

On the non-State armed groups and organized armed groups operational but not addressed in the Amazon trapezoid region

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Abstract: Considering the research objects and objectives, this research paper is primarily based upon the highly and challenging volatile scenarios and respective security dilemma in this region of this triple border, aiming not only at the national interest of three States and respective citizens, but also at the restructuring of State apparatuses through current challenges through multidimensional and cross-sectors public policy interventions, as per the U.N. system of States norms and conventions versus the not properly registered but increasingly operational wide array of mercenaries through numerous manners / off-State belligerent groups. The main cities for analyses, their sub-regions and countries are: Tabatinga (Brazil), Leticia (Colombia), and Santa Rosa / also known as Yavari (Peru). Accordingly in the Amazon trapezoid the re-establishment of public order as per security sector reforms, by also considering not effective D.D.R. programme in Colombia too, as an example, remains as vital as the core though not sole / the ones known and made visible / major non-State armed groups (N.S.A.G.) and organized criminal groups (O.C.G) that now operate constantly and increasingly through highly-volatile cooperation and / or in competition alliances / partnerships for territories where Brazil, Colombia and Peru do vehemently lack proper State legitimacy and sovereignty and continuous rather than isolated or not coordinated anyhow punctual and not effective policies implemented to date, namely regarding that this region presents local but global challenges alike, once about three continents (the Americas, Africa, and Europe) continue to be erroneously inter-connected through reciprocal licit and illicit routes that does demand local and international attention and policies simultaneously, what has not occurred properly to date once the international community is not present there via its I.G.O., namely and mainly via the United Nations per se, what does remain as a basic and uttermost need to claim global attention for a local but global challenge which does take place simultaneously.

Keywords: States; Legitimacy; Sovereignty; N.S.A.G. – O.C.G.; D.D.R. / S.S.R.;

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I - Introduction

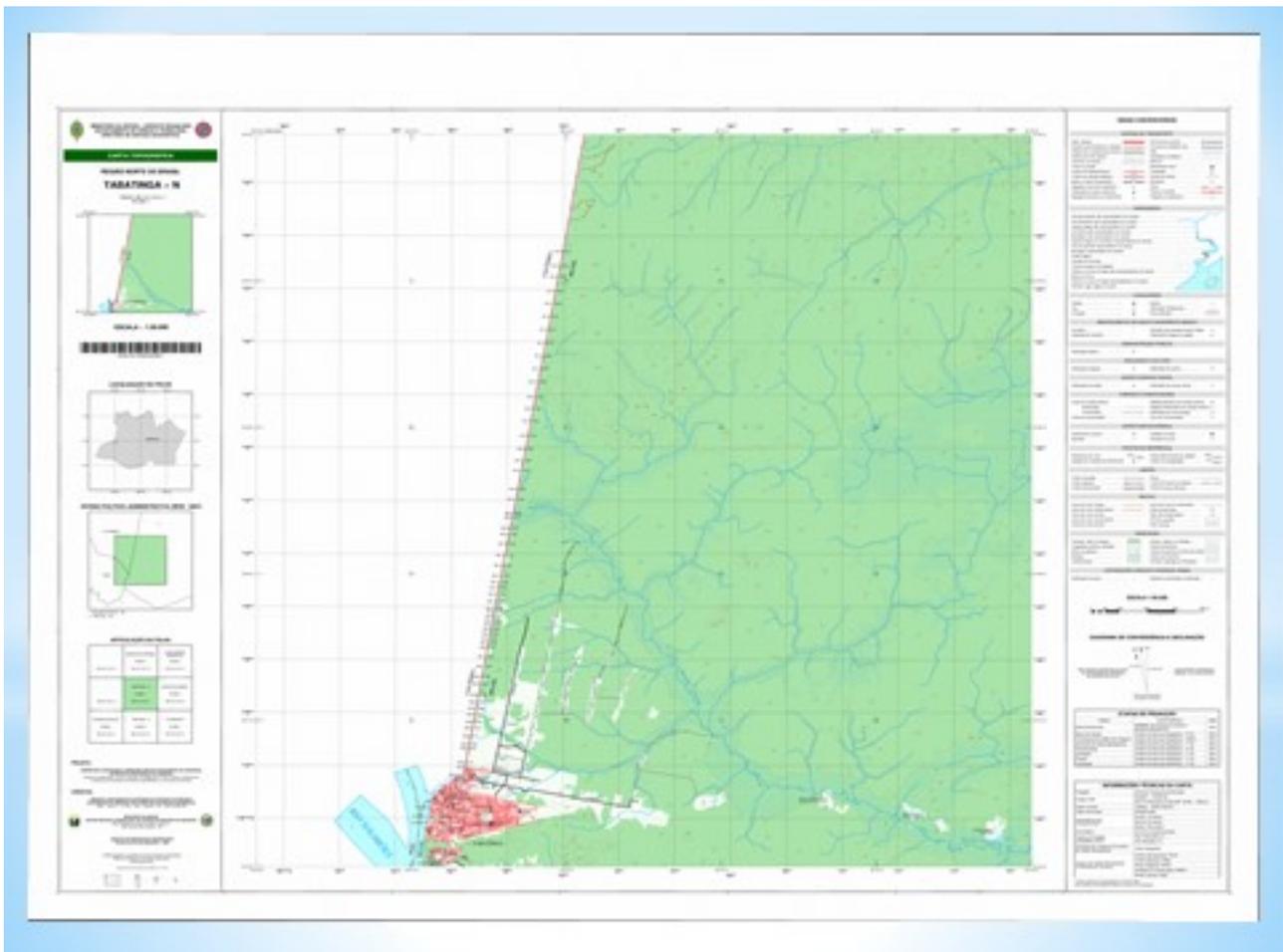
In this triple border broadly denominated and known as the Amazon trapezoid per se, due to myriad reasons and States' lack of capabilities and respective resources as well as an overall regional lack of due lack of mutual interest for a necessary trilateral cooperation to meet and address the perpetrators of cycles of armed violence and all possible related criminal activities, which do vastly vary from licit to illicit goods trafficking, ranging from endangered animal species, illegal drugs and weaponry, to human smuggling as it has been reportedly to be continuously perpetrated by numerous N.S.A.G. and O.C.G., which do not simply cease to operate relatively peacefully in a region where the rates of homicides is anyhow proportional as per the higher rates of casualties in all these countries' other regions, for instance, to wide arrays of various competing armed actors in the same region, and where a then very unusually questionable balance of power system does prevail somehow among them all, namely for the sake of their own illegal business and their respective distinct and diverse fluvial, land and then maritime routes that make them sustainable once they are precisely located at one of the most accessible and pragmatic crossing / transitional border regions ever registered to date in this continent's contemporary history.

Mercenary related activities and the activities of private military and security companies (P.M.S.C.) have actually not being reported at this triple frontier. However it has been reported that there are very small and isolated groups of mercenaries that do act very punctually within certain territories, namely for the protection of their own business as per the local land-owners interests, what does not necessarily represent the major driving force for the erosion of these three countries social fabrics, but actually a private contracted protection set of normally few safe guards to guarantee that the private lands do not get invaded or used illegally by the predominant N.S.A.G. and O.C.G. abounding in this region.

However, the sole exception properly registered is the trans-boundaries operation of Colombian paramilitary groups, known as the BACRIM, which is in charge of majorly trafficking weaponry and narcotics via this fluvial route as well as coercing, violently, or not, more and more marginalized local citizens to join and hence benefit from their illegal activities in loco.

II - The Amazon trapezoid

In the denominated Amazon trapezoid, this single triple border, this research proposes to analyse mainly the on-going public order scenario and respective dilemmas with a major focus over security sector reforms (SSR) policies to become presented to the Brazilian government and the other two neighbouring States so that their respective National Defence Policies and respective Strategies do come to validate the perpetrators of armed violence and criminalities as a means to restructure the States' apparatuses in question as per the United Nations system of States, adequately.



Source: EXÉRCITO BRASILEIRO. BANCO DE DADOS GEOGRÁFICO DO EXÉRCITO BRASILEIRO, DIRETORIA DE SERVIÇO GEOGRÁFICO.



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III - Analyses

It is very necessary to understand the composition and modus operandi of the perpetrators of violence and related crimes as well as it remains key to keep a due core focus on the rare and quite well-established balance of power system among numerous registered N.S.A.G. and O.C.G., as per the overall broader scenario presented to date with the following list of off-State belligerent actors operational in coordination or through continuous disputes for territories so that they become more sustainable for the perpetuation of the cycles of armed conflicts not restricted to their countries of origin but also throughout Brazil and then via numerous illegal routes for the transportation of a wide array of both licit and majorly illicit goods onto their counterparts in other continents, such as in Africa, and in Europe as well, where there is a reciprocal vice versa internationally illegal route system consolidated that does keep all actors involved operational more and more, such as the ones listed below that do prevail as the major ones but naturally not only the sole ones:

(1) *Família do Norte (F.D.N.)*; (2) *Guardiões do Estado (G.D.E.)*; (3) *Primeiro Comando da Capital (P.C.C.)*; (4) *Comando Vermelho (C.V.)*; (5) *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia - Ejército del Pueblo (F.A.R.C.-E.P.)*; (6) *F.A.R.C.-E.P.'s dissidents*; (7) *Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común – F.A.R.C.*; (8) *FARCRIM*; (9) The denominated ‘hidden’ *F.A.R.C.*; (10) *Bandas Armadas Criminales (BACRIM)*; (11) *Los Caqueteños*; (12) Family clans operational in Peru, such as the “Los Champas”, in 2017, as a past example and in the classification of minor non-State armed actors such as per local gangs that are temporarily established and then replaced by others in due sequence, and are actually more difficult to be mapped once they change more rapidly than the other more well-grounded N.S.A.G. and O.C.G., totally and constantly operational in Brazil and in Colombia.

IV - Objectives

Addressing the State apparatuses power vacuums created by the temporary withdrawals of N.S.A.G. and O.C.G. – namely the non-State legitimacy gaps – versus the limited capacities of the States and also I.G.O., such as the O.A.S. and the U.N. Mission in Colombia, and also local partners alike, to become enabled to retake control through the establishment of a proper socially constructed political community’ legitimacy and sovereignty within these States’ apparatuses;

Building capable, legitimate, and inclusive national security forces - also - through inclusive D.D.R. and S.S.R. reformulations processes as per the UN norms and minimum standards;

Addressing the strategic alignment among the U.N.S.C., the UN Secretariat and also the T.C.C. / P.C.C. (Colombia), as well as some of the U.N.S.C. working methods that can frame and limit the UNSC’s authorisation, design and oversight of peace operations in a very timely manner;

Addressing the mounting hostility by several host governments (in this case the sole operational U.N.D.P.A. Mission is still operational in Colombia but already highly-doomed to its overall failure at the national level namely as per the highly-elusive / questionable number of weaponry delivered plus registered former combatants’ assets not being adequately addressed and myriad other dissidents in addition to other N.S.A.G., which took this opportunity as a gap for increasing their capabilities and recruiting dissidents, such as the E.L.N.) is testing the U.N.S.C.’s will and capability to support politically the operations it has authorised but with no proper objectives met to date;

Addressing the States' volatile but considerable budgets contributions by converging local, regional and international efforts alike;

Addressing the limitations of the revision in respect to realities in the field once the N.S.A.G. and O.C.G. are not operated via a case per case analysis but included in broad hence vague scale denominations, sometimes even after the badly conducted registration of minor N.S.A.G. and O.C.G. being erroneously represented by the major N.S.A.G. and O.C.G., whereas there are myriad other armed actors not being even registered nor properly analysed to be basically addressed to date hence presenting a complex and incomplete scenario to be thoroughly more researched prior to interventions and during the same processes as well;

Addressing the need of the constant revisions of the I.G.O.'s reports simply due to and vis-à-vis the highly rapid changing realities in the field for the reasons already above highlighted, even and also mainly at the language level per se;

Focusing on financial resources to the vital issue of national but integrated Intelligence Units / Border Units at least (in all 03 countries) to avoid the continuing dependence over international but not capable Intelligence once they do not work in the field, and also a posteriori unification of data through continuing rather than punctual and non-effective policies;

Focusing on the interventions over disarticulations on the finances of all these actors involved in the Amazon Trapezoid;

Highlighting that States cannot be disassociated anyhow from its citizens. State-centred and people-centred approaches are concepts adopted by the U.N. and its States Members that in fact does not generate inclusion but it creates an erroneous segregation once people do constitute the State and vice and verse. Citizenship must be re-conceptualized otherwise in such regions citizens will continue to feel not included within State apparatuses and hence these armed actors will gain more and more ground through their coercion and illegal integrations, namely bases of support, into their illicit activities whereas the States themselves will become increasingly less legitimate hence less sovereigns;

Raising uninterrupted public awareness campaigns whilst attempting to empower strategic industries and commercial services whenever that shall be regarded as possible in order to put an end to the also key factor of the already long-lasting and very well-grounded vicious circle of the illicit economy trade and respective markets chains operational for decades to date;

Addressing the effective stabilization requires positive relationships between the peace builders and the local population, at all levels;

Addressing the very local conflict resolution and mediation methodologies and on-going practices, once when the rule of law is not properly operational (customary laws do vary considerably and there is not even proper analyses on addressing this issue) it is key to analyse beyond traditional law enforcement;

Addressing the issue of money laundering and the tracking of illicit financial flows to disrupt both the core activities of both N.S.A.G., and O.C.G. Financial data on money laundering related to the N.S.A.G. and O.C.G. are key for pragmatic investigations that do come to also rely heavily upon victims' testimonies. Moreover, apart from also focusing on investigations over national authorities over their possible suspicious transactions perpetrated by their officers, the financial institutions do actually need to start to strive more and more to tackle and hence eliminate the vicious circle from their clients' supply chains by making the provision of financial services contingent on the same clients' compliance with anti-illegal trade economies, which have been consolidated for decades to date.

V - Conclusions

In the face of all major States' apparatuses hindering legitimacy and sovereignty gaps in this triple border per se one can observe that the relative profitable silence and alliances amid such vast number of NSAG and OCG within such a very geographically small location there is the basic concluding remarks of the numerous challenges then posed to local populations as well as to all these three countries inhabitants who actually indirectly also experience very high (actually absurdly higher several times than at this triple border where these actors actually transport their goods from the source to intermediary and final clients) levels of casualties related to the then not functional and very volatile then nearly non-existent balance of power system among them:

- * Prevailing difficulties in collecting minimum primary and secondary data from the local levels does remain absurdly complicated due to myriad factors and variables;

- * The State authorities are not legitimate nor sovereign in vast portions of this region once they do lack capabilities not only to monitor their frontiers (not solely in the Amazon Trapezoid but also throughout its other regions linked to this tripe frontier) but also to address the increasing bases of local support to these actors;

- * There is a problematic issue of non-compliance, fear and lack of information and commitment provided by the local authorities to the States' authorities both at the grassroots and top levels alike, what may suggest that the levels of possibly forced obligation to these other local actors and even myriad cases of infiltrated elements plus corruption schemes have become established and beyond a de facto official data presented, made available;
- * There is absolutely no proper structuration of S.S.R. & D.D.R. intervention policies hindered also by lack of financial resources directed to the challenges presented, namely to the intelligence units and sectors aimed at mapping the non-State armed actors and their modus operandi;
- * There is an unfortunate (in all these three countries) presentation of not properly equipped Polices to implement the interventions policies that are not exclusively military but also to be focused simultaneously on civilians and respective communities issues too, as a whole, then not to be excluded anyhow within a broader scope for multidimensional and cross-sectors actions;
- * There is a need to work out better centralization versus de-centralization operations considering the on-going mistrust from both levels. Accordingly public order and S.S.R. & D.D.R. does also rely on finances, which are nearly divided into cities' and States' budgets (States themselves are the responsible Units if our Federation, as an example that equals to the two other States involved) for the functioning of both civilian and military Policies alike plus other numerous sectors;
- * There is an increasingly lack of interest and safety for local regional and international enterprises to establish their companies there in order to provide alternatives to local populations for being properly integrated into legal economies hence not vulnerable populations for the coercions perpetrated by the N.S.A.G. and O.C.G. into illegal economies networks;
- * There are efforts but no proper convergence of an international (triple) long-term S.S.R. & D.D.R. task forces to address and meet the problematic presented. The international cooperation task forces have been very punctual, through extremely short-term periods and in most cases, isolated within each countries' territories, to date, what in fact does not suffice addressing the root causes nor does interrupt this non-stop illicit trade of myriad goods (and even humans) at all plus the vast routes encompassing already four continents (South America, Africa , Europe and the Middle East);

* There is a core need to address the weaponry, be via the legal or illegal diversion means. Considering that data on this theme have become increasingly made less public available, such and namely as per the last 02 years delays and not officially open data presented to date, in 2017 itself, as a single example, Brazil and its Federal Police seized precisely 119,484 firearms, which is equivalent to 327 per day. The key fact is that about 94.9% of these seizures were not registered in the Federal Police weaponry control system (S.I.N.A.R.M.), what makes it all very difficult to investigate the origins of the weaponry diversions, namely how and for which actors. In short, out of its total, approximately 13,782 weapons that were seized went out of the legal market and ended up "lost" or even "stolen", being even reportedly diverted to, as final destination, to the members of the N.S.A.G. and O.C.G.;

In short, conclusion here does remain as challenges themselves, as there is absolutely no properly made reliable primary or secondary information on the modus operandi of numerous N.S.A.G. and O.C.G. operational in these locations because to date both national and international communities, be them national officers or even officers within the United Nations as well, seem to have not payed due attention to this triple border dynamics where there are at least minimally enough despite quite vague whilst also very important information that they are made visible themselves whereas not addressed anyhow as per the challenges they do constantly impose, what does require basic common sense for spotlighting the complex scenario presented here that have already been consolidated for a few decades until these 2020s, nonetheless to date, as previously informed, the local, regional, national and global authorities seemingly have forgotten to develop at least a basic coordinated map assessment over the several actors involved in these criminal activities which erode not these three States' apparatuses but also three badly inter-connected continents and respective countries and their populations' social fabrics though very questionable / illegal manners that this article vehemently objects to claim and demand minimum due attention.

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