

## **COOPERATION IN COMBATING TERRORISM IN SOUTHERN CONE AND THE CHALLENGE OF DOMESTIC LEGISLATION<sup>1</sup>**

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**RESUMO:** Este artigo visa analisar a cooperação entre Argentina, Brasil e Paraguai no combate ao terrorismo, bem como os desafios trazidos pelas diferentes legislações domésticas acerca da ameaça terrorista. De acordo os Estados Unidos e alguns analistas, os dois ataques ocorridos nos anos 1990 em Buenos Aires criaram a percepção de que a região seria um possível santuário financeiro do terrorismo internacional. Depois dos ataques de 11 de Setembro, a região aumentou sua cooperação no combate ao terrorismo, embora as nações tenham mantido diferentes leis para combater a ameaça. O artigo evidencia a necessidade de uma percepção comum acerca do terrorismo, especialmente ao se considerar que a região abrigará dois importantes eventos nos próximos anos: os Jogos Olímpicos de 2016 e a Copa do Mundo FIFA 2014.

**Palavras-chave:** Terrorismo, América do Sul, Legislação, Cooperação.

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper aims to analyze the cooperation between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay in combating terrorism, as well as the challenges that arise with the different domestic legislation about terrorist threat. According to some analysts and by the United States, the two 1990s attacks occurred in Buenos Aires, created the perception of the region as a possible financial safe haven of international terrorism. After 9/11 attacks the region has increased the cooperation in combating terrorism, nonetheless the countries maintained different laws towards this threat. The paper evidences the necessity of a common perception to combating terrorism, especially considering that the region will host two important events in the next years: the Olympic Summer Games 2016 and FIFA World Cup 2014.

**Keywords:** Terrorism, South America, Legislation, Cooperation.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The scenario that emerged after the attacks of 09/11 brought an elementary change in the direction of the defense and security sector. Under the influence of the major global power and the events that hurt Americans, British and Spanish population, the international arena was pushed to be more concerned with the issue of terrorism. In the Southern Cone of South America the question is not different. Reemerged concerns regarding the possible presence of terrorist groups with fundamentalist Islamic background. This concern came from the attacks in Argentinean land in 1992 and 1994 that targeted the Israeli Embassy and the Argentine Israelite Mutual Association (AMIA), and victimized 107 people.

Since the Argentine government investigations indicated the entry of the authors of the attack via Tri-Border Area of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay (TBA), the Southern Cone region happens to be in the U.S. lenses from beyond the problems of transnational crime that permeate the region - such as drug trafficking, arms smuggling and piracy. It is in this context that the region shall be more present in American discourse on terrorism. Since then, had become



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recurrent accusations that the TBA is a safe haven for groups like HAMAS and Hezbollah, since the individuals living in the region would be serving as possibly financial support to Lebanese and Palestinian sympathizers in Middle East. These assertions are quoted in reports from the State Department - as the Country Reports on Terrorism - and in the speeches of senior U.S. officials (U.S.D.S., 2008b).

Nevertheless, before the 11/09 the Southern Cone countries still indicated to be concerned to sign multilateral cooperation in defense and security issues. On one hand, such initiatives were leaded by Argentinean in a will to interdict terrorist attacks on its territory. On the other hand, by the political determination from Brazil, Uruguay or Paraguay to deal with transnational crime, particularly drug trafficking.

This paper aims to describe and analyze the main political events that indicate a steady multilateral cooperation in the Southern Cone to deal with transnational threats, in special in the fight against terrorism. To reach this goal, were studied the diplomatic and multilateral meetings, talks and agreements that meant a rapprochement between the countries of the region, as well as the plans to combat crime and efforts to interdict terrorism. As will be noticed, there is a significant proactive diplomacy between the countries, but that often finds political and bureaucratic contingencies that emerges as obstacles in fighting crime in the region – as the case of different domestic legislation and perceptions to combat terrorism.

## **THE GROUP “3+1” AND THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM**

The Brazilian government has historically repudiated the idea that TBA serves as financial safe haven for global terrorism. However, this position does not mean a disregard of Brazilian diplomacy in combating this issue. After the



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bombings attacks in Argentina in the 1990s, were recurring meetings and agreements to enhance cooperation among the countries of the region in search for concrete actions against illegal activities, including terrorism.

One of the most significant initiatives was the creation of the *Grupo dos Três* (Group of Three), or Security Group of TBA, created in December 1992 by initiative of Argentina. Basically, the *Grupo dos Três* has been a diplomatic forum of consultation among three countries: Argentina, Brazil and Paraguai. Through annual meetings, usually in Brasilia, Buenos Aires and/or Asunción, the group aims to fight against the multiple possibilities of crime on the border, like money laundering and probable terrorist support. Later, in 2002, the George W. Bush administration demonstrated concern in the area and requested the entry of U.S. in the diplomatic forum. Consequently, this group then became composed of the three geographically participating countries more the United States, being called since then *Grupo 3+1* (Group 3+1). The U.S. admission came about after an invitation by the Foreign Ministry of the three countries of TBA in June 2002. Afterward, there were negotiations between senior officials during LVII UN General Assembly to finally ratify the U.S. entry on October 18 (Amaral, 2010: 195)<sup>3</sup>.

The cooperation in this group is done especially in the field of intelligence, with regular meetings to exchange security information that potentially threaten the four countries. In the midst of its goals, is highlighted the promotion of regional cooperation against transnational crimes, the coordination of intergovernmental actions, and the need to provide mechanisms for sharing intelligence information and advance the multilateral engagement.

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<sup>3</sup> According to Department of State, "[...] in 2002, at their invitation, the United States joined them in what became the "3+1 Group on Tri-Border Area Security" to improve the capabilities of the three to address cross-border crime and thwart money laundering and potential terrorist financing activities" (U.S.D.S, 2008a).



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In the years following the 11/09 attacks, the *Grupo 3+1* meeting minutes repeatedly denied evidence of terrorism financing and presence of operating cells in the Southern Cone. However, at the plenary session of the *Grupo 3+1* in January 2008, more incisive measures were taken to track the possibilities that the area could be used as a terrorist safe haven. In the occasion, has been set the foundation for the operation of a Regional Intelligence Center in Foz do Iguaçu (USDS, 2008b). According to Green (2008), in an article published by the U.S. Embassy in Brazil

[...] one of the purposes of the center [...] is to monitor any suspicious activity of terrorism in the triple border region. [...] As informed in the report *Terrorist Groups and Organized Crime in the Tri-Border Area of South America*, although this joint force, the efforts of governments to contain the tri-border organized crime and terrorist groups "were hampered by problems like institutional corruption, inadequate funding and investigative resources ", among other obstacles. (Green, 2008)

According one of the minute draft of the *Grupo 3 +1*, the officials who work in this Regional Intelligence Center are representatives of Federal Police of Brazil, Gendarmerie's Argentina and Paraguayan National Police. The work there has focused so far on fighting smuggling and trafficking in persons (USDS, 2008b:4).

Additionally, it is said in the minutes that there is a focus on monitoring the "entry and exit of groups with respect to which possible connections with violent fundamentalist groups" (USDS, 2008a, p.4). This section of the minutes, plus the Green's affirmation (2008), open the inquiring if the "monitor any suspicious activity of terrorism" in the TBA could provide, in turn, improper surveillance of citizens of Arab and/or Muslim background in region. As indicated by other authors (Youngers, 2003; Cirino *et. al.*, 2004; Sanin *et. al.*, 2002), this monitoring is occurring, and causes a concern about the civil rights of those citizens. Also, as reported by Arab community in a visit to the region, there are a feeling that such accusations is an unjustifiably criminalization that affects their daily life.



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This violation of civil rights of citizens of Arab and/or Muslim origins in the Southern Cone due to the vigilance after 09/11 is an open question that deserves further analysis through a sociological or even legal perspective. In the literature on the topic, there is no specific discussion about the matter, while it is an issue of essential importance.

## **THE COOPERATION PLANS FOR REGIONAL SECURITY IN SOUTHERN CONE**

In addition to the important discussion forum that the *Grupo 3 +1* is, other multilateral cooperative actions were taken to interdict transnational crime and terrorism in the Southern Cone. Among these resolutions, many of them were taken in the 90s, at a time that the fight against drug trafficking was a key topic on the security agenda of the main hemispheric power. Moreover, it was in this decade that the murder rate and drug-related crimes reach an alarming peak in some Brazilian states, directing Brasilia to seek cooperation to deal with this problem.

One of the first initiatives of multilateral cooperation was a rapprochement between the foreign ministries of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay to deal with illegal activities in the Southern Cone. In 1991, concern about the security of the region gave rise to the First Meeting of Ministers of Justice of Mercosur. Four years later it was the turn of the TBA foreign ministers to meet to discuss security in the region. *Ciro Cunha (2009, p. 57)* adds that

(...) in a meeting in 1995, the foreign ministers of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay have expressed concern about the illegal activities in the region. At the time, it was determined to carry out a meet between the designed authorities for the elaboration of a set of measures for border security. In 1996, it was agreed to create a common database among the three countries, with the aim of better identifying and controlling the flow of people and vehicles.



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Before long, in 1996 we can notice the creation of two important instruments of cooperation: a common database for identification of people and vehicles and the Tri-Border Operating Agreement (*Acordo Operativo da Tríplice Fronteira*), establishing the Tripartite Command. The latter aims to promote police cooperation in the region, especially in TBA, trying to coordinate the actions of police and customs among the Federal Police of Brazil, Paraguay's National Police and Gendarmerie's Argentina. In addition, intelligence agencies of the three countries would assist each other in the police activities for law enforcement in the region. Subsequently, the U.S. has closely followed the work of the Tripartite Command, with the argument that the safety of TBA is also an interest for the country because the possible threats coming from there – mainly terrorism financing.

After the creation of the Tripartite Command, a strong rapprochement between the ministries of interior and/or justice of the countries in the region has been seen. Such proximity would culminate with the institutionalization of the Meeting of Interior's Ministers of MERCOSUR (MIM-MERCOSUR), including Uruguay in multilateral mechanisms for security cooperation. In addition, it was after two meetings of MIM-MERCOSUR that ministers worked for the opening of a broader cooperation in pursuit of institutional effectiveness.

It was through the adoption of the General Plan for the Triple Border Security (*Plano Geral de Segurança para a Tríplice Fronteira e do Plano de Cooperação*) and Plan of Reciprocal Assistance and Cooperation for Regional Security in MERCOSUR (*Plano de Cooperação e Assistência Recíproca para a Segurança Regional no MERCOSUL*) that the efforts of ministers crystallized. The latter was replaced in 1999 by the General Plan for Mutual Cooperation and Coordination for Regional Security (*Plano Geral de Cooperação e Coordenação*



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*Recíprocas para a Segurança Regional*), "more comprehensive, as applicable to all the borders involving MERCOSUR and also Chile and Bolivia" (Cunha, 2009: 58).

Along with the goals of the General Plan for Mutual Cooperation and Coordination for Regional Security, figure mutual assistance between the organs of control and security forces and/or police, through the exchange of information; cooperation and coordination for the development of synchronized activities and operational control; the establishment of the indispensable facilities for the exercise of police action, through the implementation of computer systems and communications, called Information Exchange System Security of MERCOSUR; the rational use of available human resources, perfecting their skills through the interrelations between the different organs of control and security forces and/or police, as well as through the exchange of experience between them (MERCOSUR, 1999, p.2). For Alcides Costa Vaz, such initiatives

[...] configured, at same time, responses to the increasing rates in drug trafficking and to U.S. pressure for more proactivity by Brazil in facing [the threats]. Both plans include cooperation among security forces, police forces, customs authorities and intelligence agencies for the exchange of information, development of joint operations and tracking the movement of people and goods across borders (Vaz, 2004: 94).

Although the important instruments signed in the 1990s and which continue to operate today, there is still a long way to go in combating crime in the Southern Cone. The diplomatic tools have achieved its objectives in terms of sharing intelligence and police operations against transnational crimes – in special drug trafficking – but there are improvements to be made.

In the Brazilian case, the complex structure of police and intelligence divides the fight against crime in the civil, military, and federal police and the Brazilian Intelligence Agency, creating barriers to a more streamlined flow of information to the authorities of the neighboring countries.





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Another issue that hampers the fight against crime is the political contingencies. While a particular party that governs a state blames the federal government because of porous borders on crime rate issue, the same federal government insinuates that the argument said by opposition party serves to justify their inability to deal with the topic. Such context has been seen particularly in the state of São Paulo, but is not limited solely to it. Looking on the scenario, the designed plans mean important steps taken to combat illicit transnational activities, but that should be improved to avoid political contingencies that affect them to achieve their goals.

## **THE CICTE AND THE PROCESSES TO APPROVE AN ANTITERRORIST LEGISLATION**

Although we can notice initiatives like the aforementioned plans and meetings, it is a fact that terrorism did not appear until 2001 as a matter of profound meaning in diplomacy in South Cone. However, the attacks on U.S. contributed to expand its importance in the multilateral agenda of the sub region.

Immediately after the attacks, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared repudiation to all forms of terrorism. The Brazilian ambassador in U.S., Rubens Barbosa, was one of the most active diplomats in publicly display the Brazilian response to 09/11. For him, "(...) the impact of the terrorist attacks in Brazil and South America (...) was serious, both politically and economically, and is even more significant to South America than anywhere else in the world (Barbosa, 2003: 80)."

Besides the Barbosa's statement, it has significant importance in symbolic terms the consequences of Brazilian declaration minutes after the attack. In the case, the Brazilian government through the former president Fernando Henrique



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Cardoso immediately expressed solidarity with the U.S. invoking the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Barbosa, 2003: 80). The subsequent action, supported by Brazil in the Organization of American States, was even blunter. As Vaz (2004, p. 95) affirms,

[...] the culmination regarding the instrumentalization of cooperation against terrorism within the framework of the OAS, and as a direct consequence of the attacks of September 2001, was the adoption by the General Assembly at its 32nd period of sessions, in June 2002, the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, the main instrument governing the present regional cooperation in the field [...].

The Inter-American Convention against Terrorism (CICTE) served to recognize the OAS as a legitimate forum for discussion of this transnational threat in the Americas. Among its objectives are the basic exchange of information between authorities, the establishment of a database-related issue of terrorism, a proposal to help member states in building anti-terrorism laws, adherence to international conventions against this threat and extensive cooperation on measures for security travel (Rochman, 2007: 148).

Even considering the vow signed officially, the financial dimension emerges as an immediate field for action (Vaz, 2004, p. 89), which justifies, on the other hand, the intense action by *Conselho de Controle de Atividades Financeiras* (Board of Financial Activities Control - COAF) of Brazilian Ministry of Finance in this important matter<sup>4</sup>.

In addition to the active participation in CICTE, Brazil is one of the few countries signatories of the thirteen existing global conventions on terrorism. Additionally, it should be noticed that the Brazilian government has

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<sup>4</sup> As said in the Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism, the fight against terrorism must include a “[...] comprehensive domestic regulatory and supervisory regime for banks, other financial institutions, and other entities deemed particularly susceptible to being used for the financing of terrorist activities. This regime shall emphasize requirements for customer identification, record-keeping, and the reporting of suspicious or unusual transactions” (OAS, 2002).



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worked actively in the last decade in a Special Working Group of the United Nations for the construction of a universal convention on terrorism. However, such stance it has not been translated in a legal domestic framework to condemn the terrorism, except one direct mention in *Lei de Segurança Nacional* (Law of National Security), dated from 1983 – when Brazil still had military dictatorship as political regime.

Looking on the countries of TBA, Brazil is the only one that doesn't approved in its Congress a antiterrorist law after 09/11. This stance is opposite to the Article 4 of Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, when affirms that

[...] each state party, to the extent it has not already done so, shall institute a legal and regulatory regime to prevent, combat, and eradicate the financing of terrorism and for effective international cooperation (OAS, 2002).

Nevertheless, it is also important to say that the pressure of CICTE to create an antiterrorist legislation can be seen as a specific example of a disproportionate demand of U.S. diplomacy for the region. Considering that CICTE was approved in a critical moment in which U.S. has been attacked, some countries signatories of OAS convention on terrorism before long noticed that terrorism not necessarily is in the peak of the regional security agenda. In this sense, while an antiterrorist law could be approved in its Congresses, it does not would reflect the real illicit threats to the states in the region, in which drug trafficking emerges as the main one.

This was the Brazilian case after 09/11. In a country worried with the advance of criminal gangs funded by cocaine and other drugs consumption, the terrorism did not materialize as an important topic in the public security priorities. This circumstance only changed in the last years, when Brazil won the bids to host Fifa World Cup 2014 and Olympic Summer Games 2016.



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After the victories of Brazilian candidatures for both important sport events, the public opinion and some politicians has been expressed their concerns about the probability of terrorists use the occasions to perform attacks against civilians and/or authorities. This perception finally pushed for an action by two senators that proposed antiterrorist draft bills to be analyzed by Brazilian Senate.

The first draft bill was written by Senator Blairo Maggi (Republic Party – PR – Mato Grosso state) and was presented to Brazilian Senate in Nov. 2011 (PLS 707/2011). One month later, the Senator Aloysio Nunes (Brazilian Social Democracy Party – PSDB – São Paulo state) proposed a similar law (PLS 762/2011). Given the similarities of the antiterrorist drafts bills, the Commission of Constitution and Justice decided to transact both together for analysis by the Senate. It is important to notice that both senators that sent a draft bill to analysis and voting are opposition to the current administration of Worker's Party lead by President Dilma Rousseff.

While is still soon to make an appropriate analysis of the draft bills, it is clear that they try to overcome the conceptualization of terrorism indicated in Article 20 in the *Lei de Segurança Nacional*. In the case, the 1983's law quotes the terrorism in a wider definition created to avoid political opposition when Brazil still lived in a military dictatorship. Given the inadequacy of the *Lei de Segurança Nacional* twenty-eight years after the redemocratization, a more modern law seems to be needed, adapted to the challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century and to the multilateral instruments ratified by Brazilian diplomacy in the last years. In his proposal, Senator Nunes quotes in the justification section that urges to Brazil to give domestically a legal framework for the conventions and treaties signed in last years on the topic (Nunes, 2011: 4).



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After a previous analysis of the Senate's Commission of Constitution and Justice, the draft bills has been approved to examination and voting by Brazilian Senators, arguing that

[...] great international events will arrive in Brazil in the next year: the FIFA Confederation Cup (2013), the World Cup (2014) and Olympic Games (2016). The Brazilian Agency of Intelligence (ABIN) alerted for the real possibility of episode of terrorist attacks because those events. Because that, urges a legal definition of terrorism (Senado Federal, 2012).

The justification shows that the Brazilian Senate is concerned with the possibilities of terrorist attacks in the occasion of two important sport events to be held in the next years. While is still soon to evaluate if the law will be approved, it is a fact that the perception about terrorism by Brazilian politicians has changed after the country won the bids to World Cup and Olympic Games. Moreover, a possible acceptance of an antiterrorist bill can open new ways to cooperation in the issue. More recently, in November 2013, the bill has been approved in the Brazilian House of Representatives. In the next months the bill will be analyzed and voted in the Senate.

According some interviews with U.S. officials recorded in 2008, one of the main obstacles for cooperation in the matter of terrorism in Southern Cone – and TBA in special, the main concern for U.S. in South America – is the lack of an antiterrorist law in the countries of region (Realuyo, 2008; Interview 1, 2008). This context has changed dramatically after such pronouncements.

In addition to Brazilian Senate process to endorse an antiterrorist law, Paraguay and Argentina has approved their laws in the last years. In the Paraguayan case, the law no. 4024 was signed in both legislative houses (Representatives and Senate) in 23rd June 2010. The bill indicates imprisonment from 10 to 30 years for anyone involved in causation of a terror act. Association with terrorists and financing terrorism can be punished with 5 to 15 years of imprisonment.



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The process to approve such regulation happened after years of Washington diplomatic pressure. This demand is justified because the main concern of U.S. officials of financing terrorism in TBA is the lack of law enforcement precisely in Paraguay. With the law, the legislative body of Paraguay had overcome the suspicion of the main hemispheric state and created the framework to avoid the use of its territory as safe haven.

Nevertheless, the approval of law 4024/2010 was not unanimity. The executive branch expressed concerns regarding the law, seen as a possible tool for persecution against some social movements, according a President's Lugo advisor (LEI, 2010). Similar perceptions have been expressed when Argentina modified the criminal code to indicate the terrorism as a crime.

In 2007, the Argentinean legislative branch approved a modification to criminal code, including the association and financing to terrorism as a crime to be punished with 5 to 15 years of detention. But, precisely in 26<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2011, a new postscript to the criminal code was considered controversial. While the code kept the same period of imprisonment, the addendum incorporated a fine for who collect money or support 'injurious acts' or finance an 'offensive organization' (Argentina, 2011). The openness of such sentence can be used to punish social organizations and movements that can use a pacific protest as political tool for reach any goal.

In the only country of TBA that did not approve an antiterrorist law, the same concern of Paraguayans and Argentineans is expressed by NGOs and left-wing parties. However, the Ministry of Justice, the also left-wing José Eduardo Cardozo, has expressed in some occasions to support the inclusion of terrorism crime in the new criminal code, law that is being currently discussed in Senate and House of Representatives. While can be seen as a paradox, the affirmations shows that the current Minister of Justice is in agreement with the opposition



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senators that proposed the antiterrorist law – what can mean an ease for its approval in the subsequent months.

Based in the scenario described above, it is seen that all TBA countries are working to fulfil the requirements of CICTE, like to “[...] institute a legal and regulatory regime to prevent, combat, and eradicate the financing” terrorism (OAS, 2002). The process of approval of new domestic legislations combating terrorism can be considered an important step to institutionalize the multilateral instruments signed by the three countries. While in the Argentina and Paraguay the law is in effect, in Brazil there is still a way to go – political and bureaucratic – to sanction the terrorism as a crime.

Furthermore, while the region built in the last decades an adequate multilateral framework, as well as a good advancement in the adoption of a domestic legislation to prevent terrorism, still remains the need of a common perception of what really means terrorism for the TBA countries. In this sense, although it can be seen as unrealistic, the ideal for a better cooperation between the countries would be an improvement in the communication for a common perception of what, who and how can be understood the words ‘terrorism’, ‘terrorist’ and ‘terrorist organization’. Such enhancement could be very useful for a more effective cooperation in TBA.

Finally, in this debate cannot be neglected the role of U.S. pressure to approve such bills. In a world that breathes the air of the war on terror by 12 years, the terrorism became omnipresent in the discourses and practices related to international security. At the same time that it is important to prevent terrorist attacks by a legal framework, cannot be neglected that other challenges in the region – like drug trafficking, arms smuggling and human trafficking – ought to stay in the top of regional security agenda.



## CONCLUSIONS

Our purpose in the present paper was to discuss the cooperation between the countries of Southern Cone in the matter of terrorism, in special by Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay. These countries share a border that is quoted in several official documents – mainly by U.S. – and by some scholars as a financial terrorist safe haven. In a look on the multilateral agreements and meetings to deal with transnational threats in the area, is seen that a good advancement has been achieved in last decades.

Firstly, I tried to show the importance of the creation of *Grupo "3+1"*, the first initiative to approximate the governments in the fight against terrorism after the attacks in 1992 in Buenos Aires. This diplomatic forum has shown effectiveness to share information, which even enabled the creation of a Regional Intelligence Center. On the other hand, there are concerns regarding the violation of civil rights of citizens from Arab and Muslim backgrounds. Such concerns deserve better examination in future academic researches about the area.

Regarding the multilateral talks in the issue of terrorism, there were several meetings involving Interior's and Justice's Ministers. In addition to *Grupo "3+1"*, such talks allowed the creation of some important agreements signed between 1991 and 1999, like the Tri-Border Operating Agreement (*Comando Tripartite*), General Plan for the Triple Border Security, Plan of Reciprocal Assistance and Cooperation for Regional Security in MERCOSUR and the General Plan for Mutual Cooperation and Coordination for Regional Security. All the plans contributed for the institutionalization of effective tools to deal with illicit networks that affect the neighboring countries, including preventing terrorism.





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After the 09/11 attacks, the Americas' nations through the OAS signed the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism (CICTE), a multilateral mechanism that pushed the countries to adapt their domestic laws to prevent and combat actions and financing terrorism. In the TBA, after long talks in their legislative houses, Paraguay and Argentina passed an antiterrorist law, respectively in 2010 and 2011. Brazilian legislative branch is now discussing the approval of an antiterrorist bill and is still soon to evaluate if it will be approved.

Even taking into account the low probability of attacks against authorities and civilians in Southern Cone, the existence of legislation guarantees a legal framework to prevent such attacks independently of ideological or religious orientation. Nevertheless, is needed a better clarification of what, who and how 'terrorism' or 'terrorist' can be understood, given the probability of misuse of the legal framework to criminalize social movements.

Finally, the creation of a domestic legislation and multilateral tools to deal with terrorism are important not only because the pressure of U.S. after 09/11. While the countries of region need to be alert to not adopt a disproportionate concern pushed by powerful countries, a legal framework is important to prevent that violent individuals and organizations use extreme violence as an instrument against the authorities and civilians. At same time, problems like drug and human trafficking and arms struggling must be in the top of regional security agenda, since such threats affect more acutely the Southern Cone citizens at the present time.



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