly oil), naturally require labour, of which there is by no means an adequate supply from the north of the country. Hence a large number of Chilean citizens, poorer and more pliant, have crossed the Andes, often clandestinely, in search of a better life. This is a natural phenomenon which has also occurred in other parts of Argentina, especially with immigrants from Bolivia and Paraguay, who also crossed the border for reasons of economic and social advancement. With the exception of cases of political exile, the economic and social causes of these population shifts are confirmed by the movements in the opposite direction that occur when conditions worsen in Argentina.

What makes Chilean immigration special is, firstly, the fact that it comes from a country with which Argentina has had conflictual relations, with an influence on its security, and, secondly, that these are people who generally tend to remain separate, for the most part failing to integrate into the communities they have joined. Anyone studying scenarios of conflict with Chile must necessarily take into account the element of concern arising from the presence, in the region which has been the principal object of disputes between the two countries, of potentially hostile nuclei of population capable of providing support to their country of origin, unassimilated in local society, among the reasons for which - it is feared - are the activities of Chilean consular representatives in the region, who are attentive and zealous in their natural mission to preserve as far as possible each Chilean emigrant's links with his country.

The Antarctic cannot be omitted from any account of areas of conflict between Argentina and Chile, even though it lies low on the scale of priorities. Both countries - Chile in 1940 and Argentina in 1947 - have claimed sovereignty over different sectors of the Antarctic which to a large degree overlap, while both are encompassed in the even larger area claimed by the United Kingdom.

The 1959 Antarctic Treaty, to which both countries are party, and the entire Treaty régime, as well as present international circumstances, in which the continuation of the Antarctic Treaty is combined with the aspiration of numerous non-aligned countries to convert the Antarctic into the "common heritage of mankind" and universal concern for the preservation of the environment in the region in the face of possible exploitation of its natural resources, go to form a picture which adds special connotations to this Argentine-Chilean dispute regarding sovereignty. There is every reason to think that the future of the Antarctic, including the settlement of issues of sovereignty, will not be resolved at the individual or bilateral level, but in broader forums.

From the outset Argentina and Chile have pursued a conciliatory policy in Antarctic matters. Two joint declarations, issued in 1947 and 1948, promote not only broad cooperation in the area but also - more importantly - joint defence against third parties for this South American Antarctic claimed by both countries, though in partially overlapping sectors. The Antarctic zone to be jointly protected was to be found between the meridians 25 and 90 west, the easternmost and westernmost limits of the Argentine and Chilean sectors respectively. In 1955 the two countries rejected an attempt by Great Britain to place the Antarctic issue before the International Court of Justice.

The scant possibility of serious conflict in the Antarctic, in view of the fact that this problem area falls within a broader framework, should not lead one to forget the overlapping claims which one day will have to be resolved one way or another.

Meanwhile, the 1984 Treaty of Peace and Friendship does not neglect this situation. Article 15 of the Treaty states that its provisions regarding the peaceful settlement of disputes, including procedures for conciliation and arbitration, "shall be applicable to Antarctic territory". At the same time, and in order that conclusions and implications should not be drawn from the maritime delimitations it contains and applied to the Antarctic continent, the Treaty adds that its provisions "shall not in any way affect and shall not be capable of being interpreted to mean that they may directly or indirectly affect the sovereignty, rights or juridical positions of the Parties, or the delimitations in the Antarctic or in its adjacent maritime areas, including the soil and the subsoil thereof".

At this point in the history of Argentine-Chilean relations, it remains to be seen whether the Treaty of Peace and Friendship, which, in the words of article 16, enjoys "the moral protection of the Holy See", truly signifies the turning of a page and the beginning of a new era. Much can be said in its favour, of course, but at the same time it cannot be denied that a century and a half of conflict, quarrels, distrust, skirmishes and even threats of war have left traces which cannot easily be wiped away or forgotten. In matters of international politics and security, facts are the only evidence, not words or good intentions. Hence the Treaty must pass the test of time, and of course we must devoutly hope that it will.

Unfortunately, the best use has not been made of the years since its signature and ratification. On both sides of the Andes there were completely dissimilar Governments, the military régime of General Pinochet in Chile, and the democratic civilian Government of President Alfonsín in Argentina. President Alfonsín, eager to strengthen democracy in Latin America, closed ranks with those who shared the same ideology as himself and was icily correct towards the others and in that way, pursued a kind of policy of "ideological frontiers" for which the military Governments of Buenos Aires had been so severely criticized when they followed it in the second half of the 1960s.

What is certain is that this "economic cooperation and physical integration" which was one of the essential objectives of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship made very slow progress, or in any case advanced much more slowly than expected than it would have done if the often repeated truth were recognized, that Argentina and Chile are two economically complementary and not competitive countries and that they should long ago have been linked by all sorts of strong ties if the chain of conflicts over sovereignty and the ensuing resentment had not hampered and halted a process which ought to have been natural and easy.

The advent of a civilian Government in Chile in March 1990 appears at last to have provided the missing ingredient to enable cooperation to replace conflict in the relationship between Argentina and Chile. Today, both countries have democratic Governments and the way has been cleared for them to make decisive progress towards new horizons.

Since May 1990, when the new Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chile visited Buenos Aires, a series of contacts has been made between the authorities of the two countries, in an effort to impart fresh impetus to the bilateral relationship. These contacts culminated in the official visit of President Menem to Santiago, Chile, from 27 to 29 August 1990, at the end of which a long and important joint declaration was signed.

In it, the two heads of State made "a solemn pledge to begin a new stage in the bilateral relationship, by executing specific binational integration projects designed to strengthen fraternal links between Argentina and Chile" and decided "to proceed immediately to promote action conducive to effective integration between the two countries in the fields of infrastructure, economics and energy" and, further, "to foster close links and cooperation between the armed forces of the two countries, by promoting joint activities and studies in areas of common interest".

Of the subjects included in the joint declaration, special mention should be made of the decision to draft a full report on the current situation regarding outstanding issues with respect to the boundaries between the two countries; consultation on the positions to be adopted in forums dealing with the question of Antarctica; cooperation in the field of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and in matters relating to outer space; and a detailed programme of integration in matters relating to infrastructure and energy. In the sphere of economic integration, agreement was reached on the general bases for the establishment of an expanded market, which should be set up by 31 December 1995 at the latest. It is noteworthy that the goal of "an expanded market" is more limited than the market already agreed on between Argentina and Brazil, which is "a common market". Although the overriding idea is Chile's eventual incorporation into that future common market, the fact is that Chile has said that, for the present, it would prefer to adopt a wait-and-see attitude, pending the evolution of the Argentine and Brazilian economies and the outcome of the joint undertakings on which both countries have embarked.

Lastly, attention should be drawn to a paragraph in the joint declaration of 29 August 1990 on the subject of "international security and disarmament", in which the two heads of State announced their decision "to promote the definition of a shared concept of regional and world security".

This is an ambitious agenda. It is not the first time that such laudable objectives have been proclaimed, but they have never been so varied and so vast. On previous occasions, the results have been disappointing. It is to be hoped that that will not be the case this time. Meanwhile, the distrust has not been dispelled altogether, at least among those who have to predict and examine all assumptions, nor does anyone really believe that this is a new idyllic period in which all the problems between Argentina and Chile have disappeared forever, because that does not happen in the real world. What can be hoped is that, with respect to Chile, the inevitable assumptions of conflict will gradually decline on the scale of probability until one day they disappear altogether.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> The ambitious agenda outlined by the Presidents of Argentina and Chile on 29 August 1990 did not remain a mere expression of good intentions. In August 1991, President Aylwin visited Buenos Aires and the lengthy Joint Declaration issued on 2 August reaffirmed and expanded the ideas and measures voiced the year before.

In that cordial climate, worth special mention in connection with the subject under consideration is the Presidential Declaration on Borders between Argentina and Chile signed on the same 2 August. After pointing out that "the solution of still existing border problems will not only make it possible to conclude the demarcation of our frontiers but also, and above all, to open new channels of cooperation and resolutely advance in the process of integration between the two nations", as well as "to re-create new and auspicious foundations of confidence" for future understandings between the two countries,

## Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay

Apart from Brazil and Chile, Argentina has three other neighbours: Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay. The three have common features which clearly distinguish them from the first two: their population is much smaller, two of them (Bolivia and Paraguay) have a low level of development and although Uruguay's is higher in some cases, for example the literacy rate, overall theirs is not comparable to that of their two bigger neighbours, Argentina and Brazil; the three have little military and economic power and to some extent they constitute what are commonly called "buffer States", not in a pejorative sense of course, and recognizing that each one has its own national history and characteristics which justify their existence as independent, sovereign States.

In any case, it is a fact that none of the three represents a threat to the security of the Argentine Republic. This does not mean overlooking the fact that, rather more than a century ago, Argentina was at war with Paraguay or that, until recently, there have been conflicts and even minor incidents between Argentina and Uruguay over the control of the River Plate. At present, these problems have been resolved and no dispute is expected to occur that is serious enough to engender any major conflict between any of these three countries and Argentina which could have implications for Argentina's security. There is no doubt that the neighbouring and bordering States can have - and surely will have - problems and difficulties with Argentina, especially as a growing number of citizens of two of them, Bolivia and Paraguay, have settled in Argentina, some in areas close to the border. What does not appear to be remotely likely is that these problems, should they occur, cannot be solved through the normal channels of diplomacy between friendly countries.

As has already been stated several times in this study, it is generally believed that if any of these neighbouring countries should ever become a threat to Argentina's security, this may occur as a result of an internal political, economic and social conflict which would mean a serious breakdown of law and order that could have repercussions on Argentine territory.

The scenario portrayed above could theoretically occur in any country with serious problems of underdevelopment and social backwardness. Some of Argentina's neighbouring countries have such problems and although, at present, the situation appears to be relatively calm, the possibility of violence breaking out always exists. Past experience has demonstrated this, as have current events in the neighbouring but not bordering country of Peru. Much of what has been said above can be applied to Peru.

Scenarios for possible internal conflicts in bordering States may, of course, differ, but basically the consequences for the Argentine Republic can arise from two situations. One of them would occur if an outburst against the authorities of a neighbouring State developed into

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the Declaration announces that "after study and evaluation of the 24 *pending border questions*", 23 are solved. Only one is not, an area of 500 square kilometres known as the Laguna del Desierto and situated in the extreme south of the two countries, which is referred to arbitration. The relevant tribunal, which started its work on 16 December 1991 at Rio de Janeiro, will be able to announce its award - it is hoped - in 1994. It is worth mentioning that the five arbitrators are all Latin Americans and that Rio de Janeiro was chosen because it is also the headquarters of the Inter-American Juridical Committee. That emphasis on the regional nature of the solution of the dispute is probably to be explained by the extra-continental character of the judges of the International Court of Justice - none of them Latin American - who acted in the Beagle Canal controversy and whose award in 1977 gave rise to so many difficulties.

Further evidence of the favourable period through which Argentine-Chilean relations are passing is to be seen in the so-called Mendoza Compromise of 5 September 1991, signed also by Brazil, in which the three States renounce any possibility of developing or possessing chemical or biological weapons pending the conclusion and entry into force of the convention on the subject being negotiated at Geneva.

armed revolt and even into civil war; in that case, hostilities could occur at points close to the border and the overall conflict could, *inter alia*, result in significant population movements, a massive influx of refugees into Argentine territory, a large number of political exiles and persons seeking asylum in the Argentine Embassy. Inevitably problems would arise that, although differing in nature and importance, could create tensions with the Government of that particular country or with the rebel leaders who might have control over considerable territory and forces. There is a wide range of possible difficulties but there is no doubt that if certain extremes were reached, the security of the Argentine Republic could be jeopardized.

This could also occur if - and this is the second situation which we have been considering - the revolutionary movement in the hypothetical neighbouring country triumphed and a Government with an expansionist ideology took power, and also had designs to export that ideology actively, through various forms of intervention, to the neighbouring countries, including Argentina. The conflict that would inevitably follow would undoubtedly have implications for the security of the nation.

### **The Malvinas Islands and the United Kingdom**

The conflict over the Malvinas Islands, or the Falkland Islands as the British call them, began in 1765 between Spain and the United Kingdom. In that year, the British founded Port Egmont after the French had founded Port Louis in 1764, later ceded to Spain in recognition of its prior sovereignty over the entire Malvinas archipelago.

The Argentine Republic inherited both Spain's title to the archipelago and the dispute with Great Britain. The Government of Buenos Aires occupied the islands shortly after the proclamation of independence, but its representatives were forcibly expelled in 1833 and the British expedition repossessed the archipelago in the name of His Britannic Majesty. Since then Argentina has been struggling unsuccessfully to regain control of the islands, of which, it has always maintained, it has been arbitrarily deprived.

This is not the appropriate time to chronicle all the episodes, protests and claims, and international negotiations and documents relating to the case of the Malvinas Islands, to which the South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands were subsequently added. The 1982 hostilities are still too recent to merit special reference here. The diverse consequences of the hostilities included the severance of all relations between the United Kingdom and Argentina and an end to any talks between them over the future of the islands. Although undeniable progress has been made concerning various facets of the relationship between the islands and mainland Argentina since United Nations General Assembly resolution 2065 was adopted in 1965, it should be borne in mind that, in the matter of greatest importance to Argentina, namely sovereignty over the islands, not the slightest progress has been made, and more serious still, no real negotiations have even been started.

In any event, the fact is that in 1982, the situation reverted to what it was before 1965. Worse still, relations were not being maintained between States which should have been parties to a dialogue on the South Atlantic islands. Not only has the conflict of sovereignty over these islands not been resolved by the 1982 war, but it remains essentially unchanged, while at the same time the context in which it took place has deteriorated considerably.

One should be fully aware that the efforts made since the end of the hostilities and more particularly since mid-1989 have been aimed primarily at removing the obstacles to the dialogue between the parties concerned, in order to improve the context referred to in the

previous paragraph.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, it should also be recognized that the causes and circumstances of the conflict remain exactly the same as before and that not only have positions regarding it remained unchanged but there has not been the slightest step forward towards a just and lasting solution to the problem.

Delegations from the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom met in Madrid from 17 to 19 October 1989. During this important meeting, various measures were adopted concerning bilateral links, such as the re-establishment of consular relations, the promotion of trade and financial relations, the restoration of air and sea links between the two countries and the creation of a working group on fishing in the South-West Atlantic.

Regarding peace and security in the area, the two Governments reaffirmed their commitment to respect fully the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the obligation to settle disputes exclusively by peaceful means and the obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force, and took note that all hostilities between them had ceased. Furthermore, a working group was set up to consider measures for building confidence and avoiding incidents in the military sphere.

All these measures were preceded by an undertaking, termed "umbrella of sovereignty", by virtue of which the two Governments agreed that:

1. Nothing in the conduct or content of the meeting or of any other similar, subsequent meeting was to be interpreted as a change in, recognition of, or support for the position of the Argentine Republic or the position of the United Kingdom regarding the sovereignty and territorial and maritime jurisdiction over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and over the surrounding maritime areas; and
2. No act or activity carried out by the Argentine Republic, the United Kingdom or third parties as a consequence of or in execution of the agreements reached at the meeting or at any other similar, subsequent meeting may constitute grounds for asserting, supporting or denying the position of either country regarding sovereignty or territorial or maritime jurisdiction in the above-mentioned areas.

After meetings of the Working Group on Fishing and the Working Group on Confidence-Building Measures, the delegations of Argentina and the United Kingdom met again in Madrid on 14 and 15 February 1990 and made significant progress. It was agreed that diplomatic relations should be restored; Great Britain decided to discontinue the protection zone that it had established around the Malvinas Islands; it was agreed to merge the two working groups into one - the Working Group on matters concerning the South Atlantic; and, as a result of the work of the Working Group on Confidence-Building Measures, it was decided to establish:

1. A provisional system for information and joint consultation on movements of armed forces units in the South-West Atlantic;
2. A system of direct communication between the Malvinas Islands and the mainland for the purpose of reducing the possibility of incidents, limiting their consequences should they occur, and increasing mutual reporting on military activities in the South-West Atlantic;

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<sup>17</sup> Francisco Russell Roberto-Corigliano, "El gobierno, Menem y las negociaciones sobre Malvinas", *América Latina Internacional*, FLACSO (Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences), Vol. 6, No. 22 (October-December 1989) (Buenos Aires), pp.279-288.

3. A set of rules of conduct for the units of respective naval and air forces which might operate in the vicinity;
4. A set of procedures to be followed in cases of emergency in order to facilitate search and sea and air rescue operations; and
5. A system for the exchange of information on security and the monitoring of air and sea navigation.

All of these measures, which will be reviewed in a year's time, and any others which may be adopted in the future, are aimed at defusing the tense situation which existed in the South-West Atlantic and, to the extent possible, preventing or limiting the consequences of episodes in which force is used and any incidents which might occur in the zone. The resumption of dialogue between Great Britain and Argentina, the restoration of diplomatic, consular and trade relations, the accreditation of ambassadors, and the intensification of various kinds of contacts as a result of the resumption of direct communications between them have all contributed to a new climate in which to build up links between Argentina and the United Kingdom, which had been severed a decade ago. There is no doubt that the outlook has improved.

There are, however, two basic facts that should not be forgotten. Firstly, the conflict for sovereignty over the Malvinas and other islands of the South Atlantic remains unchanged and the search for a solution has not even started. One of the parties has even expressed its opposition to such a course. For the moment the conflict has been shelved, but it would be a terrible mistake to believe that Argentina has forgotten it, or that it is prepared to postpone it indefinitely or for several generations. It will be possible to skirt the problem for some time, especially if that enables progress to be made in other areas, but it would be a dangerous illusion to believe that it has in fact disappeared.

That it is still very much alive is indicated by the fact that the United Kingdom seemingly has not the slightest intention of dismantling the powerful military base which it has built up in the Malvinas Islands, despite the new climate which now exists. That is the second basic fact referred to in the preceding paragraph. In the South Atlantic today, there is a large military presence that did not exist before and is inevitably linked to a conflict over sovereignty which has remained unchanged and unresolved.<sup>18</sup>

A serious conflict and one that is not on the way to being resolved, armed forces of both parties that may come into contact when least expected, in spite of all the precautions to ensure that such a thing does not occur - these are ingredients leading to the possibility of an incident, probably unsought, that perhaps will be controlled but may not be, and that escalates unforeseeably, but that in the final analysis constitutes a threat to the security of the Argentine Republic, which is what we are considering, and cannot be ignored by any competent military staff.

The indefinite continuation of the dispute over the sovereignty of the Malvinas Islands also risks aggravating the situation between Argentina and the United Kingdom, but not in the same way as would incidents in the region between the armed forces of the two countries. The islands are a territory on which the United Kingdom has conferred a particular legal status as a British dependent territory. It is within the power of the authorities in London to

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<sup>18</sup> José Miguel Insulza, "Seguridad en el Atlántico Sur: Nuevas percepciones", in *Malvinas hoy: Herencia de un conflicto*, Atilio Borón, Julio Faundez, eds., (Editorial Puntosur, Buenos Aires, 1989), p.251.

alter that status, and such changes may, in some cases, make an eventual just solution of the problem increasingly difficult, not to say almost impossible. Faced with this prospect, it may readily be predicted what would be the reaction of the Argentine Republic which, if it is unable to accept the present situation indefinitely, would be even less able to accept passively a change that would, to take an extreme example, convert the Malvinas Islands into an independent country. Whatever these constitutional modifications were to be, it seems reasonable to suppose that they would undoubtedly give rise to an aggravation of the conflict, a hardening of the situation and a state of tension of a magnitude that cannot be foreseen with any certainty and will probably depend in good measure on the nature of the changes that have taken place in the Malvinas. Undoubtedly no hypothesis of conflict or crisis envisaging a scenario such as the one described would be preposterous.

### The South Atlantic and the Antarctic

It would be out of context for this study to go into detail on the characteristics and the political, economic and strategic importance of the whole of the South Atlantic.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, it is obvious that only a part of this vast expanse of ocean is of direct interest to the Argentine Republic, namely the South-West Atlantic.<sup>20</sup>

Although Argentina has more than 4,000 kilometres of Atlantic shoreline, it lacks good natural ports. Two thirds of these coasts do not front the richest and most productive part of the country. Moreover, Argentina has never been a country with a particularly strong maritime awareness.

There are undoubtedly some realities that no Government can ignore. Almost all Argentine exports and imports have been routed through the South Atlantic, although it is true that the proportion has been declining as trade with neighbouring countries has been built up. The country has one of the most extensive continental shelves in the world<sup>21</sup> and, having consolidated its control of the continental shelf through the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, it has shown itself to be prepared to exploit in an appropriate manner the considerable resources of the zone. Among those resources, fishing offers extraordinary opportunities<sup>22</sup> which are being exploited, to some degree, by Argentine fishing vessels, although on a far greater scale by foreign fishing fleets that operate within and around the zone, and whose catch must be constantly restrained through bilateral agreements and strict measures of inspection to prevent predatory overfishing, which in some cases has already occurred. Prospecting for and exploitation of hydrocarbons is already taking place off the coast and there are ample opportunities for expansion closely connected with technical advances and world oil prices.

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<sup>19</sup> General Carlos de Meira Mattos, "La importancia estratégica del Atlántico Sur", *Geopolítica*, Year XIV, No. 37, (Buenos Aires, 1988), pp. 53-57. Andrew Hurrell, "La importancia estratégica del Atlántico Sur y las Malvinas Falkland", in Borón-Faundez, eds., *op. cit.*, pp.255-265.

<sup>20</sup> Norberto Laus, "El mar en la geopolítica argentina", *Boletín del Centro Naval*, Year 108, vol. 107, No. 756 (January-May 1989) (Buenos Aires), pp. 43-70.

<sup>21</sup> "The Argentine continental shelf is the fifth largest in the world. It is 2,400 km long, between 275 and 800 km wide and has a total surface of 985,000 sq. km, which is the equivalent of 30 per cent of the total land surface". See Rear Admiral Jorge Alberto Fraga, "Aspectos geopolíticos del mar argentino", *Revista de la Escuela de Defensa Nacional*, No. 26 (December 1979) (Buenos Aires), p. 21.

<sup>22</sup> Fernando Chingotto Araujo, "Los recursos naturales vivos en el mar argentino", *Revista de la Escuela de Defensa Nacional*, No. 38 (December 1988) (Buenos Aires), pp. 75-101.

There has been a marked increase in international commercial traffic using the South Atlantic, partly because ships are too large to be able to use the Suez and Panama Canals, and are obliged to follow the routes round the Cape of Good Hope and through the Drake Passage. The strategic importance of these two routes, the second of which is of direct concern to Argentina, will increase considerably should either of the above-mentioned canals be out of use for any reason.

The great naval Powers, and in particular the super-Powers, have increased their presence in the South Atlantic. Although the area lacks large naval bases, with the exception of Ascension Island, and although the Malvinas Islands and some African ports can provide adequate support, the existing fleets have a sufficient operating radius not to need them. Nuclear-powered submarines, which are practically undetectable, are undoubtedly on permanent patrol in the South Atlantic. It is impossible to say how many of the ships have nuclear arms and in what quantities.

The situation previously described shows clearly that the South-West Atlantic is an area of special concern to Argentina. What happens in this expanse of ocean cannot be a matter of indifference to Argentina but, on the contrary, will have important repercussions on the security and well-being of the country.

In 1983 Rear Admiral Jorge Fraga, a noted Argentine specialist, defined what were, in his opinion, the objectives of the Republic in the South Atlantic. They were as follows:

1. To contribute to geographical, oceanographical and meteorological research in the zone;
2. To participate in any international or regional political agreement relating to the South Atlantic;
3. To increase political contacts with the countries bordering on the South Atlantic;
4. To strengthen commercial ties with the countries of the area and to have the largest possible participation of ships flying the national flag;
5. To participate actively in any agreement, pact, treaty and organization relating to security, defence and the control of maritime traffic in the South Atlantic;
6. To maintain adequate information on and assessment of the aspirations and interests of the various countries in the region and to counteract those that affect Argentine interests;
7. To establish the concept of a "Sea of Argentine Interest", as embracing the sea area in which the country should exert influence and take part in activities;
8. On the basis of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, to prepare national legislation and to establish the "Argentine Sea" as the sea area in which the country should exercise political and or economic rights;
9. To exploit the resources of the Argentine Sea in an appropriate manner and to prevent them from being adversely affected by others;
10. To carry out and regulate scientific and technical research in the Argentine Sea;
11. To control pollution in the Argentine Sea;
12. To revitalize the geopolitical position of the River Plate through a deep-water port and the installations needed in the River Plate basin to revive river navigation;
13. To monitor compliance with the River Plate Treaty so as to avoid overfishing;
14. To control the focal area of the River Plate;
15. To engage in all possible fields and activities with a view to recovering the Malvinas archipelago, and the South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands;
16. To prevail upon neighbouring countries to avoid logistic support for the Malvinas Islands from Latin American countries;

17. To maintain activity in Antarctica in accordance with national interests in that continent;
18. To assert Argentine rights over the Antarctic in all international forums;
19. To maintain careful scrutiny of the development of the Antarctic situation for the purpose of adopting a correct strategy;
20. To avoid Chilean expansion towards the South Atlantic, seeking a solution to the disagreement based on the "oceanic principle";
21. To increase presence in and control of transoceanic routes between the Pacific and the South Atlantic;
22. To maintain a naval power adequate to the task of efficient control and defence of Argentine interests in the South Atlantic;
23. To maintain an adequate and permanent presence in the Argentine Sea and the Sea of Argentine Interest; and
24. To develop Argentine awareness of the sea.<sup>23</sup>

Not everyone will be in agreement with the aims proposed by Rear Admiral Fraga for Argentine policy in the South Atlantic and some of them have ceased to be relevant, but they do, at all events, give an idea of the extent of the interests over which Argentina has to watch in this region. At the same time, it is obviously necessary to have the means required to carry out the measures that any policy, whatever it may be, calls for. It is for the Argentine navy to ensure respect for national sovereignty in the zones to which the country has a right, and observance of the legal provisions that the national authorities are empowered to formulate, in the first place those concerned with the exploitation and conservation of marine living resources. This matter has given rise in the past, and is capable of doing so again, to incidents with countries whose flags are flown by the ships that fish in the area. In some cases shots have been fired, and boats have been damaged and even sunk. The problems have been overcome, but there is always the latent possibility that, some day, a new incident will get out of control and a situation of conflict with unpredictable consequences will arise. The Argentine navy and coastguard service have a vast region to control and limited means for doing so.

In this context, the prevailing state of affairs in the Malvinas Islands must not be overlooked. As has been said, it has profound implications for the security of the region. The stronghold of the Malvinas and the forces based there operate in this zone and, no matter what measures have been adopted to avoid incidents with the Argentine armed forces, the possibility always exists. On the other hand, the two countries are endeavouring to exercise responsibilities as regards fishing, and possible clashes in that respect cannot be ruled out. The situation, therefore, is far from ideal.

This situation was undoubtedly uppermost in Brazil's mind when it proposed in 1986 in the United Nations that the South Atlantic should be declared a *zone of peace and cooperation*. The General Assembly approved the initiative in resolution 41 11, the voting being 124 in favour (including the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union), 1 against (the United States) and 8 abstentions.<sup>24</sup>

For the purposes of this study, it is worth highlighting some of the operative paragraphs of the resolution. Thus, paragraph 3 "*Calls upon* all States of all other regions, in particular

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<sup>23</sup> Rear Admiral Jorge A. Fraga, *La Argentina y el Atlántico Sur*, (Editorial Pleamar, Buenos Aires, 1983), pp. 191-3.

<sup>24</sup> The subject is expounded by Julio César Carasales in "El Atlántico Sur: Zona de Paz y Cooperación", *Boletín del Centro Naval*, Year 106, Vol. 105, No. 748 (January-March 1987) (Buenos Aires), pp. 125-149.

the militarily significant States, scrupulously to respect the region of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and cooperation, especially through the reduction and eventual elimination of their military presence there, the non-introduction of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction and the non-extension into the region of rivalries and conflicts that are foreign to it", and paragraph 4, which also urges "all States of the region and of all other regions to cooperate in the elimination of all sources of tension in the zone, to respect the national unity, sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of every State therein, to refrain from the threat or use of force, and to observe strictly the principle that the territory of a State shall not be the object of military occupation resulting from the use of force in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the principle that the acquisition of territories by force is inadmissible".

The stated objectives of the zone are certainly unexceptionable and Argentina is in full agreement with them, considering, furthermore, that some of them are particularly relevant to its dispute with the United Kingdom over the Malvinas Islands and the dangerous situation which this creates for its security.

At the same time, it is pertinent to ask to what extent the declaration of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and cooperation, annually confirmed by successive sessions of the United Nations General Assembly, increases the security of the Argentine Republic in real terms. These resolutions merely have the force of recommendations and do not include any legally binding undertakings. Furthermore, their very objectives are capable of being interpreted in different ways. That is what happened in the one case when the validity of the obligations arising from the declaration of the zone were to some extent questioned. The occasion was in March 1988, when Argentina, in raising in the Security Council the threat to its security represented by the military manoeuvres that the United Kingdom was intending to carry out in the Malvinas Islands (Operation Fire Focus), argued, *inter alia*, that the manoeuvres ran counter to the declaration of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and cooperation. A similar stance was adopted by many other delegates who spoke in support of the Argentine complaint, but the United Kingdom representative, for his part, replied that, given that the military manoeuvres were being held with the aim of testing the capacity to provide rapid reinforcement to the islands in case of need, they would make it possible to reduce the numbers of troops stationed there and, consequently, were fully in accord with the zone. The Security Council concluded its consideration of the matter without adopting any decision and, with regard to the question of interest to this study, demonstrated that the zone has no meaning beyond the political level.

The final document adopted by the countries of the zone at the two meetings so far held had the same political meaning. The last meeting, held in Abuja, Nigeria, on 25-29 June 1990, condemned all situations that adversely affect or constitute a serious threat to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States on both sides of the South Atlantic and recalled with concern that major obstacles to the fulfilment of the objectives of the zone of peace and cooperation in the South Atlantic still persist since the colonial situation existing in the Malvinas Islands and the maintenance of a substantial military presence in the zone constitute a source of tension and a potential danger to peace and security in the region. Other paragraphs of the final document welcome the renewal of diplomatic relations between Argentina and the United Kingdom and express the hope that this new process of dialogue and cooperation will lead as soon as possible to the resumption of negotiations with a view to finding a just and lasting solution to the sovereignty dispute

that exists between the two States, in conformity with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

The paragraphs referred to above show that the situation of the Malvinas Islands and the military stronghold existing there are seen by the countries of the zone as a source of tension and a potential danger to the peace and security of the region. This obviously coincides with the Argentine view of the situation.

Although this emphasis on the problem of the Malvinas Islands may seem excessive in relation to the general question of the maintenance of security in the South-West Atlantic, it would be unrealistic to suppose that there is not a close link between the two matters for Argentina. Let us take an example: joint exercises, known as *Unitas* operations, were held annually between naval vessels of the United States and the Argentine Republic within a general framework concerned with the security of the region. These joint exercises were promptly discontinued by Argentina as a reaction to the support offered by the United States to Great Britain in the 1982 conflict and the idea that they would one day be resumed seemed very unlikely, at that time. Nevertheless, that was what happened in 1990, but it would be naive to imagine that, for that reason, the resentments left by what happened in 1982 have completely disappeared.

Still considering the topic of the maintenance of security in the South Atlantic, mention should be made of the idea of signing a South Atlantic treaty as a kind of southern equivalent of the treaty existing in the North Atlantic. Although the idea never reached the stage of negotiation of a specific text, it did have some currency in the 1960s, and interest in it remained in some circles at later times.

It was always difficult to identify the true promoters of the project and to know its characteristics with precision, because, as has been said, there was never an "official" version of the possible treaty. There would not even appear to have been agreement as to which countries would have been parties to this treaty, some versions contemplating the inclusion of the United States and the United Kingdom, and others not. At all events, the countries invariably mentioned were Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and the Republic of South Africa.

From what is known, the naval circles of these countries were quite receptive to the idea,<sup>25</sup> but there was no official pronouncement in its favour. In any case, there was no such pronouncement on the part of the Argentine Republic, whose Ministry of Foreign Affairs was in general extremely negative about the matter. Over and above other considerations, it was obvious that a military agreement capable of being regarded as an alliance with a régime such as that of South Africa would have been politically unacceptable for the great majority of the international community. What is certain is that the idea was abandoned years ago and, should it be revived some day, which seems improbable, it will be when the situation existing in South Africa is far different from that existing at present.

Moreover, it is far too early to know what will be the consequences in the South Atlantic of the impressive changes that are taking place in the international situation. These changes continue to occur day after day and the process has still not settled down. Nobody doubts that shortly, although no one can say precisely when, the postwar world will have altered substantially. But no one can yet describe what the then prevailing new state of affairs will be. It cannot be doubted that this new state of affairs will be reflected in the South Atlantic,

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<sup>25</sup> Carlos Juan Moneta, "Aspectos conflictivos de las relaciones afro-latinoamericanas: Las vinculaciones políticas, económicas y militares de la República Sudafricana con los países del Atlántico Sur latinoamericanos", in *Geopolítica y política de poder en el Atlántico Sur*, Carlos Juan Moneta, ed., (Editorial Pleamar, Buenos Aires, 1983), p. 183.

and it is to be hoped that its consequences will be positive for the security of the area and, consequently, that of the Argentine Republic.

Antarctica also represents an area of extraordinary interest to Argentina, which is one of the countries claiming sovereignty over a sector of the Antarctic, that partly overlaps with the sector claimed by Chile and is wholly contained within the sector to which the United Kingdom lays claim. It is true that article IV of the Antarctic Treaty "freezes" the problem of claims to sovereignty, but not all countries are parties to the Treaty and the Treaty itself is subject to review in 1991. A growing number of States not only do not participate in the system of the Antarctic Treaty but also have quite distinct ideas on Antarctica, which they wish to establish as the common heritage of mankind.

Moreover, there is increasing universal concern over the ecology of the region, and in the view of some this concern conflicts with the possibility of exploiting the resources of this continent and the waters around it. Although an attempt has been made within the context of the Antarctic Treaty to regulate this problem through various provisions and international agreements, such as the 1972 Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals, the 1980 Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, and the 1988 Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resources Activities, these measures are not regarded as sufficient in some of the circles concerned, who would prefer to maintain Antarctica as a vast natural laboratory free of all commercial activities.

The entire future of the Antarctic is at stake, and it is certain that discussions on the subject may well be very difficult. What is incontestable is that, whatever solutions are discussed, the interests of the Argentine Republic will be directly affected. Its sovereignty will be involved, since it claims one sector. The Antarctic environment has an important influence on Argentina's mainland and territorial sea, because it is very close. For the same reason, Argentina must have an important share in any exploitation of Antarctic resources.

Yet the whole Antarctic problem is developing rapidly, and it would be hazardous to make any forecasts in this regard, still less to anticipate specific conflicts in particular. Nevertheless, it can be said that the Argentine Republic must not only follow extremely closely - as it is already doing - the clashes of rights and interests taking place with respect to this southern area of the planet, but must also play an active part in any discussions and negotiations on this topic. Where necessary, it must be ready to take appropriate measures when it considers that its vital interests and its security are in danger.

### **The Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance**

No analysis of the Argentine Republic's security perceptions in the regional sphere can ignore the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, which was signed in Rio de Janeiro on 2 September 1947 and entered into force on 3 December 1948. Argentina was one of the last States in the Americas to ratify it, on 21 August 1950.

The Treaty of Rio de Janeiro does not create a military alliance. It is a collective security treaty, whose purpose, in the minds of its sponsors, was to protect the nations of the Americas from aggression from outside the continent. It was a characteristic instrument of the "cold war", since the possible enemy its authors had in mind, though not expressly mentioned in the text, was undoubtedly the Soviet Union and its allies. The fundamental principle underlying the Treaty is contained in article 3, which states that "an armed attack by any State against an American State shall be considered as an attack against all the American States".

Notwithstanding what has been said above, the negotiators in 1947 bore in mind that an attack against an American State could be regional rather than extraregional in origin - in other words, that the aggressor might be another American country. In such cases, the principle of mutual help would be equally valid. Indeed, it is the intent of the Treaty that all conflicts which break out between American States should be solved peacefully. Article 2 of the Treaty advocates the peaceful settlement of disputes, while article 6 makes provision for joint measures in the event of aggression which is not an armed attack or an extra-continental or intra-continental conflict, or any fact or situation that might endanger the peace of America.

As can be seen, the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance makes provision for a wide range of possible circumstances, going beyond threats to the security of the Americas originating in other areas. However, two facts should be highlighted where the Treaty is concerned: firstly, for most of the countries of the Americas the essence of the Treaty had to do with the possibility of attacks from outside the continent; secondly, and paradoxically, in the vast majority of cases the Treaty has been applied to deal with and seek peaceful solutions to problems of an intra-American nature. In this regard, almost all the cases of application of the Treaty have related to Central America and the Caribbean.

Where the countries of South America, and particularly the Southern Cone, including Argentina, are concerned, the Treaty has always been viewed in the context of a threat to the security of the entire region, as in 1962 with the Cuba missile crisis. Use of the Treaty as a system for the peaceful settlement of disputes between American countries in Central America and the Caribbean was consequently regarded as an activity which, while certainly useful, was in a sense secondary, and which could ultimately be dealt with by other inter-American institutions.

For many Latin American States, and naturally the Argentine Republic first and foremost, the South Atlantic conflict in 1982 was tailor-made for treatment under the Treaty and, consequently, the adoption of the measures of mutual assistance envisaged in the Treaty. It is common knowledge that that is not what happened. In this regard, the attitude of the United States, the principal proponent of the Treaty, was decisive. In the eyes of many parties to the Treaty, the United States evaded its responsibilities in preferring to make common cause with the European colonial Power contending for part of the territory of one of the States parties to the Treaty, with which it was engaged in hostilities. It was clear to these countries that the Treaty came into operation only when the interests at stake were those of the United States, and that when the interests of a Latin American State were threatened the Treaty ceased to be applicable.<sup>26</sup>

This is not the moment to analyse whether the above line of thinking is correct. What is important is that this is how matters were perceived by a substantial number of the parties to the Treaty, and that the undoubted consequence was a substantial downgrading of the Treaty as a source of security for the countries of the region. There might even be said to be a predominant view that, at the appropriate time, it will be necessary to embark on a

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<sup>26</sup> Domingo E. Acevedo, "El Tratado Interamericano de Asistencia Recíproca y el conflicto del Atlántico Sur" in Borón-Faundez, eds., *op. cit.*, pp. 266-278. Also A. Quiroga, "El caso de las Malvinas, visto desde la perspectiva del Organismo de Consulta del TIAR", *Anuario Jurídico Interamericano*, 1983, (Organization of American States, Washington, D.C., 1983), pp. 43-82; John Child, "La paz interamericana y el sistema de seguridad después de la crisis de Malvinas", *Geopolítica*, Year X, No. 28, (Buenos Aires), and Heberto Rubattino, "TIAR: Su vigencia y alternativas posibles para América Latina", *Geopolítica*, Year XV, No. 39, (Buenos Aires), 1989, pp. 69-72.

re-examination of the current system of collective security in the Americas or in Latin America, and that one of the results of such a re-examination will probably be either a thoroughgoing revision of the Treaty or its replacement by a different instrument or instruments.

At all events, as far as the Argentine Republic is concerned the situation is very clear. In August 1990 its Foreign Minister said that "In recent crises and conflicts such as that of the Malvinas, general agreements relating to collective security have proved *totally obsolescent*. Other pragmatic and effective arrangements should be devised to reflect current regional and world realities" (author's emphasis).<sup>27</sup>

## Attitude of the Argentine Republic to Regional Disarmament Efforts

Although the title of this chapter refers only to disarmament, it also covers other aspects such as nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace.

### Regional Disarmament

The Argentine Republic has maintained a generally sceptical attitude to regional efforts in the field of disarmament proper. This has not stemmed from a negative position on the issue, but reflects the perception that, in the light of experience, the regional sphere does not appear to be the most suitable for the realization of meaningful disarmament measures. The bilateral approach and the global approach, each with its own specific features, have proved themselves to be much more fruitful in this area.

It is a fact that achieving agreement on a disarmament treaty is extremely complex, requiring an appropriate political climate, a long process of negotiation on specifics and a degree of comparability between the armed forces whose weaponry is to be reduced. Modern weapons have increasingly acquired a level of variety and sophistication which makes it extremely difficult and delicate to reduce them in a balanced and acceptable manner without jeopardizing the security of each of the countries involved.

The history of Latin America, the regional context in which a few efforts have been pursued, reveals that taking the step from mere declarations, on which it is relatively easy to reach agreement, to the negotiation of concrete disarmament measures, has been very difficult, leading to eventual failure. It is very easy to agree on the desirability of making arms cuts and earmarking the savings for social development programmes. It is when attempts are made to transform this noble purpose into reductions in a given weapon, or in the levels of the various armed forces, that difficulties and problems arise which soon slow down any disarmament process and usually lead shortly afterwards to a complete stalemate or abandonment of the exercise.

Many declarations have been made in different Latin American forums in favour of regional disarmament or - frequently with still greater emphasis - the need to limit and reduce arms expenditure. The vast majority of them do not go beyond the stage of declarations.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Domingo Cavallo, "Las mutaciones en las relaciones internacionales y su vinculación con la defensa nacional", lecture given at the National Defence School, Buenos Aires, 13 August 1990.

<sup>28</sup> Carlos Portales, "Políticas de desarme y perspectivas de seguridad regional en América Latina" in EURAL (Centre for European-Latin American Research), *América Latina y Europa en el debate estratégico mundial*, (Editorial Legasa, Buenos Aires), pp. 220-3.

Nevertheless, three regional efforts merit special mention. The first was initiated by the Declaration of Ayacucho, adopted on 9 December 1974 by Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Peru and Venezuela on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Ayacucho, which brought to an end the process of emancipation in South America. One paragraph of the Declaration reads as follows: "We undertake to promote and support the building of a lasting order of international peace and cooperation and to create the conditions which will make possible the effective limitation of armaments and an end to their acquisition for offensive purposes, so that all possible resources may be devoted to the economic and social development of every country in Latin America."

The Declaration of Ayacucho would have remained just one more declaration if it had not been followed, during 1975 and 1976, by a number of technical meetings held to study various aspects of the limitation of arms purchases as well as arms verification and control. Argentina did not participate in the technical meetings, which soon encountered obstacles that led to deadlock.

In August 1978, a meeting was held in Mexico City, at the initiative of the host country, in which 20 Latin American States, including Argentina, participated. The aim was to relaunch the regional disarmament effort, and the participants considered the desirability of setting up flexible consultative machinery to deal with the topics already mentioned and serve as a forum for the exchange of views on other aspects of disarmament.<sup>29</sup> The result was no different from previous occasions. Although the first meeting was expected to be followed by a second, it was not. And the undertaking ended there.

The third initiative worthy of note in this study originated in Colombia and concerned the "desirability of establishing machinery for the inspection of arms and troops in Latin America". It was put forward in the Organization of American States, whose General Assembly in 1983 adopted a resolution instructing the Permanent Council to conduct a study of the issue. Although this initiative also failed to be followed up, it is of interest to record a few paragraphs from the response provided by the Argentine Government to an inquiry relating to this matter made by the OAS Secretary General. The note, dated 6 August 1984, states, *inter alia*, that "the national Government is firmly engaged in reducing military expenditure and troop levels on a scale compatible with the requirements of the defence of the country, and reallocating the resources thus released for the purposes of economic, social and educational development. In this regard, it is convinced that *security is a concept which extends beyond merely military matters and that, without a population which is properly fed, enjoying protection of its health and an adequate level of literacy, no army can effectively ensure the defence of the nation*" (author's emphasis).

The cited paragraph contains a definition of the scope of the term "security" as far as the Argentine Government is concerned, but other paragraphs adduce another element which has a direct link with regional disarmament: the fact that it is impossible to isolate one area from the extraregional context which surrounds it, influences it and even intervenes in it. The Argentine Government's reply also states: "The nations which make up the inter-American system have a pacifist vocation, which is manifested in the small number of conflicts that

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<sup>29</sup> Hugo Palma, *América Latina: Limitación de armamentos y desarme en la región*, (Centro Peruano de Estudios Internacionales, Lima, 1986), pp. 72-3, and Alejandro San Martín, "Las medidas de confianza y los procesos de limitación del gasto en armamentos: Conceptos generales y su aplicación en América Latina después de Ayacucho", in Cladde-Rial: *Limitación de armamentos y confianza mutua en América Latina*, (Ediciones Chile-América, Santiago, Chile), 1988, pp. 77-84.

have taken place on American soil by comparison with other parts of the globe. Furthermore, most of those conflicts were openly or covertly caused by powers outside the continent pursuing policies of colonial influence and domination."

In direct relation to the Colombian initiative, the Argentine reply adds that "the Argentine Republic, in keeping with its security perceptions, cannot fail to point to the doubts and questions raised by the establishment of machinery such as that proposed, as long as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland maintains the colonial military base that it has established on the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands, and fails to withdraw its weapons and troops, which, by virtue of their proximity to the mainland and their disproportionate size in relation to their alleged tasks, constitute a threat to peace and security in the region. Indeed, even the withdrawal of the British forces would not offer a sufficient guarantee, since the possibility of their return to the islands in a matter of hours would remain thanks to the strategic airport (with landing facilities for long-distance aircraft) currently under construction there."

The essence of the arguments set forth by the Argentine Government in its 1984 communication to the OAS General Secretariat remains valid. It might have added another: the undesirability of organizing through an inter-American body involving the participation of the United States, one of the two super-Powers with global strategic interests, initiatives which, though worded to refer, as in this case, to armaments and troops "in the Americas", actually affect only Latin America, since no one would dream of using the proposed machinery to check United States military forces or expenditure.

In short, Argentina's position regarding regional disarmament may be summed up as follows: it stands ready to cooperate willingly in any serious efforts undertaken in this area, but it is fully aware of the drawbacks which must be overcome and the difficult and complex nature of any negotiations, in which it will bear especially in mind, as it could not do otherwise, the implications of the entire process for its national security.

### **Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones**

The position of the Argentine Republic on this issue may be considered from two viewpoints: that of matters of principle, which is largely abstract, and the real and concrete aspect, in other words, the attitude to the treaty which establishes a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region in which Argentina is located, that is to say, the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

It seems better to begin with the latter, Argentina's stance regarding the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America. It is well known that the Treaty was negotiated in Mexico City by a Preparatory Commission, which held four sessions. An Argentine delegation participated in all four. The Treaty was concluded at the fourth of the meetings on 14 February 1967, and was signed on the same date by the majority of Latin American States. The Argentine Republic was one of those which did not sign at that time, but eventually did so seven months later, on 27 September 1967. To date it has not ratified the Treaty.

More than 20 years have passed since the signing of that international instrument, but Argentina's obvious reluctance to ratify it does not seem final. On more than one occasion its leaders have spoken positively of the Treaty - for example, the Minister for Foreign Affairs who said at the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament: "Unlike the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Treaty of Tlatelolco recognizes no category of privileged countries. All the sister States of Latin

America are placed on a precisely equal footing in assuming the obligations it lays down. By creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone, the Treaty makes a genuine contribution to nuclear disarmament while providing due protection for nuclear development for peaceful purposes".<sup>30</sup>

Argentina's "absolute fidelity to the spirit of the basic commitment entered into on signature of the Treaty" has been affirmed on various occasions, and it has been pointed out that, as a State party to the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, Argentina is under an obligation to comply with its provisions, including those of article 18, which lays down that a country which has signed a treaty, even if it has not proceeded to ratification, "is obliged to refrain from acts which would defeat the object and purpose" of the treaty.

As these lines were being written, two recent events clearly indicated the increasingly positive attitude of the Argentine Government towards the Treaty of Tlatelolco. In paragraph 11 of the Joint Declaration issued on 8 October 1990 on the occasion of a visit to Buenos Aires by Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, the two heads of State reiterated the commitment of the two countries to oppose the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and reaffirmed their support for the principles and purposes of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and expressed their determination to continue to strive to find machinery to permit its full application in the area it covers.

As has already been pointed out in section Brazil of this chapter, the Presidents of Argentina and Brazil, by means of a Joint Declaration on Common Nuclear Policy issued on 28 November 1990, initiated a process leading to the conclusion of a joint safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency based on the Joint Accounting and Control System adopted by the two countries, following which they will take action to permit the "full entry into force for the two countries of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco), including action to update and improve its wording".

Thus it goes without saying that the Argentine Republic has no objection to the basic undertaking contained in the Treaty, namely, not to produce nuclear weapons or introduce them into the region. It is certainly not opposed to the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Argentina's reservations relate to other provisions of the Treaty and its attached protocols, as well as the way in which they have been applied and interpreted.<sup>31</sup>

Argentina's principal criticisms might be summed up as follows. Article 18 of the Treaty, for example, expressly authorizes nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, "including explosions which involve devices similar to those used in nuclear weapons". As far as Argentina is concerned this article is extremely clear, particularly if it is read together with article 5, which defines what is considered to be a "nuclear weapon" as an explosive device "which has a group of characteristics that are appropriate for use for war-like purposes". Argentina said so explicitly, moreover, in a declaration it made on signing the Treaty, stating that article 18, together with other provisions which protect the peaceful development of nuclear energy, "ensure the use of nuclear energy as an indispensable aid in the process of development of Latin America and consequently represent the prior and basic condition for laying the groundwork of an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations for the nuclear and the non-nuclear Powers in the matter of non-proliferation".

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<sup>30</sup> General Assembly, Tenth special session, 5th plenary meeting, 26 May 1978.

<sup>31</sup> This topic is elaborated upon by Julio César Carasales, "The Future of Tlatelolco Twenty Years after its Signature", in *Disarmament - A Periodic Review by the United Nations*, Vol. XI, No. 1 (Winter 1987 88), pp. 74-85.

The "interpretative declarations" made by four of the nuclear-weapon Powers when signing and ratifying the Additional Protocols specified, in the cases of the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, that the Treaty does not permit nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. The United Kingdom, for example, declared explicitly that, in its understanding, "Article 18 of the Treaty, when read in conjunction with Articles 1 and 5 thereof, would not permit the Contracting Parties to the Treaty to carry out explosions of nuclear devices for peaceful purposes unless and until advances in technology have made possible the development of devices for such explosions which are not capable of being used for weapons purposes".

This gives rise to a situation in which States that are not parties to the Treaty, but to its attached Protocols, arrogate to themselves the function of deciding what can and what cannot be done by the States parties. The point at issue is not whether the nuclear-weapon Powers are right or not: it is the wording of the Treaty, which cannot be modified by States that are not parties to it. It is clear that, when the Treaty was drafted, at the beginning of the 1960s, peaceful nuclear explosions offered prospects which were subsequently not borne out. Currently the problem might be said to be an academic one, but what Argentina finds difficult to accept is the principle that, after negotiating an international treaty and securing the inclusion of provisions it regarded as favourable to its interests, after signing the treaty on the basis of those elements, it should be possible for third States which had not participated in the negotiations to emerge and seek radical changes in the negotiated texts. The situation is further complicated by the passivity with which the Latin American States parties to the Treaty acquiesced in this situation.

The above difficulty is not the only one caused by the interpretative declarations made by the nuclear Powers already mentioned, to which we should add France. The declarations fundamentally modify the content of the undertaking contained in article 3 of Additional Protocol II, one of the essential elements of any nuclear-weapon-free zone, under which the nuclear-weapon Powers "also undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the Contracting Parties of the Treaty". This undertaking is absolute, unequivocal and unconditional. Furthermore, article 27 of the Treaty rules out reservations, and this ban extends to the Additional Protocols. Despite this, the above-mentioned interpretative declarations ignore these obligations. The Government of the United Kingdom, for example, stated that it "would, in the event of any act of aggression by a Contracting Party to the Treaty in which that Party was supported by a nuclear-weapon State, be free to reconsider the extent to which they could be regarded as committed by the provisions of Additional Protocol II". In other words, the four nuclear Powers (all except China) reserve the right to decide unilaterally and independently whether or not they will comply with the unconditional and unrenounceable undertaking they made in Protocol II.

Here too the interpretative declarations, thus euphemistically described in order to avoid the term "reservations", were passively accepted by the States which signed and ratified the Treaty.

There are other aspects of the Treaty which have been questioned by Argentina (and, it should be added, also by Brazil). The obligation assumed by the nuclear Powers not to introduce nuclear weapons into the region is unverifiable, as the South Atlantic conflict demonstrated. This is another case of a unilateral declaration whose fulfilment is left up to the nuclear State involved.

Argentina has encountered serious problems with the International Atomic Energy Agency in negotiating the safeguards agreement which every State party is required to conclude under

article 13 of the Treaty. Just as the member countries of EURATOM and Japan did before signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Argentina wished to negotiate the necessary safeguards agreement with IAEA before ratifying the Treaty of Tlatelolco. This proved impossible, and the situation has been deadlocked for a number of years. The cause is the fact that IAEA offers a model safeguards agreement based on the Non-Proliferation Treaty, an instrument which Argentina rejects. The text may not present problems for countries which are party to both treaties, but this is not the case for Argentina, which demands an agreement based on the provisions of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and not the NPT. Since the IAEA secretariat says that it cannot diverge from the NPT model, matters have reached deadlock, constituting a further point which is seriously hindering ratification of the Treaty of Tlatelolco by Argentina. There are also objections to certain aspects of the verification system provided for under the Treaty, which, though not of major practical importance, constitute a potential source of risks for the maintenance of commercial secrecy for countries with a developed nuclear industry, such as Argentina, because of the excessively wide distribution stipulated in the regulations for the results of inspections and special reports.

As can be seen, the difficulties encountered by Argentina with regard to the Treaty of Tlatelolco have to do less with the text itself than with its application, and that of the Additional Protocols. The future will tell us whether these difficulties can be overcome. At all events, certain conclusions can be drawn from the history of the Treaty of Tlatelolco which are applicable to the very concept of "nuclear-weapon-free zones", and which the Argentine Government has highlighted in various forums discussing the subject.

In principle, Argentina's approach to this concept is a positive one. The existence of areas of the world from which nuclear weapons are totally absent cannot but contribute to strengthening international peace and security. But nuclear-weapon-free zones do not exist in the pure state anywhere in the world. They have to be created by means of international treaties, which are increasingly difficult to negotiate and in which the interests of the nuclear-weapon Powers ultimately prevail in one way or another. The obligations and restrictions imposed on the States of the region remain strict and are carefully verified, while the offsetting commitments by the nuclear Powers are promises of little value which are impossible to verify.

Hence there is no genuine balance of rights and obligations, renunciations in return for benefits. As long as that remains the case - this is the thinking of the Argentine Government - the future of "nuclear-weapon-free zones" as a concept is not bright. This is borne out by the facts, since 20 years had to pass before the creation of the second nuclear-weapon-free zone, in the South Pacific, which in various ways marks a step backward compared with the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and which, even so, prompted a negative reaction on the part of three of the five nuclear-weapon Powers.

It might perhaps be appropriate to ask what advantages Argentina would secure if it joined the Latin American nuclear-weapon-free zone by ratifying the Treaty of Tlatelolco. And this would be a logical question, because the countries of a region do not all share the same circumstances. In the light of what has been said above, the reply will be brief: *vis-à-vis* the nuclear-weapon Powers, the security guarantees that Argentina would receive would be negligible or nil. Its present situation would not substantially change.

As far as the other countries of Latin America are concerned, their undertaking not to produce nuclear weapons is meaningless in the vast majority of cases, since almost none of them is in a position to manufacture such weapons. Their nuclear industries are not sufficiently advanced technologically. The only other Latin American State which might

hypothetically embark on a nuclear-weapon development programme is Brazil. And Brazil is the very country with which Argentina has engaged in a dynamic process of integration, a principal element of which is nuclear cooperation. The basic objectives of nuclear cooperation include the creation of a climate of mutual trust, credibility and transparency in the nuclear programmes of either side, the outcome of which is obviously to create security in each *vis-à-vis* the other. It is difficult to say what would be gained in this area by ratifying the Treaty of Tlatelolco. It is equally difficult to evaluate the benefits that Argentina would obtain in the field of security in general through ratification. Such benefits, if there are any, should be sought in the sphere of political relations, both bilateral and multilateral.

### Zones of Peace

A similar assessment can be made of the attitude of the Argentine Republic to zones of peace. One single zone of peace, the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, exists in the region, and there is only one other in the world, in the Indian Ocean.

A "zone of peace" is a political concept, the content of which is not juridically defined. No one can lay down with complete precision what is implied by a "zone of peace" in more or less universal terms. Still less can legally enforceable obligations be derived from it. Furthermore, the theory of the concept is much less well developed than that of "nuclear-weapon-free zones". Experience in the Indian Ocean, marked by so many difficulties and ambiguities, is certainly not very instructive. And experience in the South Atlantic is still too recent to allow major conclusions to be drawn.

Consequently, it will be useful to focus on the Argentine position regarding the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, to which, moreover, we have referred in section The South Atlantic and the Antarctic of this chapter. Although the initiative for the creation of the zone came from Brazil, Argentina was involved with the project from the beginning. At the forty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly it was a co-sponsor of resolution 41/11, by which the zone was proclaimed, and it subsequently took the same attitude to all the resolutions successively adopted by the General Assembly on the subject. It has replied to all the requests for reports received each year from the Secretary-General concerning measures adopted in pursuance of the Assembly resolutions, and has dispatched high-level delegations to the two meetings so far held by the countries of the zone (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1988 and Abuja, Nigeria, 1990).

The above indicates that Argentina has adopted a favourable attitude to the Zone of Peace in its region. At the same time, it seems reasonable to assume that it would be difficult for Argentina to have adopted a different attitude. The existence of the zone is certainly not harmful to it.

To what extent it benefits Argentina is another matter. In fact, the same question may be posed in relation to any other zone of peace that it is wished to create anywhere in the world. The absence of legally enforceable contractual obligations means that pursuit of the purposes of any zone depends on the greater or lesser willingness of the countries of the region, and, above all, Powers outside the region. If the facts show that the major Powers seek wherever possible to evade the commitments they have made in conventions relating to the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, it would be an illusion to expect them to show greater zeal in discharging their responsibilities with respect to zones of peace.

The fact is that so far no extraregional Power has been seen to have ceased its previous activities as a result of the proclamation of the South Atlantic as a Zone of Peace and

Cooperation. On the only occasion when the Argentine Republic invoked the existence of the Zone to underpin its complaint to the Security Council at the holding of British military manoeuvres in the Malvinas Islands, the result was disappointing.

The conclusion that may be drawn, at least for the moment, is that Argentina's positive attitude towards the creation of a zone of peace in its region has not led to an increase in its security, nor substantially modified the prevailing state of affairs.

Yet one cannot ignore the possibility, perhaps in the long term, that the concept of "zones of peace" may evolve to accommodate such ideas as that expressed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Argentine Republic in the statement he made on 13 August 1990 at the National Defence School, which has already been quoted several times: "Integration leads us to reflect in a coordinated manner with our neighbours on future policies relating to sea areas and to the Antarctic. An integrated Southern Cone will have a renewed bioceanic sphere of influence, and it will be in our interest for these areas to remain as *zones of peace* free of pressures from extraregional powers, protected against ill-planned exploitation and environmental pollution, where we can make rational use of the resources for the benefit of our peoples" (author's emphasis).

### Confidence-Building Measures

Generally speaking, the Argentine Republic has viewed confidence-building measures favourably. At the same time, given the different forms such measures can take, its attitude may differ from one case to another.

Three considerations should be set forth here. Firstly, in the context of Argentina's dispute with the United Kingdom regarding the sovereignty of the Malvinas and other islands of the South Atlantic, it may be noted that a number of the measures contained in the agreements signed by the two countries in Madrid in February 1990 are indeed confidence-building measures in this area, aimed at preventing possible incidents and mistaken reactions to military movements.

Secondly, one of the essential purposes of the policy of cooperation in nuclear matters on which Argentina and Brazil have firmly embarked is, as indicated in the relevant chapter of this paper, to generate in each country confidence in the other's nuclear programme. A system of reciprocal visits by officials, technical staff and students to the nuclear installations of each country, the permanent exchange of information, the operation of a Permanent Bilateral Committee on Nuclear Cooperation, complementarity between the nuclear industries in the two countries and other measures have as their aim, in addition to technical and economic benefits, the creation of transparency in the two countries' nuclear programmes which will dispel once and for all any possible doubt on such a delicate and sensitive issue as nuclear technology and its possible uses for warlike purposes. Although this is not one of the classic confidence-building measures studied in the academic texts, there is no doubt that few activities better deserve the name than this process of mutual cooperation in nuclear matters.

Lastly, it is necessary to bear in mind in particular the fact that, in the Argentine Republic, the regional picture in the political, economic and security fields is viewed in the context of integration. The integration process has already been decisively and forcefully initiated with Brazil and Uruguay, and participation by Chile and Paraguay in the near future has been agreed. This is what is known as the Southern Cone, in the words of the Argentine Foreign Minister quoted above. We must now add some other words spoken on the same

occasion, which are highly relevant to interaction between countries in the fields of defence and security: "The devising of new joint defence hypotheses, objectives and doctrines will require smooth communication, a joint approach and coordinated work on the part of Governments, parliaments and general staffs. Personal interaction, frank dialogue, rigorous debate, logistic cooperation and operational coordination will progressively generate *mutual* trust and reciprocal support, which will strengthen the Southern Cone as a free, prosperous, *stable and secure* area" (author's emphasis).



# Chapter V

## The Global Outlook

### National Views on the World Situation

#### The Present Situation

The change which had been taking place in the international situation for several years accelerated very rapidly and somewhat unpredictably in 1989. There is no doubt that the situation at the time of writing is radically different from the one which prevailed not very long ago, but no one can predict what it will be like in one or five years' time. It is, however, indisputable that the post-War world situation as we have known it over the last few decades has been changed irreversibly and we still do not know what the characteristics of the future situation will be when some degree of stability is restored.

Of course, Argentina, like the other countries in the international community, has been witnessing the constant changes that have been taking place, but as an interested observer, not as a protagonist. It is not in a position to take part in the major decisions but it can follow closely the evolution of events, adjust to the new circumstances and, where possible and appropriate, benefit from the advantages deriving from the new international climate that prevails.

Senior Argentine Government officials have recognized the radical changes that have occurred in the internal and international positions of the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe, which have created major upheavals within the former and have brought with them the collapse of the Communist system in several other countries of the region. New leaders and power structures have emerged and the Marxist parties have lost their hegemony. The clamour for freedom, human rights and self-determination has become widespread and is shaking the very foundations of a world that appeared fixed and immutable.

The reunification of Germany, which until very recently was a pipedream in which few believed, has now come about and is substantially altering the European political scene. The true dimension of the future united Germany is as yet undefined.

The Soviet Union's withdrawal from Afghanistan and the helpful attitudes it has adopted in other areas are proof of its clear determination to stop its political, ideological and military expansion in the developing world and to focus its energies on internal development and on fostering economic and technological ties with the more industrialized countries.

New power centres are being consolidated in the world, thereby creating a system in which there is a greater diversification and distribution of power. The bipolarity which was a feature of recent decades is already a thing of the past. Now that the European Economic Community can visualize the extension of its influence and its huge market in the near future to Eastern and Central Europe and with its plans for increasing unification, it has become a protagonist of great weight in international politics and economics.

For some time also Japan has played a leading economic and technological role and it is daily increasing its political influence around the world. The countries of South-East Asia have been developing with astonishing speed in recent years and this will give the region a significant role in the international arena. China and India are making steady progress in mobilizing their vast human and material resources.

The new outlook for peace and stability in the relations between the big Powers - old and new - appears to reduce gradually the significance of the traditional ideological, political and military rivalries and to emphasize economics and technology more in these relations.

This view of the world today can hardly be disputed. It stands to reason that, rather than describe the present situation, we need to draw the right conclusions in order better to defend and promote Argentine interests. With regard to the subject of this study, there is no doubt that the new international situation augurs well for the security of the Argentine Republic in so far as security can be regarded as a lessening or even complete removal of external political or military threats. Now that the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union has ended, or at least so it would seem, a new climate of peace has been created in South America which had been a possible arena although very far from the most likely one - for conflict between the two super-Powers.

Other aspects of Argentine security that have to do with economics and development have undergone no fundamental changes as a result of the new international climate. They can, of course, be better promoted and protected now, because attention will not be diverted from them to any great extent by global political or ideological problems.

Events in the Middle East in August 1990 have shown that détente in a global context can never be permanent or absolute. The Argentine Government decided to comply immediately with United Nations Security Council resolutions adopted before the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. It promptly issued Decree No. 1560 of 13 August, which provided that "the Executive and the departments and agencies of the national Government, the provinces and the municipalities shall, in their respective jurisdictions, adopt all necessary measures" to implement Security Council resolution 661.

On 2 August, the Argentine Government issued a communiqué calling for "the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces to the positions which they occupied on 1 August last" and urged "the two countries, after meeting this condition, to begin negotiations for the settlement of their differences by peaceful means". On 7 August, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that "the Argentine Government will immediately and strictly comply with all the terms of the resolution adopted by the United Nations body which has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security", in other words the resolution 661 referred to in the above-mentioned decree. A few days later, on 13 August, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina stated that "in the present crisis in the Middle East, and in the face of the arrogance and aggression, Argentina has clearly opted for the defence and strengthening of the basic principles of the international system, the repudiation of the use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes and absolute respect for independence and territorial integrity. In this way, the right of all the nations of the Middle East to live within secure and recognized borders will be protected".<sup>1</sup>

In pursuit of this policy the Argentine Government took a very important step when, in September 1990, it dispatched two warships to the Persian Gulf, because as the Minister for Foreign Affairs stated on 24 August in the United Nations General Assembly, "the serious events of the past few weeks have created a historic situation of emergency which demands our active cooperation for the establishment of a more secure and peaceful world".

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<sup>1</sup> Lecture given at the National Defence School, Buenos Aires.

## The Big Politico-Military Blocs

"The military confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union on the old continent appears to have ended. The Warsaw Pact has virtually been dismantled and NATO must now redefine its rationale. The system maintained during the cold war has disappeared and we are now witnessing a profound change in world strategy."<sup>2</sup> This statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic expresses clearly the national view of the prevailing situation between the two great military alliances. As has been stated before, Argentina, like so many other countries in the world, will have to adjust to the new international circumstances and try, within this context, to find the best position for the preservation and protection of its security.

In the next few paragraphs we will try to assess the stance of the Argentine Republic with respect to the big politico-military blocs which have dominated the world scene since the end of the Second World War. The Argentine position on the subject has never been clearly defined. It has wavered and even been contradictory, for one fundamental reason: there were two opposing concepts, two different ideas or at all events two ideas that were not concordant - because of differing interpretations of what "the West" meant. If "the West" signifies the Graeco-Roman and Christian based civilization, with values developed over centuries and highly prized today and having a culture with very distinct characteristics, there is no question that Argentina has always considered itself as a nation belonging to the West. Several of Argentina's Governments have expressly emphasized that it is "Western and Christian".

The word "West" has also been construed as being synonymous with the politico-military alliance confronting the socialist and eastern bloc in a struggle for world hegemony. Argentina has repeatedly stated that its belonging to the West did not mean automatic alignment with NATO or with the strategic interests of the United States in any part of the world. At the same time, it would be unrealistic to overlook the fact that over the last 40 years not all Argentine Governments have maintained a uniform and consistent position on this subject. Régimes have changed and with them the degree of closeness to the Western politico-military system. Even during the term of the same Government the attitude sometimes changed. Nor should it be forgotten that it was the Government of General Perçn that conceived the doctrine of the third position, which has rightly been regarded as a forerunner of non-alignment.

Argentina, which is culturally a Western country, has usually pursued a policy that accommodated the interests of the United States and Western Europe. As will be seen later in this study, Argentina has sided with the West in the major crises as in the cases of Korea, the invasions of Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan or in the episode of the missiles in Cuba. Argentina has signed and ratified the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, which, leaving aside the manner in which it has been applied, was in fact conceived in 1947 as a collective security agreement to face the threat from the socialist bloc. Nor should it be forgotten that in 1954, at the Tenth Inter-American Conference of the OAS held in Caracas, Argentina voted in favour of a resolution which vigorously condemned international communism.

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

In view of the above, it should also be noted that this alignment with the West, which was more or less clear-cut depending on the case, was not automatic, nor was it repeated in each and every episode of the ongoing East-West confrontation. The Argentine Republic has always maintained its freedom of decision and on more than one occasion its position could be variously described as lukewarm, cautious, moderate or balanced during the cold war period.

However, there was never any question of Argentina embracing the positions of the Soviet Union and the socialist world. In the 1970s, Argentina developed strong commercial ties with the USSR and the other countries of Eastern Europe. There were years in which the Soviet Union was the largest importer of Argentine goods.<sup>3</sup> Bilateral relations have been cordial and the two countries have even established a system of annual consultations on foreign-policy subjects, connected in particular with the United Nations General Assembly agenda. On many issues, especially those regarding disarmament, there has been agreement or great similarity between the Argentine and Soviet positions, but this convergence of views should be seen within a broader framework: to a considerable extent, the third world countries and the socialist group express the same views in multilateral forums.

However, Argentina has never perceived the Soviet Union as a possible ally, even at the height of the South Atlantic conflict, when the United Kingdom, the United States and most of the Western world had adopted a hostile position towards Argentina. There may have been some Argentine leaders who entertained the hope that the Soviet Union would make a spectacular gesture and somehow re-establish the equilibrium. In any case, this gesture was not forthcoming and, if it had been it might well have created more problems for Argentina than it solved.

The Argentine Republic has never wavered in its foreign policy between East and West. It has hesitated between the West and the developing world, the third world or non-alignment, admittedly with the full realization that these words are not synonymous. Opposed to the appeal which the West has undoubtedly always held for Argentina, essentially for cultural reasons and living standards, is the reality that economically, it does not belong to this first world and that this world has shown no inclination to welcome it with open arms, shower aid of all kinds upon it, or accept it as a more or less equal partner. Quite the contrary, Argentina's interests frequently appeared to conflict with those of the industrialized world and instead to be similar to those of other developing countries. Since the politico-economic system of the Communist world offered no alternative, and given the fact that the political and ideological domain is one thing and the economic and social field is another, Argentina's link with this group of States, which belong to neither one world nor the other, appeared to be a logical and natural alternative.

### **The Non-Aligned Movement**

The origin and nature of the Non-Aligned Movement are very well known. As far as we are concerned, it should be remembered that Argentina was not an original member of the Movement, despite the fact that the Third Position of President General Juan D. Perón, which he formulated and promoted internationally during the second half of the 1940s, has many

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<sup>3</sup> In 1985, for example, Argentine exports to the Soviet Union totalled \$1,213 million, an amount which was not exceeded from then until the end of 1989 by any country. In 1985 the second biggest customer for Argentine exports was the United States, with \$1,004 million. The figures are taken from the daily newspaper *Ambito financiero*, 10 August 1990.

points in common with the later ideology of non-alignment. At all events, it was undoubtedly a significant antecedent of the Movement.<sup>4</sup>

An explanation for Argentina's absence at the time of the birth and the initial years of the Non-Aligned Movement may be found in the fact that, at that time, Argentina's fate was in the hands of anti-Peronist Governments which certainly had not the slightest interest in acting in the field of foreign policy, in this regard, on the basis of a doctrine whose author was the political figure to whom they were most opposed.

It was not until 1973, when Peronism returned to power, that Argentina applied for admission to the Movement. It was accepted, and attended the Algiers summit conference at the end of 1973. General Perón, once again President of Argentina, did not attend, but sent a message, which was received with a sense of anticipation because, as was clear to those who were present, Perón was undoubtedly regarded as the precursor of the Movement.

Argentine participation in the Movement did not follow an easy course, for reasons that had to do with either side. Domestically, joining the Movement did not meet with the agreement of influential sectors of opinion in Argentina, which considered that the ties binding the country to the other members of the Movement were of little importance or, at all events, in no way comparable to the common interests Argentina shared with the Western countries in general. It was thought that no advantage was to be gained from joining the "poor men's club".

The above viewpoint, which was certainly not universal, but did carry political weight, was strengthened as a result of the policies followed by the Movement itself, control of which fell into the hands of resolutely anti-Western activist States. A succession of manifestations of this ideological bias encouraged domestic criticism in Argentina of its membership of the Movement, especially when, from 1976 onwards, the Argentine Government was in the hands of the military. Argentine participation in the Movement was low-key, and senior Argentine figures did not attend high-level meetings. Support in the United Nations for the Argentine cause over the Malvinas Islands was one of the few benefits derived from Argentina's links with the Movement.

As in so many other areas, this too changed with the South Atlantic conflict in 1982. Argentina found that the West had turned its back, and that it was only in the Latin American States and the majority of non-aligned countries that its position had a favourable reception. When the civilian Government of President Alfonsín took power at the end of 1983, the attitude towards the Movement had changed appreciably.<sup>5</sup> It is also true that the Movement's policy in turn had become more balanced and moderate. The two factors combined to allow Argentina to play an active role in the Movement, of which it is now a reliable and respected member. Presidents Alfonsín and Menem have attended the last two summit meetings of the Movement. Argentina's membership of the Movement is no longer questioned, or, at all events, not as vigorously as in the past. What is now being called into question - but this is

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<sup>4</sup> Juan Archibaldo Lanús, *De Chapultepec al Beagle. Política exterior argentina 1945-1980*, (Emecé Editores, Buenos Aires, 1984), pp. 76-80.

<sup>5</sup> Roberto Russell, "Argentina y la política exterior del régimen autoritario (1976-1983): Una evaluación preliminar", in *Argentina en el mundo (1973-1987)*" Rubén Perina, Roberto Russell, etc. (Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, Buenos Aires, 1988), p.125.

another matter - is the meaning of the very existence of the Movement given the apparent disappearance of the confrontation from which the Movement wished to stand aside.<sup>6</sup>

## Security Policy on the Worldwide Scale

### Position of Argentina in the Main Conflicts of Recent Decades

It is perhaps not inappropriate that this broad-brush account of the Argentine Republic's position *vis-à-vis* the major conflicts with global repercussions that have taken place in recent decades should begin with the First World War. The attitude maintained by Argentina during that conflagration was one of complete neutrality. Above and beyond the fact itself, it should be borne in mind that this position was not an arbitrary one, adopted on a whim of the Government or in the face of the population's wishes. On the contrary, it answered a widespread feeling on the part of the Argentine people and what has come to be called a constant of the Republic's foreign policy since the end of the last century - that of standing aside from major international confrontations.<sup>7</sup> Argentina, benefiting from the fact that it was geographically distant from the sites of the conflicts and more than self-sufficient in food production, opted for a rather isolationist stance towards the crises and disputes affecting other parts of the world. The predominant impression was that the interests being discussed and resolved in those places were not those of the Argentine Republic.

During the First World War the country's destiny was in the hands of two Governments of different, not to say opposite political stripe. Both upheld the policy of neutrality, the second even more forcefully than the first. Incidents occurred with belligerents on both sides, especially the sinking of Argentine vessels by German submarines, but in every case the Berlin Government gave satisfaction and compensation which was regarded as adequate.

This rise in the Argentine authorities' assessment of the country's capacity to survive autonomously, relatively independently of the international community, was highlighted by the events at the first Assembly of the League of Nations. The Covenant of the League of Nations provided that certain neutral nations, including Argentina, could be founding members of the organization.

When the Argentine delegation attended the opening meeting of the Assembly, in November 1920, it made a number of proposals it described as vital for the smooth operation of the recently established body, beginning with a demand for complete universality of membership, without any distinction between victors and vanquished, as well as elimination of the category of "permanent members" of the Council. The initiatives had merit and undoubtedly deserved to be considered, but it was unrealistic to expect them to be approved forthwith. When its proposals were sent to committee the response of the Argentine delegation - dictated by express instructions from President Irigoyen - was to withdraw from the

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<sup>6</sup> Somewhat unexpectedly, the Argentine Republic's membership of the Movement of Non-aligned Countries was terminated with its withdrawal in September 1991. Apparently, the idea prevailed among Government authorities that the Movement was irrelevant in the present international context and that, in any case, being part of the Movement is incompatible with the firm intention of the Argentine Government to become associated with the western democracies. There were not a few who believed, on the contrary, that the Movement still had a role to play and that, anyhow, the continued presence in it of a moderate and responsible Argentina, although at a lower level, was not creating problems and might also be advantageous not only to Argentina itself but also to the western countries.

<sup>7</sup> Gustavo Ferrari, *Esquema de política exterior argentina*, (Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, 1981), pp.1-28.

Assembly. Argentina did not return to the League of Nations until 1933. It seemed that Argentina wished to demonstrate that it could manage perfectly well outside the body set up to organize the post-war world, which it clearly did not need.

On the outbreak of the Second World War, it was natural for the Argentine Government to decide to repeat the policy followed in 1914-1918: absolute neutrality.<sup>8</sup> However, the circumstances were different. In this war there were Powers which had unarguably been aggressors. Europe was much closer. What happened there could not be of so little interest for Argentina. In recent decades the countries of the Americas had developed a community of interests and machinery leading to the formulation of joint positions or, at all events, making it difficult to take up isolated positions. The United States, one of those countries, entered the conflict and sought support from the States of the region. More importantly, it obtained such support in most cases, and one by one the laggards joined those who first broke off diplomatic relations and then declared war on the Axis Powers.

The Argentine Republic, which had been ruled by a military Government since 1943, strongly resisted the continuous pressure to do likewise. It would be unfair to attribute the firmness of this position to sympathies for the Axis countries. Rather, one should see in it the continued persistence, in a different world, of Argentina's traditional policy of aloofness and non-involvement in world problems which, in a view which perhaps was already obsolete, did not directly concern it.

Argentina became diplomatically isolated from the other Latin American countries and earned the animosity of the United States, which for many years did not forgive what it considered to have been Argentina's lack of solidarity at a difficult time. The situation had serious consequences for Argentine-United States relations in later years.<sup>9</sup> Although Argentina finally declared war on the Axis on 27 March 1945, the act was a mere formality designed to enable it to join the United Nations. Meanwhile, Argentina had been excluded from all the international conferences on the problems of the war and the post-war era, such as the Bretton Woods financial meetings or the civil aviation conference in Chicago.

In the United Nations the Argentine Republic gave conditional, not automatic or permanent, support to Western positions. At times it found itself in a minority, for example in 1946 when it declined to participate in the collective recall of ambassadors in Spain decided upon by the General Assembly. These were the years when General Perón's Government formulated and spread its doctrine of the Third Position. It was also the time - 1947 - when the countries of the Americas negotiated in Rio de Janeiro the terms of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, which the United States wanted to be as firm as possible in bringing the Latin American States together to face the possibility of a threat from the enemy in the "cold war", namely the Soviet Union. Argentina held a position which was frequently opposed to, or at least substantially different from, that of the United States, working for a treaty which involved the least possible commitment. Argentina, moreover, was one of the last American countries to ratify the Rio Treaty.

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<sup>8</sup> Peter Waldmann, "La II Guerra Mundial y el surgimiento del peronismo. Una interpretación desde la perspectiva de la dependencia", in *El poder militar en la argentina 1976-1981*, Ernesto Garzón Valdez, eds. (Editorial Galerna, Buenos Aires, 1983), p. 51.

<sup>9</sup> It has been argued that Argentina's "unsupportive" attitude during the Second World War served as a pretext for the United States to adopt "punitive" measures basically aimed at destroying the "independence" and "pro-Europeanism" of Argentine foreign policy that had been so troublesome for the United States in the past. See Ernest May, "The Bureaucratic Politics Approach. United States-Argentine Relations, 1942", in *Latin America and the United States: The Changing Political Realities*, Julio Cotler, Richard Fagen, eds. (Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1974), pp. 137-138.

In fact, ratification of the Treaty occurred in the context of the conflict in Korea, and the Argentine attitude should be viewed as a contribution to the strengthening of the pan-American Western bloc. The initial reaction of the Argentine Government to the United Nations appeal to assist South Korea was very favourable, and there was even talk of sending troops. This possibility was soon discarded, however, and Argentine support finally took the form of food aid. Argentina's positive attitude towards the Korean war became more lukewarm as time passed, and it returned to the traditional view that, in the final analysis, vital interests of the Argentine nation were not at stake in the conflict. The Argentine delegation abstained when the General Assembly authorized United Nations forces to cross the 38th parallel, and also abstained during the adoption of resolution 377 (V), "Uniting for peace".<sup>10</sup>

In 1962, at the time of the Cuban missile crisis, Argentina's position was one of total support for the United States. In the Organization of American States it was a leading country in promoting full solidarity with one of the Organization's members in an episode introducing a clear threat to regional security. Argentina ordered the dispatch of two navy destroyers and a squadron of reconnaissance, search and rescue aircraft to cooperate in the operation, but the need for their departure was ultimately obviated when the conflict was resolved.<sup>11</sup>

Argentina also supported the United States in the crisis in the Dominican Republic in 1965, creating a way out for the United States by enabling it to camouflage its unilateral intervention at Santo Domingo under the cover of a subsequent Inter-American Peace Force.<sup>12</sup>

On the other hand, such support was not given when President Carter ordered an embargo on grain exports to the Soviet Union in 1980 in response to the occupation of Afghanistan. The Soviet Union was one of Argentina's best customers for its grain and the embargo was decided upon unilaterally, without any prior consultations with Argentina or other major exporters. At the practical level, joining the embargo would have presented Argentina with serious problems in disposing of its exportable surpluses, most of which had not yet been placed, and this was compounded by Argentina's traditional scepticism regarding the effectiveness of economic sanctions. Envoys sent from Washington to secure a change of position failed in their mission, and this episode should in addition be viewed in the context of poor relations between the Argentine Government of the time and President Carter as a result of his human rights policy. However, Argentina did join the boycott of the Moscow Olympics which many countries observed for the same purpose.

Reference has already been made to Argentina's attitude to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq; it was clearly aligned with the position of the United Nations and almost the entire international community. The Argentine Government spared no opportunity to declare its full support for the United States-led position in the conflict and announce its readiness to send troops to the Persian Gulf if requested to do so by the United Nations.

While in the above paragraphs we have highlighted the attitude of the Argentine Republic to a number of the principal problems and conflicts marking the international situation on the global scale, this has not pointed to the existence of a clear line pursued in one direction or

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<sup>10</sup> Juan Archibaldo Lanús, *op.cit.*, pp. 81-88.

<sup>11</sup> Edwin Lieuwen, *U.S. Policy in Latin America*, (Praeger, New York, 1969) p. 99.

<sup>12</sup> Jerome Slater, *Intervention and Negotiation - the United States and the Dominican Revolution* (Harper & Row Publishers, New York, 1970).

another. Instead, underlying Argentina's foreign policy is the perception, often indicated, that generally speaking its direct interests are not fundamentally affected by what happens in other continents.

On what might be called "cold war" issues, we may speak of rather ambiguous support for the West, which at times is conditional and at others turns to a large extent into a kind of non-alignment.

In this context, it may be said that there was only one case - the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 - when Argentina seems to have perceived that its security too was somehow at stake. It is true, moreover, that that was the only clear-cut confrontation between East and West that took place on the American continent. On that occasion, the Argentine Republic opted firmly for the Western position, considering, of course, that its security would thus be protected.

Finally, mention should be made of a fact which may be transitory or may represent a fundamental change in Argentina's traditional approach to the principal problems arising on the global scene - only time will tell. These lines are being written in the middle of the Persian Gulf crisis, and in that regard, the Argentine Government's decision to send troops to the region in support of United Nations action is a subject of discussion in Argentina. What is noteworthy is the growing perception in specialist public opinion, moving perhaps not to a consensus but to a broadly majority view, that Argentina's old policy of isolation, impartiality, neutrality or aloofness from major world problems, whatever it may be called, must come to an end. The predominant viewpoint is that the time has come for Argentina to cease standing aside from important international developments and that, in contrast, it must henceforth play an active part, so far as it is able, in tackling and solving them.<sup>13</sup>

### Argentine Positions on the Main Disarmament and Security Issues

The Argentine Republic is one of the developing countries which has manifested the greatest interest in disarmament issues. Any study of the history of multilateral efforts to deal with disarmament and security problems will show that, among third world countries, Argentina has been in the vanguard in terms of its active participation in this process. From the moment when participation in the negotiating body in Geneva became possible for countries outside the major military alliances, the Argentine Republic displayed the greatest interest in joining it. It succeeded in doing so in 1969, and from that moment onwards became a hard-working and energetic member of what is now the Conference on Disarmament. In 1982 it created a Special Permanent Mission for Disarmament, with the status of an embassy, in Geneva. In 1984 the Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs was one of the first foreign ministers from the non-aligned group to visit and address the Conference on Disarmament. In the same year the President of Argentina, together with the heads of State or government of five other countries, set up the Six-Nation Initiative, whose activities had an impact on the international disarmament process in the years that followed.

It has been emphasized in this study that political instability in the Argentine Republic, with abrupt changes of Government and alternation between civilian and military régimes, led

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<sup>13</sup> This type of thinking is illustrated by statements made by the Chief of Staff of the Argentine Navy in reference to the sending of two warships to the Gulf. Admiral Jorge Ferrer stated: "It is a great responsibility and a privilege for the Navy to carry out the Government's directive. This decision *places Argentina on the world stage, where the history of the world and perhaps the new international security order are being determined*" (author's emphasis). Statements reported in *La Nación*, 14 November 1990.

*inter alia* to a lack of continuity and at times a lack of consistency in policies formulated on various issues. Disarmament is an exception to this rule. The stances taken up by Argentina on a range of matters dealt with in the disarmament field have remained unchanged over the years, and the fact that Argentine policy has been guided by military Governments has, perhaps surprisingly, had no influence in this area. While it is a fact that policy-making in this area has generally been a task for the professionals in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, it is worth mentioning that this has happened without serious interference from the military authorities.<sup>14</sup>

A brief exposé of the Argentine Republic's views on the main issues under consideration in the framework of disarmament and security appears below.

**Nuclear Weapons.** Argentina has declared its complete opposition to nuclear weapons whenever an appropriate opportunity has arisen. It has publicly expressed support for their prohibition, and has backed the proposals to that effect which have been put forward in international forums, particularly the Indian initiative. Within the Six-Nation Initiative Argentina has followed the same path. The current President of Argentina said in a message addressed to the Conference on Disarmament on 8 February 1990: "Weapons of mass destruction continue to be the highest priority. Nuclear weapons must disappear from the military lexicon, and the positive negotiations already under way must take account of the fact that a stable and permanent peace should embrace all types of such weapons and all States possessing them."

Obviously, the decisive role in abolishing nuclear weapons falls to the Powers in whose stockpiles they are to be found. Other States can only foster that objective as their means permit. Argentina has done so, and that signifies, as its leaders have stated on many occasions, that Argentina is taking no steps which lead to the production of nuclear weapons, and has no interest in possessing such weapons in the future or the slightest intention of embarking on a process leading in that direction. It has never been possible to discover any fact or any item of evidence to the contrary, other than the universally known fact that Argentina has a nuclear industry which is relatively advanced for a developing country and has achieved mastery of what is known as the complete nuclear fuel cycle. Successive Governments have repeatedly emphasized the exclusively civilian and peaceful nature of the Argentine nuclear programme, and these claims have never been belied by the facts. Undoubtedly there have existed a series of suspicions and cases of distrust from non-Argentine sources which, as any dispassionate study of them will show, are not based on facts but on interpretations, speculations and fears which, equally undoubtedly, have never been subsequently confirmed. An example is the argument citing as "proof" of the warlike intentions of the Argentine nuclear programme the fact that the National Atomic Energy Commission was for many years headed by a senior navy officer, ignoring the fact that the officer was a nuclear engineer, that the Commission never reported to the navy but directly to the Office of the President, and that its staff is almost completely civilian.

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<sup>14</sup> "Argentine diplomacy's concern with questions relating to disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy has a long history and has maintained a notable continuity despite the crises and disruptions that have affected the domestic political order". These are the opening words of Roberto Russell's article on "La posición argentina frente al desarme, la no proliferación y el uso pacífico de la energía nuclear", in *Desarme y desarrollo* (Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, Buenos Aires, 1989), p. 53.

There is no point in denying that this mistrust is fuelled by Argentina's failure to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco. In the first place, it should be pointed out that the Argentine Government has always drawn a distinction between the objective of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, which it has always firmly supported, and an instrument designed to achieve that objective, the NPT, which is not the only possible instrument and which, it considers, gives rise to serious objections in itself. At the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs said: "My Government wholeheartedly endorses the objective of avoiding the spread of those weapons. Argentina is not only concerned with the undeniable risks inherent in such a proliferation, but over and above that, we declare our opposition to nuclear arms as such wherever they may exist and whoever may possess them. Unreservedly we declare here once again that they must be totally eliminated for ever and as soon as possible. ... We have also maintained that there should be no confusion between ends and means. The objective of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, both horizontally and vertically, should have the unrestricted and unreserved support of the entire international community. The proper means to attain this goal, in the view of the Government of Argentina, is not the Non-Proliferation Treaty".<sup>15</sup>

Argentina's objection to the Non-Proliferation Treaty is that it is discriminatory, it legitimizes the possession of nuclear weapons, it focuses exclusively on horizontal proliferation without having any effect on vertical proliferation, it is totally ineffective in promoting international cooperation in nuclear matters, it imposes restrictions without any *quid pro quo* and it is inadequate as a source of security for technology transfers, since the industrialized countries, which are the principal proponents of the NPT, impose conditions which go beyond the NPT, such as those contained in the rules of the London Club or the Zangger Committee.

It can be stated with certainty that the prospects that Argentina will accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty one day are practically nil.

This is not the situation regarding the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, or Treaty of Tlatelolco, as was indicated in chapter IV. Argentina's objections to the Treaty relate not so much to its text as to the way in which it has been interpreted and implemented. As indicated earlier, the chances that the Argentine Republic will eventually ratify this international instrument, which it signed on 27 September 1967, have recently increased.

Regarding *nuclear weapon tests*, Argentina has been in favour of a complete test ban. It signed the Moscow Partial Test Ban Treaty on 8 August 1963 and ratified it in November 1986. Both in the General Assembly and in the Conference on Disarmament, Argentina has repeatedly attempted to obtain negotiations to convert the partial ban of the Moscow Treaty into a complete ban. As is well known, one of the main aims of the efforts of the Group of Six was to achieve that goal, considered to be one of the most effective ways gradually to eliminate nuclear weapons and thus make the world a safer place.

It should be pointed out that the Argentine Republic has always stressed that the tests that should be prohibited are nuclear weapon tests, and not tests that are for peaceful purposes. A growing number of countries do not share this position, claiming that peaceful explosions

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<sup>15</sup> General Assembly, Tenth special session, 5th plenary meeting, 26 May 1978.

cannot be distinguished from those whose purpose is war. However, it is consistent with Argentina's desire to maintain the possibility of conducting nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes one day, although in reality this is a theoretical position since the prospects of Argentina's managing to conduct such an explosion are quite remote, not to say non-existent. What is not consistent, in this context, is the ratification of the Moscow Treaty, which prohibits any type of explosion.

**Conventional Disarmament.** The Argentine Republic does not have a cut-and-dried position on conventional disarmament. In other words, it believes that conventional disarmament can be considered from different points of view. Regarding priorities, Argentina believes that nuclear disarmament is much more urgent and important. Conventional disarmament should not precede, much less replace, nuclear disarmament, or be used to conceal lack of activity or lack of progress in the nuclear field by diverting attention to the conventional field.

At the same time, Argentina considers that the more powerful States militarily, which include the nuclear-weapon Powers, are the ones that should head conventional disarmament efforts. It would not be logical for this task to begin among the less powerful countries or for attempts to be made to do everything at once, which would obviously be impossible. What should be avoided, in Argentina's opinion, is a situation where international pressure would be aimed at the developing countries, on the ground that they have an excessive amount of conventional weapons, to produce a situation in which such countries would become even weaker *vis-à-vis* the major Powers and even more at their mercy than they are now. That is to say, a situation in which inequality and imbalances would worsen and the more powerful States would be able to control international relations even more easily.

Faced with the alternative of tackling conventional disarmament on a global scale or, on the contrary, making efforts in the regional context, Argentina, since it is in favour of the major Powers' being the first to disarm conventionally, believes it logical to prefer a universal approach. In any event, if conventional disarmament attempts are made at the regional level, Argentina believes that not all regions can be treated in the same way but that each should be analysed separately. In Argentina's view, not all need a negotiated reduction in conventional forces, either now or in the future. In the case of South America, Argentina is convinced that a situation requiring the negotiation of conventional disarmament does not exist. The countries of the region, especially those of the Southern Core, are engaged in a process of integration, and there is little chance of conflicts arising among them. In that context, to distract Governments' attention to make them solve a non-existent problem would be pointless and even harmful, since the negotiation of reductions in conventional forces and weapons, which is always a difficult and complex undertaking, would not only involve prolonged efforts but might possibly create mistrust and disagreement in an atmosphere where they currently do not exist.

**Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.** The Argentine Republic's position on this issue can be summarized as follows: the number of countries that are developing outer space activities on a relatively large scale is steadily growing, and this confirms the need for problems regarding the utilization of outer space to be treated in a genuinely multilateral way. Existing international instruments in this field are global in scope, but numerous questions of a practical nature, beyond their legal framework, must be considered from a genuinely multilateral point of view and not among the few States that have thus far been regarded as the only ones to count as far as space matters are concerned.

Such multilateral treatment and the development and improvement of the body of legislation concerning outer space is being resisted by some of the Powers with significant space programmes, for two different reasons. On the one hand, they wish to maintain the broadest possible freedom of action to conduct their military activities without restriction, since they feel that their capacity for utilizing outer space for such purposes is far from having been fully exploited. On the other hand, protectionist trade considerations lead them to attempt to defend and preserve their interests and to limit as far as possible, through restrictions on transfer of technology, entry into the outer space field by new countries, which might become competitors.

Argentina accepts as incontestable the fact that outer space is militarized and that this trend is not declining, on the contrary. Thus, in Argentina's view, what should be sought is the greatest possible transparency in such military activities and maximum protection and security for objects already in outer space through the elaboration of legally binding rules.

To the same end, the series of steps known as "confidence-building measures" which were established and developed in the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and which have become universally recognized, should be extended, with the appropriate adjustments, to the field of outer space. Argentina has submitted several proposals to that effect in the Conference on Disarmament.

Finally, Argentina believes that emphasis should be placed on the value of outer space as an indispensable area for the economic and social development of States, their own security and the preservation and protection of the environment. In this connection, it is essential to guarantee the security of space devices placed in orbit for peaceful purposes and also to adopt adequate measures to create a situation of predictability and security in outer space, one that will promote the legitimate interests of the developing countries in developing their capacity to place objects in space in the near future.

***Disarmament and Development.*** Argentina's attitude towards the relationship between disarmament and development is not very clearly defined, perhaps because the topic in itself has different meanings. There is no doubt that Argentina, like most of the international community, considers the amount of material and human resources that States habitually use for purposes of war to be absurdly excessive. It is obvious that such resources could be much better used to satisfy pressing needs in the areas of food, health, education, etc. which affect, while not everyone, at least a large portion of the world's population.

The relationship between disarmament and development can be seen in purely economic terms. One school of thought holds that, if the major Powers begin a substantive disarmament process, their savings could easily be channelled, at least partially, into cooperation and aid programmes for developing countries. Argentina's position in this respect is rather sceptical, and it has never had high hopes, assuming the industrialized countries did cease to spend a significant portion of their current outlay on weapons, that the money thus saved would ultimately go, in whole or in part, to the developing countries in the form of assistance plans, technical cooperation, soft loans, etc.

On the other hand, the situation would be quite different if the developing countries, as a result of disarmament programmes, had more resources available to devote to their own development. This might be possible, at least in theory, but it should not be forgotten that the countries in question might either devote these resources to other unproductive purposes or simply make budgetary savings, their budgets, generally being in deficit. In other words, they would simply stop spending what they would have spent on weapons; an allegedly

useless expenditure (on weapons) would not be replaced by a useful expenditure (on economic and social development programmes).

The Argentine Republic has tended to view this relationship between disarmament and development more as a process in which disarmament contributes to peace and peace contributes to development. That is, the relationship is not perceived in economic terms. The head of the Argentine delegation to the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development (New York) said on 25 August 1987 that "The great majority of nations meeting here today share a conviction born of experience. Those who have experienced the tragedies and destruction caused by war or by the ascendancy of intolerance and violence also know the value of peace. They know that, without peace, there can be no sound and lasting prosperity for peoples". He added, "no other arguments are necessary to be convinced that, without economic and social development, there can only be a precarious peace within and among nations. On the basis of this experience, we believe that stimulating disarmament and promoting the economic and social development of peoples is the fairest and most rational approach to the major problems afflicting humanity in our times."

The central argument in the Argentine position is the relationship between peace and development and the fact that there can be no lasting peace among peoples if they do not enjoy an acceptable level of development, but that, at the same time, it is difficult for sound and lasting development to exist without an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity. The arms race is seen, rather, to be the cause of a squandering of resources and disarmament as a contributory factor to strengthening an atmosphere of peace. The final words of the Argentine statement mentioned in the previous paragraph summarize this well: "During this Conference we shall work to show that, in the face of the squandering of resources for destruction and the ever-increasing risk that humanity will perish, there are fairer and more reasonable alternatives for guaranteeing peace throughout the world by strengthening the security and prosperity of nations".

**Military Expenditure.** This topic is a broad one and encompasses several interrelated issues: the supply of standardized information on military expenditure to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the reduction of military budgets and objective information on military and other, related questions, all of which are ultimately designed to increase transparency about the prevailing situation in every country in the military field.

Argentina's opinion in this area is that these issues should not be considered as priorities or as part of the problem of disarmament as such. They fall into the category of "confidence-building measures"; they may relax tensions and facilitate the beginning of a disarmament process in some cases, but essentially they are not major questions for debate between nations, nor could they by themselves change the pre-existing situation in any significant way.

The fact that their effects are secondary does not mean that efforts in this field should be disdained or abandoned. The Argentine Republic has supported them and supplies information to the United Nations on the standardized forms.

At the same time, it would be counter-productive to ignore the fact that the more detailed and comprehensive the information that States are urged to supply, the more difficulties will arise. Not all of them will be unjustified, and, furthermore, the situations are not the same in all the regions and concerning all the interests affected; they may be substantially different. Thus, each country's attitude towards the same question will be different, and any reservations a particular one might have, might be altogether justified.

From Argentina's point of view, what appears ultimately appropriate is for the efforts to intensify and expand the amount and type of information that is sought from Governments to be preferably channelled on a regional basis. Situations vary considerably from region to region and even within the same region. Thus, as already has been stated on another occasion, Argentina believes that there is neither a risk of military conflict nor a regional arms race in South America, beyond a few imbalances that might exist in certain areas.

Efforts in this field are only just beginning, and doubts and mistrust have already been seen in some countries concerning the risks that might arise, at least in certain cases, from too broad a dissemination of sensitive information. Argentina believes that one way of attenuating these difficulties and objections might be to make exercises of this nature exclusively regional. Information would be exchanged on a voluntary basis and only between interested countries in the region and would be confidential, i.e. would not be given general distribution. Thus the information would only reach those neighbouring countries in which it was hoped to instil confidence, without prejudice to sending the Secretary-General of the United Nations or any other agreed international authority any type of communication that would guarantee that the purposes of the exercise were being duly fulfilled.

***Disarmament Treaties.*** In addition to the disarmament treaties mentioned in this paper as being in force for the Argentine Republic, Argentina has also ratified others in the field, as follows: Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (ratified by Argentina on 26 March 1969); Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof (ratified on 21 March 1983); Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (ratified in Washington on 23 November 1979); and the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (ratified on 20 March 1987).



## Chapter VI

### Concluding Considerations

In any study of the situation and Argentine Republic's security perceptions it must be borne especially in mind that, to a far greater extent than is normal in other countries, the subject is steeped in the process of momentous change which is now taking place in Argentina in virtually all areas of national life.

For less than a decade Argentina has been experiencing a period which will surely be seen in future as historic. It is a stage which countries very seldom go through in the course of a century; a series of unconnected events has radically changed Argentina's ideas, modes of behaviour and world view in a transformation of national conduct and thought. Most Argentines may not be clearly aware of how their country is changing, of the rapid evolution which will create an Argentina that is different from the one they knew before and certainly different from the one that their parents knew. It has been rightly said that "historical processes are prolific in history books, not in the course of events".<sup>1</sup>

After more than half a century of political instability during which civilian and military Governments succeeded one another, since the end of 1983, the democratic system appears to have been established in Argentina more firmly than it has ever been since the beginning of the twentieth century. The intervention of the military in the institutional life of the country is regarded today as a remote possibility and one that can be virtually ruled out in the foreseeable future, in sharp contrast to what was commonly expected up to 10 years ago.

This apparent strengthening of the democratic system would not be more than a promising development for Argentines if it had not been followed by a fundamental change in the economic system which had also controlled their lives for more than 50 years. The excessive State interference in the financial and productive life of the country, the protectionism, the import substitution policy, the declining Argentine share in world trade, the stifling of private initiative, the tendency towards complete reliance on omnipresent State intervention in every sector of the economy, all these were factors which dragged Argentina into a situation of stagnation and deterioration that became intolerable. Ever-widening circles of Argentine society finally became convinced that if the nation continued to pursue that path the future would be bleak or, more aptly put, it would have no future. Argentina as a country would have to change or decline to unpredictable levels.

In the late 1980s, this awareness grew and the first steps were taken in a process of change which, in 1989 when the present Government took office, accelerated at an unsuspected pace. Long-standing beliefs and practices, which appeared to be socio-economic dogmas rather than doctrines, were abandoned and the country began to be liberalized, to cut back on the State bureaucracy, gradually to reduce State intervention in productive processes, to open up the economy, and to privatize State enterprises which had formerly been untouchable monopolies; in short, a new Argentina began to be built, different from any Argentina that had ever existed before and certainly from the Argentina of the last 50 years.

This process is now fully launched and is taking place in a very unfavourable socio-economic context, which is in fact largely a consequence of an economic model that

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<sup>1</sup> Juan Carlos de Pablo: "El único país que funciona ... Argentina", *El Cronista Comercial*, 5 December 1990.

clearly failed completely and ultimately led to frustration and to a decline in Argentine living standards, which in the past had given the country an exceptionally good position among non-industrialized countries.

This array of difficulties in which the Argentine Government and people daily found themselves, the need to overcome the problems which continually arose, sapped all the country's energy. Attention to the security of the nation and how best to defend it were diverted to sheer survival and to the satisfaction of the most basic needs.

The Argentine armed forces did not remain unaffected by this, and high-ranking military figures stated this publicly and bluntly. The Chief of the Joint General Staff stressed "the deterioration of our forces, which means we are not in a position to meet present requirements. It would be erroneous not to grasp clearly the bleak reality, that over the last decade, the Argentine military apparatus has *deteriorated in every area as never before*"<sup>2</sup> (author's emphasis). The Chief of the Navy General Staff made a similar comment: "The Navy's situation today is considered by the Admiralty to be *the worst it has been during this century*"<sup>3</sup> (author's emphasis).

This poor state of preparedness and equipment, of the Argentine armed forces, which would have been very serious in other circumstances, can be borne relatively serenely because of the country's positive international environment. While the danger of conflict with neighbouring countries has not been completely removed, it has been considerably reduced. The Argentine Republic has begun a process of integration with its eternal rival, Brazil, and it has been agreed to establish a common market by the end of 1994. The cooperation between the two former competitors in virtually all areas has extended to levels that would have been inconceivable only a few years ago. It is therefore now realistic to expect that any problem which may arise between both countries - and that is obviously a possibility - would be solved peacefully and satisfactorily.

There is no serious prospect of a conflict with any of Argentina's three less powerful neighbours, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Chile and Great Britain remain the only potential adversaries, Chile because of the persistence of a number of unresolved border disputes and the United Kingdom because of its occupation of the Malvinas and other islands of the South Atlantic, which Argentina claims are part of its territorial heritage.

However, even in these cases the situation is encouraging. Chile now has a democratic Government, with which Argentina maintains good relations and with which it will presumably be able to settle any border dispute peacefully. Diplomatic relations have been restored with the United Kingdom and a series of cooperation and confidence-building measures has been initiated which, although they will not remove the chances of conflict over a situation that is fraught with difficulties as long as it is not fairly and permanently resolved, will at least reduce the likelihood of their occurrence.

In fact, the whole international environment has entered a more tranquil phase. The crisis in the Persian Gulf, which will certainly not be the last, was not serious enough to disrupt the order which was recently established after the cold war ended and the Marxist economic systems collapsed.

The Argentine armed forces are in an unsatisfactory condition and this obviously leads to concern over the country's security. However, such a situation can be tolerated not only

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<sup>2</sup> Address by Admiral Emilio Osses during the closing ceremony of the Higher Joint Military Strategy Course and the Joint Military Planning Course, made at the Higher Army War School on 10 December 1990.

<sup>3</sup> Statements by Admiral Jorge Ferrer published in *Clarín*, 14 December 1990.

because of the prevailing favourable international climate but also because the armed forces are required to fulfil a purely deterrent role. Deterrence as the object of the military strategy has not only been repeatedly emphasized but has also been supported by more than 100 years of Argentine history. The Malvinas episode in 1982 should not be regarded as a departure from this policy but as a phenomenon with unique characteristics, which cannot be repeated in other situations, because they are inseparable from Argentine irredentism with respect to this archipelago. Anyone who sees in the events of 1982 a manifestation of expansionist ambitions or the beginning of an attempt by the Argentine armed forces to put aggressive designs into effect is completely mistaken.<sup>4</sup>

It goes without saying that the purpose of the Argentine military apparatus is essentially deterrent and since, for the present at least, the country is likely to have no enemies to deter, the present period of relative defencelessness can be temporarily tolerated because a rudimentary but acceptable level of security is being provided.

This period of difficulty has been used to make a thorough review of the organization and functions of the armed forces, in the light of the experience in the South Atlantic conflict and of the prevailing political, economic and technological circumstances in Argentina. In the final analysis, this redefinition of the role of the armed forces has also been influenced, in no small measure, by past experience. Argentine political history, with the frequent interference of the armed forces in institutional life, the rotation of military and civilian Governments and the instability and legal insecurity which this has brought in its train, has made it imperative to find a way of ensuring that the armed forces will not again exceed their appointed functions and that they will once and for all become the firm support that is needed by the democratic authorities. Over the last decade, there has been a lot of thinking and writing in Argentina about the armed forces, their reorganization and their role, but it should be borne in mind - this being the subject of this study - that much of this thinking and writing has had little to do with the armed forces' role in security but rather, directly or indirectly with their participation, or lack of it, in the conduct of the country's political affairs.

In late 1990, a programme to restructure the armed forces was publicly announced and it is to be implemented in two phases over a period of at least five years, starting in 1991. Certain corps of the army, and some air and naval bases, and training, teaching and maintenance establishments will be closed or merged. Military institutions in both the North and the South will be relocated. The point to note here is that joint armed forces operations are continuing and being strengthened and that "rapid deployment forces, smaller in size and with higher mobility and strike power" will be formed, as stated by the Minister of Defence.<sup>5</sup>

It remains to be seen in what way and how quickly the stated aims will be implemented. Time will also show how far the restructuring is based - as appears to be the case in respect of most of the measures announced so far - on budgetary and administrative criteria and to what extent it is a response to strategic and operational considerations.

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<sup>4</sup> Events have belied such views as the following: "Of all the ghosts in torment in the world today, one was conspicuous by its absence in South America: war. For a long time, armed conflicts in the region were limited to internal political violence. The changing conditions in the region and the world suggested that there was an increasing likelihood that war would break out or that there was a grave danger of one occurring. The invasion of the Malvinas by Argentine troops disrupted the situation and shattered the myth that there could be no wars in South America". Alexandre Barros, "Las armas y los conflictos en Sudamérica" in *Paz, desarme y desarrollo en América Latina*, Augusto Varas (ed.): (Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, Buenos Aires, 1987), p.109.

<sup>5</sup> Press Conference given by Defence Minister, Humberto Romero, following the announcement on 7 December 1990 of the plan to restructure the armed forces.

The radical transformation now taking place in the Argentine Republic, referred to at the start of this chapter, is also occurring in the area of foreign policy. As has been stated elsewhere in this study, there have generally been two constants in Argentina's position on major world events: non-participation and non-alignment, policies which in practise have much in common, although there are some exceptions.

In 1990, the Argentine Government sent out clear signals that it had decided to abandon this traditional policy. On the one hand, it took sides immediately, firmly and emphatically in the Persian Gulf crisis, whereas in the past it would probably have remained on the sidelines. It was the only Latin American country which dispatched warships to the conflict area. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic said in his address to the forty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly, this action on the part of the Government confirms its determination fully to assume its international commitments and in the building of the post-cold war order, all members of the international community, without exception, are responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Minister Cavallo's statement shows that Argentina no longer wishes to remain on the fringe of important international events. In particular, it wishes to participate fully in the building of the post-cold war order. There is no question that this new policy is fundamentally different from the course followed in the past but at the same time it implies that there might be challenges and risks to the nation's security in the future.

How Argentina will face up to any future threats to its security remains to be seen. The question is apparently not even being clearly addressed. The fact is that, as has been stated earlier, the present regional context is favourable. However, no one can stand easy and be confident that this state of affairs will last indefinitely. New dangers, some perhaps quite unexpected, may arise.

The regional security system in the western hemisphere, which was established by the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance is now outdated or at least this is the general opinion. It seems to have been dealt a mortal blow during the South Atlantic conflict. It may still serve for the peaceful settlement of conflicts in Central America and the Caribbean, where it has in fact been applied in most instances, but as far as South American regional security is concerned especially the Southern Cone, it appears to have outlived its usefulness.

The Argentine Government has established the closest possible ties with the United States and has been trying to end once and for all 100 years of not very cordial and often difficult relations. It is said that this year the bilateral Argentine-United States relationship has reached a level of trust and friendship unprecedented in this century. It would appear that Argentina today has aligned itself with the United States or, perhaps to overstate the case, with the West. It could be that, within the framework of such a positive relationship, Argentina may, should the circumstances arise, receive support for its security from its most powerful friend. If this is the thinking, it should be remembered, firstly, that the new stage in the relationship between the two countries is still too recent for too many conclusions to be drawn from it and, secondly, that the interests of the United States are very diffuse and sometimes contradictory. This was demonstrated to Argentina's detriment in the traumatic South Atlantic conflict.

Argentina is energetically pursuing a policy which is on the way to yielding results and which, without question, has major implications for its security. This is a policy of integration with the neighbouring countries. The process is under way with no less a country than Brazil, the most powerful of the bordering States and is designed to lead to the establishment of a common market by 31 December 1994 at the latest. Paraguay and

Uruguay are now joining this process, from which it would in fact be difficult for them to remain aloof. Chile is slightly further away, but has agreed to the establishment of a free trade area at least. This is an enormously important undertaking, not only for the countries involved, but for all of Latin America.

In this context, there is no doubt, as stated by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina,<sup>6</sup> "that no progress in political and economic integration can be made without simultaneous action in the areas of defence and security. Defence must be rethought in the light of the changes on the international and regional scene. We must formulate a new concept of external security for the new times and circumstances. The idea that defence is an isolated national territorial exercise is gradually giving way to the realization that there are common security interests in the Southern Cone and a concomitant need for a united response to common problems and risks. The traditional assumptions involving conflicts with neighbouring countries, will give way to more comprehensive and up-to-date approaches, and an integrated and shared concept of security. The redefinition and modernization of the respective forces should result in the intelligent use of available resources, adapted realistically to the existence, dimension and nature of the new challenges. Nothing could be more dangerous for our external security than a costly defence which is geared to meeting threats and adversaries that no longer exist and which offers no protection against the real dangers".

In the same statement from which the above quotation was taken, the Minister for Foreign Affairs also declared that the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, was "completely out of date" and that "other pragmatic and effective arrangements should be devised, in keeping with the present regional and world situation. These arrangements should be prompted by the deep-seated desire for peace with solidarity, freedom with justice and progress, which is harboured by our peoples, without any anachronistic ambitions of hegemony or supremacy. This should form the foundation, *inter alia*, for efforts to strengthen peaceful mechanisms for the prevention and settlement of intraregional disputes, and to keep the region out of conflicts extraneous to it, for agreement on different aspects of the respective defence production policies, for the promotion of cooperation in the development of advanced technologies and for coordinated control of the adjacent seas".

We thought it instructive to quote the Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs verbatim because he has outlined a new concept of security, with the region as the centrepiece, that is regarded as one aspect or, in any case, as an outgrowth of integration. It seems reasonable to assume that in this statement the Minister indicated the path to be followed in order to achieve this goal.

At the same time it cannot be overlooked that apparently very little progress has been made in this direction, although the first step has been taken. An analysis of published materials on the subject shows that, while there is general agreement that something must be done in this regard and that some effort should be made to move towards the formulation of joint subregional approaches on the security and defence of the area, there are no specific plans or programmes for this purpose beyond an acknowledgement of the fact that closer contacts should be established between the General Staff of the neighbouring countries.

Furthermore, the need to proceed with caution along the path ahead has been pointed out. The chief of the Argentine Joint General Staff said: "I believe that, although defence is a

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<sup>6</sup> Lecture given at the National Defence School on 13 August 1990.

national matter, that does not exclude cooperation or mutual assistance with other countries, especially those from the region to which we belong. The desire for integration witnessed at the most recent diplomatic meetings for the purpose of creating a Southern Cone common market and in other international agreements to which Argentina has been a party requires a defence policy that is consistent with the nation's foreign policy. Consequently, the defence system which is beginning to be formulated should cautiously but firmly adopt a stance that takes this new circumstance into account. I should emphasize that this proposal does not and could in no case imply a loss of decision-making authority by our country as far as the defence of its interests, still less its national identity, is concerned."<sup>7</sup>

To sum up, it should be emphasized that the Argentine Republic is living through a momentous period of its history as a nation. Its political, economic and social system is undergoing radical change, which will make it in many ways a different country from the one it has been in the last 50 years.

The process of change is so complex and multifaceted that security considerations and the situation of the armed forces have to a large extent been submerged in this sea of difficulties, obstacles and opposing interests which inevitably accompany any evolution - one might almost say revolution - of this kind and magnitude.

This relative neglect, imposed by circumstances, has been made easier by the favourable international context which has considerably reduced the risks to a country's security from the outside world.

In any event, the Argentine armed forces are also undergoing change and readjustment and must rise to the challenges presented by an outside world which is itself undergoing change.

It appears that, contrary to previous trends, Argentina has decided to pursue a foreign policy of active participation in world events. At the same time, intense efforts are under way towards integration with the neighbouring countries, in the first place with Brazil.

This policy will bring not only benefits but also problems, which will have to be faced. There will be risks for security - probably different from those of the past - which, partially at least, must be met through coordinated regional action.

At the same time in addition to challenges yet unknown, other new challenges have already emerged and been identified, but their characteristics, or rather the way to tackle them, is still not altogether clear. Drug trafficking and terrorism linked to drug trafficking, damage to the environment, demographic problems, mass poverty, foreign debt, deterioration of the quality of life, threats to democracy, non-participation in the technological revolution - all these are issues which Argentina, like other developing countries, must address, in addition to dealing with questions traditionally linked to its security, namely territorial disputes and global conflicts.

Argentina has a very full but also stimulating agenda. It is to be hoped that the profound changes taking place in the country will equip it better to confront future trials, and to provide adequate protection for its security in all circumstances.

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<sup>7</sup> Admiral Emilio Osses, "Hacia el cumplimiento de la política de defensa nacional", lecture given on 5 December 1990 at the Fundación Banco de Boston, Buenos Aires.