

# **SIPRI YEARBOOK 2013**

Armaments, Disarmament and International Security

Confidence- and security-building measures in the Americas

CARINA SOLMIRANO



# Confidence- and security-building measures in the Americas

CARINA SOLMIRANO

## Contents

The Organization of American States	416
South America	417
Central America and the Caribbean	419
Prospects for CSBMs in the Americas	419

This is an offprint of section V of chapter 9 of

*SIPRI Yearbook 2013: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*

Oxford University Press, 2013, ISBN 978-0-19-967843-3, hardback, xxii+574 pp., £100/\$185

The SIPRI Yearbook is published and distributed in print and online by Oxford University Press—more information is available at <<http://www.sipriyearbook.org>>

**OXFORD**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

[www.sipriyearbook.org](http://www.sipriyearbook.org)

## V. Confidence- and security-building measures in the Americas

CARINA SOLMIRANO

Unlike other regions of the world, such as Asia, border disputes in the Americas have not led to tensions that have required a military response. The region faces no major external military threat and in the past two decades it has developed an array of confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) at both the regional and subregional levels.<sup>1</sup> This section outlines CSBMs with, first, a region-wide application in the framework of the Organization of American States (OAS), then those conducted in subregional forums in South America and in Central America and the Caribbean.

### **The Organization of American States**

The end of the cold war, the transition from authoritarian regimes to democracy in South America and the conclusion of the civil wars in Central America laid the foundation for a new security architecture in the Americas that started to develop in the 1990s. In 1991 the member states of the OAS met in Santiago, Chile, to begin a process of consultation on hemispheric security that would reflect the new international and regional realities.<sup>2</sup> At the First Summit of the Americas in 1994, the OAS member states agreed to support 'actions to encourage a regional dialogue to promote the strengthening of mutual confidence, preparing the way for a regional conference on confidence-building measures in 1995'.<sup>3</sup> The OAS's Committee on Hemispheric Security has led the process and has held a series of conferences on CSBMs that have resulted in the current consolidated list of 36 measures; since 2005 the Committee has organized a series of forums to discuss progress on and implementation of these measures.<sup>4</sup>

OAS member states are asked to submit annual reports on implementation of the consolidated list of CSBMs. A report from the Inter-American Defense Board noted that, between 2001 and 2011, 21 countries

<sup>1</sup> CSBMs are defined here as measures undertaken by states to promote confidence and security through military transparency, openness, constraints and cooperation. They are militarily significant, politically binding, verifiable and, as a rule, reciprocal.

<sup>2</sup> Organization of American States (OAS), Permanent Council of the OAS, Committee on Hemispheric Security, 'Confidence and security-building measures', <<http://www.oas.org/csh/english/CSBMintro.asp>>.

<sup>3</sup> Organization of American States (OAS), First Summit of the Americas, 'Summit of the Americas action plan', 9–11 Dec. 1994, <<http://www.summit-americas.org/miamiplan.htm>>.

<sup>4</sup> Organization of American States (note 2).

had submitted reports at least once, with Brazil, Chile and El Salvador standing out for the regularity of their submissions.<sup>5</sup>

The OAS has emphasized CSBMs that strengthen or promote transparency in military expenditure and arms acquisitions. For example, the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions (OAS Transparency Convention) was approved in 1999.<sup>6</sup> In the most recent OAS Forum on Confidence- and Security-building Measures, in 2010, the member states agreed to promote the universalization and full implementation of the convention.<sup>7</sup> As of December 2012, 16 states had ratified the convention, but by January 2012 only 13 had submitted a report on at least one occasion.<sup>8</sup>

### South America

Since its establishment was agreed in 2008, the Union of South American Nations (Unión de Naciones Suramericanas, UNASUR) has increasingly become active in peace and security issues in South America. It played an active mediating role in the 2010 diplomatic crisis between Colombia and Venezuela, which legitimized it as a regional security body.<sup>9</sup> In 2009 the UNASUR member states also agreed CSBMs to exchange information and increase transparency.<sup>10</sup>

In May 2012, at a seminar organized by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Defence, the Center for Strategic Defense Studies (CEED) of the South American Defence Council (Consejo de Defensa Suramericano, CDS) presented a 'preliminary' version of the newly created UNASUR register of military expenditure—the first mechanism to compile data on the defence spending of each of the member states of UNASUR from 2006 to 2010.<sup>11</sup> The register, the product of two years of work by a team of defence minis-

<sup>5</sup> Organization of American States (OAS), Inter-American Defense Board, 'Confidence building measures: inventory 2012', Mar. 2012, <<http://iadb.jid.org/secretaria/confidence-building-measures>>.

<sup>6</sup> For a summary and other details of the OAS Transparency Convention see annex A in this volume.

<sup>7</sup> Organization of American States (OAS), Permanent Council, Committee on Hemispheric Security, 'IV forum on confidence- and security-building measures, 2010', 15–26 Nov. 2010, <<http://www.oas.org/csh/english/Foro.asp>>.

<sup>8</sup> See annex A in this volume; Bromley, M. and Solmirano, C., *Transparency in Military Spending and Arms Acquisitions in Latin America and the Caribbean*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 31 (SIPRI: Stockholm, Jan. 2012), p. 29; and Organization of American States (OAS), Permanent Council of the OAS, Committee on Hemispheric Security, Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapon Acquisition, 'Reports', <<http://www.oas.org/csh/english/conventionalweapons.asp>>.

<sup>9</sup> Burdman, J., 'UNASUR vs OEA' [UNASUR vs OAS], Infolatam, 15 Aug. 2010, <<http://www.infolatam.com/2010/08/16/unasur-vs-oea-julio-burdman/>>.

<sup>10</sup> Schmidt, H.-J. and Zellner, W., 'Confidence- and security-building measures', *SIPRI Yearbook 2012*, p. 447.

<sup>11</sup> 'Unasur cuenta con registro de gastos militares' [UNASUR has a register of military expenditure], *El Universo* (Guayaquil), 10 May 2012.

try experts from Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela, employs a common methodology to measure military expenditure using international and regional instruments and experiences. The new register's methodology takes account of the United Nations Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures and the common standardized methodology for the measurement of defence expenditure between Argentina and Chile that was conducted by the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).<sup>12</sup> In June 2012 the CDS agreed to make the UNASUR register public, although that step had yet to be taken at the end of the year.

The UNASUR Action Plan CDS-2012 created a working group tasked with establishing a standard methodology to report on military inventories, including procedures for regular data updates.<sup>13</sup> This instrument will enable information about each country's weapon inventory to be made available to other states, thereby facilitating cooperation in, for example, peace operations.<sup>14</sup> It will also be the first time that countries in South America share information about their current military holdings.<sup>15</sup> The working group met twice in Chile, which chairs the working group, and presented its initial findings to the CDS in Peru in November 2012. While the defence ministers did not achieve consensus on the methodology proposed by the working group, the instrument is expected to be finalized during 2013.<sup>16</sup>

At the same CDS meeting, the defence ministers agreed a new package of CSBMs in an action plan for 2013.<sup>17</sup> The Peruvian Minister of Defence, Pedro Cateriano, noted that these agreed measures would consolidate South America as a zone of peace, adding that 'this confidence should allow

<sup>12</sup>The ECLAC project was the first CSBM aimed at fostering transparency in military expenditure between Argentina and Chile. See UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, *A Common Standardized Methodology for the Measurement of Defence Spending* (United Nations: Santiago, Nov. 2001). On UNASUR's methodology see UNASUR, South American Defence Council, 'Plan de Acción 2010–11, Grupo de Trabajo Informe Final, Diseño de una Metodología Común de Medición de Gastos de Defensa' [Plan of action, 2010–11, working group final report, design of a common methodology for measuring defence spending], La Paz, 29 July 2011, p. 2. On the UN report on military expenditure see chapter 3, section VI, in this volume.

<sup>13</sup>UNASUR, South American Defence Council, Action Plan CDS-2012, <[http://www.unasurcds.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=333&Itemid=261&lang=en](http://www.unasurcds.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=333&Itemid=261&lang=en)>.

<sup>14</sup>'La Unasur celebra segundo encuentro del Grupo de Trabajo Formulario Suramericano de Inventarios Militares' [UNASUR celebrates second meeting of the South American Military Inventory Form Working Group], Infodefensa, Aug. 28, 2012.

<sup>15</sup>The UN Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA) invites states to report on their military holdings. Thus, the UNASUR instrument appears to replicate UNROCA, which has been unevenly applied in South America. On states' submissions to UNROCA see Bromley and Solmirano (note 8), pp. 21–27.

<sup>16</sup>'South American defense ministers meet today in Lima', Andina, 28 Nov. 2012, <<http://www.andina.com.pe/ingles/noticia-south-american-defense-ministers-meet-today-in-lima-437638.aspx>>.

<sup>17</sup>UNASUR, South American Defence Council, 'Action Plan 2013', <[http://www.unasurcds.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=567&Itemid=270&lang=en](http://www.unasurcds.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=567&Itemid=270&lang=en)>.

standardizing our military forces to deal with potential threats to our nations'.<sup>18</sup>

### **Central America and the Caribbean**

In Central America and the Caribbean, the development of CSBMs has been less structured than in South America, where they fall under the umbrella of UNASUR. Subregional efforts to promote CSBMs are being contemplated in both the Central American Integration System (Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana, SICA) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), but little public information is available on the content of these efforts. For example, in 2006 the SICA Security Committee adopted the Central American Permanent Programme on Confidence- and Security-building Measures.<sup>19</sup> To date, it is not known what these CSBMs are and whether they have been developed and implemented more formally.

Trafficking in small arms and light weapons (SALW) has received increased attention as one of the main current security challenges in Central America and the Caribbean. In 2005 the SICA member states adopted the Code of Conduct of Central American States on the Transfer of Arms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materiel.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, in 2011 the CARICOM member states signed the CARICOM Declaration on Small Arms and Light Weapons in an effort to improve work towards better combating the illicit trade in SALW and their ammunition.<sup>21</sup> These efforts seek to increase the exchange of information and cooperation among states.

### **Prospects for CSBMs in the Americas**

The development and consolidation of CSBMs in the Americas has passed through various stages since the end of the cold war. CSBMs are not only limited to arms control and disarmament issues, but also include cooperation in the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking and in the prevention of, and coordination of response to, natural disasters. While the

<sup>18</sup> 'Estandarizar fuerzas militares plantea Perú a Unasur' [Peru proposes that UNASUR standardizes military forces], Radio Guatapurí, 29 Nov. 2012, <[http://www.radioguatapuri.com/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&id=8389:estandarizar-fuerzas-militares-plantea-per%C3%BA-a-unasur&Itemid=240](http://www.radioguatapuri.com/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=8389:estandarizar-fuerzas-militares-plantea-per%C3%BA-a-unasur&Itemid=240)>.

<sup>19</sup> Villalta Vizcarra, A. E., 'Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA): aspectos relevantes del año 2006' [Central American Integration System (SICA): highlights of 2006], ASADIP, 24 Mar. 2008, <<http://asadip.wordpress.com/2008/03/24/sistema-de-la-integracion-centroamericana-sica-aspectos-relevantes-del-ano-2006/>>.

<sup>20</sup> Code of Conduct of Central American States on the Transfer of Arms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materiel, adopted and entered into force 2 Dec. 2005, <<http://www.poa-iss.org/RegionalOrganizations/5.asp>>.

<sup>21</sup> CARICOM Declaration on Small Arms and Light Weapons, signed at the 32nd meeting of the Conference of CARICOM Heads of Government, 30 June–4 July, Basseterre, <[http://www.caricom.org/jsp/communications/meetings\\_statements/declaration\\_small\\_arms\\_light\\_weapons\\_2011.jsp](http://www.caricom.org/jsp/communications/meetings_statements/declaration_small_arms_light_weapons_2011.jsp)>.

OAS continues to be the hemispheric forum for implementation of CSBMs, new subregional bodies, such as UNASUR, have taken steps to develop CSBMs that aim to turn South America into a zone of peace. In just two years a young political entity, the CDS, has proved effective in the creation of a register to measure military expenditure. It remains to be seen whether the level of states' submissions to the register will remain high in future.