

Latin American armed humanitarianism in Haiti and beyond¹

El humanitarismo armado latinoamericano en Haití y más allá

Monica Hirst²

*I lived through military intervention at the Maré for 14 months. Favela people know exactly what it means to listen to tanks at their door.
(Marielle Franco, 02.22.2018)³*

Abstract: MINUSTAH representa un punto de inflexión en la vinculación entre la securitización global y las prácticas humanitarias latinoamericanas. Las responsabilidades militares asumidas en Haití fueron útiles para que las FFAA perfeccionasen capacidades para crisis humanitarias. La presencia militar en Haití también contribuyó a la experimentación en combate al crimen organizado, una preocupación creciente para actores y organizaciones humanitarias internacionales. Sin embargo, el humanitarismo armado sigue siendo un tema controvertido por su potencial impacto negativo en la protección de los Derechos Humanos y el fortalecimiento de instituciones democráticas. Este texto plantea un terreno común de análisis, vinculando los estudios militares y los de acciones humanitarias. Para esto, serán articulados los conceptos de “militares posmodernos” y el de “humanitarismo armado” bajo la suposición de que ambos pueden combinarse para explicar desarrollos militares latinoamericanos después de la experiencia en Haiti.

Palabras claves: Humanitarismo, Latino América, Violencia, Seguridad

Resumen: MINUSTAH represents a benchmark in the link between global securitization and humanitarian practices in Latin America and the Caribbean. Regional military responsibilities in Haiti became useful to improve and expand the armed forces’ capabilities in international humanitarian crises. Military presence in Haiti has also contributed to the

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² PhD in Strategic Studies (UFRGS); retired full-time professor at the University of Quilmes (UNQ) and visiting professor at MA Program in International Studies (UTDT). Previous teaching experience: ISEN Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1994-2008), FLACSO (1985-2006), Stanford University (1992), USP (1994), Harvard University (2000), UFSC (2017); Visiting scholar: IECAH (Madrid-2016), Swiss Peace (Bern-2016). Publications on Brazilian foreign policy, South-South cooperation, global & regional security and governance. hirstmoni@gmail.com

³ Marielle Franco was a woman councilor for Rio de Janeiro. She was murdered on 03.14.2018.

experimentation in the fight against organized crime and gangs, a growing concern on the radar of international humanitarian organizations and actors. Armed humanitarianism in the region, however, has remained controversial due to its potentially negative impact on the protection of human rights and the strengthening of democratic institutions. This text intends to trace a middle ground around military and humanitarian studies conceptualization by connecting the concepts of “postmodern military forces” and “armed humanitarianism”. This is based on the assumption that both concepts, while focusing on different objects, can actually be related to explain the Latin American military experience in Haiti.

Key words: Humanitarianism, Latin America, Violence, Security

1. Opening

At the beginning of 2004, a provisional UN mission (MIF) was deployed in Haitian soil after a period of political turmoil that led to the escalation of violence and the fall of Jean Bertrand Aristides's administration. After a few months, the temporary mission was replaced by the MINUSTAH, which came to be the UN's fifth Security Council mandated mission in Haiti.⁴ The MINUSTAH mandate involved different tasks, such as: maintaining order and security, encouraging national reconciliation and promoting economic and social development. MINUSTAH went through three different phases: i) 2004-2010; Latin American political and military pro-activism with best results regarding stabilization, political normalization and development improvements in Haiti; ii) 2010-2013; breakdown of Haiti institutions and local devastation caused by the humanitarian crisis after the earthquake and cholera epidemic; iii) 2014-2018; growing fatigue of UN mission and dispersed withdrawal of Latin American troops.

The prominent participation of Latin American military forces, alongside other contributors, led MINUSTAH to become emblematic as an initiative of regional cooperation combined with a multilateral intervention. Latin American presence represented over sixty per cent of MINUSTAH troops during most of its duration. All through the MINUSTAH years, ABC+U countries maintained the lead as other countries gradually stepped in and out. Besides assuming the Military Command of MINUSTAH, Brazil was the main troop contributor during its almost 14 years of duration.⁵ In its early phase, the regional commitment to MINUSTAH carried the illusion that a democratic transition

⁴ In June 1st, 2004, by Resolution 1542, the MINUSTAH was established for an initial period of six months. Previous UN missions in Haiti: MICIVIH, developed jointly with the OAS (Res. A/47/208. April 1993); UNMIH (UN's Mission in Haiti. Res. CS/940. September 1993- June 1996); UNSMIH (UN's Support Mission in Haiti. Res. CS/1063. July 1996 – June 1997); UNTMIH (UN's Transitional Mission in Haiti. Res. CS/123. August-November 1997); MIPONUH (UN's Civil Police Mission in Haiti. Res CS/1542. December 1997-March 2000); MICAHA (Res. A/54/193. December 1999).

⁵ Brazil sent approximately 38,000 men to Haiti. Brazilian military contribution to MINUSTAH started in 2004 with the envoy of 1210 men. In 2010, Brazil expanded its troop contributions in Haiti from 1282 to 2188 men. Since 2012 Brazilian contribution downsized annually according to a withdrawal plan approved by UNSC resolution. See: Security Council Resolutions S/2004/698, S/2009/439, S/2010/200, S/RES/2070 (2012).

could be exported to Haiti.⁶ Latin American troops undertook responsibilities related to local communications, infrastructure, public health and civil construction. On many occasions, improvised solutions would substitute for the lack of international aid in the construction of roads, schools and hospitals and the improvement of basic sanitary conditions. In this context, MINUSTAH became a benchmark experiment for Latin American military forces regarding humanitarian assistance logistics.

Non-military Latin American cooperation also made major contributions in Haiti. As well as Cuba's medical presence, Venezuela provided key help by supplying energy. The first years of MINUSTAH were especially important for regional South-South cooperation in the areas of health, food security, education, institutional strengthening and infrastructure (Malacalza 2017). In addition, Latin American social organisations were active participants in this effort— such were the cases of *Techo para mi País* and *Viva Rio*. After the 2010 earthquake, Latin American cooperation in Haiti decreased dramatically and irreversibly. The expanded presence of DAC donors, together with US/EU NGOs, led international aids to focus exclusively on basic humanitarian needs.

Regional footprints blurred even more once MINUSTAH entered a state of fatigue. Over-stretching of military presence went hand in hand with the outburst of a cholera epidemic and the repeated human rights violations committed by UN troops. In the 2015-2017 period, individual governments decided to leave Haiti instead of working together on a regional coordinated withdrawal. Dispersion was more a reflection of the growing political fragmentation in Latin America than of military rivalries.

The experience in Haiti represented a chance for Latin American military forces to share peace-building capacities. For all ex-MINUSTAH contributors, combined regional military preparedness in humanitarian relief and stabilization tasks would be positively absorbed in other domestic and international realities.

2. Concepts and contexts

This text intends to trace a middle ground between military studies and humanitarian action analysis by connecting the concepts of postmodern military forces and armed humanitarianism. In order to do this, it begins with the assumption that both concepts can be intertwined to address the legacies of the Latin American military experience in Haiti.

The concept of postmodern military forces applies to armed forces prepared to face non-traditional menaces posed by post-Cold War security agendas that involve a renewed assortment of missions (Moscós, Williams and Segal, 2000:1-11). In this context, threats may relate to domestic unrest, terrorism, organized crime, natural disaster, civil wars among others. In all cases, interaction with social actors and organizations become crucial and adaptation to specific responsibilities is more complex. Expanded civil-military articulation is linked to non-traditional military missions, which may be of international nature authorized by non-national entities, implying the internationalization of military forces. Post-modern military forces must deal with unclear enemies and effectiveness

⁶ See Valdes, Juan Gabriel (2009), "MINUSTAH y la reconstrucción política de Haití.", en Hirst, M. (ed.) *Crisis del Estado e Intervención Internacional*, Buenos Aires: Edhasa, p.207-248

becomes of major importance as a source of mission legitimization. Yet... “Chaos and disorder are poor substitutes for an obvious enemy for this purpose” (Williams, 2000:274).

The concept of armed humanitarianism applies to the assorted relief actions undertaken by the military in contexts of humanitarian crisis. While the essence of a postmodern military force rests on the capacity to fulfill duties that involve dealing with society, the focus of armed humanitarianism is relief itself and the contribution of military presence to assure its effectiveness. From a traditional military perspective, the idea of armed humanitarianism can be controversial as it infers military presence as part of a bigger humanitarian picture. Conceptual and practical collisions are hardly avoidable, once this prism affects military autonomy (Pion-Berlin, 2016:120).

At the present time, the provision of military logistic support plays a crucial part to assure access for civilian relief workers to severely affected environments. Logistic expertise allows the military to speed up help in disastrous contexts. They can hurry up search, evacuation, demolition, debris removal and reconstruction operations, as well as food and water distribution. The combination of new operational approaches with concrete developments in conflictive areas opens up a space for new debates regarding the militarization of humanitarian actions and its impact upon the relationship between the military and traditional humanitarian actors. Armed humanitarianism brings in new dynamics in the interaction between political, military and humanitarian actors that stimulated politicization and militarization of humanitarian action (Sezgin and Dijkzeul, 2016:4).

Differences between Western and non-Western approaches have emerged, entailing questions of military interaction, interoperability and effectiveness (Carpenter and Kent, 2016:151). Setting the time for armed intervention has become a point of controversy. The question is whether military forces come first or last as providers of humanitarian assistance. This debate reflects on recent OCHA guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies—the ‘MCDA Guidelines (OCHA, 2006) and the Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief, known as the Oslo Guidelines (OCHA, 2007). Another conceptual and practical dispute concerns the relationship between international humanitarian actors and the military (Metcalfe, Giffen and Elhawary, 2012). Civil-military coordination in UN peace missions nowadays must adjust to multi-task mandates approved by the Security Council. Responsibilities on the ground show a new “interface between military and civilian components of the mission, as well as with the humanitarian, development actors in the mission area” (UN DPKO/DFS, 2010. cited in Metcalf, Giffen and Elhawary, 2012:2).⁷ Multi-task missions become even more challenging in the context of global securitization.

After 9-11, the “war against poverty” became associated to the “war against terror” (Easterly, 2016)⁸ and armed humanitarianism was linked to humanitarian securitiza-

⁷ Statement made by Homeland and Americas’ Security Affairs Assistant Secretary of Defence Paul Stockton at the Inter-American Dialogue policy forum on Western Hemisphere affairs in January, 2011. Available: <http://www.gsdr.org/professional-dev/stabilisation/> (Accessed 03.09.2018)

⁸ Securitization is understood as a process of threat perception radiation that goes beyond States and justifies policies and practices to contain them. Its use in this text follows the premises of the Copenhagen School (Waever, 1995; Buzan and Waever, 2003:71-6).

tion. Global humanitarian action increased in close connection with post 9-11 foreign military intervention. Accordingly, in 2015 the 10 major recipients of humanitarian aid were Syria (12,5%), Yemen (9,1%), Jordania (5,6%), South Sudan (5,5%), Iraq (5,2%), Palestine (5,2%), the Democratic Republic of Congo (5%), Lebanon (4,8%), Ethiopia (3,6%) and Nepal (2,7%) (Development Initiatives, 2017). Severe humanitarian crises caused by military intervention became especially dramatic in the cases of Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, where the premises of human security suffered profound transfiguration (Sanahuja and Schunemann, 2012:25). In this context, global threats justified violent responses with direct impact upon local population, deepening the casual link between military intervention and humanitarian crises.⁹

Besides, securitization of humanitarian practices curtailed the magnanimity of liberal-principled relief as it affects the neutrality/independence/impartiality dogma of humanitarian practices.

Certain scenarios included in the global humanitarian sensor coincide with new security threats on the international postmodern military radar. This has been the case of the violent realities dominated by organized crime, drug traffic and gangs activities. Military international/national action to fight organized crime and gangs have added new complexities to civil-military coordination in UN-led missions (Liyn, 2018). Several multi-lateral missions show that UN rules of engagement are hardly realistic when organized crime and gang activities represent the central threat targeted by international military forces¹⁰. Combining stabilization tasks with human rights regulations has been particularly challenging. A myriad of UN missions have had to face such challenges: MINUSTAH in Haiti, MONUC in Central African Republic, UNOCI in Côte d'Ivoire, MONUSC in the Democratic Republic of Congo, MONUSC, UNMIL in Liberia, and UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone (Liyn, 2018:5). In this context, MINUSTAH is acknowledged for the results obtained in military regional leadership and 'proactive response' to stabilization responsibilities prescribed by the Security Council. (Liyn, 2018:12). Hence, the expanded securitization of humanitarian practices coincides with the blurring of frontiers between violence, humanitarian hardship and severe institutional deficits in public security.

3. The Latin America-Caribbean fit

Geographical distance from hot international conflict zones curtails Latin American involvement with global securitization. Nevertheless, armed violence and public insecurity has expanded the region's presence on the securitized humanitarian radar.¹¹ Latin America has become the region with the highest record of deaths caused by armed vio-

⁹ See: Pérez de Armiño and Mendia Azcue 2013; Churruca 2016; Giménez Pardo 2017; Sabage and Muggah, 2012; Donini et al. 2006; Kent et al. 2016; Barnett and Weiss 2008.

¹⁰ This sort of caveat has been the dominating argument of the "Cruz Report", elaborated by Brazilian General Santos Cruz. See:

https://peacekeeping.un.org/.../improving_security_of_united_nations_peacekeeper (Accessed 15.03.2018)

¹¹ A picture of this mosaic was published by the Institute for Humanitarian Studies together with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). See: Mosel, Bennett and Krebs 2016

lence (SIPRI, 2015). Brazil alone ranks as the most violent country in the world.¹² Organized crime, drug trafficking and gang activities, particularly in urban peripheries, added to police and military repressive responses, are responsible for the death of thousands of people, for continuous human rights violations and the collective victimization of civil populations. Besides, violence and coercive territorial control have produced massive forced migration in different parts of Latin America, Colombia and the Northern triangle - United States, Mexico and Guatemala being especially worth mentioning (Gonzalez, McAuliffe and Laczko, 2016; Rangel 2016). In this context, military participation in the fight against crime has been on the rise in Latin America. In different contexts, public opinion perceives military intervention to combat criminal organizations as a necessary solution to offset ineffective and fraudulent police performance (Pion-Berlin and Carreras, 2017). Military crime-fight operations aim to reduce victimization and overcome widespread fear in local communities in which police practices have become part of the problem. The political and sociological complexities of this process in Central America and Mexico have become a topic of expanded concern in academic, activist and journalistic critical writings (Trevino-Rangel, 2016). Military engagement in organized crime fighting in Central America and Mexico takes place in the context of US cooperation, mostly linked to broad antidrug operations. Military intervention in crime-fighting operations in the Northern part of Latin America does not seem to be related to knowledge acquired in PKO. Yet, the connection between military involvement in peace missions and crime fighting has become emblematic in the case of Brazil, particularly of Rio de Janeiro.

Addressing public security deficits as a humanitarian issue is controversial in the region. Multilateral organizations - Organization of American State, European Union, OCHAUN - and a widespread network of NGOs, with growing presence in the region, insist upon perception.¹³ Local and national security authorities resist accepting to address these realities as part of an international humanitarian agenda. At the same time, international organizations and actors resent the limited attention to these realities by the global humanitarian system, particularly when compared to other regions that receive more funding and benefit from a vast number of multilateral initiatives (Wilson Center, 2017).

On the other hand, preparedness for humanitarian relief regarding natural disaster has increased and ameliorated in Latin American and the Caribbean. An expanded network of multilateral initiatives adds to preventing and pro-active national programs in most of the countries in the region¹⁴. This development comes hand in hand with the

¹² In 2017, the annual rate of homicides in Brazil nearly 60.000. This figure overcomes the added rates of United States, China, Europa, Northern Africa, Japan, Indonesia, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. Available: <http://metrocosm.com/homicides-brazil-vs-world/> (Accessed:03.20.2018)

¹³ In 2015, UNHCR offices were inaugurated in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. In July 2016 UNHCR and the OAS held a high-level meeting to address the lacking protection conditions for civilians in the Northern triangle area of Central American. In June 2017, *Humanitarian Practice Network*, linked to *Overseas Development Initiative*, edited a special issue of *Humanitarian Exchange* (n.69), entitled "The humanitarian consequences of violence in Central America". Available: <https://odihpn.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/he-69-web.pdf> (Accessed 07.20.2017)

¹⁴ Among the multilateral organizations dedicated to natural disaster are: CDEMA (Caribbean Association for Disaster Control), CAPRADE (Andean committee for disaster prevention and attention), CEPREDENAC (Center for coordination of natural disaster prevention in Central America); REHU (Mercosur specialized

noticeable expansion of military engagement in contexts of humanitarian distress caused by natural disaster. Different formats of institutional arrangements have a built-in military component in Latin American governmental structures that assist environmental emergencies (Pion-Berlin, 2016:113-141; Resdal, 2016:68-78). Armed humanitarianism tasks lead to the enhancement of public visibility and to stronger ties with the locals. Dissemination of humanitarian action executed by Defense Ministries in each national context show a shared interest to “advertise” their accomplishments (Pion-Berlin, Ugues and Esparza, 2011).

Expanded military presence in humanitarian emergencies does reflect a new phase in civil-military relations in the region. What tensions may emerge that endanger the rule of law and stretch the terrain of “legitimate” use of force and dissuasive methods is yet to be further developed in military studies in the region. Besides a priority in national defense policies, natural disaster is perceived as a security threat by the OAS¹⁵ and has been included as a cooperation priority for the South American Defense Council¹⁶. National and foreign involvement in natural disaster has stimulated regional inter-military networking to exchange expertise and share learning processes¹⁷. An extensive agenda of venues, exercises and collaboration programs take place year-round to update and reciprocate capabilities among Latin American armed forces.

Latin American armed humanitarianism has been coached by the US South Command¹⁸. United States’ military engagement in humanitarian response to natural disaster gained unprecedented importance in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina, which devastated the states of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. Training in relief capabilities became a core concern in the preparation of force deployment at home and abroad. The US military has built an active agenda of Inter-American coordinated humanitarian action - particularly in the Caribbean and Central America. Consequently, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief have become a central concern in InterAmerican military summits. The US has been pushing for a standardized system of military disaster relief and improved coordination procedures with civil actors in disaster contexts.¹⁹ The Defense Ministry of the Americas has

reunion for risk reduction of socio-environmental disaster, civil defense, civil protection and humanitarian assistance), MIAH (Humanitarian Assistance Mechanisms for Latin America and the Caribbean), and REDLAC (Environmental fund network for Latin America and the Caribbean), CRID (Regional Information Center for Disaster in Latin America and the Caribbean) and ROLAC (OCHA Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean).

¹⁵ Available:

<http://www.oas.org/en/sms/docs/declaration%20security%20americas%20rev%201%20%2028%20oct%202003%20> (Accessed.03.8.2018)

¹⁶ Available: <http://ceed.unasursg.org/Espanol/09-Downloads/Normativa/EstatutoCDS.pdf> (Accessed 03.20.2018)

¹⁷ Available: www.nodal.am/2017/04/delegados-10-paises-la-region-analizan-guatemala-planes-accion-antedesastresnaturales/ (Accessed 06.17 2017); <https://dialogo-americas.com/s/16p2v> (Accessed 03.07.2018)

¹⁸ Available: www.southcom.mil/ (Accessed 03.04.2018)

¹⁹ This proposal was announced at the Inter-American Dialogue policy forum on Western Hemisphere affairs (January 2011) <https://www.army-technology.com/features/feature125223> (Accessed 03.15.2018)

become a privileged platform to advance in this direction; three out of five topics on the 2018 agenda relate to questions of humanitarian, environmental and/or disaster relief.²⁰

In 2010, US military presence in Haiti became “the largest disaster response mission in modern US military history”²¹. It is worth mentioning that, in addition to the envoy of troops and relief materials, US armed humanitarianism in Haiti included immediate anti-immigration precautions.²²

4. The Haitian “experiment”

The mission in Haiti transcended initial expectations for Latin American military forces as they were provided with the chance to improve professional assets to engage in contexts of violence, chaos and massive distress. Comparable to the benefits of learning processes in the 1990’s and the early 21st Century in peacekeeping missions in conflict zones, armed humanitarianism in the early 2000’s has added value to a positive image for the military in Latin America. During the 2004-2017 period, Haiti was affected by severe natural disasters three times (Hurricane Jeanne 2004; Earthquake 2010; Hurricane Matthew 2016) and by the sanitary emergency caused by the cholera outbreak in 2010. Civil-military forces, particularly interacting with NGO’s and aid agencies in the attendance of local population, became crucial in MINUSTAH years. Latin American forces engaged in responsibilities of stabilization of local public order that involved traditional police tasks of elimination, disarmament and containment of local gangs. Such responsibilities were a source of controversy in the ABC countries during the early stage of MINUSTAH (Hirst, 2009; Tokatlian, 2005). Political questioning focused mainly on the implications of reintroducing military forces in public security affairs, considering their responsibility in past human right violations. As previously mentioned, Haiti did not represent an exceptional case of UN peace missions involvement in crime and gang fighting. Yet it has become an emblematic case of experimentation, as revealed by the case of Brazil and the connection established between MINUSTAH experience and the military intervention in Brazilian slums known as *favelas*. Military intervention in Rio de Janeiro to inhibit crime and drug-traffic activities had been taking place since the 1990’s²³.

Replication of methods experimented in the periphery of Port au Prince has been narrated in the literature on the complexities of public security in Brazil, and vice versa (Hirst and Nasser, 2014; Zaluar and Barcellos, 2014). While in Haiti, military forces replaced absent police forces, the Haitian National Police (PNH); military intervention in Rio

²⁰ Available: [C:\Users\monica_hirst\Downloads\https://www.gob.mx/sedena/documentos/xiii-conference-of-defense-ministers-of-the-americas](https://www.gob.mx/sedena/documentos/xiii-conference-of-defense-ministers-of-the-americas)

²¹ Available: <https://www.army-technology.com/features/feature125223> (Accessed 03.15.2018)

²² Coast Guard cutters were sent off of Haiti shores to prevent the population from fleeing to the United States.

Nevis, J. “Border Ward. A Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing: Homeland Security’s Humanitarianism.” 7/24/2013. Available: <https://nacla.org/blog/2013/7/24/wolf-sheep%25E2%2580%2599s-clothing-homelandsecurity%25E2%2580%2599s-humanitarianism> (Accessed 03.15.2018)

²³ Available: <http://www.dw.com/pt-br/ex%3%A9rcito-no-rio-25-anos-de-fracassos/a-42750301> (Accessed 03.20.2018)

aims to execute tasks local police were/are incapable to perform²⁴. In this context, an important percentage of the contingents deployed in the *favelas* of Rio did have experience fighting gangs in Haiti.²⁵ According to Brazilian military authorities, "...over time, the Brazilian and Haitian situations became complementary. The experience in the Caribbean was very important to consolidate the way to approach urban environments densely populated with poor infrastructure"²⁶. From this prism, 'operational conditions' in Brazil are considered much worse than in Haiti, especially considering the differences regarding commitment and determination of both UN and local authorities. Following the same argument, accomplishments in Haiti have not been easy to replicate in Brazil.

After the 2010 earthquake, Haitian public security deteriorated dramatically. Together with the loss of local police members and the physical destruction of the Haitian prison system, a new generation of gangs emerged with a more fragmented territorial presence and new violent practices. In the years to come, Brazilian military faced challenges that blurred the distinction between stabilization tasks and armed humanitarianism. MINUSTAH police and military contingents dealt simultaneously with a severe humanitarian crisis, the chaotic presence of external actors and gang resurgence. In 2016, Hurricane Matthew struck the Southwestern part of the Haitian territory with dramatic devastating effects. Even though the zones in Haiti under Brazilian control were not affected, Brazilian battalions immediately engaged in relief actions to ensure help would arrive safely.²⁷

Brazil concluded its mission in Haiti on October 10, 2017 leaving behind more than thirteen year of MINUSTAH military command. At the time, withdrawal from Haiti coincided with a renewed and more thorough military intervention in Rio de Janeiro. The decision to intervene came from the federal government in response to the escalation of violence and fear within a context of institutional and moral collapse of both the local police and political authorities. Lessons from the Haitian experience, though overstated in the media, became less relevant than the accelerated politicization regarding the decision itself. In Brazil, military intervention has become growingly controversial in the face of human rights violation risks and the utilization of methods that may be contrary to the state of law. A broad spectrum of responsibilities assumed in intervention involve dealing with local political and institutional entanglements that go far beyond those faced by MINUSTAH military command. Armed forces intervention in the fight against crime and

²⁴ Between 2010 and 2017, the Brazilian Armed Forces intervened 11 times in Rio de Janeiro. Available: <http://www.dw.com/pt-br/ex%C3%A9rcito-no-rio-25-anos-de-fracassos/a-42750301> (Accessed 03.18.2018)

²⁵ In 2010, approximately 60% of the troops deployed in the favela Moro do Alemão favela had been previously in part of MINUSTAH. Available: <https://extra.globo.com/noticias/rio/general-da-brigada-paraquedista-que-jacomandou-as-tropas-brasileiras-no-haiti-vai-comandar-forca-de-paz-no-alemao-18418> (Accessed 03.20:2018)

²⁶ These environments involve "narrow streets, poor constructions, 'barracos', hard to find addresses and persons, no public authority, strong local leaderships, presence of gangs and organized crimes, no public services, etc..." (Author's interview on 25.03.2018 with General Carlos Alberto Santos Cruz - Force Commander of MINUSTAH 2007-2009 and of MONUSCO 2013-2015; National Public Security Secretary since February 2018)

²⁷ Available: <http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mundo/2016/10/1821459-furacao-muda-foco-de-militares-brasileirosno-haiti.shtml>. (Accessed 03.15.2018)

drug trafficking in Brazil, particularly in Rio de Janeiro, is part of a long process of poverty criminalization (Franco, 2014:73-76). An indication of the poor results obtained with military presence has been the continuous escalation of political violence, related to the nexus between crime, gang and police corruption.

5. Final remarks

It seems to be more plausible to acknowledge the importance of MINUSTAH for Latin American military experimentation than to perceive the mission as a source of transformation for Haiti. The conditions on the island, after more than thirteen years of MINUSTAH, are far from promising. Economic and social indicators cause great concern. A population of approximately 10.5 million faces dramatic realities, such as: 40% illiteracy, 50% below poverty line, and 28% in extreme poverty. Only 12.2% of the Haitian population has access to Internet services, 25% enjoy basic sanitation and 50% have access to drinking water. Haiti is the country with the poorest infrastructure in the Western Hemisphere; less than 20% of its territory has paved roads²⁸. The chances that Latin America can contribute to ameliorate this reality have decreased after MINUSTAH was dismantled. The end of the logistic support offered by Latin American troops to cooperation and humanitarian activities add to the growing disdain of present governments in the region to maintain non-military presence in Haiti. The growing irrelevance of ties with Latin America will lead to the creation of a new cycle of marginalization for Haiti in the international community.

This text has aimed to show how, as in other parts of the world, armed humanitarianism and postmodern military capabilities have been confluent in Latin America and the Caribbean. MINUSTAH has been an important point of reference for Latin American armed forces in humanitarian relief capacitation in contexts of natural disaster. The experience in Haiti has also improved military preparedness in the fight against organized crime and gang activities. Brazil has provided particularly intense feedback in its experience regarding public security responsibilities.

After October 2017, Latin American military experience in Haiti has become a regional legacy that will move beyond MINUSTAH. Military forces represent states which “carry their histories around with them and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.” (Williams, 2000:266). This inevitably entails cultural, political and institutional coherence between military performance in Haiti and in other international and domestic contexts.

6. Abbreviations

ABC- Argentina, Brazil and Chile

DAC- Development Assistance Committee at OECD

²⁸ UNDATA Haiti Available: <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=haiti#Social> (Accessed 07.11.2017). See also KNOEMA World Data Atlas – Haiti. Available: <https://knoema.es/atlas/Hait%C3%AD/Tasa-de-desempleo> (Accessed 11. 07.2017)

DPKO-Department for Peacekeeping Operations at the UN
MINUJUSTH- United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (2017 -)
MINUSTAH- United Nations Mission for Stabilization in Haiti (2004-2017)
MONUC- United Nations Organization Mission for the Democratic Republic of Congo (1999-2010)
MONUSC- United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo(2010-)
NGOs – Non-governmental organizations
OAS- Organization for American States
OCHA- Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs at the UN
UNMIL-United Nations Mission for Liberia(2003 -)

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