

# **THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES MONA CAMPUS**

**M.Sc. NATIONAL SECURITY & STRATEGIC STUDIES PROGRAMME  
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES**

TEL: (876) 977-3775/3808/6960; 702-2099

FAX: (876) 977-3829

E-mail: [msc.nationalsecurity@uwimona.edu.jm](mailto:msc.nationalsecurity@uwimona.edu.jm)

MONA, KINGSTON 7  
JAMAICA

## ***GANGS, SOVEREIGNTY AND NATIONAL DISASTERS: AN AGENDA FOR THE CONFERENCE OF THE DEFENSE MINISTERS OF THE AMERICAS 2008***

*by*

Hilton A. McDavid, D.Sc.

### **INTRODUCTION AND CURRENT ENVIRONMENT**

The end of the cold war and the ensuing globalization has defined the new security environment in the Caribbean in terms of new risks and threats of diverse nature such as increasing unemployment, marginality of great sectors of the population, particularly in Guyana and Jamaica, terrorism in its diverse modalities, organised crime and tile violations of human rights. The traditional international problem of conventional external aggression retains certain credibility with border disputes.

From an international perspective, Shapley et al suggest that the new world system has produced a more complex security environment with multiple threats, but the primary immediate threat to national security is that of terrorist groups<sup>1</sup>.

Manwarring suggest that for sovereignty to be meaningful today, the state operating under the rule of law must be the only source of authority empowered to make and enforce laws<sup>2</sup>. The most insidious problem facing the region is that of territorial integrity which definition has been broaden to include, the fair and just treatment of citizenry, and the containment of non-state nation-actors seeking the illegal and violent change within the territorial borders of the nation–state. Referring to the world in general, Manwarring perceives that this kind of instability along with the human destabilizers who exploit it can lead to a final downward spiral into failing and failed state status<sup>3</sup>.

According to Nain transnational crime is dominating the security environment and he considers the illegal trade in drugs, arms, intellectual property, people and money as booming. The fight to control these illicit markets is similar to the fight against terrorism as they pit governments against agile, stateless and resourceful networks empowered by globalization<sup>4</sup>. It is important that it is realised that just

as how nation- states have benefited from the information revolution, stronger political and economic linkages and the shrinking importance of geographic distances, unfortunately criminal networks have gained even more. Globalization has in effect expanded illegal markets and strengthened criminal networks.

Nain suggests that the global economy is currently fighting five wars that of drugs, arms trafficking, intellectual property, alien smuggling and money laundering. He opines that the global nature of these five wars was unimaginable just a decade ago and is mainly the results of the unfathomable order of magnitude of the financial, human, institutional and technological resources deployed by the criminals<sup>5</sup>.

But Butfoy suggests that under these new concepts of security, threats are also generated from such global issues as environmental change, resource scarcity, transnational crime, health, bio security and challenges to sustainability<sup>6</sup>. Perhaps the worst threat facing the Caribbean and Atlantic States is that of the combination of natural and manmade disasters. Recent happenings in the Baltic Sea where storms caused the wrecking of vessels with the associated severe damage to the environment can be repeated in the Caribbean Sea with far greater consequences for the tourism dependent economies<sup>7</sup>.

### **GANGS AND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE STATE**

Lovelace in analyzing the threat posed by Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) and gangs expounded that the ultimate threat of the destabilizing activities of the gang phenomenon is not violence, instability, the challenge to state sovereignty, or state failure. Instead, it is the coerced criminal imposition of a radical restructuring of the state and its governance<sup>8</sup>.

In his most recent seminal works on gangs in Latin America and the Caribbean, Max Manwarring, Professor of Military Strategy at the U.S. Army War College explains that gang-generated instability leads to threats to national, regional, and global security, nation-state sovereignty, failing and failed states, and a “clash of civilizations”. “Rather than trying to depose a government with a major stroke (*golpe* or coup) or in a prolonged revolutionary war, as some insurgents have done, gangs and their allies (the gang phenomenon) more subtly take control of territory and people one street or neighborhood at a time (*coup d’ street*) or one individual, business, or government office at a time. Thus, whether a gang is specifically a criminal or insurgent type organization is irrelevant. Its putative objective is to neutralize, control, or depose governments to ensure self-determined (nondemocratic) ends”<sup>9</sup>. This objective defines insurgency, a serious political agenda, and a clash regarding the authoritative allocation of values in a society.

In specifically discussing Jamaica, Manwarring considers that the behaviour and actions of the gangs in that country reflect on Jamaica not as a “failed state,” but

as a failing state in the process of reconfiguration. Thus, Jamaica appears to be slowly moving toward something like a “criminal state” or a “narco-state.”<sup>10</sup>

The consequences of this is that the effective sovereignty of the state and the personal security of citizens are being challenged every day, and the gangs’ commercial motives for controlling people and territory are, in fact, an implicit political agenda<sup>11</sup>.

The response to this critical situation for small developing states is that what is required is a unified civil-military effort to apply the full human and physical resources of the nation-state, as well as the international community, to generate effective multilateral solutions to transnational issues. A good example of such a holistic, multidimensional, and multilateral approach is the cooperation for security that was achieved between and among the English-speaking states in the Circum-Caribbean during the April-May 2007 World Cricket Matches. This involved the Organisation of American States, United States of America, Canada and the United Kingdom among other countries.

The mini-states of the Caribbean are overmatched by the gang phenomenon and Caribbean situation should be seen as a special circumstance, thus the concept of “keeping the soldiers in the barracks” is irrelevant. The resources employed by the TCOs quite often have the combat power of military units and many developed countries such as the United States of America have deployed their military resources in the fight against drugs and transnational organised crime.

### **CARIBBEAN DEFENCE FORCES AND SCOPE**

In the Commonwealth Caribbean the military is subordinated to the civilian authority and the Minister of National Security or of Defence has the responsibility for the deployment and operations of the defence forces.

The military is subject to oversight of parliament. It is based on this and the current security environment that the topics for the agenda of the Defence Ministers in 2008 are being suggested.

The 3 topics that this paper is recommending are:

1. Collaboration at Hemispheric and sub-regional levels between civil and military authorities to deal with internal security operations
2. Development of a regional policy and doctrine on the role of the military in internal security operations
3. Internal and external military cooperation in the mediation and preparedness of natural and manmade disasters
4. Military and Security Lessons learnt from Cricket World Cup 2007

## **COLLABORATION ON INTERNAL SECURITY OPERATIONS**

The major areas for collaboration would be in intelligence and information collection, training and education and establishing a protocol to deal with transnational criminal and terrorist network, particularly when external military assistance is required for operations. Considerations for multinational operations should be developed which must address issues such as goals, effort, doctrine, SOPs, culture, communications, media command and control, and logistic systems and procedures. Concomitant with this is the development of appropriate policies and doctrines. Peacekeeping operations can also be included in this section of the agenda

## **POLICY AND DOCTRINE**

Increasingly the military is being involved in what can be considered as routinized, operations with the civilian authority in the fight against transnational crime in general, but more specifically anti-narcotic and anti-terrorism activities. In Jamaica, the Jamaica Defence Force is involved on a daily basis with the Jamaica Constabulary Force on joint operations against crime. However, the policy and doctrine like the rest of the CARICOM States remain the same as inherited from the British at the granting of independence. It is felt that a regional approach to the development of policies and doctrine will not only make available the necessary expertise, experience and a broader spectrum, but will provide a greater legitimacy. The policies and doctrine would be geared to the current security environment and should emphasise areas such as rules of engagement and the granting of powers of arrest to the military. The latter would include implications and limitations.

## **MILITARY COOPERATION FOR NATURAL DISASTER**

With the increasing incidence of manmade disasters, natural disasters and the combination of manmade and natural disasters it is important that the meeting addresses a protocol for Humanitarian Assistance(HA) which will be acceptable to all.

The HA operations should be conducted to relieve or reduce the results of these disasters or other endemic conditions. General Principles for these operations should be established along with specific principles for planning and other appropriate areas.

## **LESSONS LEARNT FROM CRICKET WORLD CUP 2007**

Cricket World Cup 2007 is probably the largest sporting event in terms of total viewership to be held in the Americas with the exception of World Cup Football Finals. Of particular interest from a security perspective was that these games were held across numerous sovereign states. Important lessons can be learnt relating to cooperation amongst domestic, sub-regional, hemispheric and international security organisations. Areas for consideration would include the threat assessment, security architecture, political issues and considerations, and the implementation of the security programme across the nation-states.

<sup>1</sup> Shapley, Craig(2006).*The Study of National Security Versus the Study of Corporate Security*, in Gill, Martin(2006)(editor), *The Handbook of Security*, Palgrave

<sup>2</sup> Manwarring, Max(2002).*The New Global Security Landscape: The Road Ahead*, Low Intensity Conflict and Law Enforcement, Vol.11, No. 2/3

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Naim, Moises(2003), *The Five Wars of Globalization*, Foreign Policy, January/February 2003

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Butfoy, Andy (1997). *Forecasting Common Security*, Working Paper 1995/8, Department of International Relations Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University

<sup>7</sup> During the period November 01 to November 12, 2007 severe storms in the Baltic Sea caused vessels to capsize resulting in large oil spills. The San Francisco Bay, California, USA also suffered from oil spills caused by a vessel colliding with bridge support. - reported worldwide.

<sup>8</sup> In the foreword to, Manwarring, Max(December 2007), *A Contemporary Challenge To State Sovereignty: Gangs And Other Illicit Transnational Criminal Organizations In Central America, El Salvador, Mexico, Jamaica, And Brazil*, Strategic Studies Institute, National War College, USA

<sup>9</sup> Manwarring, Max(December 2007), *A Contemporary Challenge To State Sovereignty: Gangs And Other Illicit Transnational Criminal Organizations In Central America, El Salvador, Mexico, Jamaica, And Brazil*, Strategic Studies Institute, National War College, USA

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> J Rapley, John “The New Middle Ages,” *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2006, pp. 93-103.