

Culture of Peace: Reflections Drawn from the Notion of Security

Alejandra
Cerón Rincón

Vicente Torrijos

(Editors)



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ALEJANDRA CERÓN RINCÓN
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Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto"
Bogotá D.C., 2026

Catalogación en la publicación – Escuela Superior de Guerra “General Rafael Reyes Prieto” (ESDEG)

Culture of peace: reflections drawn from the notion of security/ Editors Alejandra Cerón Rincón y Vicente Torrijos -- Bogotá D.C.: Sello Editorial ESDEG, 2026.

184 pages : illustrations and tables; 24 cm.
includes references at the end of the chapter

ISBN: print: 978-628-7818-47-7
E-ISBN978-628-7818-48-4

(Human Rights and IHL Collection)

1.International security - Latin America 2.Peace – Investigation - Latin America 3.Violence – Prevention - Latin America 4.Peace building - Latin America i.Espinosa Torres, León Ernesto, Vice Admiral, (preface) ii.Cerón Rincón, Alejandra, (editor – author) iii. Torrijos, Vicente, (editor – author) iv.Granada-Cardona, Juan Sebastián, (author) v.Cardona Orozco, Andrés Felipe, (author) vi. Barrientos Martínez, Brandon Rene, (autor) vii. Gómez Rojas, Ana Carolina, (author) viii.Ruiz Mora, Jesús Alberto, (author) ix.Suárez, Luis Edmundo, (author) x.Noguera Salas, Mauricio, (author) xi.Colombia. Escuela Superior de Guerra “General Rafael Reyes Prieto” (ESDEG).

SCLC JZ5538 C85813 2026
SCDD 327.172

Catalog Record SIBFuP 991407932407231



Downloadable file in MARC: <https://tinyurl.com/esdeg991407932407231>

Culture of Peace: Reflections Drawn from the Notion of Security

First edition, 2026

Editors:

Alejandra Cerón Rincón
Vicente Torrijos

2026 Escuela Superior de Guerra

“General Rafael Reyes Prieto”

Office of the Deputy Director of Research

Sello Editorial ESDEG

Carrera 11 N°. 102-50 Bogotá D.C., Colombia

www.esdeglibros.edu.co

Cover:

Lina Marcela Manrique Lozada based on images of
Escuela Superior de Guerra y Gemini IA.

E-book published through the Open Monograph Press
platform.

Print run of 100 copies

Printed in Colombia

Human Rights and IHL Collection

Print ISBN: 978-628-7818-47-7

ISBN digital: 978-628-7818-48-4

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484>

Translation of the book titled “Cultura de paz: reflexiones desde la noción de seguridad” resulting from research conducted at the Escuela Superior de Guerra “General Rafael Reyes Prieto.”

The content of this book reflects the authors' views and is their sole responsibility. The positions and statements presented herein are the result of an academic and research exercise that does not necessarily represent the official or institutional position of the participating institutions, the Escuela Superior de Guerra “General Rafael Reyes Prieto,” the Military Forces of Colombia, and the Ministry of National Defense.



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Preface

Vice Admiral León Ernesto Espinosa Torres

Director, Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto"

This book is the result of research conducted by the Regional Center for Strategic Studies in Security (CREES) at the Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto." Its premise derives from the historical context of Colombia and other nations in the Americas, which, since the second half of the 20th century, have faced profound and enduring conflicts.

These conflicts have significantly affected state structures and institutional stability, rendering security a critical and highly relevant aspect of public policy development. Aiming to contribute to peace studies, this work belongs to the research project titled "Culture of Peace and its Relationship with Security in the Western Hemisphere."

This knowledge serves as a key tool for systematically addressing the manifestations and consequences of violence. In this context, the strategic, security, and defense studies conducted by the Colombian Armed Forces aim to contribute to analysis of conflict transformation and the consolidation of the Colombian state by disseminating these processes across Latin America through publications.

In relation to philosophical reflection, this work integrates diverse currents of thought on security grounded in an understanding of human beings. It addresses themes from various security approaches, including public, comprehensive, multidimensional, human-centered, and citizen-centric perspectives, which are understood as the foundations and concrete manifestations of security in a society.

To complement these theoretical and conceptual reflections, a methodological approach was developed through the analysis of specific cases in Latin America, in which violence was used as a tool of power in public debate. The book is presented as a contribution to knowledge in the field of strategic studies, security, and defense, inviting readers to engage with a series of analyses conducted by faculty members and researchers of ESDEG.

Introduction

Alejandra Cerón Rincón

Vicente Torrijos

Editors, Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto"

The Regional Center for Strategic Studies in Security (CREES) introduces this book, a research product that examines how pacifism contributes to understanding *contemporary security*. It also includes some elements related to the positive transformation of the Colombian conflict.

The text aims to explore the relationship between the culture of peace and security, recognizing its complex and multifaceted nature. On the one hand, the culture of peace is understood as an approach to human relations that encourages nonviolent conflict resolution, mutual understanding, and cooperation. This approach highlights social justice, human rights, and equality as vital elements of peace.

Conversely, it begins with the idea that security has traditionally been seen as protecting individuals and communities from external threats, whether military, political, economic, or environmental. Nonetheless, this view broadens the notion of security to include the safeguarding of human rights, freedoms, and dignity.

The relationship between a culture of peace and security is mutual. Promoting a culture of peace enhances security by reducing the likelihood of violent conflict and supporting peaceful dispute resolution. In turn, security measures are essential for a culture of peace to thrive, as evidenced by stable political institutions, respect for the rule of law, individual and human dignity, and economic growth.

To strengthen the link between a culture of peace and security, this research explores Hannah Arendt's (2006) political philosophy, particularly her concept of *political action*. According to Arendt (2006), political action relies on interactions among people who exercise power in order to reach agreements. However, when reaching a consensus through communication and discourse proves impossible, resorting to force or violence may seem like the only option. This impacts society at large, which tends to adopt and internalize these practices as legitimate forms of power and, consequently, as valid means of political participation.

In other words, violence begets more violence, which has serious implications for community life. Fragility, an inherent aspect of human existence, is constantly challenged by such practices. This chain of events—reflected in the impact on human fragility—tends to destabilize the political order and, consequently, the security and structure of the State. According to Arendt (2006), the fragility of human affairs is evident in the fragility of the State, of laws, and of institutions; therefore, it is necessary to peacefully transform the orders that govern human coexistence.

From this perspective, studies on conflict resolution seek to understand why a society chooses violence and rights violations over dialogue. They also examine how recognizing these facts can foster collective memory and social awareness, thereby promoting a culture of peace.

This should be grounded in renewing the civic agreement by restructuring social frameworks that recognize the diversity of opinions and expressions within a democratic setting. In essence, pacifism—seen as a political stance—aims at positively transforming conflict, and spreading these ideas helps foster a culture of peace.

Using this frame, the research focused on theoretical aspects of peace, violence, and modern interpretations of security. This approach led to the identification of key elements necessary to understand phenomena such as violent social mobilization, terrorism, and the pacification of territories following the implementation of social and political agreements aimed at overcoming violence.

Methodologically, the approach to the selected cases involved using narratives and recognizing interactions among social groups in conflict scenarios, with the aim of understanding the culture of violence and its systemic impact on the State's security and stability.

Chapter 1

Peace from the Perspective of Hannah Arendt's Political Philosophy: Tools for Understanding Its Implications for State Security*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.01>

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Abstract: Pacifism is presented as a political alternative oriented towards the positive transformation of conflict. This research, grounded in the frame of Hannah Arendt's political philosophy, aims to identify the principles that underpin peacebuilding and a culture of security. In the realm of political culture, this involves examining how conflict-resolution processes enhance thinking about peace by valuing citizen agreements, which are central to rebuilding the social fabric through recognizing diverse opinions and expressions in a democratic environment.

Keywords: Peace; plurality; politics; transformation; State; security

* This book chapter results from the research project "Culture of Peace and Its Relationship with Security in the Western Hemisphere," conducted by the Masa Crítica group at Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto," which is categorized as A1 by the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (Minciencias) under code COL0123247. The views and results presented are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the participating institutions.

Alejandra Cerón Rincón

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APA Citation: Cerón Rincón, A. (2026). Peace from the Perspective of Hannah Arendt's Political Philosophy: Tools for Understanding Its Implications for State Security. In A. Cerón Rincón & V. Torrijos (Eds.), *Culture of Peace: Reflections Drawn from the Notion of Security* (pp. 13-28). Sello Editorial ESDEG. <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.01>

CULTURE OF PEACE: REFLECTIONS DRAWN FROM THE NOTION OF SECURITY

Print ISBN: 978-628-7818-47-7

ISBN digital: 978-628-7818-48-4

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484>

Human Rights and IHL Collection

Sello Editorial ESDEG

Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto"

Bogotá D.C., Colombia

2026



Introduction

Peace scenarios built after periods of violence develop in political contexts marked by deep ideological divisions. These divisions directly affect the interpretation of the problems that impact state stability and the normalization of social life.

This panorama has been a constant across most states that have engaged in negotiations with belligerent actors. Such actors, after attempting to overthrow governments and establish a new *status quo* through prolonged military confrontations, eventually reintegrated into the sphere of political deliberation.

In several Latin American countries, negotiation processes between armed actors and the state have fostered the transition of belligerent groups into political participation coalitions, thereby promoting the construction of a culture of peace. Such is the case of Guatemala, which, after the escalation of violence in the 1980s, reached an agreement that allowed members of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) to enter the public arena as a political party. Likewise, in Uruguay, the National Liberation Movement—Tupamaros (MLN-T)—managed the release of political prisoners and their integration into political life, as in the case of its leader, Pepe Mujica (González-Moreira & Torres-Araque, 2019). These examples demonstrate the potential of Latin American societies to overcome violence and strengthen democracy.

However, in other peace processes in the region, the incorporation of former combatants into political life and their reintegration into the social fabric have had unexpected effects, especially in security-related areas. This has resulted in political and social instability, which, in turn, has given rise to new forms of violence and posed significant challenges to ensuring citizen tranquility. Such is the case of El Salvador, where, after the peace process with the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), the implementation of the peace agreements led to a

restructuring of the Armed Forces and a considerable reduction in personnel, which resulted in an increase in crime and violence rates in the country (Ribera, 1994).

In the case of Nicaragua, it can also be observed that, after a bloody insurrectional struggle that lasted nearly a decade, the implementation of peace was marked by "a counterrevolutionary process that continued deepening violence, polarization, and the loss of valuable human lives" (Gómez, 2011, pp. 6–7).

In this regard, achieving agreements and political will for the implementation of peace processes requires coherent coordination with each nation's political, economic, and social characteristics. Peacebuilding requires creating a context that ensures the coexistence of diverse identities and cultural representations. Otherwise, these processes could be hindered by the persistence and intensification of ideological boundaries, leading to new social fractures and, consequently, the emergence of conflicts marked by the violent dynamics of the past.

These conditions can undermine peacebuilding processes, diverting political action toward domination as a form of power at certain moments. This, in turn, turns violence into an expedient means to resolve differences. Historically, numerous and significant efforts for peace, both in international and local contexts, have failed. Far from solving problems, these initiatives have given rise to new forms of conflict and violence, with a profound impact on societies and on the states responsible for their control.

Hannah Arendt's philosophy offers a valuable way to understand positive peace: a process grounded in the recognition of difference and the defense of human rights. This conception promotes the construction of spaces characterized by diverse and plural identities and arguments, with the potential to reorient conflict toward a constructive path, thereby rescuing the essence of politics.

This chapter aims to identify the essential elements of this Arendtian conception of politics and to establish a framework that guides deliberation and the formulation of peace strategies in Latin America.

Latin American history forces us to question how deep our understanding of warlike acts really is. Fully comprehending these events is essential to prevent their repetition. In this regard, Stolcke (2010) notes that "Hannah Arendt's pacifism differed from postwar pacifism in that it arose from her own experience of war, rather than from a general fear of war" (p. 174).

It is not only a matter of addressing the war–peace binary. Arendt's philosophy explores possibilities that transcend this dichotomy, proposing a deeper and more active understanding of peace. Within this framework, peace is conceived as a

sustained process of building focused on the true meaning of living in peace, which implies generating the conditions and developing the capacities necessary for pacification. Far from focusing exclusively on the role of the state or on the problem of domination, Arendt's philosophy emphasizes the importance of creating environments in which one can live without violence, thereby allowing freedom and political spontaneity to flourish as genuine expressions of the human.

The capacities for peace enable conflict resolution within a normative framework whose main objective is to prevent the perpetuation of violence. However, how is the desire to live in peace incorporated into a society? Conflict resolution processes contribute to the construction of a culture of peace by promoting civic agreement, the reconstruction of the social fabric, and the recognition of the diversity of thought and expression in a democratic environment. In this regard, pacifism, understood as a political proposal, is oriented toward the positive transformation of conflict.

Arendt's perspective suggests that it is possible to establish relationships that are not determined by the negativity of conflict, but that are founded on mutual recognition and solidarity. Adopting this frame, research could focus on identifying and analyzing these principles in peacebuilding processes and on developing a culture of security across various nations on the continent, such as Central American countries and Colombia.

Methodologically, an approach to the selected cases centered on narratives and the recognition of interactions among diverse social groups will allow a deeper understanding of the culture of violence and its systemic impact on security and state stability. Thus, key research scenarios include the dynamics between armed groups and civilian populations, civil–military relations, and the coordination between society and the state.

The Analytical Dimensions of Peace

H. Arendt's philosophical approach to the theme of peace, as presented in seminal works such as *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) and *On Violence* (1970), provides a basis for identifying interpretative guidelines. In general terms, the author offers a renewed stance that contrasts with the treatises of traditional political philosophy on this subject. In this sense, a marked divergence stands out in her thought from conventional notions of politics, power, and violence, among other substantive issues intrinsically linked to the conception of peace.

Regarding violence, Arendt (2006) argues that the authentic substance lies in a *telos* intrinsic to the human being: the capacity to be subsumed by the very means that justify it. Hence, the overcoming of violence becomes the cardinal north of political action.

Arendt departs from traditional references and seeks categories grounded in experience, adopting an attitude akin to existentialist philosophy, emphasizing common sense and the value of difference. Consequently, politics, conceived within the framework of peace, is configured as an alternative for the positive transformation of conflict, prioritizing the protection of individuals who forge agreements within the singular political framework they have established.

Singularity arises from the confluence of diversities that establish agreement as the fundamental pillar of power, a fact that materializes in the consolidation of the state. In this fabric, collective political power serves as a guarantor of the recognition and respect for the multiple identities that make up community life, thereby fostering the affirmation of freedom. However, the decline of political pacifism can lead to the violation of identities and, subsequently, to the instrumentalization of violence. This underscores the urgent need to preserve a culture of peace within the spectrum of political expressions.

Political Culture and Peace

The transformations inherent to Western modernity, both in the social and political spheres, rest on the consolidation of identities. These become a reference for other vital spheres, such as politics. The bases of classical liberalism hold that identity enables the recognition of a collectivity that manifests its freedom and autonomy in a specific territory. This scenario, in turn, fosters understanding and the achievement of peace.

The characterization of political culture has evolved substantially, grounded in seminal notions from classical and contemporary sociology. Its development has been nourished by Weber's distinction between traditional and modern society, Parsons' analysis of the transition from modernity to postmodernity, and Luhmann's proposal regarding globalized society. The aim has been to build an autonomous sphere of knowledge, establishing bridges with the categories proper to political theory.

However, twentieth-century conflicts brought these pillars of peace into question. The two world wars were characterized by the vindication of identities threatened by aspirations for political participation.

The above tested the viability of achieving a stable and lasting peace within the liberal model. In this context, the following question arises: how can contemporary democracies guarantee the protection of freedom and identity autonomy, ensuring their political participation in a pacifism that contributes to the consolidation of a common culture?

To answer this question, the contribution of Will Kymlicka is fundamental; he maintains that contemporary violence maintains substantive links with the formulation of the cultural foundations of the liberal state, which have privileged the perspective of majorities. As a result of this dynamic, the omission in defending minority rights has perpetuated violence and the disarticulation of collectives.

However, according to Kymlicka (2003), the possibility of achieving an equilibrium and a state of communal peace lies in building cultural pluralism from the foundations of the liberal state. This perspective, in line with other contemporary currents of political philosophy, holds that a culture of peace is the true guarantor of coexistence, transcending mere aspiration to an abstract ideal.

Although the classical modernity approach requires reform, alternative proposals have emerged that criticize the liberal roots. These start from the premise that identity is intrinsically diverse and must be understood and appreciated from multiple spheres and levels of cultural life, thereby inscribing itself in a postmodern perspective.

Scenarios of violence and authoritarianism can be transformed if politics is approached through a culture of peace that encompasses the various spheres of life and democracy, always recognizing difference as a fundamental principle. In this context, political practice would seek to balance discourses, especially regarding hierarchies and hegemonies of participation, and to resolve conflict through understanding, respect, and recognition of the other. This would be the path toward building a deliberative democracy.

To understand how deliberative democracy materializes, it is necessary to address rational choice theory (RCT) and its contribution to political theory and science (Vidal, 2008). RCT enriches understanding of political culture by explaining how the political system and its actors interact and, based on their interests, construct the web of actions that guides public deliberation. Dimensions related to cultural and social values serve, in this sense, as a macro framework that influences more concrete decisions.

Political philosophy provides key notions—such as value, tradition, and ideology—that are crucial for analyzing contemporary realities and constructing a critical hermeneutics, particularly in the Latin American context. For its part, political

theory develops fundamental categories—such as the state, the political system, power, and deliberative democracy—in an effort to consolidate its autonomy from philosophy, sociology, and political economy.¹

However, at the intersection of these spheres of knowledge, a persistent tension is perceived between the limits of the social and the political, as well as in their points of convergence and divergence. In this respect, the viability of erecting new emancipatory models of deliberative democracy will inevitably depend on an interdisciplinary construction of knowledge that integrates both the social and the political. By conceiving the social and the political as two sides of the same coin, their unified understanding will enable a dialectical synthesis.

When addressing the distinction between political theory and political culture, a first tension arises: the social is perceived as a sphere encompassing the political. Despite this, various theorists have insisted on demonstrating the autonomy of the political sphere.

Although they often wish to preserve Arendt's vision of the political, contemporary theorists have largely abandoned the separation she established between the political and the social, as well as her nostalgic pessimism about the emergence of massive social movements by the oppressed and the unemancipated. The prevailing view today is that social justice constitutes a condition of freedom and equality; therefore, the social must be one of the great focuses of the political. (Bernstein, 1986, as cited in Young et al., 1998)

To support this idea, it is necessary to examine Young's proposed thematic differentiation and orientations in political theory. The author organizes contemporary political theory into six key subtopics, each of which illustrates a distinct way of politicizing the social.

The first subtopic, developed by Rawls in his theory on rights, social justice, and welfare, conceives the state as the entity responsible for mitigating social inequalities (Caballero, 2006). This objective is achieved by providing basic conditions that ensure the welfare of all individuals, thereby guaranteeing equal opportunities for competition.

From this perspective, Nozick opposes Rawls' interpretation, arguing that the supposed state intervention to guarantee equality is not aligned with the principles

¹ The transformation and delimitation of political theory are addressed in the document *Elementos para la reconstrucción del estatuto epistemológico de la cultura política*, prepared by Professor Oscar Mejía and published by the National University of Colombia.

that should underpin economic systems (Bader, 2010). Nozick emphasizes the importance of safeguarding the freedom inherent in democracy and capitalism, arguing that any attempt to constrain individuals or the system in the name of equality is harmful.

The second subtopic, democratic theory, sometimes focuses excessively on state intervention, thereby ignoring individuals' agency in decision-making. Nevertheless, from this perspective, it is argued that democratic participation not only guarantees but also promotes social equality, and vice versa. Therefore, it is imperative that such participation not be limited to state institutions but also extend to the workplace.

In this context, the reductionist conception of the human being, predominant in some models—which represent the person solely as a consumer with purchasing power or as an individual defined exclusively by their productive capacities—is called into question. However, distributive justice is conceived as a mechanism that enhances freedom, and it is precisely this freedom that, in turn, fosters the full development of human capabilities.

This discussion encompasses the problem of social inequality generated by class differences, as well as gender inequalities, especially in the workplace. A model based exclusively on the logic of competition may prove insufficient to face these challenges. In this regard, authors such as Mansbridge (2015) propose the idea of a *unitary democracy*, in which debate and deliberation are conceived as means to achieve the common good. However, the author also emphasizes that the soundness of the democratic system depends on the coexistence of unitary and competitive democracy, which implies preserving the plurality of individual interests within the political order.

The third subtopic, feminist political theory, delves into the public–private dichotomy to reveal how politics traverses all social relations. It also highlights the significance of gender in political representation.

The fourth subtopic is consolidated within the framework of postmodern thought. One of its fundamental contributions comes from feminism, which introduces the idea that power does not reside in a single center but flows through all social spaces. A second contribution suggests that political actors replicate social dynamics, though not always coherently.

In this direction, Foucault's contribution is crucial. The philosopher recognizes that, in contemporary democracies, the form and figure of power still retain traits of monarchical power and premodern experience. For Foucault, power tends to reproduce itself in the various institutions that structure social life.

From this Foucauldian conception of power, it is possible to develop an analysis that rethinks fundamental categories of political theory, such as the state, law, authority, obligation, liberty, and rights. Finally, it is argued that the Marxist category of the *proletariat* does not encompass the diversity of contemporary social groups' categories and interests.

The fifth subgroup, new social movements and civil society, constitutes the most significant contribution. Her proposal centers on the politicization of the social, driven by the heterogeneity of thought, identities, and collective representations. In this way, her critique and analysis transcend the traditional political sphere to encompass social interaction and cultural processes.

The reflections put forward by these subgroups do not fit within traditional categories of law or welfare understood solely in economic terms. Instead, their analysis is directly linked to a critical hermeneutics of political culture. This perspective, in turn, is incorporated into Claus Offe's conception of political culture, which demonstrates how bureaucratic practice has depoliticized state actions:

Claus Offe presents the modern Welfare State as processes of depoliticized social control and public spending. The state has become an arena in which officials carry out their real activities behind closed doors and experts administer sectoral policies with technical expertise, in which normative purposes barely have a place.

Habermas argues that state institutions, by developing their own rational logic, become decontextualized from everyday reality and, therefore, from cultural interaction. This poses the challenge of coordinating a vision of politics and democracy with an active commitment to promoting social justice.

The sixth subgroup, the debate on liberalism and communitarianism, understands the social as prior to and constitutive of the political. In this line, Sandel argues that "to formulate a robust political theory of social union, justice must be complemented by recognition of the peculiar ties and cultural commitments that constitute personal identities."

The main objection of communitarians toward liberalism lies in its inability to recognize the particularities of social groups. They hold that this political current privileges the individual to the detriment of the dimension of collectivity. Liberalism, understood as the universal and egalitarian application of laws and norms—as established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—comes into tension with the demand for political recognition and the preservation of certain cultures. From

this perspective, liberalism reveals itself as a limited framework for addressing cultural diversity and communal identities.

Considering the debate on the status of political culture, Iris Young's proposal regarding new social movements and civil society is particularly significant. Her perspective not only expands but also enriches the reflection on the political culture proposed by Offe and Schmitter in their article "Las paradojas y los dilemas de la democracia liberal":

If liberal democracy has become "the only game in town," why bother investigating its paradoxes and dilemmas? Is the absence of any plausible alternative not enough to guarantee the success of its consolidation in neodemocracies or its persistence in older democracies? (1995, p. 30)

Biopolitics: The Concepts of Bare Life and State of Exception

What living conditions would eradicate violence? How can we create spaces of coexistence that promote both freedom of expression and political spontaneity? The key lies in dismantling the politics of domination, which demands a radical transformation of political language, shifting from a logic centered on power to one based on recognition and solidarity.

The fragility of human affairs manifests itself in the vulnerability of the state, laws, and institutions. For this reason, it is imperative to peacefully reform the orders that govern coexistence, with the aim of building public spaces of communication that emulate the spirit of the Greek *polis*.

The universal recognition of human dignity and fundamental rights marked a milestone in transforming social structures. This evolution, driven by the affirmation of equality, has enabled dismantling the historical bases of discrimination and supremacy that legitimized relations of domination (Peces-Barba, 2007). Thus, inequality on grounds of sex, ethnicity, or religion has been questioned and rejected, consolidating a new international paradigm based on equity, inclusion, and respect for the human condition.

However, this achievement at the level of declarations did not materialize in most places around the world. This led to a reappraisal of its origins, diverting attention from a cultural identity dimension to a fundamental question: who defines them?

In this regard, dignity stands as a pillar of moral, political, and legal thought; that is, it functions as a value or a cardinal principle. Likewise, solidarity emerges as

a key constitutional principle for the conceptualization of human rights. So crucial is Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that it states: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood" (United Nations, 2012, p. 2).

Solidarity is a fundamental principle of human rights, rooted in the moral dimension of the human being, who recognizes himself in others. This awareness of similarity fosters coexistence grounded in reason and empathy, implying recognition of equality in dignity and rights.

Although the liberal project—as opposed to monarchical and medieval structures of social organization—began with the conquest of the principle of equality, this perspective has not been without its critics. It is contested that values such as dignity and solidarity have been relegated to mere minimum normative requirements within a state whose main function is to guarantee individuals *identical* conditions that allow the free functioning of markets.

This perspective marginalizes human intersubjectivity and, therefore, the possibility of moral realization. Often, principles are instrumentalized, becoming mere mechanisms of punitive social control. This causes *real solidarity*, according to Durkheim (1987), to acquire a negative character:

Thus we see what this real solidarity consists of; it directly links things to persons, but not persons among themselves. In a strict sense, one can exercise a real right by thinking one is alone in the world, without reference to other men. Consequently, since it is only through the medium of persons that things are integrated in society, the solidarity resulting from this integration is wholly negative. It does not lead wills to move toward common ends, but merely makes things gravitate around wills in orderly fashion. Because real rights are thus limited, they do not cause conflicts; hostility is precluded, but there is no active coming together, no consensus. Suppose an agreement of this kind were as perfect as possible; the society in which it exists—if it exists alone—will resemble an immense constellation where each star moves in its orbit without concern for the movements of neighboring stars. Such solidarity does not make the elements that it relates at all capable of acting together; it contributes nothing to the unity of the social body. (p. 85)

Thus, solidarity has been dissociated from the recognition of societies' roots and history. This is because it has been reduced to a principle of justice applied by the state and sustained exclusively by norms. This denial of its profound moral

dimension makes it a crucial challenge for contemporary thought on human rights: the urgency of reconnecting with those origins, fostering both pluralism and solidarity:

The great question is, then, how to think and how to introduce in practice, even into positive law, notions of *pluralism* and *solidarity* that do not sanctify differences among men, yet that preserve precisely those factors without which the relation between individuals and social groups is no more than a new version of the cunning of power advancing upon what it has not yet taken by force. The essential words in the philosophical discussion of this enormous topic are responsibility and identity. (García-Baró, 2004, p. 26)

In this regard, the history of societies is not only relevant to the social group to which one belongs—by normatively regulating interactions—but is also a constitutive part of individuals. By engaging with it, they acquire responsibilities and commitments, and through it, they build and express their identity.

Over the course of history, solidarity can be recognized in the sense proposed by H. Arendt (1998), who maintains that its foundation lies in human charity, understood as the capacity to generate identity within a social group, differentiating its members from others and strengthening bonds of unity. However, in historical moments when power acquires authoritarian traits, a progressive deterioration of the human condition is observed, leading to the weakening—and even abandonment—of this valuable quality.

Conclusion

The construction of a culture of peace that guarantees stability and citizen security is a viable project. To achieve this, states must be able to integrate diverse identities into a common framework of interaction that recognizes and dignifies them. In this context, contributions from contemporary political philosophy are crucial to link theoretical reflection with the realities and conflicts that currently affect societies, especially regarding the multiple manifestations of violence.

Contemporary democracy has also been challenged by changes in the social, economic, and cultural institutions that configure it, as well as by the interests and expectations of the individuals who actively participate in it. In this context, the exercise of citizenship falls directly on the subjects, who assume it from the

particularity of the social groups that shape their identity and, at the same time, connect with issues of global scope.

This is the case with Latin American democracies, which must be analyzed through the lens of neodemocracies. These are due to an ambivalent characteristic: they oscillate between premodernity—marked by intolerance and exclusion—and postmodernity—defined by indifference and skepticism. This tension has facilitated the emergence of authoritarianism as a solution to the crisis (Mejía, 2008).

The fact that democracies across Europe, Asia, Eastern Europe, Africa, and Latin America face similar dilemmas underscores the urgency of incorporating insights from other social science disciplines into argumentation and research in political theory and political culture. Just as the social and the political form a dichotomous unity capable of generating synthesis, the disciplinary and the interdisciplinary can also be integrated. This will substantially enrich the analysis, methods, and knowledge of democracies in a broad sense, which in turn will contribute to the formulation and orientation of current political systems.

The situations currently affecting Latin America have provoked legitimate concern among various social and political sectors. These revolve around peace processes and the integration and political participation of former combatants. The experiences of Latin American nations with these state projects have left a perception of their benefits and risks that is ambiguous. Nevertheless, peace and its culture cannot cease to be a prime objective for the future of societies.

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Chapter 2

Violent Social Mobilization: A Model for Analysis from the Perspective of Contentious Politics*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.02>

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Abstract: Analyzing contemporary political phenomena through the mechanisms of contentious politics offers a valuable opportunity to understand current dynamics by exploring the links between contention and democracy. This article presents an intermediate-level analytical framework grounded in the most salient characteristics of violent social mobilization, conceived as a specific manifestation of contentious politics. Drawing on recent case studies from countries such as the United States, Chile, and Colombia, the model's applicability is validated. The diagrams also identify the relationship between the concept of violent social mobilization and its practical implementation across different contexts.

Keywords: Conflict; democracy; social mobilization; contentious politics; social protest; violence

* This book chapter results from the research project "Culture of Peace and Its Relationship with Security in the Western Hemisphere," conducted by the Masa Crítica group at Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto," which is categorized as A1 by the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (Minciencias) under code COL0123247. The views and results presented are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the participating institutions.

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APA Citation: Torrijos, V., & Granada-Cardona, J. S. (2026). Violent Social Mobilization: A Model for Analysis from the Perspective of Contentious Politics. In A. Cerón Rincón, & V. Torrijos. (Eds.), *Culture of Peace: Reflections Drawn from the Notion of Security* (pp. 29-50). Sello Editorial ESDEG. <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.02>

CULTURE OF PEACE: REFLECTIONS DRAWN FROM THE NOTION OF SECURITY

Print ISBN: 978-628-7818-47-7

ISBN digital: 978-628-7818-48-4

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484>

Human Rights and IHL Collection

Sello Editorial ESDEG

Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto"

Bogotá D.C., Colombia

2026



Introduction

As Della (2015) and Walter (2022) have shown empirically, the weakening of social protection and the State's diminished capacity to respond over recent decades have contributed to rising inequality and precarity. This situation has not only intensified social fragmentation in identity terms—since it is difficult to build a national discourse when people's lived realities are profoundly unequal—but has also driven more particularistic and local mobilizations, albeit with shared demands, in different parts of the world.

Additionally, it is important to emphasize that some protest movements radicalized during the COVID-19 pandemic, producing significant outbreaks of violence. In recent years, violent social mobilizations have been recorded in countries such as Colombia, Venezuela, Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti (Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project [ACLED], 2020b).

While each of these experiences has its singularities—such as extreme inequality in Brazil and Haiti, the persistence of illegal armed groups in Colombia, or institutional fracture in Nicaragua and Venezuela—it is also possible to identify, beyond those particularities, certain common traits that enable mid-range analyses. This implies moving beyond approaches that focus exclusively on the specifics of each case, without necessarily resorting to systemic or structural explanatory frameworks.

In this sense, it is pertinent to analyze violent social mobilization through the mechanisms of political contention, paying special attention to organizational strategies, the factors that promote or inhibit recourse to violence, and their group-level effects. This perspective offers a valuable opportunity to understand the most

recent dynamics of global politics, as it recognizes the role of contention in political phenomena and, consequently, facilitates the exploration of its links to democracy.

This article proposes an analytical framework to address cases of violent social mobilization, understood as a specific manifestation of contentious politics. It also offers some considerations on the importance of this perspective for more effectively interpreting the challenges posed by experiences of violence in contemporary mobilizations.

Like any analytical proposal, this framework operates with specific objectives and is not free of limitations. Its scope is deliberately intermediate, because it focuses on analyzing the strategic possibilities deployed within the framework of violent political contention. In this regard, the factors that promote and inhibit the use of violence become particularly relevant.

The utility of this analytical framework, therefore, does not lie in its capacity to explain the structural conditions that precede or precipitate violence, nor in its ability to synthesize its sociopolitical consequences, since such aspects fall outside its purpose. Likewise, as an intermediate-level analysis, it does not aim to explain in detail the conditions that lead individuals to join various violent dynamics.

To understand these phenomena with greater rigor, the first part presents the salient characteristics of contemporary violent social mobilizations. This is based on empirical findings from recent work (ACLED, 2020a, 2020b, 2021; Della, 2015; Walter, 2022). This analysis enables the identification of the specific institutional and ideological context in which violence develops. The second section offers an analytical discussion of the results, which allows us to understand the exercise of violence within mobilizations as a destabilizing factor for the established political order.

On the basis of this analysis, the third part proposes a model—oriented to research in political and international studies—grounded in the contentious politics framework (Tilly, 2017). This model focuses on the following aspects:

- the political situation or background;
- the role of actors;
- the options or courses of action.

This proposal seeks to contribute to understanding the density and complexity of violent social mobilization, without overlooking its fundamentally ambiguous nature (Tilly, 2022b).

The article develops following an inductive method. It begins with an analysis of the empirical material, which leads to an analytical discussion, and culminates

in a structured synthesis presented as a schematic. As a tool for political analysis, this proposal facilitates the identification and isolation of three crucial aspects in any violent social mobilization: (i) the most relevant details of the process; (ii) the moments considered triggers of action; and (iii) the links between actors and institutions.

This model constitutes a significant contribution both methodologically and theoretically-conceptually for those interested in untangling the configuration of a political phenomenon as complex as violent social mobilizations.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Beyond the relevance of normative theories that promote conflict resolution through consensus, social cohesion, and legal mechanisms (civil and criminal), it is essential to consider less normative perspectives. These, unlike the former, attribute an undeniable political value to conflict. A clear example is conflict theory.

The conflictivist perspective offers notable advantages:

- a broad view of the nature of violent interactions, covering both individual and collective levels;
- consideration of all forms of violence, from overtly voluntary actions to those that are more subtle or less intentional;
- recognition of a multiplicity of violent actors, deployed along a continuum from insurgency to institutional actors (Giner, 2001).

Consequently, this perspective also takes into account security, policing, and military mechanisms that may resort to repression to guarantee order.

It is essential to reflect on violent social mobilization within a political context, without ignoring its practical value for both state actors and those who challenge them. Based on the studies of Auyero (2007) and Tilly (2010, 2017, 2022b) and on social mobilization, the relationship between mobilization and violence is understood by how their meanings are configured over time and space. Hence, to understand it, it is indispensable to analyze it always in its context.

Thus, first, violent social mobilization is understood as a form of social interaction in which diverse social actors—both individual and collective—participate in activities that may be planned or spontaneous, and in which intentional harm occurs (Giner, 2001; Tilly, 2022b).

Second, it is important to note that actions undertaken during mobilization—such as negotiation, strategy modification, elections, disruptions, and improvisation—are, on the one hand, conditioned by the norms, values, and

scripts of participants and, on the other hand, decisive in transforming both the confrontation and the representations of the actors in dispute. In this regard, it is crucial to recognize that these representations are not static; rather, they change as a result of coordination among actors and of the responses that arise in the course of their interaction (Tilly, 2022a).

To better understand the roles of institutions, the economic context, and social relations in the outbreak and intensity of the most recent violent social mobilizations, this research relied on a comparative analysis across contexts. From case studies with empirical evidence, it was possible to identify the individual resources associated with political protest, the role of institutions and organizations, and perceptions of citizen dissatisfaction (Quaranta, 2015; Vráblíková, 2014).

It is worth noting that the review of empirically dissimilar cases—in terms of their motivations and scenarios—shows that the particular conditions of each (that is, the various situations of disintegration or imbalance of each political system) are not decisive for the proposed analytical framework. This is because the objective is not to address the structural or systemic aspects of violent interactions.

For the search and selection of information, an initial state-of-the-art on paradigmatic studies of contemporary social mobilization was prepared (Álvarez et al., 2011; Antentas & Vivas, 2009; Blumenkranz et al., 2011; Hessel, 2010; Jacson, 2012; Montgomery, 2011; Roitman, 2012). Second, a documentary investigation focused on recent empirical findings was conducted, using reports and databases from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED). These provide updated information on locations, dates, actors, and characteristics of protest events and political violence globally. The research focused on mobilizations in the United States between 2019 and 2021—especially the Black Lives Matter (BLM), Proud Boys, QAnon, and Boogaloo movements—as well as on citizen protests in Chile, Colombia, and Bolivia during the same period.

The purpose of this research is to propose an analytical and interpretive framework for identifying connections between violent social mobilization and its empirical manifestations. For this reason, the state of the art is limited to presenting the central arguments of the debate, avoiding an exhaustive review of the phenomenon of contemporary social mobilization, since that would exceed the purposes and scope of this chapter.

Results: Cases of Violent Social Mobilization

To define violent social mobilization, we start with Touraine (2006), who emphasizes the conflictive character inherent to any social mobilization. According to Touraine,

it is a form of action that demands organized collective participation and the existence of common objectives that confront those of other social actors.

Now, because “the forms, [actors] and demands of social movements vary and are subject to a process of historical evolution” (Tilly, 2010, p. 294), it is necessary to consider internationalization—both of practices and discourses—contemporary democratic challenges and changing characteristics of actors, such as their growing professionalization. Movements like Los Indignados (Álvarez et al., 2011; Hessel, 2010; Roitman, 2012), Resistencia Global (Antentas & Vivas, 2009), Occupy World Street (Blumenkranz et al., 2011; Jackson, 2012; Montgomery, 2011) and 15-M, among others, are paradigmatic of this new context, whose distinctive traits can be seen as a key link to the most recent mobilizations.

To narrow the scope of this study, the analysis focused on collective actions in which participants, to achieve their objectives, deliberately act against other people, either by threatening, attacking, or inflicting physical harm (Jackman, 2002).

BLM, initiated in 2013, stands out as one of the most influential social movements of recent years. Its impact was unexpected, not only because of its magnitude but also because it addressed issues that transcended U.S. borders and were successfully replicated in other countries. Within this analysis, its importance lies in the fact that its mobilizations were triggered by acts of violence that, in turn, precipitated violent reactions in various U.S. cities, such as Seattle or Portland (ACLED, 2020a; Shepherd & Bailey, 2020).

In the last phase of this movement, which began in 2020, tensions intensified between locally mobilized groups organized in networks and the institutional agents of Donald Trump’s government. The mobilizations of that period not only revealed the government’s incapacity and lack of willingness to address social demands and subsequent waves of protest, but also evidenced the strengthening of various networks of movements calling for justice for a specific incident: the killing of George Floyd, an unarmed man, at the hands of police officer Derek Chauvin. Floyd was asphyxiated by Chauvin, who knelt on his neck for more than nine minutes, ignoring his repeated pleas for help (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2022). The lack of empathetic responses from various government agencies also contributed to the escalation of the mobilizations.

Moreover, the BLM case exposes a deep division in contemporary U.S. society. Institutionalized violence, exemplified by police brutality toward vulnerable Afro-descendant populations, is not perceived as a public problem demanding a response from political institutions, nor does it arouse a feeling of solidarity among other marginalized groups, such as the white poor often labeled “white trash.”

This increasingly radicalized violence has its foundations, on the one hand, in a legal framework that proves insensitive to the implications of an individualism that fosters insulated spaces for violence whose social costs tend to be invisible. On the other hand, it lies in the particular way racialized multiculturalism is experienced in U.S. society. The most tragic examples of this dynamic are seen in clashes—and in their media coverage—between unarmed Black citizens and armed white police officers.

Another significant case is the protests in Chile that began in October 2019, also relevant for understanding recourse to violence in recent social mobilizations (Palacios-Valladares, 2020). The violent confrontation between mobilized citizens—coming from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds—and the Carabineros police has been interpreted as an expression of the overflow of structural inequalities, especially in access to health care, education, and the pension system, among others, within a neoliberal framework (Molina, 2019). Likewise, these mobilizations have been understood as a critique of Pinochet's dictatorship, the consequences of which remain evident in Chile, as evidenced, for example, by the constitution written during that period.

The Colombian case is also illustrative. Faced with a State whose legitimacy was questioned from its beginnings—due to its stance on implementing the 2016 Peace Agreement—and with limited support from political allies, diverse civil actors converged in a mass mobilization to oppose reforms proposed by the government in 2019. The violent protests that occurred during the national strikes of 2019–2021—initially triggered by rejection of a proposed tax reform—were particularly complex because they involved both state agents and organized civilian actors. Among the most visible groups were rural indigenous populations and urban students, especially in Cali, who repeatedly clashed with law enforcement.

One of the most violent episodes was recorded in the country's southwest, where a confrontation occurred among members of the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca (CRIC), armed civilian groups, and police forces. This event highlighted the complex overlap among paramilitary violence, vandalism, and organized violence within the framework of social protest (Garzón & Sánchez, 2021). Added to this was the tenuous relationship between the government and movement leaders, marked by mutual refusal to recognize the legitimacy of opposing stances. This led to radicalization of the protests and intensified repression, accentuated by the growing militarization of the conflict.

Another important case was the violent mobilization associated with institutional rupture in Bolivia, triggered in 2016 when President Evo Morales decided to ignore the results of a referendum and run for re-election. As a result,

the electoral process began to lose legitimacy, and in 2019, social protests spread across the country, becoming increasingly violent (Miranda, 2019). Morales's resignation, the interregnum of Jeanine Áñez—a period during which elections were postponed on several occasions—and Áñez's eventual reappearance on the political scene called the country's democratic stability into question. This environment, in turn, gave rise to new violent mobilizations, some directed against high-profile political figures, including the president himself.

Another representative example of recent violent social movements has been registered in the United States, driven by the activity of groups such as the Proud Boys, QAnon, and Boogaloo. These far-right groupings—some of which emerged as a reaction to BLM have engaged in violent clashes with their opponents (Biscontini, 2021). Although their members had already formed networks and participated in violent acts in various U.S. cities—such as Charlottesville—their visibility increased markedly in January 2021 when they led violent episodes in response to the results of the November 2020 presidential election, in which Trump failed to win re-election (Weiner, 2021). After these events, their discourse radicalized further, incorporating pseudo-religious arguments linked to conspiracy theories. According to their supporters, the elections that resulted in President Joe Biden's victory lacked legitimacy and were branded as fraudulent.

Criticism of institutions has not only manifested in discourse but has also spurred explicit calls for coordinated action against people, groups, and institutions, widely disseminated through social media. The culminating point was the assault on the Capitol on January 6, 2021, when armed civilians linked to the movements mentioned above stormed the building with the clear objective of thwarting the inauguration of the new president. That event had tragic consequences, including five deaths (Duignan, 2022).

These movements counted on the support of certain sectors of the political class, including some Republican senators with extreme positions (such as Taylor Greene). To better understand these violent demonstrations, it is important to consider the ambiguous stance Donald Trump adopted during his administration. His refusal to condemn many of the acts that preceded the Capitol assault was interpreted by many as a form of tacit solidarity or support for these groups. Moreover, the scale of the violence forced social media to impose limits on inciting speech, which, in the first quarter of 2021, facilitated coordinated actions across various cities nationwide.

It is important to stress that the radicalization of several protest movements occurred during the pandemic. Lockdown measures decreed by various

governments, the overload experienced by health personnel, and the economic losses suffered by broad sectors of the world population have served as triggers for social mobilizations across diverse regions. In particular, riots with violent expressions intensified between 2019 and 2021 (ACLED, 2021). According to ACLED data (2021), the pandemic drastically altered the pattern of violence in social disturbances. Before the health crisis, clashes between civilian actors predominated; however, after that point, state forces became the main targets of violence in approximately 75 % of cases.

Analytical Discussion

In addition to individual motivations, factors traditionally considered to explain participation in protests include participants' socialization, their socioeconomic status, the political context, and the involvement of individuals not necessarily aligned with a specific ideology (Andrain & Apter, 1995; Orum, 1974). These factors are a crucial starting point for analyzing recent mobilizations and, from there, identifying the new traits that characterize violent social mobilization.

Within social mobilizations, violent demonstrations have tended to direct their actions against the State, which has become their main target. This violence constitutes a form of radicalized critique, reflecting a growing distrust of political institutions, which are perceived as follows:

- anti-democratic;
- opposed to citizens' interests;
- indifferent to civil society's demands;
- obsolete;
- complicit in international conspiracies.

According to Kostelka and Rovny (2019), this vision of the State—conceived as an entity at which protest is aimed—demonstrates that violent social movements are not necessarily identified with left-wing politics.

Regarding justifications based on conspiracy theories, the sense of threat stands as the principal trigger of calls for social mobilization that devolve into violent acts. While perceived threat is usually linked to internal institutions, in cases motivated by these theories, an external actor is also identified, whose influence is indirect and diffuse.

Another relevant aspect of recent violent mobilizations is the political context in which they occurred. In some cases, violent episodes occurred before or

after national elections; in others, they arose as reactions to unpopular political announcements or controversial reforms. Empirical studies, such as that by Giugni and Grasso (2019), emphasize the importance of analyzing the links between these moments of crisis and the configuration of participants' networks during mobilizations. In this sense, electoral participation is not incompatible with social mobilization, even when the latter takes violent forms.

To properly understand and characterize these episodes of violence, the temporal factor is decisive in at least two senses. First, it is essential to analyze the interaction between each country's temporal dynamics of political agenda and the development of social mobilizations. Second, it is necessary to consider the chronology of events, since this permits identification of evolution, ruptures, and transformations of the processes in question.

Although most of the mobilizations analyzed had a national scope, they did not manifest homogeneously. The pandemic, in particular, transformed the use of public space and revealed the interactions among traditional public space, private spaces, and virtual platforms—each with different reach and dynamics—which began to operate as interrelated political arenas (Leitner et al., 2008). Thus, demonstrations did not only take place on the streets of major cities, but also spread to private places—such as residential buildings—and were replicated through virtual actions on social media. This multi-sited expansion of demonstrations enabled the consolidation of denser networks among protesters and the coordination of a greater diversity of social profiles.

Moreover, this singular context revealed an unusual capacity for adaptation in social demonstrations, something uncommon in previous scenarios. For example, protest calls acquired a high-immediacy dynamic, allowing demonstrators to react in real time both to attempts at appeasement or co-optation by political actors and to repressive strategies by the security forces.

In the contemporary context, the media play a fundamental role in shaping political events and exert significant influence on the development of violent social mobilizations (Lance & Segerberg, 2013). First, these media—especially digital platforms such as Twitter and Facebook—have been essential for organizing and disseminating calls, thereby facilitating network formation (Bailo & Vromen, 2017). Second, mass media capable of reaching national audiences have actively contributed to constructing narratives around protests, shaping public perception of their evolution, the actors involved, and the disputed issues (Herkenrath & Knol, 2011; Lee, 2014). Finally, media have not only served as platforms for visibility but

also become strategic actors, both in containing violence and in amplifying it by reproducing polarizing discourse or inciting confrontation.

In recent mobilizations—such as the protests in Colombia or the rise of the supremacist movement in the United States—a multi-scalar coordination of collective actions is observed, structured through local, regional, and national networks. Although this type of configuration is not entirely new, its particularity in these contexts lies in the overlap and interconnection of those scales (Giugni & Grasso, 2019). Local networks not only established links with regional networks that share similar demands but also connected with national networks, often through the strategic use of digital platforms. This coordination enabled greater visibility of actions carried out in peripheral territories that have historically been marginalized from political and media centers.

These mobilizations have also fostered the emergence of new actors with diverse social affiliations (Leitner et al., 2008). On the one hand, the inclusion of previously marginalized participants in the political sphere is evident—as is the case with new generations in countries such as Chile and Colombia—who now participate actively in deliberation and protest processes. On the other hand, actors with nontraditional trajectories and radical discourses have emerged—such as the Proud Boys, QAnon, and the Boogaloo movement—whose actions are characterized by an explicit rejection of dialogue as a mechanism for conflict resolution and by confrontational rhetoric that destabilizes established institutional frameworks.

Plurality is a distinguishing trait of contemporary social mobilizations, including those that resort to violence. In a context marked by distrust of state institutions and amplified by the connective and diffusive capacity of social media, the coordination of shared demands has been facilitated, even when they arise from adverse realities. Sometimes violence is not due to a unified collective identity nor to a homogeneous social position. Instead, it channels a heterogeneous set of demands linked to gender issues, racial or class inequalities, and structural problems associated with exclusion and socioeconomic inequality in each country (Leitner et al., 2008).

Regarding the balance of power between mobilized actors and political authorities, it has been observed that the State's institutional position was fragile or in decline. Faced with perceived threats, decision-makers were forced to operate with a considerably reduced margin for action. In some cases, this pressure led them to adopt confrontational strategies that, although intended to reestablish order, carried high social and political costs in the event of failure (Goldstone &

Tilly, 2001). The Chilean case illustrates how, amid the escalation of the conflict, expressions of violence not only exceeded institutional containment mechanisms but also enabled the emergence of new social demands that put Sebastián Piñera's government into a crisis and a situation of retrenchment.

It should be noted that episodes of violent social mobilization are not always directed against the government. The relationship between movements and decision-makers can oscillate between direct confrontation and certain degrees of closeness or affinity. In this regard, to better understand the dynamics of these mobilizations, it is necessary to recognize that, beyond expressing generalized weariness, violent acts often target specific institutions. Whether political entities—such as electoral bodies in Bolivia—or social infrastructures—such as the public transportation system in Chile—these institutions tend to become visible and less controversial targets, positioning themselves as strategic catalysts for violent action.

To fully grasp this panorama, it is important to highlight that the role of security forces varies significantly depending on the context in which violent demonstrations unfold. Rahtz (2016) points out that, in the United States, for example, historical tensions between police forces and Black communities are the epicenter of a deep social fissure whose specificity complicates any direct comparison with other social realities. Moreover, police actions are not homogeneous across sociogeographic spaces. This disparity is a determining factor in shaping protest dynamics and the degree of violence they may reach.

A Model to Interpret and Analyze Contentious Politics

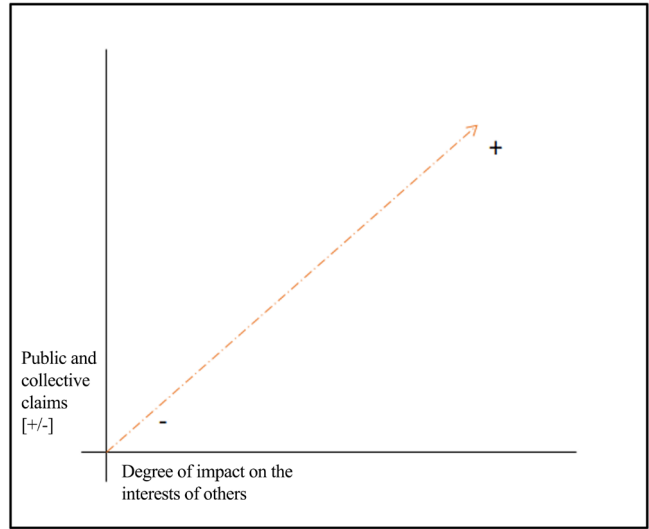
This section proposes a diagram based on three interrelated axes: (i) the political context or background; (ii) the role of the actors involved; and (iii) the options or courses of action available. Along these axes, a series of charts is introduced that synthesizes key information to elucidate their interaction, thereby facilitating a comprehensive, analytical reading of violent social mobilization processes.

The model is framed within a perspective that conceives mobilizations as contentious phenomena, that is, “mechanisms and processes operating at multiple levels are explanatory devices or tools that elaborate hypothesized relationships” (Lichbach, 2010, p. 545).

There is, of course, nonviolent contentious politics as well as violent contentious politics. Although both overlap in practice and interact at different levels, this analysis focuses on the mechanisms, actors, and effects associated with the violent dimension of social mobilization. It is important to emphasize that, even in its most

violent expression, these mobilizations remain forms of political contention—in the sense proposed by Tilly (2017)—since participants come into conflict with the interests of institutional or social actors. Furthermore, this type of contention retains its political nature insofar as claims, whether made by governments, individuals, or organizations involved, are publicly and collectively voiced. In this regard, the degree of violence tends to intensify as the impact on third parties' interests increases. That is, as the effect on specific actors—institutional or social—becomes more severe, the severity of the conflict also increases (see Figure 1).

Figura 1. *Expression of the Severity of Violent Social Mobilization within the Framework of Contentious Politics*

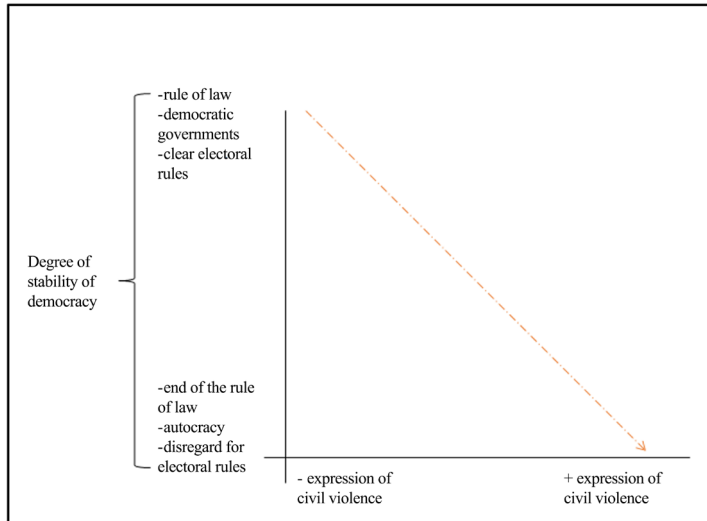


Source. Own elaboration.

This correlation should be interpreted in light of Tilly (2017), who argues that state weakness favors the proliferation of interpersonal violence among the population. Conversely, when the government exercises strong and legitimate authority, such violence tends to decrease significantly.

On the other hand, according to Walter (2022), the fragility inherent to democracies—characterized by weakness of the rule of law, the presence of autocratic governments or disregard for electoral rules, among other factors—also increases the risk that cycles of civil violence will break out (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. *Relationship between Democracy and Violence*



Source. Own elaboration.

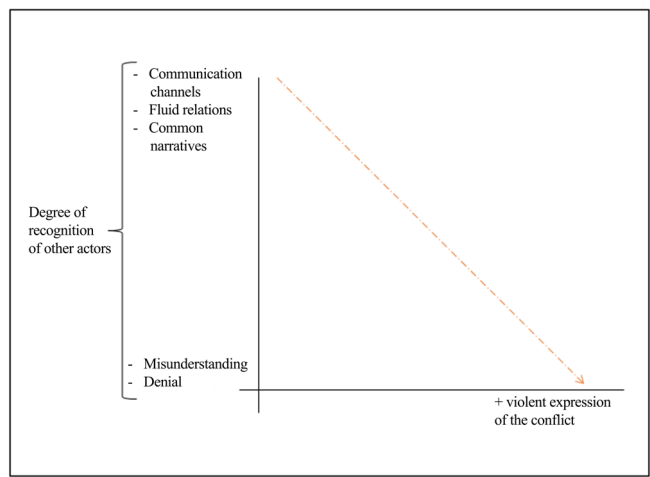
As a framework for analyzing contentious events, the proposed scheme identifies transactions between governmental agents (strong or weak) and other political actors, whether they act within institutional structures or from outside as opponents. Therefore, the model must consider disputes over public policy understood broadly, since these constitute the core of any contentious politics claims.

In contentious politics, the classification of actors involved is central to defining and understanding violence. Following Tilly's approach, these actors may be grouped into different categories: governmental agents, traditional political actors, opposition forces, non-mobilized citizens and other external actors.

According to Tilly (2017), the government has the faculty to recognize and legitimize —or, conversely, to delegitimize— the participation of certain actors in political contention. However, within such contention, recognition does not operate unidirectionally but is constructed among actors in conflict. In this sense, the greater the degree of mutual recognition, the lower the probability that cycles of violence will be triggered (see Figure 3).

To the extent that denial or incomprehension of the other predominates, symbolic boundaries that separate an “us” from a “them” are reinforced. This dynamic hampers the construction of shared narratives, restricts communication channels, and weakens the possibility of establishing links between different actors. As a result, the likelihood of violent episodes increases.

Figure 3. Relationship between Recognition and Violence



Source. Own elaboration.

According to Tilly (2017), in contentious episodes, certain individuals—*political entrepreneurs*—may exert significant influence over mobilized collectives or the State, thereby directly shaping the forms that collective violence takes. These actors can influence its intensity, territorial distribution, and modes of expression. Their relevance lies in their active participation in coordinating mobilization actions, which, in that sense, can expand or restrict the margins of recognition and facilitate connections among different groups and networks involved in contention (see Figure 4).

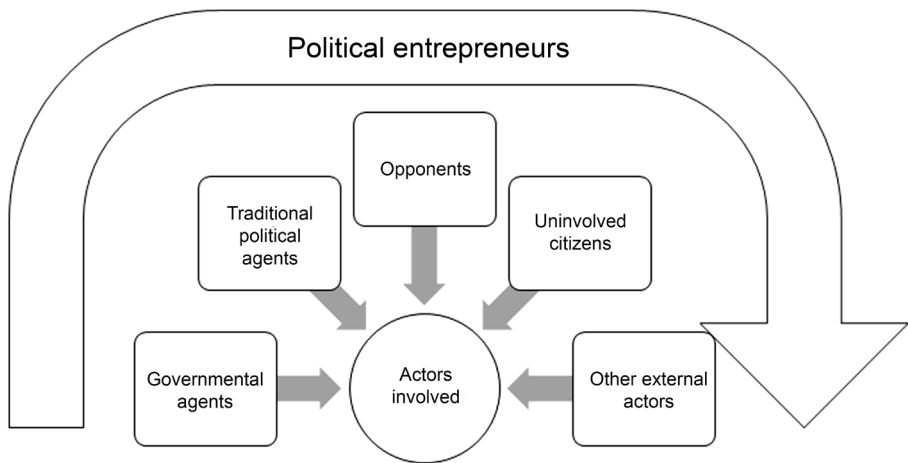
However, the exercise of violence is not reducible exclusively to factors linked to recognition or denial. During mobilizations, violent experiences may arise in response to interventions by multiple participants whose motivations and modes of action do not always align with the logic of reciprocal legitimization (Tilly, 2017). In this regard, it is necessary to consider the presence of *specialists in violence*, both inside and outside the state apparatus.

According to Tilly (2017),

collective violence rises with the extent that organizations specializing in deployment of coercive means—armies, police forces, coordinated banditry, pirate confederations, mercenary enterprises, protection rackets, and the like—increase in size, geographic scope, resources, and coherence. (p. 284)

Evidently, some of these organizations are involved in violent social mobilizations.

Figure 4. *Political Entrepreneurs*



Source. Taken from Tilly (2017).

From the elements identified in the empirical analyses, it can be stated that violence arises not only when organizations expand territorially but also when they begin to interfere with one another. This happens, for example, when they share the same physical space and undesired encounters occur, or when their agendas overlap around disputed issues. As Lichbach (2010) warns, local interactions among actors specialized in the use of violence are also one of the—often involuntary—causes of violent cycles, whether in revolutionary or counterrevolutionary contexts.

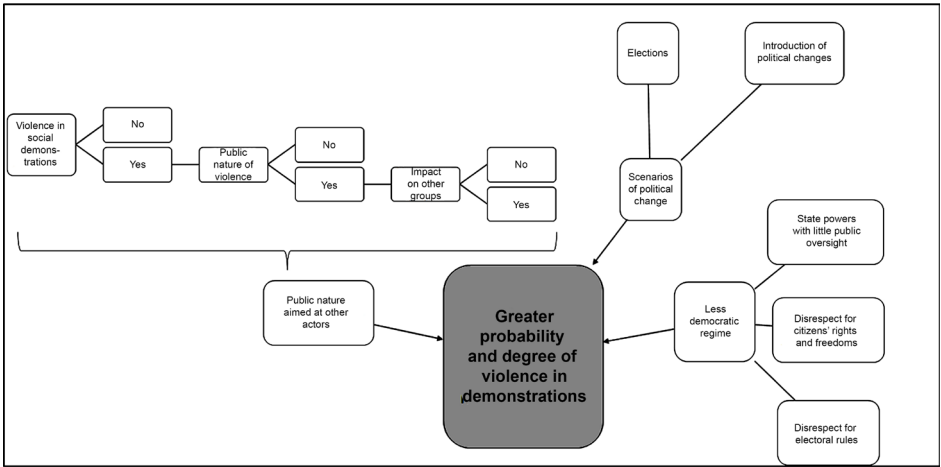
Following Demetriou (2012), it can be argued that processes of violence in recent mobilizations can be decomposed into a series of action mechanisms that are activated at specific moments and places. This perspective is fundamental for analyzing the functioning of action networks among the various actors involved.

For example, direct action networks—with local and regional reach—and indirect networks—which operate mainly through digital platforms—have been identified. Both types of networks acquire significant analytical relevance for the study of violence escalation, especially in cases where temporal synchronies and convergences in the trajectories of actions deployed simultaneously in virtual and physical spaces are recorded.

Thus, the formation of simultaneous networks operating in the same space—whether virtual or physical—favors the escalation of violence. These networks tend to incentivize participation in violent acts and increase the risk of higher-intensity attacks. In general terms, Figure 5 synthesizes the central axes to understand the

factors that trigger violence and explain the increase in its severity in contemporary social demonstrations.

Figure 5. *Analytical Framework: Factors that Trigger Violence and Increase Its Severity in Violent Social Mobilizations*



Source. Own elaboration.

Conclusions

Traditionally, violent events have been analyzed from a microsociological perspective, focusing on the web of links among independent actors (McAdam, 1986; Walgrave et al., 2021). Likewise, protest studies have developed from an interdisciplinary perspective combining elements of sociology and psychology, focusing on identifying the motives of contention: grievances between actors, identities in dispute, and emotions at play (Duncan, 2018; Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013). However, the analysis proposed here argues that, although these factors are relevant, focusing exclusively on them risks making invisible other structural elements and cross-cutting dynamics that underlie different types of violent demonstrations, even when they exhibit very diverse characteristics.

This perspective, in contrast, privileges a comparative reading of the broader context (Quaranta, 2015; Vráblíková, 2014). The objective is to elucidate the roles

of institutions, the economic and political panorama, and broader social structures in triggering and intensifying violent social mobilizations.

From this comparative reading, diagrams were developed that enabled an analytical interpretation of the phenomenon, leading to the proposed model. These diagrams are valuable tools for identifying connections between the notion of violent social mobilization and its empirical application in different contexts. They also facilitate the development of more precise analyses focused on the key aspects that structure this type of demonstration.

The application of this model, however, does not imply ignoring the ambiguous nature of violence in the political sphere. This ambiguity manifests, for example, in: (i) the constant dispute over the notion of legitimate force in different political systems (as partially illustrated in this chapter); (ii) the existence of a continuum between permitted actions, negligence and harm perpetrated by governmental agents; and (iii) the active or passive participation of these agents in interactions that involve intentional harm (Tilly, 2022b).

In this respect, the analytical framework developed does not aim to offer a univocal view. On the contrary, it seeks to highlight the need to consider decisive factors—strategic, triggering, agency-related, and interactional—that allow for an understanding of the conflict inherent to the political event.

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Chapter 3

Culture of Peace and Terrorism: Towards the Reconstruction and Restoration of Public Order*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.03>

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Abstract: This chapter starts with an analysis of the concepts of *culture of peace* and *terrorism*, exploring their differences and similarities. Based on their characteristics, it suggests that a culture of peace, despite its differences from terrorism, can serve as a strategic tool for preventing violence and restoring public order in situations where terrorism has caused chaos. The chapter provides an initial reflection on the idea of *public order*, seen as a key element in managing social coexistence and the exercise of state authority. Building on this, it develops the conceptual frameworks of a culture of peace and terrorism to examine their theoretical bases, practical aspects, and application contexts. Afterwards, a comparative analysis of both approaches is presented, aiming to identify not only their structural differences but also potential points of convergence, allowing us to view a culture of peace as a tool for terrorism prevention and restoring order in violence-affected scenarios.

Keywords: Culture of peace; terrorism; conflict; peace

* This book chapter results from the research project "Culture of Peace and Its Relationship with Security in the Western Hemisphere," conducted by the Masa Crítica group at Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto," which is categorized as A1 by the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (Minciencias) under code COL0123247. The views and results presented are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the participating institutions.

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APA Citation: Cardona Orozco, A. F. (2026). Culture of Peace and Terrorism: Towards the Reconstruction and Restoration of Public Order. In A. Cerón Rincón & V. Torrijos (Eds.), *Culture of Peace: Reflections Drawn from the Notion of Security* (pp. 51-70). Sello Editorial ESDEG. <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.03>

CULTURE OF PEACE: REFLECTIONS DRAWN FROM THE NOTION OF SECURITY

Print ISBN: 978-628-7818-47-7

ISBN digital: 978-628-7818-48-4

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484>

Human Rights and IHL Collection

Sello Editorial ESDEG

Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto"

Bogotá D.C., Colombia

2026



Introduction

Discussing a culture of peace and terrorism in the same document is no easy task. Each of these topics, considered separately, encompasses a series of dimensions and characteristics that could give rise to extensive and complex treatises.

The effort to understand the need for a culture of peace in a world where conflicts seem relentless points, at the same time, to a historical paradox: humanity has repeatedly resorted to war to preserve order and advance towards the consolidation of certain social groups or states. Historically, war has not only functioned as an instrument for imposing interests and ensuring cultural survival, but also as a lens through which to interpret the evolution of societies and the global order. This dual dimension—destructive and formative—urges us to reconsider the potential of a culture of peace as a sustainable and legitimate alternative to the persistence of violence as a mechanism for conflict resolution.

From this perspective, understanding the dimensions and implications of war requires applying *polemology*, an approach that enables a broader, more interdisciplinary understanding of warfare. This approach allows us to detach—at least partially—war from a strictly military conception (Llantén-Quiroz, 2021).

However, with human and social progress, both war and its forms of execution have undergone profound, accelerated transformation. The ways in which current conflicts are waged are very different from those employed in antiquity or in different cultural traditions. Today, conflicts are fought through complex strategies that integrate cutting-edge technologies and the deployment of actions in new arenas, such as social media and, more generally, cyberspace.

Under these circumstances, peacebuilding acquires an undeniable centrality and increasing relevance. Its objective is not only to achieve peace in the abstract, but to chart a concrete course for restoring order in societies affected by conflict.

Thus, peacebuilding is configured as a fundamental tool for societies—and the international community—by contributing to the prevention of human suffering and the reconstruction of social cohesion. However, recognizing the vital nature of this process implies accepting that its implementation requires a firm and sustained commitment from the actors involved in the conflict.

For the purposes of this document, it is crucial to understand that terrorism is perceptibly, albeit tangentially, intertwined with the phenomena of war and peace. While terrorism is not a recent phenomenon, since the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington, studies on the subject have proliferated globally. The objective has been to offer explanations, from diverse perspectives and contexts, that allow us to address and mitigate the effects of terrorist acts (Cardona-Orozco et al., 2022).

While some key elements have already been addressed, it is important to emphasize that a culture of peace and terrorism represent diametrically opposed visions of how individuals and societies confront conflict and seek coexistence. A culture of peace promotes the peaceful resolution of disputes, respect for human rights, and the building of inclusive societies; terrorism resorts to violence, fear, and destruction to impose a political, social, or religious agenda.

Given the above, countless questions could be raised about the relationship between terrorism and peacebuilding. However, for the purposes of this paper, the following question is addressed: How can peacebuilding contribute to restoring order in areas where terrorism has been a central factor in violence?

The initial answer is that peacebuilding and its tools must lead, clearly and decisively, to the restoration of order in those areas where terrorism has been the primary cause of violence. In this regard, if this objective is not achieved, any peacebuilding effort will lack sustainable long-term results, which could perpetuate terrorist acts.

Public order is defined as the condition of social peace, sustained by the full and effective functioning of the legal system, which guarantees peaceful coexistence, citizen security, and the institutional development of the community.

To develop this proposal, the chapter will be organized into three sections. The first will be conceptual, addressing the definitions of *peacebuilding* and *terrorism*, their main characteristics, and their implications. In the second part, the elements underlying these concepts will be contrasted, with reference to specific cases in which it is possible to identify paths toward the restoration of order. Finally, the third section will present the general conclusions on the topic, integrating the findings and reflections derived from the analysis.

From a methodological point of view, this chapter adopts a qualitative, analytical-descriptive approach, based on a literature review of the topics addressed. This methodological perspective allows for an in-depth approach to the central concepts, favoring, from an inductive logic, the transition from the general to the particular. Thus, it seeks to identify specific elements that demonstrate the relationship between these concepts, with a view to establishing general patterns or explaining the singularities of a given reality (Hernández et al., 2014).

Theoretical Framework

In line with the general approach, this section aims to elaborate on the concepts of a *culture of peace* and *terrorism*, which are central to the analysis.

Culture of Peace

A culture of peace is an approach that promotes peaceful, constructive coexistence among individuals and communities. It is based on fundamental values such as respect for human rights, gender equality, tolerance, non-violence, and social justice. From this perspective, it promotes dialogue, peaceful conflict resolution, and the building of inclusive and equitable societies. More than an abstract ideal, a culture of peace represents a concrete commitment to building communities capable of coping with conflict situations and protecting the rights of individuals, regardless of their creed, race, or political ideology (United Nations, 1999).

To complement this and offer a broader understanding of the concept, the notion of a culture of peace will be broken down into its two fundamental components: culture and peace. In this regard, *culture* is understood as the set of symbolic elements that guide human behavior, especially within social groups or collectives, and that define a particular lifestyle (Muñoz & Molina, 2010). The concept of peace, whose etymology derives from the Latin term *pax*, is conceived as the set of human actions aimed at preserving well-being, both individually and collectively.

To understand the objectives of a culture of peace, it is essential to analyze the concept of *peace*. A deep understanding of this term not only clarifies the central purpose of this approach but also provides the necessary foundation for interpreting and formulating strategies more effectively aimed at its construction and maintenance.

In this respect, it is necessary to understand peace holistically, enabling us to reflect on the type of peace we desire, its fundamental characteristics, and the challenges inherent in achieving it. Therefore, it is pertinent to consider two

essential concepts of peace studies (the discipline dedicated to the study of peace): positive peace and negative peace.

Positive peace can be defined as a situation in which cooperative relationships are consolidated among different actors—both state and non-state—in order to build a stable, lasting peace. This form of peace is not imposed through the use of force, but rather built through dialogue, the identification of common goals, and shared benefits among the parties involved (David, 2008). Negative peace, on the other hand, is conceived as the absence of direct violence between states or other actors. Its main focus is eliminating the factors that fuel armed conflicts, prioritizing violence prevention, and achieving security among the warring parties (David, 2008).

From the above, it is possible to infer that a culture of peace is oriented toward the consolidation of positive peace. This serves a dual purpose: on the one hand, it acts preventively by addressing the structural causes that generate and perpetuate violence; on the other, it enables a broad framework for intervention focused on the management and peaceful resolution of conflicts.

However, this approach involves multiple levels of complexity, given that promoting a culture of peace does not guarantee the formation of fully secure or conflict-free societies. Nevertheless, it can become a fundamental pillar of peacebuilding¹ by providing normative, pedagogical, and ethical frameworks to transform the factors that fuel violence. In this context, a culture of peace contributes significantly to overcoming conflicts and restoring social, political, and institutional order.

Terrorism

When addressing the phenomenon of terrorism, it is impossible not to recall the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington, followed by other episodes that shook the international community, such as those in London, Madrid, Paris, Brussels, and Tunis. At the beginning of the 21st century, terrorism became established as one of the most complex phenomena and one of the main threats to international security.

However, while acts associated with terrorism continue to cause fear and uncertainty, a significant difficulty persists: the absence of a universally accepted

¹ The concept of peacebuilding refers to a set of strategic actions aimed at preventing the resurgence of armed or violent conflicts by strengthening the institutional capacities of the State. The objective is to restore order and create conditions that allow for the consolidation of sustainable peace. These actions include political, social, economic, and transitional justice interventions designed to address the root causes of violence and to promote reconciliation and social cohesion (United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office, 2010).

definition of the term. This lack of consensus worries both security agencies and the academic community, as it hinders the development of coherent strategies to prevent and combat it.

When attempting to define the concept of *terrorism*, the existence of multiple theoretical approaches becomes evident. These have sought to identify a series of elements and characteristics that allow for the construction of a sufficiently broad definition, free from ideological biases or political influences (Bruce, 2013; Richards, 2014). In this regard, several academics, including Laqueur (1977), Schmid (2012), and Schmid and Jongman (1988), have addressed the phenomenon from different perspectives, and their contributions have been fundamental to the development of the academic debate.

However, one of the most significant contributions in this area is Schmid's (2012) systematic and exhaustive review of the specialized literature, aimed at establishing an academically rigorous definition of terrorism. Based on this work, the author identified 12 key elements that could serve as the basis for an operational definition acceptable internationally.

1. A doctrine presumed to be effective as a tactic for instilling fear, exerting political coercion, and carrying out violent actions in a calculated and demonstrative manner, frequently through conspiratorial strategies.
2. Terrorism can manifest itself in three distinct ways: i) as a form of repression illegally exercised by the State; (ii) as a propaganda agitation strategy used by non-state actors for ideological or political purposes; (iii) as an illicit tactic employed in the context of irregular armed conflicts.
3. Physical violence can take various forms: from lethal acts (bombings or armed assaults) to actions that seek to generate fear without causing immediate deaths (kidnapping or hostage-taking). It can also include systematic sequences of violence, such as enforced disappearances, torture, and murder.
4. Victimization is framed within a communicative process through which perpetrators issue demands directed at individuals, groups, or states, with the aim of exerting pressure, influencing decision-making, or supporting causes of an ethnic, political, or religious nature.
5. The term *terrorism* derives from the concept of *terror*, which refers to intense states of anxiety, panic, or fear. These states not only affect the direct victims of violent acts, but also spread among individuals or groups who share characteristics or affinities with them.

6. A distinctive characteristic of terrorism is the intentional selection of victims who, generally, do not belong to military forces or security agencies. They are primarily civilians or non-combatant personnel.
7. The direct victims of terrorist acts are not an end in themselves, but rather serve as a means to transmit a message of mass reach.
8. Terrorist acts can be perpetrated by a wide variety of actors, ranging from isolated individuals and small groups to decentralized transnational networks. Furthermore, in some cases, these acts may be sponsored, either directly or indirectly, by states or carried out by state agents.
9. The violence exercised in terrorist acts is political in nature.
10. The immediate objective of a terrorist act is to induce terror and intimidation, destabilize a community or group, and coerce and demoralize its members. Through these actions, the perpetrators seek to provoke specific reactions that allow them to consolidate or secure power that favors their political, ideological, or social interests and objectives.
11. The motivations behind terrorism are diverse, including political, ideological, and religious factors.
12. Terrorist acts should not be understood as isolated events, but as integral components of deliberate and sustained campaigns of violence. These campaigns seek to establish a prolonged climate of uncertainty and widespread fear, with the strategic purpose of influencing political, social, and cultural processes.

While the elements formulated by Schmid are of great importance, they do not exhaust the perspectives necessary to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. In this respect, it is appropriate to complement the analysis with the definition proposed by De la Corte (2006):

A succession of violent and intimidating acts perpetrated against a non-combatant population and designed to psychologically influence a number of people far greater than their direct victims, and thus achieve some objective, almost always of a political nature (as cited in Cardona-Orozco et al., 2022)

A conceptual distinction between classical terrorism and contemporary or post-9/11 terrorism is necessary. While both are similar, the terrorism that emerged after the September 11 attacks incorporates additional dimensions. One of these is its transnational character, which implies that the demands transcend national borders; that is, they are not limited to a single group or country. Furthermore, the

integration of technology in a globalized context not only amplifies the dissemination of these claims through the media but also enables the actors involved to operate covertly. Finally, a convergence with other actors and forms of criminal activity is observed (Montero-Moncada & Cancelado-Franco, 2022).

Regarding terrorism, the multiplicity of existing definitions should not impede the recognition of its essential elements. Taking the aspects listed in Table 1 as a reference, any conceptual approach should be grounded in these elements, as they synthesize the central characteristics of the phenomenon and can serve as a common basis for academics, politicians, jurists, and other relevant actors. This facilitates the construction of analytical and strategic frameworks aimed at its understanding, prevention, and the formulation of effective public policies.

Table 1. *Main Characteristics of Terrorism for a Definition*

	Element	Frecuency %
1	Violence, force	83.5
2	Political	65
3	Fear, terror emphasised	51
4	Threat	47
5	(Psychological) effects and (anticipated) reactions	41.5
6	Victim - target differentiation	37.5
7	Purposive, planned, systematic, organised action	32
8	Method of vombat, strategy, tactic	30.5
9	Extranormality, in breach of accepted rules, without humanitarian constraints	30
10	Ciercion, extortion, induction of compliance	28
11	Publicity aspect	21.5
12	Arbitrariness; impresonal, random character; indiscrimination	21
13	Civilians, noncombatants, neutrals, outsiders as victims	17.5
14	Intimidation	17
15	Innocence of victims emphasised	15.5
16	Group, movement, organisation as perpetrator	14
17	Symbolic aspect, demonstration to others	13.5
18	Incalculability, unpredictability, unexpectedness of occurrence of violence	9
19	Clandestine, covert nature	9
20	Repetitiveness; serial or campaign character of violence	7
21	Criminal	6
22	Demands made on third parties	4

Fuente. Tomado de Bruce (2013).

Lastly, it is important to point out that terrorist acts, however media-covered, dramatic, and impactful they may be, do not in themselves constitute a threat capable of dismantling the political, legal, or social order of a state. While they can trigger episodes of destabilization and social upheaval, their effects are usually temporary and do not compromise the state's *status quo*. However, when a systematic and sustained campaign of terrorist acts takes shape, the impact is different: it produces a direct alteration of the established order, erodes trust in institutions, and increases perceptions of vulnerability, paving the way for prolonged periods of uncertainty, state weakening, and governance crises.

Culture of Peace and Terrorism

After examining the key definitions of the concepts that underpin this analysis, it is pertinent to delve deeper into the elements surrounding both the culture of peace and terrorism. The purpose of this exploration is to identify the points of tension and divergence between these two notions.

As a starting point, and based on the United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, it is recognized that a culture of peace is built on a set of principles and components that enable its development and consolidation. These elements form a normative and guiding framework that States can adopt as a common reference point to promote social environments grounded in non-violence, respect for human rights, justice, and international cooperation.

The first element highlighted is respect for life, the eradication of violence, and the active promotion of non-violence through education, dialogue, and cooperation. This component encompasses a set of factors and actions essential for the genuine and sustainable development of a culture of peace. Thus, the following key aspects are identified:

- A culture of peace promotes education oriented toward acquiring skills for the peaceful resolution of conflicts, the promotion of non-violence, and respect for diversity. Within this framework, peace education is based on the transmission of fundamental values and principles, such as justice, democracy, coexistence, respect, and cooperation. These values are integrated throughout the educational process, contributing to the holistic and integral development of the human being (Acevedo & Báez, 2018).
- Cooperation acquires special relevance in this context. While the document does not delve into its development, it can be conceptualized as the process by which different state entities coordinate to promote non-violence. Furthermore, this concept encompasses collaboration between states and international agencies.

The second element—or, more precisely, the set of aspects addressed in Resolution 53/243—focuses on respect for the rights of individuals and social groups (see c, f, g, and h)—is key. Within this framework, a culture of peace is based on the protection and promotion of fundamental rights, aiming to guarantee equality, dignity, and freedom for all people, regardless of their race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. From a broader perspective, its ultimate goal is to ensure full respect for these rights, emphasizing essential values such as equality, human dignity, freedom of expression, and integral development.

The third element is based on Article 1(c) and is subsequently reiterated in Article 3(d), which advocates for the peaceful settlement of disputes through mechanisms such as negotiation, dialogue, and consensus (United Nations, 1999). This perspective is essential to a culture of peace, as it underscores that one of its guiding principles is to establish pathways and alternatives that allow for the peaceful resolution of conflicts. In this regard, a culture of peace categorically rejects any form of violence as an instrument or means to achieve objectives, regardless of the party involved in the conflict.

In contrast, examining the main elements underlying terrorism, both theoretically and in practice, reveals a complex landscape that is difficult to understand. In this context, it is pertinent to revisit the characteristics outlined in Table 1. This analysis shows that terrorist acts are closely linked to violence and the intensity with which it manifests. Put differently, these acts constitute a spectrum of violence ranging from assaults to extreme and inhumane acts, such as beheadings and attacks with explosives.

Following this line of analysis, it is crucial to recognize that terrorism cannot be reduced to a single form of violence driven solely by political intentions. Rather, it is a multifaceted phenomenon that arises from diverse causes and motivations. Contrary to the widespread belief that associates contemporary terrorism with religious motivations—especially those linked to fundamentalist Islamic groups such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and Boko Haram—empirical and theoretical evidence reveals a plurality of origins in the genesis of terrorist groups. These can be related to left-wing ideologies, nationalisms, and other complex sociopolitical agendas, which underscores the heterogeneity of the terrorist phenomenon (Europol, 2021; Rapoport, 2002).

In this regard, terrorism serves diverse purposes and follows diverse logics, making it inappropriate to characterize it homogeneously. According to De la Corte (2006), drawing on Merari (1993), it is possible to identify at least four underlying logics of terrorist acts: propaganda by the deed, intimidation, provocation, the cultivation of chaos, and wars of attrition.

The first logic aims to transmit a message or spread a specific ideology and draws on the anarchist model developed by Kropotkin at the end of the 19th century. The second logic directs terrorist acts toward varied objectives, specific sectors, or concrete social groups, thereby configuring attacks against selective targets. The third seeks to provoke a popular reaction against the State, attributing to it actions or omissions in the face of the terrorist group's actions. Finally, the fourth logic seeks to create a scenario of chaos by demonstrating the State's and its institutions' incapacity to maintain order, which can lead to a change of government or to excessive support for the terrorist group's cause.

In short, terrorism is configured as a strategy within an irregular war, whose purpose is to create a sociopolitical situation so complex that both society and the State end up yielding to the demands of the terrorist group (De la Corte, 2006).

Divergences and Convergences between a Culture of Peace and Terrorism

Up to this point, a detailed analysis of the two central themes structuring this chapter has been presented. This section aims to examine the tensions and dissonances existing between them, as well as to identify possible areas of complementarity or conceptual dialogue. Within this framework, and based on the elements previously discussed, it is possible to point out a series of dimensions in which the culture of peace and terrorism occupy antagonistic and mutually exclusive positions:

- The culture of peace, as promoted by the UN, is based on principles such as peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. This approach contrasts radically with the logic of terrorism, which is based on the systematic use of violence as its central instrument of action and as a means to achieve political, ideological, or religious ends.
- A culture of peace actively promotes the construction of inclusive societies, based on tolerance and the creation of spaces for dialogue among the various sectors of society. In contrast, terrorism—and those who perpetrate it—operates from a logic that restricts the possibilities for dialogue and participation. Its actions are based, in many cases, on the exacerbation of differences—whether political, religious, ideological, or ethnic—which are exploited to justify exclusion, polarization, and, ultimately, the use of violence.
- Education is a fundamental pillar in building a culture of peace by contributing to the formation of citizens committed to non-violence,

respect for human rights, and democratic coexistence. In contrast, from the perspective of terrorism, peace education represents a direct threat to its aims, as it promotes values that counteract radicalization, intolerance, and the justification of violence. In this context, peace-oriented education becomes an obstacle to the objectives of terrorist groups, which often attack or discredit its principles and platforms for dissemination.

- The logic of a culture of peace is oriented toward conflict prevention and resolution through peaceful means, promoting social environments that guarantee the full exercise of fundamental rights. This approach prioritizes institutional strengthening, dialogue, and social justice as pillars of coexistence. In contrast, terrorism responds to diverse motivations—political, ideological, social, or religious—and resorts to violence as a mechanism to achieve particular objectives, openly defying the principles of coexistence, legality, and respect for human rights.

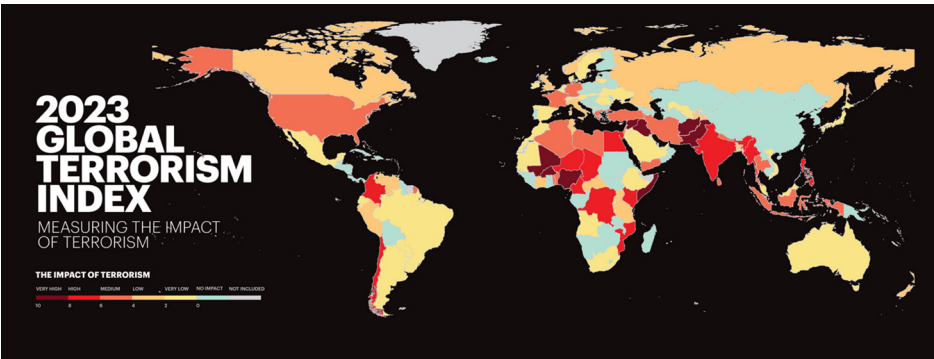
Now, it is pertinent to analyze certain elements that show a possible convergence between a culture of peace and terrorism. The analysis focuses on how a culture of peace can play a strategic role both in preventing the formation of terrorist groups and in containing and transforming contexts marked by extremist violence. From this perspective, a culture of peace not only acts as a preventive mechanism, aimed at strengthening social cohesion and reducing the structural conditions that favor radicalization, but also as a tool that can facilitate the reconstruction of the social fabric and the search for sustainable solutions in scenarios where terrorist actions have led to protracted conflicts.

In this vein, and considering a first scenario, it is important to recognize that a culture of peace—based on the peaceful resolution of conflicts, the promotion and protection of human rights, and the reduction of social factors that can lead to violent acts—constitutes a strategic tool for States.

From this perspective, a culture of peace should be conceived as a structural commitment of the State, whose promotion and consolidation require systematic and cross-cutting integration at all levels of education. This educational approach cannot be separated from the strengthening of a legitimate and democratic legal order that guarantees the full exercise of human rights and citizen participation under conditions of equity and justice. In this sense, both the rule of law and the strength of democratic institutions are fundamental pillars for shaping societies capable of reaching consensus, fostering environments of peaceful coexistence, promoting mutual respect, and driving social integration.

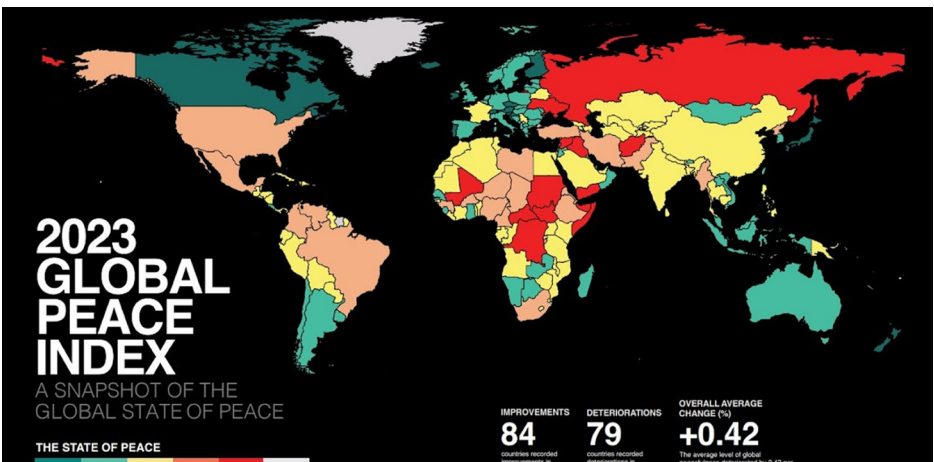
While the centrality of the State as a key agent in promoting a culture of peace is highlighted, it is necessary to recognize that it is not the only relevant actor in this process. Building a sustainable and authentic peace requires the participation of a wide variety of actors, including non-governmental organizations, social movements, political parties, public institutions, and citizens. In this network of collective efforts, the international community also plays a fundamental role, both through technical and financial cooperation and by promoting global normative standards on human rights, justice, and democratic governance.

Figure 1. Global Terrorism Index



Source. Taken from the Institute for Economics & Peace (2023).

Figure 2. Global Peace Index



Source. Taken from the Institute for Economics & Peace (2023).

Furthermore, based on Figures 1 and 2, a correlation can be established between territories with the highest levels of impact from terrorist acts and those with the lowest levels of peace, as measured by the Global Peace Index indicators. This relationship is especially relevant because it demonstrates that, although a culture of peace and terrorism represent antagonistic conceptions of social organization and human coexistence, their empirical link reveals that, in contexts where this culture is weak or incipient, the probability of terrorist acts tends to increase substantially. In contrast, societies that have managed to consolidate environments of sustained peace—where a culture of peace constitutes a structural component—exhibit a significantly lower incidence of extreme violence.

Continuing the analysis, given that a culture of peace is based on a preventive approach and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, it is relevant to highlight its role in contexts where terrorist groups have operated. In these scenarios, strengthening peace and building a culture of peace are consolidated as key strategies for understanding the transition from environments devastated by violence to others where institutional order has been restored, and lasting peace agreements have been established.

This approach not only allows us to address strategies aimed at overcoming armed conflict, but also the structural conditions necessary for peaceful and lasting coexistence. This is especially relevant in societies that have been affected by the actions of armed or terrorist groups. The specialized literature documents illustrative examples of this dynamic, such as the peace process in Northern Ireland, the Good Friday Agreement, the dissolution of ETA in Spain, and the agreements reached in countries like Guatemala and the Central African Republic (Clubb, 2016; David, 2008; Dyrstad et al., 2021).

To understand the relationship between a culture of peace and terrorism, it is essential to begin by defining the structural elements that differentiate them. A rigorous analytical approach requires recognizing that, beyond any points of convergence in post-conflict contexts, both notions stem from diametrically opposed worldviews. After examining their theoretical and practical implications, it becomes clear that the dichotomy between a culture of peace and terrorism is based primarily on the acceptance or rejection of violence as an instrument of action.

In this respect, a culture of peace seeks to develop mechanisms—based on education, culture, and diplomacy—to prevent or avoid the use of violence as a means of political action. Conversely, terrorism makes violence the core of its actions.

It follows that a culture of peace not only contributes to maintaining order but also, in turbulent contexts marked by violence, fosters conditions conducive to its restoration. On the other hand, terrorism is, by definition, an agent that undermines institutional stability and weakens the frameworks of democratic coexistence. This makes it one of the main obstacles to building a lasting peace and to the viability of agreements aimed at restoring political and social order.

Conclusions

Throughout this document, we have sought to define and delve into the concepts of culture of peace and terrorism, with the aim of analyzing their relationship from a critical perspective. This analysis has not only allowed us to identify the substantive differences between the two concepts but also to recognize elements that enable their integration as useful analytical frameworks for understanding contexts of transition. In particular, we have explored how these concepts can contribute to the interpretation of transformation processes in societies marked by dynamics of violence, facilitating the path towards scenarios of sustainable peace, characterized by the restoration of institutional order and the rebuilding of the social fabric.

In this regard, the analysis of the concept of culture of peace reveals that it is more than a mere abstract ideal. It encompasses, in fact, a set of principles, actions, and strategies aimed at both preventing violence and transforming conflictive contexts into peaceful scenarios. On the one hand, it creates conditions that inhibit the occurrence of violent acts; on the other, it promotes processes that facilitate the transition from contexts marked by violence to peaceful, sustainable environments. In this respect, a culture of peace is not only a desirable objective but also a concrete tool and a normative mandate supported by international agencies, especially the UN, which has established legal frameworks to promote societies grounded in democratic coexistence, mutual respect, and justice.

A fundamental component of a culture of peace is the strategic role attributed to education as an engine of social transformation. Educational processes are recognized as essential for strengthening values such as tolerance, empathy, respect for diversity, and intercultural dialogue—all indispensable for conflict prevention and the promotion of harmonious coexistence.

To this axiological dimension must be added an education oriented toward the knowledge, understanding, and effective exercise of human rights, enabling

the formation of conscious, critical citizens committed to social justice. From this perspective, education is not only a tool for transmitting knowledge but also an essential means of coordinating institutional and community efforts in building peaceful, inclusive, and democratic societies.

A culture of peace and terrorism are diametrically opposed visions for managing conflict and promoting harmonious coexistence. While a culture of peace is based on the peaceful resolution of conflicts, respect for human rights, and the building of inclusive and democratic societies, terrorism is based on the deliberate use of violence, fear, and coercion as means to achieve political, ideological, or religious objectives.

From this perspective, an initial conceptual approach suggests that there are no points of convergence between the two terms, leading to the conclusion that their joint analysis within a single frame is unfeasible.

Based on the analysis developed in this chapter and after considering various interpretive scenarios, it is concluded that a point of convergence exists between a culture of peace and terrorism. It is recognized that a culture of peace can play a key role in preventing terrorism by promoting values oriented toward peaceful coexistence, fostering education in and for peace, and promoting inclusion and social equity. Building societies based on mutual respect, tolerance, and justice helps reduce the structural conditions that, in many cases, facilitate the emergence and radicalization of terrorist groups.

However, for this preventative potential to materialize, sustained political and social will is essential, as is the commitment of the various actors involved in formulating real and effective agreements. This task, however, is far from simple and faces multiple challenges, both locally and globally.

Another finding aligns with the convergence between these two concepts, especially in contexts where terrorism has significantly impacted the established order. From this perspective, a culture of peace becomes a “toolbox” that the State can use to address and mitigate the factors underlying the formation and persistence of terrorist groups.

Clearly, this approach transcends mere prevention and moves into concrete action. In this context, a culture of peace plays a fundamental role in rebuilding spaces for coexistence, based on respect for human rights and the promotion of peaceful coexistence. It is also vital for restoring and re-establishing public order, which has been severely affected by prolonged and sustained acts of terrorism.

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Chapter 4

Violence and Complexity: An Approach from Security*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.04>

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Abstract: Violence is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon that has been addressed by multiple disciplines. This diversity of approaches has facilitated a more comprehensive understanding of its nature and its role in society. However, to fully understand its impact on the State and its security dynamics, a deeper analysis is required. This chapter aims to foster a critical and thorough reflection on the phenomenon of violence, addressing both its theoretical conceptualization and the methodologies employed for its empirical analysis. Methodologically, a qualitative, descriptive design was adopted, enabling a deep, contextualized analysis that elucidates the multiple dimensions and manifestations of violence. In conclusion, the imperative need to transcend disciplinary boundaries in the study of violence is highlighted, thus fostering a holistic, profound, and pluralistic understanding of the phenomenon. Furthermore, the relevance of the culture of peace is emphasized as a fundamental epistemological and practical strategy that not only contributes to a more complete understanding of the phenomenon but also to the formulation of effective policies and actions to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violence across diverse social and political contexts.

Keywords: Complexity; culture of peace; State; security; violence

*This book chapter results from the research project "Culture of Peace and Its Relationship with Security in the Western Hemisphere," conducted by the Masa Crítica group at Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto," which is categorized as A1 by the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (Minciencias) under code COL0123247. The views and results presented are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the participating institutions.

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APA Citation: Barrientos Martínez, B. R. (2026). Violence and Complexity: An Approach from Security. In A. Cerón Rincón & V. Torrijos (Eds.), *Culture of Peace: Reflections Drawn from the Notion of Security* (pp. 71-92). Sello Editorial ESDEG.
<https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.04>

CULTURE OF PEACE: REFLECTIONS DRAWN FROM THE NOTION OF SECURITY

Print ISBN: 978-628-7818-47-7

ISBN digital: 978-628-7818-48-4

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484>

Human Rights and IHL Collection

Sello Editorial ESDEG

Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto"

Bogotá D.C., Colombia

2026



Introduction

Although there is no universally accepted definition, violence can be understood as an omnipresent phenomenon (Robles, 2004). This concept manifests itself in a wide variety of cultural contexts, from gender-based violence to armed conflicts in different regions of the world. Thus, violence is presented as a cross-cutting axis of human culture.

Violence is configured as a complex and multidimensional object of study that, despite having been extensively addressed by a diversity of actors—from academic research centers to governmental and international agencies, both state and non-state—continues to give rise to a multiplicity of interpretations. The heterogeneity in the definition of the concept and the methodologies used to analyze it has created a landscape marked by ambiguity, in which the phenomenon is addressed across different disciplines, each with its own theoretical frameworks, analytical approaches, and specific purposes.

Although violence can be conceived as a form of language or expression inherent to the individual, society, and even the State itself, it is the latter that ultimately takes responsibility for mitigating it. It is therefore incumbent upon this entity to promote alternatives that build more peaceful paths to prevent human self-destruction.

The State is not the only actor capable of addressing violence, a phenomenon with deep social roots. However, in the complex and endless search for its causes and consequences, the State repeatedly consolidates itself as a key and indispensable agent, whose participation is essential to understanding the problem and confronting and mitigating its effects.

The security approach—whether in its national, human, or international dimension—presents itself as a relevant perspective for the analysis of violence.

However, this approach faces significant intellectual challenges in grasping the complexity of the phenomenon, since, as mentioned, violence has been addressed from multiple disciplines and frames that, far from offering a unified vision, contribute to its conceptual ambiguity. Consequently, it is necessary to transcend reductionist perspectives and move towards a more comprehensive approach, one that allows us to capture the multidimensionality of violence and, from there, pave the way for its decomplexification through a culture of peace.

The purpose of this chapter is to offer a critical reflection on violence, addressing its conceptualization, the methodologies used to study it, and exploring the potential of a culture of peace as an alternative for confronting this complex phenomenon. To this end, the chapter is divided into four sections: i) violence as an object of study; ii) the need to make its analysis more complex; iii) a culture of peace as an alternative approach; and iv) conclusions and recommendations.

From a methodological standpoint, this work is framed within a qualitative paradigm and adopts a descriptive approach, relying on documentary research. The information was organized into three categories: i) the theoretical analysis of violence; ii) complexity as a method; and iii) theories surrounding the culture of peace. To complement these sources, empirical data on violence in various regions of the world were incorporated, drawn from official reports, documents issued by international agencies—both governmental and non-governmental—and research articles published in indexed journals. Based on this corpus, a hermeneutic analysis was conducted, which facilitated the critical interpretation of the data, the substantiation of the findings, and the formulation of conclusions.

Violence as an Object of Study

Studying violence presents a significant challenge, especially given the breadth and heterogeneity of the concept, which encompasses everything from acts of struggle and domination to various forms of repression. A pluralistic, at times fragmented, research agenda is evident in the literature on violence, which is studied by multiple disciplines within the social sciences, including political science, sociology, anthropology, and psychology. This conceptual and disciplinary diversity not only increases the complexity of the phenomenon but also creates multiple scenarios that hinder its comprehensive understanding.

Nonetheless, a first methodological approach to the study of violence can be traced to the efforts of various academic, governmental, and non-governmental

organizations. These entities, both nationally and internationally, have dedicated resources to rigorous, systematic monitoring of the phenomenon, with the aim of categorizing violence and giving it concrete meaning in social reality.

One of the most important organizations in this field is the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), based in Australia with a global presence. The IEP is dedicated to research and knowledge production, with its annual Global Peace Index (GPI) report being particularly relevant. This document ranks countries by their levels of peace, becoming a recurring source for the international press to identify the most violent or dangerous nations, as well as those that stand out for their high levels of political stability.

However, the IEP reports offer a detailed analysis of peace levels across 163 countries, representing 99.7 % of the world's population. This assessment is based on 23 indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, grouped into three core categories:

1. security and protection of society;
2. intensity and scope of current conflicts (national and international);
3. level of militarization.

Based on the organization's 2022 study, a brief summary of the ranking of the evaluated countries is presented. The purpose is to highlight a representative sample of nations that exhibit exemplary levels of peace, as well as those that register the most adverse results. It is important to note that the index classifies countries into six levels of peace: very high, high, medium, low, very low, and not included.

Table 1. *Summary of the Global Peace Index Ranking in 2022*

Rank	Country	Score	Level
1	Iceland	1107	Very high
2	New Zealand	1269	Very high
3	Ireland	1288	Very high
4	Denmark	1296	Very high
5	Austria	1300	Very high
68	Namibia	1908	Medium
69	Argentina	1911	Medium
70	Senegal	1916	Medium
71	Kosovo	1938	Medium

72	Rwanda	1945	Medium
143	Nigeria	2655	Low
144	Colombia	2729	Low
145	Turkey	2785	Low
146	Burkina Faso	2786	Low
147	Pakistan	2789	Low
148	Venezuela	2798	Low
149	Ethiopia	2806	Low
156	Somalia	3125	Very low
157	Irak	3157	Very low
158	Democratic Republic of the Congo	3166	Very low
159	South Sudan	3184	Very low
160	Russia	3275	Very low
161	Siria	3356	Very low
162	Yemen	3394	Very low
163	Afghanistan	3554	Very low

Source. Adapted from the Institute For Economic and Peace (2022).

The sample reveals that the regions with the most critical levels of violence—characterized by armed conflict, high militarization, and persistent insecurity—are concentrated mainly in Africa, the Middle East, and some South American countries. In this context, Ukraine and Russia are exceptional cases due to the military conflict that began in early 2022.

Examination of this index reveals that, although a specific methodological framework for measuring violence is not established, it is implicitly manifested in the categories of geopolitical analysis. These categories allow us to understand the degree of predisposition to the use of violence—legitimate or illegitimate—especially in relation to levels of militarization and conflict. In contexts of crisis or war, violence serves as a means to materialize conflicts (wars, military attacks, and internal confrontations). However, this methodological approach, although indirect, contributes valuable elements to the study of violence, particularly in its military dimension and its link to political and social problems at the national and international levels.

Moreover, the study of violence can be approached through more specific and rigorously developed methodological monitoring criteria at the national, regional, and international levels. In this context, observatories play a fundamental role. Conceived as entities dedicated to the systematic monitoring of social phenomena,

they are usually promoted by academic and scientific groups (Marcial, 2009). The promotion of these observatories frequently falls to non-governmental organizations, both national and international, or to universities interested in the academic and scientific analysis of various social problems.

A preliminary survey revealed that violence, as an object of study, is approached in a fragmented manner. Likewise, an intermediate level of complexity was identified when categorizing the observatories that analyze this issue. This is because violence is usually conceptualized in terms of its manifestations, the subjects to whom it is directed, and the consequences it has for human life, as well as for social, political, and economic development.

A prominent example of this approach is the Inter-American Security Observatory of the Organization of American States (OAS). This observatory addresses violence as it manifests itself in reality, using various analytical categories that facilitate its study from multiple perspectives.

Table 2. *Categories of Analysis Used by the Inter-American Security Observatory*

Categories	Indicators
International homicide	Crimes
	Victims
	By relationship and sex
	By nationality and sex
	By city
Violent crimes	Acts causing harm
	Harmful acts of a sexual nature
	Violent acts against property
	Threats of violence against people
	Victims of serious assault
	Victims of sexual assault
Other crimes	Victims of sexual exploitation
	Arms trafficking
	Migrant smuggling
	Drug trafficking
	Terrorist financing
	Money laundering
	Theft
	Affiliation with terrorist groups or criminal organizations

Categories	Indicators
Criminal justice system	Accused
	Convicted
	Convicted of intentional homicide
Prisons	Total number of inmates and related characterizations
Criminal justice system personnel	Personnel serving politics and judicial and penitentiary entities
	Infrastructure of prisons

Source. Adapted from the Organization of American States (2023).

As shown in Table 2, the monitoring carried out in the Latin American region—which includes specific violent crimes, the ways in which violence is perpetrated, the number of people convicted for these acts, and the deployment of personnel responsible for community intervention—constitutes a methodological approach centered on the qualitative analysis of the phenomenon. This analytical strategy not only allows for the systematization of available information but also for its categorization as a form of empirical representation of violence.

In this context, observatories with specialized approaches are identified: the International Observatory on Terrorism Studies, focused on the analysis of the terrorist phenomenon, and the Observatory on Violence against Refugees, promoted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which focuses on violence against migrant and displaced populations. Likewise, there are numerous national observatories dedicated to monitoring different forms of violence, especially in regions such as Latin America and Africa. Among these, the notable development of observatories focused on the study of gender-based violence stands out, gaining increasing relevance in both academia and social activism.

To date, a series of variables aimed at quantifying violence has been examined, understood as a set of political and social experiences that impact different spheres of collective life. However, it is necessary to move towards a deeper, more complex analysis that addresses the multifaceted nature of violence. Only in this way will it be possible to undertake a process of deconstruction of the issue, contributing to a critical understanding of the phenomenon and to the formulation of more comprehensive strategies for addressing it.

Complexifying Violence

As discussed in the previous section, prevailing approaches tend to address violence from a global perspective, relying on variables standardized by international

agencies, whose main objective is to quantify and classify the phenomenon based on its most visible expressions. However, one of the central premises of this work is that violence must be understood through a deeper approach, particularly in regions such as Latin America, where it persists as a complex structural phenomenon and remains without effective solutions for its diverse social, political, and economic manifestations. Therefore, it is imperative to problematize it from a more intricate and integrative perspective.

Why resort to complexity? This approach rejects the tendency to individualize or analytically reduce social phenomena, allowing for a more holistic understanding. According to Morin (2007), “complexity appears where simplifying thinking fails” (p. 22). While complexity manifests itself in contexts marked by chaos and uncertainty, its purpose is not to perpetuate confusion, but rather to contribute to establishing order, precision, and ultimately, clarity in the interpretation of phenomena as multidimensional as violence.

One of this author’s most relevant positions—which, in turn, justifies and conceptually supports the present study—emphasizes the imperative need to address the problems of reality through strategies that transcend quick, uncritical solutions. In contrast, he proposes an approach that recognizes uncertainty and randomness as intrinsic components of social phenomena.

Along these lines, the importance of not fragmenting or dissociating the object of study is emphasized, rather than grasping it in its entirety and considering the diverse contexts in which it can manifest itself. This conception stems from a critical awareness of the risks of “blind intelligence”—understood as a form of knowledge that operates without recognizing its own limitations—and the urgent need to overcome it.

The central concern lies not only in addressing violence from a strictly conceptual perspective, but also in doing so from a state-centric approach. This stems from the conviction that it is the State’s responsibility to guarantee the protection of human integrity against any manifestation that may represent a threat.

In this context, three key dimensions emerge for addressing violence: the what, the how, and the from where. The “what” refers to the definition and conceptual specification of violence. Understanding its attributes enables a more precise approach to the phenomenon, which is fundamental for both its analysis and for unraveling its complexity and achieving more holistic interpretations.

The Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung is one of the intellectuals who has paid the most attention to the phenomenon of violence. His contributions transcend

the scientific sphere and significantly influence conflict resolution. Galtung addresses violence with the aim of fostering peaceful scenarios. His extensive academic work provides valuable epistemological and theoretical contributions that deepen understanding of the phenomenon.

Galtung makes a fundamental contribution by questioning the traditional conception that considers violence an intrinsic trait of human nature. He argues, instead, that while human beings possess the potential to exercise violence, its expression is determined by the social and structural environment in which they develop. Building on this idea, he introduces his influential model of the violence triangle, which conceptualizes violence as a phenomenon observable in direct actions (direct violence) and supported by less visible dimensions: cultural and structural violence (Galtung, 2004).

Regardless of the analysis's starting point or the independent variable chosen, each manifestation of violence is interrelated and functions as both a cause and an effect of the others.

Galtung (1990) already warned that direct violence, given its visibility, tends to monopolize attention. This is understandable, since global public opinion tends to focus on current events, which are interpreted as symptoms of a historical malaise.

At this point, Galtung (1990) shifts his analysis to structural and cultural violence. The former is defined as a more comprehensive type of violence, encompassing any condition that obstructs the fundamental right to life. That is, the transgression of essential human needs—such as survival, well-being, identity, and freedom—constitutes a manifestation of structural violence.

In this sense, everything that violates the basic needs—such as poverty, harassment, indoctrination, repression, or alienation—constitutes a form of violence. Although they do not always manifest as direct aggression, they are more insidious and lasting, as they emerge from the State's political and economic structures. For Galtung (1990), the second category, cultural violence, acts as a bridge between structural violence and direct violence. It is important to emphasize that it is precisely in the cultural sphere that the legitimization that justifies and rationalizes both forms of violence takes place.

Despite the interconnection between these types of violence and their potential to act as reciprocal causes and effects, it is essential to discern a fundamental difference, especially when analyzing them across the individual, collective, state, and cultural spheres. Direct violence always manifests as an event; structural violence, as an unstable process; and cultural violence, as a persistent phenomenon.

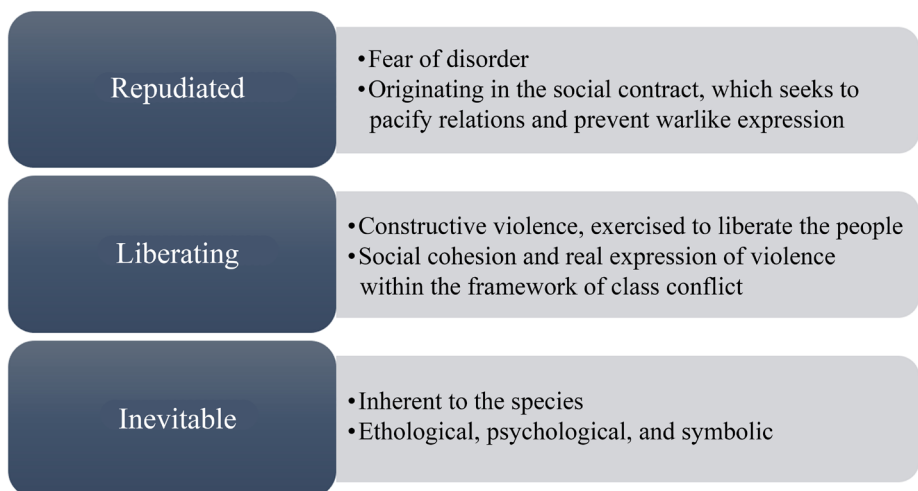
Galtung focuses on the latter, postulating that the main task of academia is to identify appropriate mechanisms to counteract a behavior that is difficult to eradicate: the culture of violence (Tavares, 2013).

This brief overview of Galtung's theory allows us to draw a first conclusion: it is a multidimensional phenomenon whose roots lie in both individual and collective behavior. Any attempt to understand it requires considering not only its concrete manifestations but also the context in which it originates and acquires meaning. However, regardless of the sphere in which it is expressed, violence shares a constant: the infliction of harm.

This perspective aligns with the definition proposed by Sanmartín (2007), who maintains that violence constitutes a form of aggression modified by sociocultural factors. Unlike automatic impulses, it implies an intentionality oriented toward harm, the manifestation of which varies according to diverse factors. Consequently, violence can be classified into different categories—active or passive—and typologies, according to the nature of the harm, the methods employed, or the target of the violent behavior.

Generally, the concept of violence is approached through categories that facilitate its classification and systematic analysis. In line with the aforementioned authors, Crettiez (2008) proposes a typology that integrates philosophical, political, and psychological approaches, thus offering a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

Figure 1. *Categories of Violence by Approach*



Source. Adapted from Crettiez (2008).

This categorization reveals that violence does not solely exhibit a negative connotation, but can also be perceived as positive, just, and even liberating.

The concepts and categories analyzed represent a significant contribution to the scientific study of violence, insofar as they enable its problematization from a multiplicity of theoretical and contextual frameworks. However, this analysis not only broadens the understanding of the phenomenon but also raises a more far-reaching question, shifting the discussion toward ethical and practical dimensions: Is it possible to eradicate or prevent violence? And, if so, what would be the necessary conditions for its materialization?

According to the microsociological theory formulated by Collins (2008), the predominant approaches tend to identify antecedents and analyze conditions that, directly or indirectly, favor its emergence. While these approaches contribute to scientific knowledge, they do not fully explain the phenomenon's dynamics. This is because factors such as poverty, discrimination, abuse, or stress do not constitute sufficient conditions for its manifestation. Consequently, causal explanations are almost always relative, context-dependent, and, in many cases, insufficient to account for its eruption.

The author points out that studies focused on the situational analysis of violence begin with a hypothesis: the presumption that violence is a behavior that tends to emerge more readily than others. As a result, certain conditions are more likely to trigger violent episodes.

However, Collins (2008) argues that violence does not emerge with the spontaneity commonly attributed to it. For it to manifest, it is necessary to cross thresholds of tension, confrontation, or conflict that depend on specific conditions and particular interactional dynamics. Although violence can serve as a means, it should not be understood as an immediate or inevitable reaction.

It is necessary to differentiate between aggression and violence. Aggression, linked to biological factors and primary impulses, does not necessarily culminate in a violent act, since not all aggressive behaviors presuppose intentional harm. In contrast, violence always involves an aggressive manifestation, characterized by the deliberate intention to cause harm or suffering.

This author's reflections are especially relevant for understanding violence, a phenomenon that has typically been investigated from a linear logic of cause and effect. However, it is also necessary to approach it from a nonlinear perspective, where complexity is presented as a valid alternative. Thus, violence reveals itself as a phenomenon that emerges from social disorder, frustration, and irrationality.

Violence and Complexity

Complexity arises from recognizing that violence is not a one-dimensional, single-cause phenomenon, nor can it be addressed from a single analytical or conceptual approach. It is worth noting that its manifestation is ambiguous and difficult to categorize. To understand it and, ultimately, prevent or control it, adopting a reductionist view is not feasible. It is precisely in this complexity that the true challenge lies: determining which approaches and strategies yield effective responses. In both theory and practice, violence demands multiple interpretations, even though the common purpose is to understand it and mitigate its effects.

[...] Although navigating the theoretical realm is complex, the situation becomes even more so when we venture into the field of intervention. While in the first case an inclusive approach may suffice, integrating the various intervening factors and maintaining an appropriate balance between theory and practice, the specific characteristics of the situations to be addressed, the interrelationship among professionals, social actors, the problem itself, and both macro and micro contextual forces come into play in the field of intervention, in addition to the various factors. That is to say, theory leans toward the realm of ideas, while intervention leans toward the realm of action. (Sánchez & Escobar, 2007, p. 59)

In this context, Quiroz and Chávez (2022) propose three categories for addressing violence from a complexity perspective: nonlinearity, fuzzy sets, and fractal theory. Although these categories originate from formal sciences, such as mathematics, and are applied to the study of abstract objects, they are also useful for analyzing phenomena characterized by chaos and complexity.

Over time, nonlinearity has become established as an interdisciplinary approach that, although rooted in the natural sciences, has been applied to the social sciences. While its basic premise is causality, this approach questions the idea that all phenomena derive exclusively from linear causes, characterized by predictable, regular, and stable patterns. Nonlinearity arises when a phenomenon exhibits erratic or unstable behavior, making it impossible to trace its trajectory in a linear fashion. In such circumstances, confusion, disorder, and complex scenarios emerge that challenge and surpass conventional explanations (Quiroz & Chávez, 2022).

Authors such as Chaparro (2008) highlight that this approach considers two perspectives when analyzing phenomena: i) ordered systems that evolve toward chaos; and ii) those that emerge from chaos to form a new order. The first is

associated with strange attractors, which reveal an ordered structure in the system's trajectory that nevertheless culminates in chaos. The second approach, linked to dissipative structures, describes processes of spontaneous self-organization that emerge amidst chaos.

Both approaches, in one way or another, stem from a fundamental problem: the imperative need to simplify analysis, given the large number of variables and components involved, as well as the complexity arising from their nonlinear interactions (Agüero, 2013).

Fuzzy set theory, conceived by the mathematician Lotfi Zadeh, provides a valuable perspective on how data are represented and categorized. According to this theory, linguistic labels are essential to human thought, as they facilitate flexible, gradual categorization of elements (Universidad Internacional de Valencia, 2018).

This approach focuses precisely on what escapes strict definitions and classifications. Its purpose is to make sense of that which can only be partially understood, allowing for a more conceptually flexible approach to complex phenomena (Juca et al., 2020). It is also establishing itself as a valuable methodological tool for describing the reality of complex social relationships. As Quiroz and Chávez (2022) point out, "fuzzy logic allows the creation of thresholds for the analysis of variables and enables the use of subjective, vague, uncertain, and difficult information to transform it into comprehensible information" (p. 10).

Finally, fractal theory is addressed, which aims to offer a geometric and mathematical understanding of natural phenomena that lack an established order (Quiroz & Chávez, 2022). Generally, these phenomena result from the system's self-organization, and their emergent structure can only be recognized as it takes shape within the chaos. It is worth noting that this form can be unstable, irregular, or interrupted (Álvarez, 2012; Quezada, 2006).

Security, Violence, and Culture of Peace

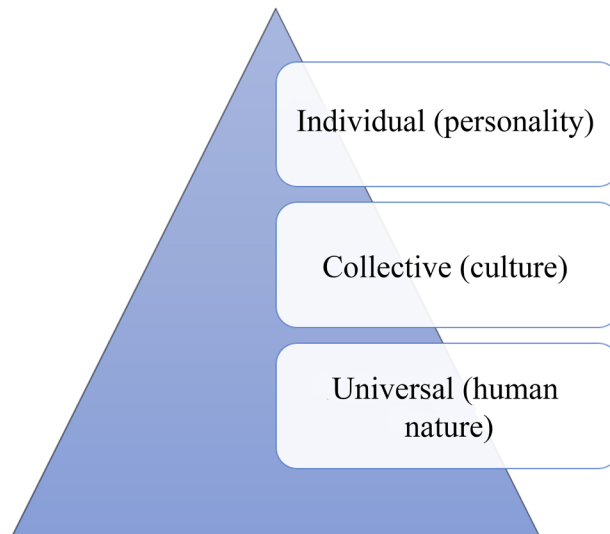
Up to this point, it has become clear that violence is far from a fixed concept or a one-dimensional phenomenon. Its complexity represents both an interpretive obstacle and a fertile analytical avenue for its study, regardless of its typology, dimensions, or effects. Throughout this document, a premise shared by various authors has been developed: violence is not a natural act per se, but rather can appear and disappear depending on specific contextual conditions (Collins, 2008; Crettiez, 2008; Galtung, 2004).

Even from an Aristotelian perspective, violence can be conceived as a potential capacity, that is, as a latent possibility for transforming human behavior (Xirau, 2003).

Within this framework, direct violence can be understood as the actualization of that latent possibility, triggered by contextual conditions that foster a violent response.

If violent behavior is triggered by specific contextual conditions, then it is within those same contexts that the keys to understanding and confronting violence must be sought. From this perspective, culture and peace become key tools for demystifying it. Why? According to Hofstede's approach, culture can be conceived as a collective mental programming. This programming can be inherited, learned, or adopted (Fariás, 2007).

Figure 2. *Levels of Mental Programming, According to Hofstede*



Source. Adapted from Fariás (2007).

Individual programming refers to the fact that much of human behavior is inherited, as evidenced by the similarity of certain skills or characteristics among members of the same family or immediate environment. Collective programming—categorized as cultural—means learning shared by a broader social group. Finally, universal programming comprises cultural elements recognized and accepted globally, thereby constituting an essential part of human nature (Fariás, 2007).

This conception of culture is crucial for understanding violent behavior in contemporary societies. Violence—understood as a potential, that is, as a latent possibility—can arise as a response to environmental challenges. From the

perspective of levels of mental programming, this predisposition can manifest itself at the individual, collective, or even universal level.

The categories established by the Inter-American Security Observatory include, among others, monitoring gender-based violence. In this context, the Colombian case is particularly concerning. In 2022, it was reported that three women per hour—equivalent to 128 per day—were victims of domestic violence, totaling approximately 47,000 cases during that period (Procuraduría General de la Nación, 2023). This scenario highlights that even in the most fundamental units of society, such as the family, deeply rooted patterns of violence are perpetuated. In countries like Colombia, these behaviors can be interpreted as manifestations of individual cultural programming influenced by patriarchal sociocultural structures.

At the second level of cultural programming, known as *collective*, behaviors associated with structural violence are manifested, understood as that exercised within the institutional sphere and resulting in social injustice (La Parra & Tortosa, 2003). This type of violence is evident, for example, in the phenomenon of organized crime in Latin America, a major problem in countries such as Colombia, Bolivia, Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Honduras, and Panama, among others. Structural violence manifests itself through illicit activities such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, money laundering, arms trafficking, and smuggling.

This situation shapes a collective response that arises in areas of greatest socioeconomic exclusion and state neglect, becoming an alternative embedded in these communities' cultural programming. On the one hand, this dynamic entails a violent rupture with the State's legal culture. On the other hand, violence—or the explicit threat of its application—emerges as the primary tool for the materialization and perpetuation of these illicit activities.

At a universal level, this programming of violence is manifested in the conception of war as a legitimate means of conquering and defending sovereignty. War has been a recurring phenomenon throughout human history. While conquest has defined much of this trajectory, the defense of sovereignty assumes central importance with the consolidation of the modern State, when the delimitation of borders and national security become paramount.

From a Hobbesian perspective, the recognition of the need for government stems from the preservation of collective security. In this regard, history, marked by countless conflicts between states, has contributed to the legitimization of war to the point of promoting its regulation, as evidenced by the development of international humanitarian law.

Violence permeates all social spheres. Although it cannot be considered inherent to human nature, its manifestation is highly context-sensitive, and its historical recurrence suggests a process of acculturation and even the normalization of violent behavior. However, it is precisely in the cultural sphere that tools to counteract it can be found. Building a culture of peace is a viable way to confront violence in its multiple expressions. In this regard, Galtung conceives of peace as the negation of violence; that is, an environment will be peaceful to the extent that the absence of violent acts prevails (Tavares, 2013).

The absence of violence is embodied in the notion of a culture of peace, understood as a framework of values, attitudes, behaviors, and practices that rejects violence in all its forms, promotes human rights, and fosters fundamental principles such as freedom, justice, solidarity, and tolerance. This concept was consolidated by the United Nations (UN) in the Declaration on a Culture of Peace (1999). Article 1 defines this approach as an attitude and social practice based on respect for life, sovereignty, equality, freedom of expression, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. This declaration underscores the urgent need to reshape humanity's violent behavior (Amnesty International, 1999).

Despite the declarations and principles established in support of a culture of peace, a fundamental question remains: what concrete strategies and effective policies are states implementing to truly advance toward this goal? To this end, the UN has led programs and promoted strategies through the decisions, pronouncements, functions, and mediations of the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the Secretary-General. Among the actions undertaken, those related to preventive diplomacy and disarmament stand out, conceived as mechanisms to raise awareness of threats to international peace and security and to mitigate or prevent the escalation of conflicts. These measures can range from reducing the carrying of weapons in tense situations to their destruction, under the premise that "destroying the weapons of the past prevents their use in the wars of the future" (United Nations, n.d.).

Although the UN makes significant efforts to promote a culture of peace, it is necessary to acknowledge its inadequacies. The culture of violence is a much more complex phenomenon, one that transcends the scope of global policies and strategies. While international programs seek to address specific challenges in regions such as Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, the complexity of violence surpasses the immediate impact of each regional conflict. Therefore, promoting a culture of peace cannot be approached from a reductionist perspective,

but rather from an approach that recognizes its complexity. Given that conflicts are multifactorial and often manifest in confusing, chaotic ways, the construction of a culture of peace must also be multifaceted.

From a biological and complex perspective, Muñoz and Molida (2010) acknowledge this scenario and maintain that humanity is intrinsically linked to its environment. Human beings have developed learning and control mechanisms to maintain a dynamic equilibrium with the environment. In this dynamic, instincts, emotions, rationality, and freedom converge—elements that intervene in fundamental decision-making for the continuity and evolution of the species. Nevertheless, these decisions can also be contradictory, thereby generating a latent schizophrenic tension that hinders the resolution of life's essential problems.

Consequently, rationality, instinct, and emotions must be the starting point for understanding and interpreting the conflict inherent in human beings. Within this dimension, conflict-resolution strategies are delineated, which can lead to either peaceful solutions or the intensification of violence. Undoubtedly, this is a complex vision that demands rethinking and deepening the culture of peace, especially regarding the cultural mechanisms that have historically been used to resolve conflicts.

However, this challenge requires a coordinated effort among states, the academic community, and various methodological and epistemological approaches to studying and addressing conflicts. In other words, it is essential to adopt a complexity-based approach to developing a new culture of peace. As Muñoz and Molida (2010) warn, this is not a simple task:

Aspiring to manage the complexity of the Culture of Peace is not an easy task; it requires individual and institutional, academic and scientific, solidarity-based and cooperative efforts. There is the advantage of having countless interesting and useful contributions, but the difficulty lies both in the dispersion of their objects of study and in the methodologies employed. (p. 49)

If we intend to move toward more effective mechanisms for addressing the violence that permeates all spheres of human life, an approach that integrates multiple factors is necessary. This will allow us to understand and capture the complexity of the conflict. The objective should not be limited solely to reducing violence, but rather to fostering a process of acculturation for peace, based on reason, balance, and tolerance, and integrated into tradition, institutions, and human thought.

Therefore, any strategy, public policy, program, or initiative designed to break the cycles of violence must avoid reductionist interventions. Instead, it must

follow a path that allows for both the complexification and simplification of the phenomenon. This implies recognizing that the limited effects of many educational, security, or social intervention policies may stem from their operation within an accelerated and reactive rationality, driven by a survival instinct. This rationality prevents us from observing violence in its entirety, as it focuses solely on its most visible manifestations—such as homicide, the use of weapons, or sexual assault—while neglecting its structural, symbolic, and cultural dimensions.

Conclusions

Violence is a phenomenon that has sparked growing interest in academia and is the subject of numerous studies. However, it still requires new approaches to understand its dynamics within social relations. This paper proposes a more complex analysis to identify alternatives that move beyond conceptualization and progress to the intervention stage, ensuring effective outcomes.

This work demonstrated that, at the state level, violence is typically addressed through methodological and epistemological perspectives that prioritize its manifestations and social impacts, while its root causes and potential solutions are often relegated to a secondary position. In conclusion, this approach reveals a limited understanding of the phenomenon, underscoring the need for more holistic and up-to-date analytical frameworks.

Therefore, a series of alternative perspectives, based on complexity and chaos theory, was presented and considered potential tools for the study of violence. Among these, concepts such as nonlinearity, fuzzy sets, and fractals stand out. It was also argued that a culture of peace would be more effective at counteracting violent behavior, as it enables intervention at the various levels at which culture reproduces violent practices through acculturation oriented toward the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

In this way, actors such as the State could have new alternatives to face the challenge posed by violence, understood as a latent threat to state security. This phenomenon requires a multidimensional approach, as its causes and consequences extend beyond linear or simplistic perspectives. Indeed, conventional causal explanations often reveal only superficial symptoms, without considering other determinants that institutional actors often overlook. This limitation contributes to the ineffectiveness of state responses.

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Chapter 5

Contributions of Human Security to Intractable Conflicts*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.05>

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Abstract: This chapter aims to identify the conceptual links between intractable conflicts and human security to develop an analytical model geared towards reducing their intractability. To this end, the concept of *human security* has been operationalized based on five fundamental characteristics, and its application is proposed as a strategy to counter the beliefs that perpetuate intractable conflicts. Transforming these beliefs is not achieved solely by creating deliberative spaces. Rather, it is necessary to improve the structural and contextual conditions of the parties involved. This reduces asymmetries between them and, consequently, creates more equitable conditions for reaching agreements on the issues and resources in dispute. These are precisely the possibilities offered by the human security approach.

Keywords: belief, human rights, environment, human security, conflict resolution, social transformation

* This book chapter results from the research project "Culture of Peace and Its Relationship with Security in the Western Hemisphere," conducted by the Masa Crítica group at Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto," which is categorized as A1 by the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (Minciencias) under code COL0123247. The views and results presented are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the participating institutions.

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APA Citation: Gómez Rojas, A. C., & Torrijos, V. (2026). Contributions of Human Security to Intractable Conflicts. In A. Cerón Rincón & V. Torrijos (Eds.), *Culture of Peace: Reflections Drawn from the Notion of Security* (pp. 93-114). Sello Editorial ESDEG. <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.05>

CULTURE OF PEACE: REFLECTIONS DRAWN FROM THE NOTION OF SECURITY

Print ISBN: 978-628-7818-47-7

ISBN digital: 978-628-7818-48-4

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484>

Human Rights and IHL Collection

Sello Editorial ESDEG

Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto"

Bogotá D.C., Colombia

2026



Introduction

In the specialized literature, intractable conflicts have been defined as situations characterized by:

a very long resolution time or an ongoing negotiation process; a seemingly simple, readily available negotiated solution; and conflicting positions among the disputing parties that show no sign of resolution in the short or medium term, with persistent disagreements. (Pacheco-Vega, 2014, p. 229)

Based on the assumption that conflicts arise when parties operate from different frames—that is, different cognitive and cultural lenses through which they perceive reality and make decisions—the specialized literature has identified reframing as a strategy for transforming these conflicts (Shmueli et al., 2006). Reframing a conflict involves modifying how the conflict is understood, thereby promoting reinterpretation that facilitates the identification of shared or at least compatible meanings across the frameworks at play (Lewicki et al., 2003).

For reframing to be effective, it is not enough to simply create deliberative spaces, as much of the specialized literature often proposes. Empirical evidence indicates that deliberation is insufficient to transform the parties' beliefs and perceptions of the adversary (Lindahl & Zachrisson, 2022). This is because frames are not only individual constructions but also social configurations that emerge from the social, cultural, and educational fabric in which the actors are embedded (Bar-Tal, 2000).

This chapter examines the concept of *human security* and its five fundamental dimensions to identify the elements that contribute to improving the structural and contextual conditions of the parties involved in a conflict. It is assumed that

transforming economic, food, health, and environmental conditions not only impacts individual and collective well-being but also helps reduce asymmetries between actors. Reducing these inequalities creates a more equitable framework, facilitating the construction of sustainable agreements both in the interpretation of disputed issues and in the management of the resources involved.

To achieve this objective, this chapter is structured in three sections. The first focuses on the definition and characteristics of intractable conflicts, as well as the strategies proposed to address their tractability. The second examines the concept of *human security*, detailing its attributes and scope. The third presents a concrete proposal that links intractable conflicts to human security, identifying which dimensions of the latter can help transform the collective belief systems that perpetuate these conflicts.

This proposal is based on studies of socio-environmental conflicts, given that these disputes currently occupy a significant portion of the attention and resources of local and national governments, the business sector, and affected communities. Furthermore, although the environment and territory are central to these conflicts, their nature is complicated by the concomitant presence of political, economic, and cultural demands, thereby justifying their classification as intractable.

In this regard, Campbell (2003), based on his research on socio-environmental conflict, argues that moral differences between parties and discrepancies in framing processes are the main obstacles identified by mediators. Therefore, the proposal to transform beliefs—or, in Bar-Tal's (2000) terms, the conflictive *ethos*—through the principles of human security is presented as a relevant and necessary strategy.

Intractable Conflicts: Definition, Characteristics, and Proposals for Tractability

In the early 1990s, the American sociologist Louis Kriesberg introduced the concept of *intractable conflicts*, thus initiating a debate in the field of conflict studies. These are defined as confrontations that, in addition to being prolonged, are destructive due to the dynamics within which they develop. Despite numerous third-party interventions, they have demonstrated remarkable resistance to resolution or transformation (Kriesberg, 2005).

Since then, a sustained debate has arisen around the definition, causes, and particularities of these conflicts. As Kriesberg himself points out, neither the duration nor the use of violence automatically makes a conflict intractable. In recent decades, an academic consensus has been consolidating around the definition of

intractable conflicts as those that persistently defy proposed resolutions or exhibit marked resistance to transformation (Burgess, 1998; Campbell, 2003; Crocker et al., 2005).

Regarding their characteristics, authors such as Zartman (2005) point out that intractable conflicts present at least four distinctive features: i) they are prolonged due to their persistent resistance to attempts at transformation or resolution; ii) they are marked by strong polarization between the parties, who tend to interpret the situation in zero-sum terms; iii) they are profitable for certain actors, since their prolongation allows for the mobilization of support and the extraction of strategic resources; iv) they lack maturity for resolution, insofar as the existing conditions grant the parties relative stability or benefits that could be lost if the conflict were resolved.

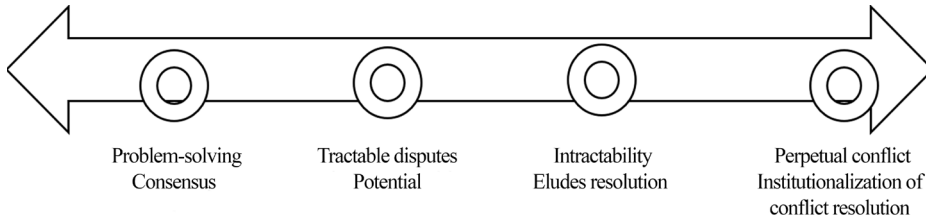
For his part, Campbell (2003) identifies several characteristics that define intractable conflicts: i) the presence of deeply rooted moral conflicts; ii) their temporal extension prevents resolution through conventional mechanisms; iii) a significant power imbalance between the parties, which increases the risk of coercion and escalation of violence; iv) the rigidity of positions, accompanied by a high level of hostility stemming from beliefs intensely held by the conflicting groups; v) the complexity and interconnectedness of the issues in dispute; and v) the existence of divergent frames.

Of the characteristics mentioned above, prolongation is susceptible to multiple interpretations. For this reason, Putnam and Wondolleck (2003) propose focusing attention not so much on the duration of the conflict, but on two key aspects: i) the degree of penetration—that is, how it extends and impacts the social life of the actors involved; and ii) its complexity, understood as the expansion of the number of parties and issues involved. In this regard, the more a conflict expands into other spheres—social, political, and environmental—and the greater the incorporation of demands, issues, and actors, the more prolonged its development will be and, therefore, the more intractable it will become.

The above suggests that intractable conflicts are not static; rather, they can be conceptualized as a spectrum or a cycle of escalations and de-escalations. During this cycle, moments more conducive to resolution can be identified, as well as stages in which the conflict may have transcended intractability to become an enduring conflict (Lewicki et al., 2003; Torrijos & Pérez, 2013).

The shifts within this spectrum are determined by various factors, including changes in the perceptions of the actors involved in the conflict; in the nature and scope of their demands; in the formulation of the objectives they seek to achieve; and in the way violence is employed in the development of the conflict (Kriesberg, 2005).

Figure 1. Spectrum of Intractability



Source. Adapted from Lewicki et al. (2003) and Torrijos y Pérez (2013).

The concept of *perpetual conflict* has been included in the analysis of intractable conflicts, based on the recognition that, despite the large amounts of energy that societies spend on these conflicts, when they are prolonged, they tend to reach a certain degree of coupling and stability, as well as a greater capacity to channel all resources toward their maintenance. To that extent,

the passage of time does not imply the depletion of available resources, nor does it lead to the parties' willingness to seek alternative solutions. Rather, it actually reinforces and predisposes subsequent generations to violence and to the search for new ways of capturing resources. (Torrijos & Pérez, 2013, p. 134)

A conflict reaches the status of intractable and perpetual when three logical processes converge and reinforce each other: i) the stabilization or sustainability of violence; ii) the institutionalization of the conflict; and iii) the enduring nature of the aggression. The assembly of these elements, in turn, produces a generational identity based on narratives of struggle and a negative emotional tone that extends to new levels and domains (Torrijos & Pérez, 2013).

This helps explain why, even though conflicts are usually demanding, stressful, painful, and costly for the parties involved, the conflictive *ethos* is difficult to dislodge once it has reached intractability. According to Bar-Tal (2000), the conflictive *ethos* is defined as the set of societal beliefs that, being functional within the conflict, constitute the informational and motivational basis that sustains the parties' continued involvement.

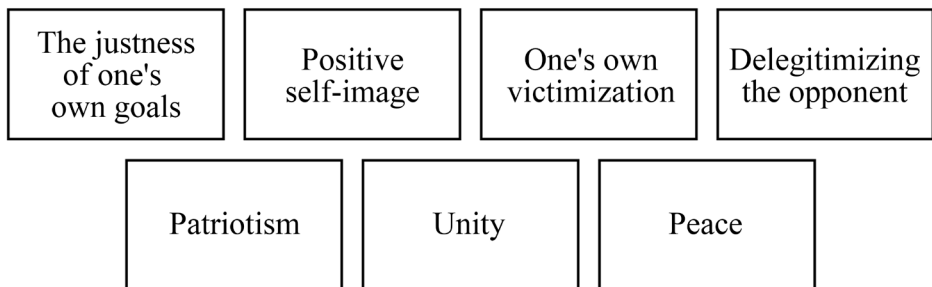
Among the reasons the author identifies for the difficulty of transforming the conflictive *ethos*, its contribution to shaping the parties' identities stands out. Furthermore, the underlying beliefs are reinforced by cultural, economic, and educational systems.

The temporal extent of the conflict implies that at least one generation has grown up without experiencing periods free of confrontation. On the other hand, the conflictive *ethos* serves as the ideological basis for certain political groups that come to power.

Finally, actors immersed in intractable conflicts maintain social mechanisms designed to protect the consensus built around this *ethos*. This is perceived as a functional system for coping with a threatening and stressful situation. Individuals or groups that express divergent beliefs are sanctioned, both formally and informally, thereby inhibiting the emergence and dissemination of alternative ideas and opinions.

From a psychosocial perspective, Bar-Tal (2000) identifies eight societal beliefs that constitute the conflictive *ethos*. This conceptualization provides concrete clues for mitigating the escalation of conflict and fostering its transformation into a manageable dispute (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. *Societal Beliefs that Form the Conflictive Ethos*



Source. Adapted from Bar-Tal (2000).

The importance of recognizing societal beliefs in the context of conflict lies in their capacity to guide and constrain the actions of the parties involved. When an individual or group perceives a situation as conflict-prone, they seek to understand its causes, which causes stress and uncertainty. To mitigate these emotions, people tend to attribute responsibility to the actors involved. This cognitive-emotional process contributes to constructing the meaning they give to their own actions within the framework of the conflict (Bar-Tal, 2000).

This set of beliefs is related to the concept of *frame*. Frames allow actors to structure and organize their experience, guiding their actions in response to a given situation. They are constructed from the careful selection of specific contextual

elements and relationships, with the aim of giving coherence and meaning to lived experience, while excluding those aspects that do not fit the explanatory logic each individual develops. Thus, the frame facilitates the presentation of certain perceptions about what is wrong and what needs to be corrected as self-evident and justified (Lindahl & Zachrisson, 2022). Consequently, conflicts arise when actors in the same situation operate from incompatible frames.

The importance of recognizing frames and framing processes lies in their capacity to identify convergences between actors' objectives and positions. This, in turn, opens avenues for de-escalating the conflict. Once the frames in the disputes have been identified, it is possible to seek mechanisms to align them. This process is known as *reframing* (Pacheco-Vega, 2014).

The goodwill or interest of the parties involved is not enough to reframe a situation, precisely because frames are socially constructed. Hence, the political, social, and economic context plays a determining role in their configuration. In this regard, Bar-Tal (2000) proposes seven fundamental conditions for the sustainable resolution of intractable conflicts:

1. Existence of a formal resolution agreement: This represents a public commitment by the actors involved.
2. Concrete demonstrations of goodwill from the adversary: Actions must demonstrate a genuine change in their attitude toward the conflict.
3. External conditions favorable to change: Convergence between the local, national, and international environments is essential to facilitate the implementation of agreements.
4. Support for internal political structures: These must have the necessary capacity and legitimacy to enforce the agreed-upon commitments.
5. Sustained actions that support the resolution process: Continued support from the parties involved is essential, and the active role of leaders is particularly relevant.
6. Mobilization of the educational, social, and cultural system: This should be oriented toward reconciliation and the transformation of hostile perceptions.
7. Participation of multiple organizations: It is necessary for various entities to be involved in promoting and consolidating new peace and cooperation processes.

Burgess and Burgess (1998) proposed constructive confrontation as a method for addressing intractable conflicts. This perspective suggests that the parties

should reach solutions through direct mediation, without third-party intervention. To achieve this, they propose three steps:

1. Diagnosing the dispute and mapping the conflict: This phase requires identifying the participating actors, potential intermediaries, the parties' interests and positions, as well as the long-term structural framework of the conflict.
2. Identifying and analyzing overlapping conflicts: Distinguishing between core and secondary issues is crucial. Without proper analysis, superficial issues can hinder the understanding and resolution of deeper aspects.
3. Reducing the complexity of the conflict: The goal is to simplify or segment overlapping elements, thus allowing efforts to be focused on the key issues of the dispute (Caton, 2003).

The practical application of these proposals in addressing intractable conflicts is highly complex. Therefore, it is essential to explore different analytical approaches and examine concepts that have been implemented in real-world conflict contexts. This will allow us to evaluate their scope and the contributions they can make to the understanding and management of disputes. Within this framework, a fundamental concept is that of *human security*.

Human Security: Definition, Characteristics, and Scope

It is essential to revisit the definition of human security to operationalize the concept and to explore possible connections between its theoretical formulation and the dynamics of intractable conflicts. In this chapter, human security means

to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms—freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people's strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity. (United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security [UNTFHS], 2008, p. 6)

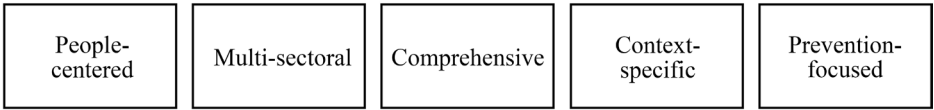
This definition implies a move beyond traditional conceptions of security, which prioritized the nation-state as the sole guarantor, primarily through military

defense mechanisms. In contrast, human security recognizes the plurality of threats to individuals' life and liberty, which must be addressed comprehensively, with a focus on human rights and individual dignity.

These new approaches to human security are the result of profound transformations, not only in the roles and configurations of states and other international actors, but also in the complex, interdependent nature of current economic, social, cultural, and environmental problems. In this context, the international security system—established after the Second World War and focused on the protection of states—is insufficient because it disregards the experience of people directly affected by conflicts (Commission on Human Security, 2003). Therefore, it is pertinent to examine more closely the definition of human security to assess its explanatory and practical potential in the face of the challenges posed by contemporary conflicts, particularly those considered intractable.

In the UN's published work, at least five fundamental characteristics or principles that shape the human security approach can be identified (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. *Characteristics of Human Security*



Source. Adapted from Commission on Human Security (2003).

1. From a people-centered perspective, human security is achieved through an integrative and participatory approach. This framework not only considers individuals and communities as beneficiaries of protection, but also as key actors in identifying their own needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities. It also promotes the collaborative development of assessments of the insecurities affecting each context, highlighting the importance of mobilizing resources at the local level, including the knowledge, means, and adaptation strategies inherent to each community (UNTFHS, 2008). It is important to emphasize that its scope is not limited exclusively to the individual. On the contrary, it also incorporates communities, broadening the spectrum of protection to include those social groups that have historically faced conditions of vulnerability. This approach is especially relevant for establishing dialogue in intractable conflicts, which are not only

manifested at the interpersonal level but also involve complex relationships among groups, authorities, and a diversity of collectively organized actors. In this respect, human security offers a broader analytical framework for understanding and addressing the structural and symbolic dynamics that characterize this type of conflict.

2. Characterized by its multisectoral approach, human security promotes dialogue and cooperation among actors from different sectors—such as the economic, political, social, and environmental sectors—that contribute to guaranteeing stable living conditions for individuals and communities. This approach fosters coherence and intersectoral coordination, overcoming traditional institutional fragmentation. It also seeks to evaluate the collateral effects—both positive and negative—of each human security intervention, with an emphasis on the differential impacts on affected communities (UNTFHS, 2008).
3. Characterized by its comprehensive approach, human security is structured around seven components: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political. This comprehensive framework aims to address the multiplicity of threats, vulnerabilities, and capacities that affect the security of individuals and communities. It also entails analyzing actors and sectors that, to date, have not been considered relevant to the formulation and implementation of policies, programs, or projects, thereby promoting the development of multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder responses (UNTFHS, 2008).
4. Human security is based on a context-specific and situated understanding of the realities that it seeks to transform. This approach requires an in-depth analysis of each situation to identify infringed freedoms and threatened rights, taking into account the historical, social, cultural, and political particularities that shape each context. Based on this diagnosis, the needs and capacities of the affected communities can be identified, facilitating the design of more relevant and realistic strategies. This approach considers the local, national, regional, and global dimensions, recognizing the complexity and interdependence of the factors that influence the situation and, therefore, its transformation.
5. Human security is oriented toward the prevention of conflicts and crises, which implies the early identification of risks, threats, and vulnerability factors. The objective is to address the underlying causes of these threats

before they escalate into critical situations. This approach is structured around two key concepts: protection, understood as the guarantee of security against immediate threats, and empowerment, conceived as the strengthening of individual and collective capacities to confront, resist, and transform these threats (UNTFHS, 2008).

In the case of protection, the United Nations defines it as “strategies, set up by States, international agencies, NGOs, and the private sector [that] shield people from menaces” (Commission on Human Security, 2003, p. 31). From this perspective, protection constitutes a top-down approach, focused on developing norms, procedures, and institutions designed to ensure the security of individuals against serious and widespread threats. These actions are promoted by a diverse range of actors, including States, international agencies, civil society, NGOs, and the private sector.

On the other hand, empowerment is defined as “strategies [that] enable people to develop their resilience to difficult conditions” (Commission on Human Security, 2003, p. 31). Unlike the top-down approach to protection, empowerment adopts a bottom-up perspective, oriented towards recognizing, strengthening, and mobilizing the individual and collective capacities of people. The goal is for them to reach their full potential and to actively participate in developing solutions that contribute to their security and well-being.

Both protection and empowerment are complementary principles, the coordination of which is essential to guarantee the comprehensiveness of the various components of human security. However, the balance between these two approaches largely depends on the characteristics of the context.

Connection between Human Security and Intractable Conflicts: A Proposal from Socio-Environmental Conflicts

Conflict resolution theory often addresses intractable conflicts by drawing on the postulates of deliberative theory, understood as an instrument oriented toward consensus-building through deliberative processes grounded in reason and argumentative exchange. However, empirical studies have shown that these processes do not always yield consensus (Johanson et al., 2022).

A concrete example of these dynamics is socio-environmental conflicts, many of which have been categorized as intractable. Empirical studies reveal a series of structural challenges. First, there is a diversity of values and cultural

frameworks among the actors involved, which, along with a lack of trust, respect, and willingness to engage in dialogue, hinders the possibility of constructive deliberation. Second, these disputes often involve structural economic and social issues that transcend the strictly environmental sphere and reveal tensions related to development models, resource distribution, and territorial justice. Third, these conflicts unfold within normative and regulatory frameworks that constrain the scope and quality of the debates and, in many cases, reproduce the institutional *status quo*. Finally, the various participating groups may resort to different or even contradictory forms of deliberation, further complicating efforts to establish a minimal consensus (Caton, 2003).

As Merlinsky (2013) points out, socio-environmental conflicts constitute genuine political struggles, in which not only access to and use of resources are contested, but also the definition of public and private spheres, as well as the legitimacy of the actors empowered to make decisions about these resources:

[...] they call into question the power relations that facilitate access to these resources, which involve decisions about their use by some actors and the exclusion of their availability to others. These are situations of tension, opposition, and/or dispute in which not only environmental impacts are at stake. (p. 40)

Johansson et al. (2022) present the results of their research, in which the principles of deliberation were applied in two contexts of socio-environmental conflict in Sweden. The principles considered were: i) inclusivity, understood as the need for all perspectives to be heard and given equal opportunity to influence the final outcome; ii) sufficient time to allow for effective participation in the deliberative processes; iii) a productive group atmosphere, that is, an environment that fosters dialogue and reduces hostility; iv) multiple forms of communication; v) clear and flexible rules, along with the establishment of an agenda; vi) a system for tracking progress; and vii) highlighting the potential impacts or benefits derived from the deliberation process (Johansson et al., 2022).

Deliberative theory applied to natural resource conflicts underscores the importance of principles such as inclusivity, equity, non-coercion, clarity, and flexibility. It also emphasizes the need to base agreements on previously agreed-upon norms, agenda, and objectives. Furthermore, it highlights the role of an impartial and competent facilitator to guide the process (Fisher et al., 2020; Schultz et al., 2018).

However, the empirical findings of Johansson et al. (2022) diverge from theoretical positions. Despite adjustments made during the deliberative process, it was not possible to establish a productive group atmosphere due to deep-seated historical antagonisms among the actors involved. This dynamic is characteristic of socio-environmental conflicts, in which territorial, cultural, and social claims are deeply rooted and have often been rendered historically invisible or delegitimized by relevant authorities.

The research also revealed that, while deliberative spaces can adapt their rules and agendas to the dynamics of the actors involved—avoiding the imposition of unilateral conditions—the agreements reached lose legitimacy and meaning when the actors identified as responsible for the injustices (the State and the business sector) do not assume an active, transparent, and self-critical role. Furthermore, a structural difficulty was identified in ensuring the uninterrupted participation of the same actors, attributable to time constraints and concurrent responsibilities that prevented sustained involvement. The need to document the process, maintain collective interest, and synchronize the participation timelines of all involved parties poses a highly complex operational challenge.

Regulatory frameworks are subject to contention at multiple levels, hindering the achievement of agreements. Each actor develops a particular interpretation of legal and constitutional norms to uphold the primacy of their own rights and interests. In this context, it was not possible to reach substantive issue-consensus, defined as situations in which actors develop convergent perceptions of the problem and similar preferences regarding its resolution. Nor could working agreements be established, which occur when actors, despite differing motivations, manage to provide a solution acceptable to all parties involved.

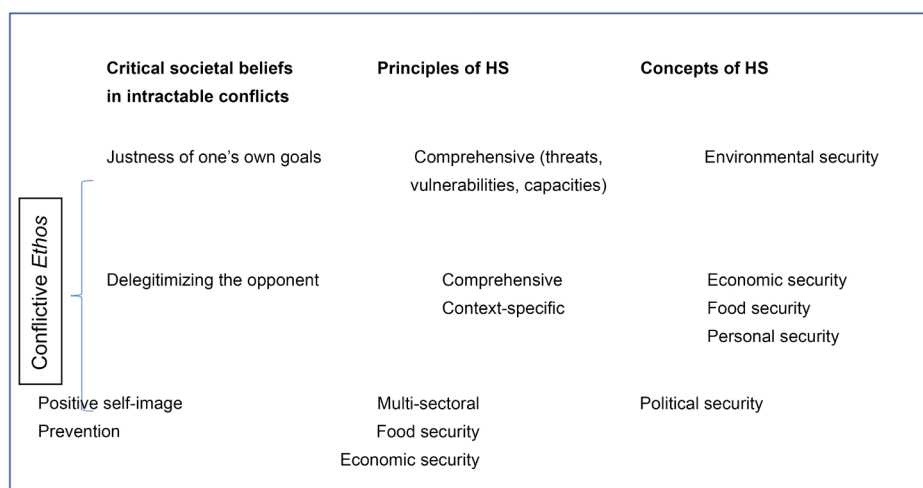
Despite the aforementioned difficulties, a meta-consensus was reached, defined as actors' willingness to recognize and accept the legitimacy of other frames and to develop a rational understanding of them. This outcome holds substantial value within the framework of a pluralist democracy, as it represents progress toward conceiving of the other not as an enemy, but as a legitimate adversary whose perspective is worthy of consideration. According to Mouffe (1999), in a deliberative and pluralist democracy, it is permissible to oppose the opponent's ideas vehemently, but never to deny their right to hold and defend them.

Recognizing the validity of alternative frames or interpretations of the conflict helps weaken the logic of delegitimizing the opponent and victimizing them, a process that tends to solidify in contexts of prolonged confrontation. However, while building a meta-consensus is necessary to initiate a de-escalation process,

it is not sufficient to transform the conflict into a dispute susceptible to resolution. This is because framing processes are not only a product of deliberation, but are also deeply conditioned by social, cultural, and educational structures that require broader transformations to foster a change in the conflictive *ethos*.

For this reason, this chapter revisits the contributions of the human security approach as a conceptual tool for understanding and addressing intractable conflicts, particularly socio-environmental conflicts. It argues that human security can contribute to transforming the conflictive *ethos*. According to Bar-Tal (2000), among the eight social beliefs that characterize conflicts, three are especially relevant in the case of intractable conflicts: the justness of one's own goals, delegitimizing the opponent, and a positive self-image. Based on this premise, an analytical proposal is presented focusing on the potential transformation of these beliefs.

Figure 4. *Proposed Connection between Human Security and Intractable Conflicts*



Source. Own elaboration.

Regarding the belief in the justness of one's own goals, it is important to highlight its decisive influence on shaping the conflictive *ethos*. Each party involved in the conflict tends to develop justifications, rationales, myths, symbols, and rituals that not only legitimize their position but also construct a sense of justice around their cause.

In the case of socio-environmental conflicts, groups that proclaim themselves defenders of the territory and natural resources often base their cause on a strong sense of justice, which is difficult to refute as it is grounded in values such as

harmony with nature, territorial autonomy, and the defense of life. On the other hand, actors who support the implementation of megaprojects or activities perceived as threats by environmental groups also claim legitimacy for their objectives, arguing that they pursue the economic and social development of the communities involved.

To prevent these opposing conceptions of justice from intensifying the conflict, it is necessary to transform the parties' cognitive foundations. This is achieved by creating new symbols and redefining their purposes (Bar-Tal, 2000). In this sense, the holistic principle of human security offers a valuable framework, especially when integrated into the environmental security approach. The latter seeks to counteract the threats arising from "environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters, and pollution" (UNTFHS, 2008, p. 7).

While this definition excludes the essential demands of environmental groups—particularly those with a territorial base that prioritize sovereignty over security—it can provide a minimum common ground for understanding and collaboration among government authorities, local communities, non-governmental organizations, and private-sector actors. Moving towards consensus on environmental security, as articulated in the international frameworks proposed by the UN, could serve as a starting point for developing agreements oriented toward sustainability and conflict mitigation.

Furthermore, the operationalization of the holistic principle proposes three key categories for risk identification: threats, vulnerabilities, and community capacities. To the extent that the beliefs and perceptions of all actors involved in socio-environmental conflicts are recognized and analyzed—including not only communities, but also government authorities and other stakeholders—it will be possible to identify points of convergence that could form the basis for a common agenda.

The belief in delegitimizing the opponent hinders the transition from an intractable conflict to a dispute that can be addressed, as it perpetuates negative stereotypes and a process of dehumanization that legitimizes one's own actions, including the use of violence (Bar-Tal, 2000).

In the case of socio-environmental conflicts, a progressive increase in levels of violence has been observed. The number of murdered environmental leaders¹ demonstrates that this violence occurs within a context of profoundly

¹ According to Global Witness (2022), more than 1,700 environmental defenders have been killed in the last decade.

asymmetrical relationships, in which states and transnational corporations hold a significant advantage in the use of force.

To counteract this process of dehumanization, the holistic and contextual principles are essential. First, the holistic principle enables recognition of the multiple threats to the lives and integrity of individuals and communities, thereby transcending the traditional notion of personal security. This implies fostering a deeper, more collaborative relationship between civil society and states, one that extends beyond military logic.

To the extent that the commitment to guaranteeing the economic and food security of communities—and not just their personal security—is recognized, affected populations will be able to feel legitimized as collective subjects whose needs are being met, rather than being perceived as mere military targets. Similarly, they will be able to recognize a human dimension in their adversaries, thereby reducing negative stereotypes.

Furthermore, opening the debate around these additional dimensions of security—particularly food security, which is threatened, for example, by megaprojects in agricultural areas—helps to recognize that socio-environmental conflicts transcend purely technical discussions. These conflicts encompass political, economic, and social dimensions that require the design and implementation of viable strategies.

The contextual principle of human security enables us to situate socio-environmental conflicts within their respective local contexts, given that many actors' beliefs are shaped by national and international frameworks that hinder recognition of local needs. By focusing on these needs and the authorities capable of addressing them, it is possible to reach agreements that are unfeasible at other territorial scales due to the complexity of the conflict, characterized by the diversity of actors, values, interests, and resources involved.

Finally, the belief in a positive self-image is intertwined with delegitimizing the opponent, creating a dichotomy between a "we" perceived as "good" and a "they" seen as "bad." To reduce this degree of polarization—which tends to intensify in protracted conflicts—it is essential to apply the principles of multisectoral collaboration and prevention.

Regarding the principle of multi-sectoral collaboration, its potential lies in its capacity to convene the various sectors and actors involved in conflict-prone situations, facilitating deliberation and dialogue within a human-rights framework. This principle seeks to guarantee the coherence and coordination of public

policies among sectors that have historically operated in a fragmented manner (UNTFHS, 2008). For this approach to be effective, it is essential to create spaces for interaction among the actors involved, as this can foster information exchange and encourage reframing the beliefs that underpin their respective positions.

The study by Johansson et al. (2022) has demonstrated that creating spaces for dialogue can, at the very least, contribute to the recognition of other interpretive frameworks and to their valuation as legitimate. In this context, the key concept is that of *political security*, understood as the capacity to participate in decision-making processes.

Moreover, the principle of prevention addresses the structural causes of human insecurity. In this regard, ensuring a minimum threshold of well-being for individuals and communities before creating spaces for deliberation creates more conducive conditions for dialogue. This not only ensures that individuals have more time and energy to participate actively—since they are not absorbed by satisfying basic survival needs—but also helps to mitigate the intensity of social demands that often emerge in socio-environmental conflicts, such as the right to food or to a decent livelihood. When these demands are not met, they tend to complicate disputes to the point of rendering them intractable.

Conclusions

Intractable conflicts are characterized by prolonged duration and high polarization, stemming from profound divergences in the parties' frames. Furthermore, they are often characterized by multiple demands and involve diverse actors operating across different territorial scales.

When the sectors and actors involved in a conflict reach a certain stability and comfort within the conflict dynamic itself—that is, when the conflict acquires a degree of institutionalization, the identities of the parties consolidate in mutual opposition, and resources are allocated to maintaining the *status quo* caused by the dispute—what Torrijos and Pérez (2013) have termed *perpetual conflicts* emerge.

To prevent conflicts from reaching such a degree of immobility, and recognizing that they are dynamic processes characterized by moments of escalation and de-escalation, the concept of human security and its operationalization have been invoked. This enables the identification of principles that help transform intractable conflicts into disputes that can be managed (Kriesberg, 2005).

Specifically, the application of these principles has focused on socio-environmental disputes, which are paradigmatic cases of intractable conflict. This is because socio-environmental conflicts are essentially political and highlight profound debates about diverse conceptions of justice, democracy, and territorial appropriation, which manifest themselves through the resources and strategies deployed by the actors involved.

In this respect, the analysis has focused on the three most deeply rooted social beliefs within the conflictive *ethos* that, according to Bar-Tal (2000), perpetuate conflict: justness of one's own goals, delegitimizing the opponent, and a positive self-image. For each of these beliefs, a correspondence has been established with the principles of human security, which could contribute to its transformation. For example, with respect to the justness of one's own goals, the holistic principle facilitates the development of new conceptual frameworks and values linked to environmental security that can be shared by the parties involved.

In delegitimizing the opponent, holistic and contextual principles are fundamental to modifying the dynamics of intractable conflicts. Specifically, a comprehensive perspective recognizes that the threats in these conflicts extend beyond the mere defense of life, encompassing economic, food, and environmental dimensions. The joint recognition of these elements helps counteract the dehumanization that often accompanies the delegitimization of the "other," also known as the *opponent*.

As for the contextual principle, reconstructing the threats, vulnerabilities, and capacities of the parties in their immediate contexts and territorial scales fosters the construction of agreements that are unfeasible at the national or international level due to the complexity arising from the multiplicity of interests, values, sectors, and actors involved.

Finally, the belief in a positive self-image can be transformed through the principle of multi-sectorality, as convening all actors involved in a conflict to design joint security strategies fosters spaces for deliberation. In this way, the principle of prevention helps ensure economic, food, health, environmental, and personal well-being—conditions necessary for the full development of individuals and communities within the social sphere. Progress in these dimensions of security can reduce the demands accumulated during protracted conflicts. This facilitates the recognition and addressing of the specific demands arising from intractable conflicts, thus paving the way for their eventual resolution.

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Chapter 6

From the State of Nature to the Rule of Justice^{*}

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.06>

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Abstract: This chapter aims to analyze how, through the harmonious connection between the rule of law and the proper application of the concept of *social order*—referred to by Thomas Hobbes as the *state of nature*—it is possible to avoid chaos and the so-called *war of all against all*, thus advancing toward a culture of peace. The relationship between the rule of law and the state of nature will be examined as a conceptual dichotomy whose reconciliation can yield a positive rule of justice, characterized by the formal enforcement of the law in favor of equality and equity. The analysis will be grounded in the approaches of Kelsen, Rawls, and Hobbes to the aforementioned concepts, highlighting their contributions.

Keywords: Rule of law; harmonization; social order; rule of justice

^{*} This book chapter results from the research project "Culture of Peace and Its Relationship with Security in the Western Hemisphere," conducted by the Masa Crítica group at Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto," which is categorized as A1 by the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (Minciencias) under code COL0123247. The views and results presented are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the participating institutions.

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APA Citation: Ruiz Mora, J. A. (2026). From the State of Nature to the Rule of Justice. In A. Cerón Rincón & V. Torrijos (Eds.), *Culture of Peace: Reflections Drawn from the Notion of Security* (pp. 115-138). Sello Editorial ESDEG.
<https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.06>

CULTURE OF PEACE: REFLECTIONS DRAWN FROM THE NOTION OF SECURITY

Print ISBN: 978-628-7818-47-7

ISBN digital: 978-628-7818-48-4

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484>

Human Rights and IHL Collection

Sello Editorial ESDEG

Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto"

Bogotá D.C., Colombia

2026



Introduction

The question that traditionally accompanies the theses of legal scholars seeking to establish a balance between the rule of law and the political state is this: Is law an end in itself or a means to achieve justice? In this context, this chapter delves into the framework of this debate to address a central question: How does the interaction between a legitimately constituted rule of law and a normatively structured system of social order contribute to achieving a stable and sustainable rule of justice?

Context and Theoretical Framework

In order to answer the question posited—that is, how can the exercise of a legitimate rule of law, complemented by the appropriate application of the instruments of social order, contribute to the consolidation of a permanent state of nature, whose fulfillment facilitates access to and enjoyment of a positive rule of justice? A reformulation of the original question is presented below to facilitate a coherent, logical approach.

How is it possible to achieve a positive rule of justice, based on the appropriate application of the following normative precepts: i) the legitimate and effective exercise of the rule of law; ii) the active participation of a society committed to respecting institutions, complying with social norms, and fulfilling its duties; and iii) the performance of a government legitimized by its unrestricted adherence to democratic principles, constitutional supremacy, and the principles of legality and order?

Throughout this chapter, the legal, conceptual, doctrinal, and structural aspects discussed by various authors will be examined, supported by a critical analysis of their principles. The goal is to highlight the key elements that enable the reinterpretation of legal tools and normative principles, whose proper functioning affects the balance of the State's role in protecting security and advancing social progress.

The achievement of a positive rule of justice, based on these principles, therefore requires the implementation of a series of actions and approaches:

- To consolidate the legitimate exercise and effective development of the rule of law, it is necessary to:
 - guarantee the independence of the judiciary, in order to ensure impartiality, objectivity, and autonomy in the interpretation and application of the legal system;
 - promote transparency in legal proceedings and establish effective control and accountability mechanisms in order to prevent and punish corruption within the judicial system;
 - promote legal education and raise legal awareness, with the goal of enabling individuals to understand, value, and fully exercise their rights and duties.
- To achieve a society committed to respecting institutions and complying with social norms, it is necessary to:
 - promote awareness-raising campaigns and civic education programs aimed at strengthening respect for public institutions and compliance with social norms;
 - encourage citizen participation in decision-making processes and in the oversight of government actions;
 - establish effective accountability mechanisms that allow citizens to verify compliance with the rules by all members of society, including authorities.
- To ensure that the nation is actively involved in the election of its leaders, prioritizing the selection of government proposals grounded in ethical principles, such as unwavering respect for the Constitution and the rigorous application of legal frameworks.
 - Ensuring legal equality for all citizens, without privileges or discrimination
 - Promoting transparency in public administration and strengthening accountability mechanisms

- Fostering citizen participation in the formulation of public policies and in the oversight of government administration

Ultimately, positive justice is achieved when the State, society, and government act in a coordinated manner to guarantee the fair and equitable enforcement of the laws. This joint effort must ensure respect for the rights of all citizens.

Theoretical Framework

This chapter is developed within a theoretical framework that incorporates the ideas of thinkers such as Hobbes, Dworkin, Kelsen, and Rawls. Addressing the challenge of establishing a rule of positive justice, based on the three pillars mentioned earlier, requires a comprehensive analysis of the relationships among the state, society, and government.

According to Hobbes, the establishment of a social contract constitutes the basis of the rule of law, conceived as a mechanism to prevent chaos and guarantee collective security. For his part, Dworkin emphasizes the importance of integrity and consistency in the enforcement of the law, as well as a legal interpretation oriented toward ensuring equity.

According to Kelsen (1934), establishing ethical communication is fundamental to sustaining institutions and guaranteeing the fulfillment of legal duties. Within the framework of his pure theory of law, Kelsen conceives of this communication as a legal relationship between state organs, in which each issues a norm that grants another the power to issue subordinate norms:

The individuals whose actions give rise to this peculiar imputation are the organs of the State, and the common point of convergence for all lines of imputation stemming from acts qualified as those of the organs is the will of the State. So, if we ask ourselves what principle governs this type of imputation and what acts are subject to it—in other words, what acts are acts of the State—the answer will be provided by the legal norm: it is the law—understood as the body of legal norms—that expressly establishes how the State intends to act and under what conditions it acts through its organs.

On the other hand, Rawls posits justice as fairness, an approach in which the legitimacy of government is grounded in respect for the Constitution and the pursuit of collective well-being, with particular attention to the least favored sectors. His central argument is that the principles of justice must be chosen

under the so-called *veil of ignorance*, a hypothetical condition in which individuals are unaware of their particular circumstances—such as their social position, their natural talents, or their interests. From this position of impartiality, Rawls maintains that people may adopt rational and equitable principles to structure a just society.

In short, integrating these theoretical perspectives would enable analysis of how the interaction among the state, society, and government contributes to the consolidation of a positive rule of justice. This approach would promote the proper application of the principles of the rule of law, foster civic engagement, and guarantee respect for the Constitution and the laws.

Ultimately, the combination of a strict rule of law and an effective social order is fundamental to achieving a genuine and sustainable rule of justice. Through the consolidation of robust institutions, the empowerment of citizens, and respect for the law, an enabling environment is created that guarantees all individuals access to justice and the opportunity to contribute to the common good.

Rule of Law and Justice

Theories

These concepts complement one another, forming a legal and regulatory framework that not only guarantees the protection of individual rights and promotes social welfare but also fosters civic responsibility in building a just and equitable society.

The Rule of Law

Undoubtedly, the rule of law is a normative system whose application is vital to guaranteeing the proper functioning of society. In turn, the rule of law—based on Hobbes's notion of a state of nature—provides security, trust, social cohesion, and protection of individual rights, elements that contribute to collective well-being and the community's progress.

In this regard, Borda (2007), in his work *Estado de derecho y Estado social de derecho*, states:

For a state to be considered a true rule-of-law state, it must meet certain requirements. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, analyzed in the previous section, already established the first two: 1) the separation of powers; 2) the guarantee of fundamental rights; 3) the primacy of the law as the expression of the general will over all other legal norms; and 4) national sovereignty. (p. 36)

The separation of powers must be clear and effective. The Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches must not only operate autonomously but also implement mechanisms of mutual control. In a true rule of law, all persons—including political leaders and authorities—are subject to the law. Likewise, fundamental rights must be protected and respected at all times. The principle of legality requires that laws be clear, predictable, and fair, and that they be enforced impartially.

It is essential to have an independent, competent, and accessible judicial system that guarantees the prompt and effective resolution of disputes. Finally, a true rule of law must be based on a culture of legality, in which citizens actively participate in democratic life and exercise their rights and duties responsibly. These requirements are essential to safeguard individual rights, social stability, and good governance.

The Rule of Justice

The aspiration towards a rule of justice can be understood as the search for a superior form of the rule of law: a more perfect, accessible, and concrete form of social organization. The rule of justice plays a fundamental role in the construction and stability of society, and its legitimacy rests on the concepts of the *state of nature* and the *rule of law*.

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes argues that order is necessary to avoid the chaos and violence inherent in the state of nature, in which individuals act solely out of self-interest, without a sovereign to constrain their actions. In this sense, the rule of justice is presented as a normative and ethical framework that establishes rules and principles to regulate peaceful and equitable coexistence.

Moreover, the rule of law is based on the principle that all people, including those who wield power, are subject to the same laws and norms. This means that both political power and authority must be exercised within the limits established by law, thus guaranteeing respect for fundamental rights and access to a fair trial. In this regard, Salazar and Woldenberg (1997) state:

The modern state had to be configured as a state governed by the rule of law, that is, as a power responsible for creating and enforcing laws, yet also as a state subject to those laws. The sovereignty of the state, of political power, was thus transformed into the sovereignty of legality, in which state institutions are legally constrained in their powers and responsibilities. (p. 26)

In this context, the rule of justice must be conceived as the guarantor of the impartial enforcement of the laws and the equality of all individuals before the legal

order. Schmitt's work highlights the importance of establishing a constitutional order that defines the powers and responsibilities of state institutions, while guaranteeing the protection of individual rights and the balance of power. Along these same lines, Agesta (1989), analyzing the crisis of the parliamentary regime in Schmitt's work, argues:

Such were the most important ideologies and ideas at the time that this and other works by Schmitt (including his *Theory of the Constitution*) were published; and the enduring relevance of his thought entitles him to be considered, if not the most important thinker of the 20th century, then certainly one of the great thinkers of the century, who also did not shy away from the delicate problems of his time and his people, even in contradiction with such astute thinkers as Max Weber, Radbruch, and Thomas.

Schmitt's theory, as expounded in *Constitutional Theory*, argues that state institutions are legally constrained in exercising their powers and responsibilities to establish a constitutional order that guarantees the protection of individual rights and preserves the balance of power.

This theory maintains that such limitations are fundamental to preventing the abuse of power and preserving the legitimacy of state action. Schmitt argues that the separation of powers, along with the definition of competencies and responsibilities, constitutes a set of mechanisms aimed at containing and controlling state power. In this way, both the protection of citizens' rights and the proper functioning of the institutional system are guaranteed. These normative restrictions establish a legal framework within which state institutions must operate, thereby preventing arbitrary decision-making and safeguarding popular sovereignty.

The rule of justice plays an essential role in guaranteeing the legal order, promoting social equity, and protecting citizen security. First, it protects citizens by establishing a legal framework that regulates conduct and punishes criminal acts. This system contributes to maintaining public order and preventing violence, essential conditions for the development and well-being of society.

Rawls (1971) states that "a rule of justice is essential to establishing a framework in which citizens can have equal opportunities and enjoy fundamental rights and freedoms" (as cited in Caballero, 2006). In *Los derechos en serio*, Peidró (1986) notes that Dworkin (1977) emphasizes the importance of "the state acting as an impartial arbiter and enforcing the law fairly and consistently to protect the rights of individuals and safeguard the integrity of the legal system."

The rule of justice fosters trust and social cohesion. When people trust that they will be treated fairly and equitably, they are motivated to comply with the law and to actively participate in public life. This climate of trust strengthens community ties and contributes to peaceful and harmonious coexistence.

Furthermore, the rule of justice plays a fundamental role in safeguarding individual rights and freedoms. Through an independent and impartial judicial system, access to justice and the protection of citizens from potential abuses of power must be guaranteed. This is essential to promoting equal opportunities and respect for human dignity within a democratic society.

Towards a Rule of Justice

Achieving a rule of justice requires consolidating the rule of law, which, in turn, is supported by social order. A robust rule of law establishes a legal framework that guarantees equality before the law for all and the impartial enforcement of the law. This approach reduces arbitrariness and strengthens trust in the judicial system, essential elements for equitable and consistent justice.

However, an efficient rule of law cannot operate in a vacuum. In this regard, the existence of a social order that complements it is fundamental. This concept refers to a society committed to respecting social norms and fulfilling civic duties. Citizens educated in exercising their rights and responsibilities tend to abide by the law and help build a just environment. Social cohesion and mutual respect are pillars that strengthen the rule of law by promoting a culture of legality, solidarity, and shared responsibility.

The connection between a robust rule of law and a solid social order brings additional benefits. This synergy fosters conflict prevention and peaceful resolution, strengthens political and economic stability, and creates a safe and predictable environment that encourages investment. It also promotes citizen participation in decision-making, allowing their voices to influence the formulation of public policy and the consolidation of a transparent and accountable government.

Difficulties in Achieving a Positive Rule of Justice

Despite the prevalence of the rule of law in many contemporary societies, obstacles persist that hinder the realization of a true rule of justice. This limitation becomes evident when society does not actively collaborate in consolidating a genuine social order. The lack of commitment to civic duties and the reluctance to obey authority contribute to disorder and social disintegration. According to Hobbes (2009), when

every man does what seems convenient to him, “the life of man [is] solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” (p. 62).

Resistance to social norms and precepts creates an environment characterized by persistent conflict, diminished security, and interactions marked by distrust. In this sense, a society that does not adopt mechanisms of social discipline—such as compliance with norms, respect for authority, and an ethical conviction oriented toward duty—will hardly succeed in consolidating a true social order. As a result, society is exposed to processes of social fragmentation and a lack of justice, which contradicts the essential principles of peaceful and equitable coexistence.

To achieve a true rule of justice, the guarantees of the rule of law are not enough. It is essential that society internalize and fulfill its duties. While the rule of law provides the normative framework that regulates social life, justice cannot flourish if citizens do not adopt a culture of responsibility and active participation in its observance. In the absence of a civic consciousness oriented toward duty, laws risk being reduced to abstract formulations that lack real effectiveness, rather than becoming living principles that underpin equality, social cohesion, and mutual respect.

Hobbes (1986) argues that cooperation and mutual respect are fundamental to escaping the chaotic state of nature. In a society in which each individual prioritizes their personal interests without regard for their duties to others, conflicts tend to intensify, and the notion of justice becomes diluted. Unfortunately, this situation only partially describes the reality in Colombia. The consolidation of a culture oriented toward fulfilling civic duties strengthens individual and collective responsibility. It establishes a solid foundation for each citizen to recognize their role in preserving a just and equitable social order.

Relationship between the Rule of Law and Social Order

Although the rule of law plays a fundamental role in establishing a legal framework that guarantees equal rights and protects individual freedoms, it is not sufficient to achieve a true rule of justice. This is because, while the rule of law defines the principles that should govern coexistence, its effectiveness largely depends on citizens' willingness to obey and respect these laws. In the absence of a social order that promotes the internalization and voluntary observance of the law, the ideal of justice is seriously compromised.

Furthermore, a genuine social order presupposes the internalization of shared norms and values that promote mutual respect, cooperation, and peaceful coexistence. Without a solid social foundation, laws risk being ignored, manipulated, or even violated, thereby undermining trust in the legal system and distorting its enforcement.

In this regard, the connection between a robust rule of law and social order is fundamental to ensuring that laws are respected and enforced equitably, thereby advancing a true rule of justice. Regarding this idea, Russell (2023) states:

Education should serve to provide education, and not merely to eliminate impediments to development. This immediately raises the question of whether education should form good individuals or good citizens. It could be argued, and anyone with Hegelian leanings would maintain, that there is no antithesis between the good citizen and the good individual. A good individual is one who is concerned with the good of the community, and the good of the community is shaped by the good of individuals.

In this line of thought, Russell (2023) conceives of social order as an organized, structured system in which individuals interact predictably and coherently, following established norms. According to the author, such order is indispensable for the harmonious functioning of society, as it helps prevent conflict and chaos.

Russell argues that social order is based on both shared ethical and moral principles and a normative framework that guides citizens' behavior. According to the author, this structure enables peaceful coexistence and cooperation within the community, maintaining a dynamic balance between individual rights and collective well-being. Within this framework, ethical values and respect for the rules stand as essential pillars of a just and cohesive society.

Consequently, for Russell (2023), social order does not imply blind conformity or the suppression of individuality, but rather the construction of an environment in which individual rights and freedoms can coexist harmoniously, within rational limits that guarantee collective well-being and security.

From the Rule of Law to the Rule of Justice

The rule of law and the rule of justice are complementary but conceptually distinct notions brought together within contemporary political and legal theory. The rule of law refers to a system in which the exercise of state power is subject to the law and grounded in the protection of individual rights and freedoms, as well as in respect for the principles of legality, impartiality, and predictability. In contrast, the rule of justice transcends the merely formal compliance with the law by orienting itself toward the active promotion of equity, human dignity, and the realization of substantive justice as guiding principles of the social order.

In his work *Law's Empire*, Dworkin argues that the rule of law is based on respect for individual rights and freedoms, as well as on the equality of all before the law. From his perspective, the rule of law must establish an objective, stable, and predictable legal framework that allows citizens to develop in a just society. However, Dworkin warns that this framework is not sufficient to guarantee complete justice. This also requires an interpretation that considers the circumstances and needs of each individual.

According to Gracia (2014),

Dworkin's conception of law is principle-based—open to moral considerations—and is clearly interpretivist, as he understands law from the perspective of the judge's role in resolving cases. His position also implies an ideological conception of the State, hence his critique of utilitarianism and the view that individual rights should always prevail over the dictates of the State's cost-benefit calculations. (p. 549)

In this regard, the difference between the rule of law and the rule of justice lies in that the former is primarily oriented toward compliance with and respect for legal norms, whereas the latter aspires to the realization of substantive principles of equity and justice across all spheres of social life.

Tension between the Rule of Law and the Rule of Justice

While a functioning rule of law represents a significant step towards consolidating a rule of justice, there are contexts in which this condition is insufficient to guarantee a truly just and equitable order.

When the rule of law operates adequately, but society does not actively contribute to strengthening order and social discipline, the consolidation of a full rule of justice can be compromised. According to Rawls (1971), complete and effective justice between the parties cannot be achieved when the norms of social cooperation are not generally accepted.

Although the existence of a solid and equitable legal framework is a necessary condition for achieving justice, society's commitment to respecting the rules, fulfilling civic duties, and promoting the common good is equally indispensable. In the absence of a social internalization of the values of order, responsibility, and cooperation, even a well-structured rule of law will face serious difficulties in guaranteeing substantive, stable, and lasting justice.

The phenomena that can distort the relationship between the rule of law and the rule of justice, posing significant challenges to the development of an equitable and effective legal system, are described below. Ultimately, these factors can compromise fairness, erode public trust, and weaken both the legitimacy and effectiveness of the established legal order.

- **Corruption and lack of impartiality:** When the legal system is vulnerable to corruption and lacks impartiality, law enforcement may favor certain groups or individuals to the detriment of others. This undermines trust in the justice system and weakens the rule of law.
- **Judicial inefficiency:** The slowness and high costs of court proceedings create a significant gap between the legal framework and effective justice. The lack of timely and efficient access to the judicial system weakens citizens' trust and undermines the perception that justice is truly attainable and effective.
- **Lack of resources and inequality:** Disparity in access to legal remedies and quality legal representation gives rise to profound inequity in the exercise of the right to justice. This asymmetry undermines the relationship between the rule of law and the rule of justice, leading to unbalanced procedural outcomes that violate the principles of fairness and equality.
- **Political interference:** When political power interferes in the functioning of the judicial system or influences legal decision-making, the independence of the judiciary is compromised. This, in turn, affects its capacity to ensure impartial, objective justice within the legal framework.
- **Changes in legal interpretation:** Excessive flexibility in the interpretation of legal norms can lead to unpredictable decisions and the perception of arbitrariness in the administration of justice. Divergent interpretations, especially when they lack solid doctrinal foundations or jurisprudential uniformity, affect the coherence and stability of the legal system, weakening public confidence in its impartiality and legitimacy.
- **Lack of legal education and awareness:** The absence of basic legal training and civic awareness among citizens limits their ability to exercise their rights, fulfill their duties, and actively participate in democratic life. This deficiency hinders effective access to justice, weakens the rule of law, and reduces the prospects of consolidating a true rule of justice grounded in informed participation and respect for the law.

- Discrimination and prejudice: Despite the existence of the rule of law, social prejudice and discrimination can persist, negatively affecting impartiality and fairness in the administration of justice. This problem manifests itself in biased judicial rulings that categorize or exclude people based on their race, gender, or sexual orientation, thus violating the fundamental principles of equality before the law and universal justice.
- Technological advances and new challenges: Rapid technological evolution poses legal and ethical challenges that demand constant updating and adaptation of the legal system. The inability to respond adequately to these transformations can cause uncertainty and undermine perceptions of justice.

How to Achieve a Positive Rule of Justice

To achieve a full rule of justice, a strict rule of law and a stable social order are essential, in accordance with Hobbes's theory in *Leviathan*. Hobbes argues that, in their natural state, human beings are inclined toward conflict and competition over resources, resulting in chaos and insecurity.

To escape this precarious state, individuals must enter into a social contract, relinquishing a portion of their freedom in exchange for the protection and order provided by a centralized sovereign power. This social contract, along with sovereign authority, is an indispensable safeguard against anarchy and the unchecked exercise of power.

However, the existence of the rule of law is not enough to guarantee full justice. While it establishes the normative framework that regulates the conduct of citizens and the government, a social order grounded in shared values and collective commitment is also indispensable. This commitment implies the internalization of mutual respect, cooperation, and the voluntary observance of laws and norms. In the absence of a social order founded on shared values, laws risk being ignored or manipulated, undermining justice and compromising the equitable functioning of the legal system.

For Hobbes (1986), the state of nature refers to a hypothetical condition prior to the establishment of civil society, in which individuals live without a central government or any legitimate authority to enforce common laws or norms. In this sense, Hobbes argues that human beings are driven by their own interests and passions, leading to a state of permanent insecurity, conflict, and mutual distrust.

According to Orozco (2009),

Hobbes uses the term “natural,” which, in his works, generally refers to the classic opposition with the artificial, understanding the former as that which is a product of nature without human intervention, and the latter as that in which humans intervene, as imitators of creation. Thus, the “natural condition of man” refers to his bodily constitution, as a being endowed with “bodily strength, experience, reason, and passion,” without considering anything else. From the natural condition of man, at most, one can conclude that, in general terms, all men are equal.

According to Hobbes (1986), social order, also known as the *state of nature*, is characterized by features that, when contrasted with the behavior of contemporary societies, demonstrate how the concept of *order* has been relegated to ostracism.

For Hobbes (1986), the state of nature is characterized by a constant struggle for resources, the lack of regulatory mechanisms, the supremacy of the instinct for self-preservation, constant rivalry among individuals, equality in terms of vulnerability, and the absence of objective principles of justice and morality.

Faced with this bleak outlook, the author emphasizes the need for a social contract that enables the overcoming of these adverse conditions. Thus, it is clear that contemporary citizens still operate in contexts that reflect aspects of this state of nature, often marked by a passive expectation of almost messianic leadership. Meanwhile, these societies struggle to survive in environments deteriorated by profound social dysfunctions, the overcoming of which requires effective and equitable governance of collective resources.

Hobbes (1986) identified six essential characteristics of the state of nature:

1. a state of conflict and competition;
2. insecurity and absence of rights;
3. unlimited freedom;
4. a condition of self-preservation;
5. lack of justice and morality;
6. the need for a social contract.

Each of these characteristics gives rise to distinct dynamics that significantly influence social behavior, causing interaction patterns characterized by distrust, violence, or the individualistic pursuit of power and survival.

This chapter will address two of these characteristics to identify tensions and parallels with observable social behaviors today.

Regarding the state of nature, Hobbes posits a scenario in which individuals compete relentlessly for scarce resources, resulting in a permanent state of conflict and rivalry. The absence of a central power responsible for mediating and resolving disputes only intensifies this condition of instability and insecurity.

The state of constant conflict and competition manifests itself when individuals, guided solely by their self-interest, interact in an environment without legal limits or institutional structures to regulate their behavior. In the absence of a sovereign authority to establish clear rules and guarantee their enforcement, each person is compelled to compete to ensure their survival and well-being. This situation gives rise to a society characterized by distrust, instability, and the inability to sustain cooperation.

A concrete example of this state of conflict and competition could be a group of people shipwrecked on a desert island. In the absence of a central authority to regulate behavior and distribute resources, individuals would be compelled to compete for survival, resorting to struggles over scarce goods such as food and water. In this context, the absence of institutionalized norms would foster a climate of distrust and fear, prompting individuals to act in their own self-interest, even at the expense of collective well-being.

Hobbes (1986) argues that permanent conflict and unbridled competition give rise to a climate of insecurity and instability that makes peaceful and just coexistence impossible. Faced with this situation, individuals, driven by the need to preserve their lives and achieve a minimum of stability, would be willing to relinquish certain freedoms voluntarily in favor of a social contract. This covenant implies the transfer of power to a sovereign authority capable of imposing common norms, resolving disputes, and guaranteeing collective security. Thus, the state of nature becomes the theoretical justification for the establishment of government and social order.

In the context of insecurity and the absence of rights, the lack of a sovereign authority or an institutional framework to regulate coexistence means there are no guarantees of personal security or the protection of rights. In this context, each individual has the unrestricted freedom to act according to their own will to preserve their life, thereby fostering distrust, fear, and vulnerability.

Hobbes describes a hypothetical scenario in which there is no government or central authority to establish rules and guarantee order. In this state of insecurity and lack of rights, individuals live in constant danger, as there are no institutional safeguards to protect their safety or property. Peaceful coexistence becomes virtually impossible due to widespread distrust and the constant threat of

aggression. A concrete example could be a group of people living in an environment completely devoid of government control.

Consider a region where there is no legal system or authority responsible for enforcing the law. In that context, each individual would act solely on their own will and personal interests, without regulatory constraints or legal consequences. The absence of an institutional framework to regulate social conduct and guarantee fundamental rights would create an environment marked by insecurity, distrust, and the constant threat to personal safety.

In the absence of a legal framework or an authority to guarantee the protection of rights and property, individuals would be forced to defend themselves. This would lead to constant conflict, as each person would act in their own interests and out of survival instincts. In such an environment, physical strength or personal resources would become the primary mechanisms of power, allowing the strongest to prevail over the most vulnerable. As a result, a climate of structural insecurity, social instability, and widespread distrust would emerge.

In this state, Hobbes argues that individuals would act out of fear and self-preservation. In the absence of guarantees of personal safety and of an authority to regulate coexistence, people would choose to cede part of their individual freedom through a social contract. This agreement would establish a sovereign authority capable of imposing order, establishing norms, and guaranteeing the protection of fundamental rights. Thus, the state of nature provides a theoretical justification for establishing a legitimate political authority that ensures stability, peace, and collective security.

The state of nature, in essence, is characterized by constant conflict, widespread insecurity, unlimited freedom, and the primacy of self-preservation. It lacks objective principles of justice and morality, thereby rendering the social contract the sole means of overcoming these adverse conditions and achieving a stable civil and political order.

Justice and Law: A Contradictory Relationship

Traditionally, the legal community has debated whether law is an end in itself or a means to achieve justice. This chapter will examine various positions, drawn from legal and philosophical theory, that reflect the complexity and multiplicity of approaches to the relationship between law and justice.

The debate on whether law is an end in itself or a means to achieve justice has been analyzed by numerous jurists and philosophers. Some argue that law is an

end in itself, considering its primary purpose to be establishing a normative system that guarantees both justice and social order. In this regard, Kelsen (1934), in his work *Pure Theory of Law*, posits that law should be understood as an autonomous system whose purpose is to create a coherent and functional legal order. He also rejects the dualism between law and the State, maintaining that they cannot be conceived as separate entities. For him, the State is reduced to a system of legal norms that emanate from the law itself.

Conversely, Rawls (1979), in *A Theory of Justice*, distances himself from the Kelsenian conception by characterizing law as an instrument serving distributive justice. According to Rawls, law is not an end in itself but a means of guaranteeing an equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. He maintains that a just society requires an institutional structure that respects and promotes equal opportunities among its members. In this sense, Rawls affirms that each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice, which cannot be sacrificed even in the name of the collective good.

In conclusion, the relationship between law and justice has been addressed from diverse theoretical perspectives, reflecting the complexity of the debate in both legal and philosophical fields. While some schools of thought maintain that law is an end in itself, oriented toward the construction of an autonomous and coherent normative order, others conceive of it as a means to realize justice in terms of equity and respect for fundamental rights.

With regard to the rule of law and the political state, it is essential to recognize that this link transcends a mere formal hierarchy. The legal order is structured hierarchically by normative precepts, within which relationships of superordination and subordination are established. A norm belongs to a specific legal order insofar as its validity derives from a superior norm that authorizes its creation. However, this structure raises the problem of potential conflicts of interest between norms at different hierarchical levels, especially when a lower-level norm comes into tension with the principles or provisions of the higher-level norm on which it is founded. In these cases, the following question arises: Which of the two should prevail as the legitimate expression of law?

The conflict between norms of different hierarchical levels has been extensively addressed in legal theory. Kelsen, in his work *Pure Theory of Law*, argues that a norm is valid to the extent that it conforms to a norm of higher rank within a hierarchical normative system. Ultimately, every norm derives its validity from a fundamental norm—the *Grundnorm*, or basic norm—which, while not a positive norm, serves as

the logical presupposition that provides the foundation and legitimacy of the legal order. This presupposed norm establishes the original authority from which the normative system is hierarchically structured.

Contradictions between Kelsen and Rawls

Pure Theory of Law and *A Theory of Justice* are two fundamental approaches in contemporary political and legal philosophy. On the one hand, Kelsen argues that law constitutes an autonomous normative system, independent of ethical or moral considerations. From this perspective, justice is irrelevant to legal analysis, since the study of law focuses exclusively on the structure and internal functioning of the legal order, without engaging in value judgments about what is just or unjust from a moral standpoint.

In contrast, Rawls argues that justice should be the guiding principle of any legal system. Social and economic inequalities are legitimate only if they benefit the least advantaged members of society and are established through an equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. His conception of justice as fairness seeks to guarantee equality of rights and conditions, prioritizing the interests of the disadvantaged.

To achieve an adequate state of justice in contemporary societies, it is necessary to promote effective conflict resolution processes. These mechanisms not only contribute to building a culture of peace by valuing citizen consensus but also foster the rebuilding of the social fabric. In this regard, it is essential to commit to conflict transformation as a decisive instrument for achieving peaceful and sustainable coexistence.

For Galtung (1999, p. 9), peace is "everything we have when it is possible to transform conflicts creatively and non-violently." Transforming conflict entails transcending the objectives of the conflicting parties by defining alternative objectives, without becoming accustomed to a static discourse. It is clear that this transformation process occurs in mediation, since the neutral and impartial third party becomes a true facilitator for conflict resolution, a genuine peacemaker. (Pérez, 2015)

It is important to recognize and respect the diversity of opinions and forms of expression within a democratic environment. In this context, pacifism, conceived as a political proposal, should be oriented toward the constructive transformation of conflicts through the pursuit of negotiated solutions that contribute to the development of a more equitable and just society.

When a society attains civic awareness, it establishes a framework conducive to the effective protection of human rights and the fulfillment of the State's essential purposes. This civic awareness constitutes the starting point for realizing the values, principles, and rights enshrined in the Constitution, guaranteeing a coherent, structured, and, above all, just political order. Such an order is characterized by a harmonious relationship between the social duties of the State and those of its citizens.

Furthermore, building a culture of peace requires establishing and consolidating a legitimate rule of law. This must be a matter of justice for the State and its representatives. In fact, it constitutes one of the essential purposes of every State, since, through its authority and power, it must guarantee its citizens the full exercise of their rights. These rights, which are inherent to the dignity of each person, must be afforded the utmost protection and are recognized as inalienable, inviolable, and non-waivable.

In a democracy, the legitimacy of constitutional governance depends on the rule of law, which establishes a normative framework of laws that are clear, fair, and enforced impartially.

According to Rodríguez (2019),

Hobbes's sovereign, who may be a man, a small group of men, or an assembly, is legitimate because his power derives from the will of the contracting parties and not from some kind of divine decision. The laws that the sovereign promulgates will therefore be just laws insofar as they will be seen as an extension of the will of the men bound by the contract. (p. 41)

Likewise, the rule of law must be supported by strong, autonomous, and reliable institutions that guarantee the promotion of equality, transparency, and accountability. The consolidation of a robust and coherent legal framework not only ensures the effective protection of fundamental rights but also provides citizens with confidence that all disputes will be resolved in accordance with the principles of justice, impartiality, and peaceful settlement.

To promote a culture of peace, an essential aspect is the proper application of the concept of *social order* or, as Hobbes termed it, the *state of nature*. This concept aims to prevent chaos and widespread conflict by establishing norms and principles that regulate coexistence and foster harmony among members of society.

Therefore, it is necessary to promote fundamental values such as respect, tolerance, and solidarity. In a state of nature, citizen participation and the peaceful resolution of conflicts must be encouraged in order to prevent the escalation of

tensions and acts of violence. In this way, a balanced social environment conducive to peaceful coexistence is created, thus laying the foundation for the sustained development of a culture of peace.

The preeminence of the social rule of law grants democracies a fundamental role and provides citizens with the strongest guarantees for the protection of their rights. In Colombia, the 1991 Political Constitution marked a milestone by replacing a constitution that had been in effect for more than a century. One of the most significant events was the proclamation of Colombia as a social rule-of-law state, founded on respect for human dignity and the State's commitment to guarantee and protect fundamental rights. These principles were enshrined in Article 2, which establishes that one of the State's essential purposes is to ensure the effectiveness of the laws, rights, and duties recognized within the institutional order.

Furthermore, a fundamental element for strengthening a culture of peace is the active promotion of citizen participation in consolidating a robust social order. This order seeks to prevent the chaos and conflicts typical of contemporary societies. In this sense, civic duties—understood as the set of norms that regulate coexistence and social tranquility—play a central role.

However, among younger generations, there is a perceived lack of commitment to fulfilling civic duties, creating an imbalance between exercising rights and assuming responsibilities. Given this situation, it is essential to design and implement public policies focused on civic education and social development. This will help cultivate a sense of responsibility for peaceful coexistence and respect for the democratic order.

"When a man becomes aware of their own rights, it is necessary that they also become aware of their own duties" (Pope John XXIII). Being responsible for one's own actions (what one does, what one does not do, what one says, what one does not say) implies a judicious exercise of self-awareness, defining one's commitment to the social structure in which one lives, dreams, and brings into being every day, with one's family, at work, in one's city, with one's friends, and in society at large. This could result in an invitation for each individual to value their rights, grounded in love as a unilateral act of free will, and to pursue continuous growth based on their behavior. (Moreno, 2020)

When a society attains civic awareness, it establishes a framework conducive to the effective protection of human rights and the fulfillment of the State's essential purposes. This civic awareness constitutes the starting point for realizing the

values, principles, and rights enshrined in the Constitution, guaranteeing a coherent, structured, and, above all, just political order. Such an order is characterized by a harmonious relationship between the social duties of the State and those of its citizens.

In this regard, Moreno (2020) states:

If each citizen attains awareness and acts in accordance with their responsibilities to ensure the effective enjoyment of their rights, we could envision a genuine alternative to harmonious coexistence, security, and, consequently, peaceful communities. If each citizen is aware of the world they create day by day, they could truly be a change-maker.

Hobbes (1651) argues that, to achieve harmonious coexistence, it is essential to establish rules that regulate life in society and foster harmony among its members. Within this framework, the aim is to promote values such as respect, tolerance, and solidarity. In a state of nature, the state must promote citizen participation and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, thereby preventing the escalation of tensions and recourse to violence. From this perspective, a suitable social order is fundamental for preserving peace and guaranteeing collective well-being.

The core of Hobbesian political philosophy lies in the conception of the natural state of humankind as a condition of permanent war and chaos. In this scenario, each individual acts in their own interests, without a higher authority to impose rules that regulate social coexistence. In this context, Hobbes (1651) proposes the formation of a sovereign state to which citizens owe obedience and loyalty, thereby guaranteeing order and stability.

According to this conception, modern citizenship is defined primarily by the acceptance and fulfillment of the rights and duties imposed by the sovereign state. Political participation, by contrast, is limited to preserving order and avoiding conflict. These elements shape his perception of social organization and the relationship between individuals and political power.

For Hobbes (1651), social order requires the establishment of a centralized, sovereign power, legitimized by a social contract, whose primary function is to enforce compliance with the law and guarantee the security and well-being of all members of the community. From this perspective, social order is not only a mechanism for avoiding the conflict and violence inherent in the state of nature, but also an indispensable condition for peaceful, stable, and lasting coexistence.

However, Gallegos (2011) states:

Some believe that Hobbes ultimately negates the concept of the citizen with his proposal of a sovereign with absolute power. For others, however, it marks the beginning of political modernity, whose advent, in turn, inaugurates a new conception of citizenship: that of the modern citizen. This conception is characterized primarily by privileging the individual freedom of citizens within the State and, unlike the classical and medieval conceptions, being a citizen signifies the condition that an individual has in relation to the state entity; that is, the legal bond of belonging to the State in which one acquires duties of one's own free will in order to be guaranteed certain rights within the territory in which one lives. (as cited in Plaza, 2018)

In metaphorical terms, it could be said that the sum of the rule of law and social order necessarily leads to the virtues of a rule of justice. The latter is configured to guarantee equal opportunities, protect fundamental rights, and promote the general welfare.

To achieve this ideal, it is necessary for both the state and its citizens to assume the responsibility of respecting and promoting the principles of justice, equity, and solidarity. This implies values-based education from the earliest stages of development, as well as the implementation of policies to promote social inclusion and eradicate all forms of discrimination. Thus, the construction of the rule of justice stands as the fundamental pillar for the consolidation of a lasting and sustainable culture of peace.

In conclusion, a society can cultivate a culture of peace by establishing a legitimate rule of law and effectively implementing a just social order. The combination of these elements enables the formulation of a rule of justice that fully respects the rights and guarantees of all citizens.

To achieve this, it is necessary to promote citizen participation, foster an education grounded in democratic and ethical values, and strengthen robust, transparent, and trustworthy institutions. A culture of peace is based on mutual respect, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and the continual promotion of equality and justice as fundamental pillars of social life.

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Chapter 7

Security and Development Governance*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.07>

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Abstract: This chapter offers an exploratory analysis of governance as an effective public management tool, aimed at examining the harmonious interaction between security and development. These two dimensions are highly sensitive to national stability and prosperity, and their balance and effectiveness enable progress toward greater freedom within a framework of respect for human rights, the promotion of progress, and the guarantee of security. The complementarity between security and development must be assumed as a constant, framed within a symbiotic relationship. In this context, in addition to examining how inter-institutional capacities should be coordinated from a governance perspective, an analysis of the Security, Defense, and Citizen Coexistence Policy will be conducted in light of the principles of complexity science. This analysis will draw on theories of risk management, resilience, and complex adaptive systems to generate inputs that inform the understanding and application of risk-based security policies.

Keywords: Governance; security; development; public policy; risks; complexity

* This book chapter results from the research project "Culture of Peace and Its Relationship with Security in the Western Hemisphere," conducted by the Masa Crítica group at Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto," which is categorized as A1 by the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (Minciencias) under code COL0123247. The views and results presented are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the participating institutions.

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APA Citation: Ruiz Mora, J. A., & Suárez, L. E. (2026). Security and Development Governance. In A. Cerón Rincón & V. Torrijos (Eds.), *Culture of Peace: Reflections Drawn from the Notion of Security* (pp. 139-162). Sello Editorial ESDEG.
<https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.07>

CULTURE OF PEACE: REFLECTIONS DRAWN FROM THE NOTION OF SECURITY

Print ISBN: 978-628-7818-47-7

ISBN digital: 978-628-7818-48-4

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484>

Human Rights and IHL Collection

Sello Editorial ESDEG

Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto"

Bogotá D.C., Colombia

2026



Introduction

"We will not have development without security, we will not have security without development, and we will have neither security nor development if human rights are not respected" (Kofi, 2005, para. 17). This statement raises a crucial question: Does the disconnect between security and development policies constitute a strategic risk and a significant threat to national stability?

In the culture of government administration, particularly in public policy, a disconnect has persisted between security objectives and development projections. This separation can be attributed to a multitude of historical and conceptual factors, such as differences between disciplinary approaches; the ideological antagonisms that polarized the world during the Cold War; the tension between short- and long-term planning models; the coexistence of divergent visions among the actors involved; competition for resource allocation, and especially, friction between the political and military spheres in high-conflict contexts, where the armed forces have assumed a leading role in internal security.

Analyzing the link between public development policies associated with security and prosperity levels presents a complex, multifaceted challenge. There is no statistical indicator that establishes a direct causal relationship between these variables, given that development and security are conditioned by numerous economic, social, political, and institutional factors, whose influence varies by context.

This work aims to demonstrate that integrating security and development policies, through the harmonization of their respective capabilities, constitutes a fundamental governance tool for national stability. Disconnection or isolation between these two spheres can generate risks and threats of high strategic value, jeopardizing the achievement of national objectives.

Security and Development as Challenges

Security and development are determinants of the survival and well-being of any society. In Colombia, their integration is a major challenge for defending national interests and state stability.

A central characteristic of national interests is their orientation toward protecting and promoting a nation's objectives, values, and needs. These interests are intrinsically linked to the well-being and security of its citizens and include key aspects such as the defense of sovereignty, territorial security, economic prosperity, and political stability. In this regard, national interests play a decisive role in the formulation of public policies and government decisions and constitute a strategic line in the design of foreign policy, diplomacy, and international relations.

In the Colombian case, the legal basis for national interests is found in the Political Constitution, which establishes that the country must have a National Development Plan and a State Investment Plan:

The general section will set forth the long-term national purposes and objectives, the medium-term goals and priorities of state action, and the general strategies and guidelines for economic, social, and environmental policy that will be adopted by the Government. (1991, Art. 339)

Accordingly, the National Security and Defense Manual reaffirms this instruction by stating that:

For such objectives to be achieved effectively and promptly, it is essential that their pursuit take place within certain security conditions, that is, within a protected situation... which must be understood as a permanent necessity even after the respective goals have been achieved. Indeed, once the development objectives have been formulated, it is necessary to achieve them within a general security framework, and once achieved, to maintain them through adequate protection. (1996, no. 4)

For a nation, a security state represents the guarantee of comprehensive protection for its citizens, territory, and resources against internal and external threats. This protection encompasses multiple dimensions, such as physical security—which includes national defense, the maintenance of public order, and crime prevention—and economic security, understood as financial stability and the protection of critical infrastructure. Likewise, the concept of security extends to

areas such as food security, public health, and cybersecurity. In short, security is essential for safeguarding the nation's sovereignty and overall well-being.

National development refers to a nation's economic growth and social progress. This includes the continuous improvement of the living conditions of its inhabitants, achieved through poverty reduction, equal opportunities, quality education, accessible health services, and infrastructure strengthening. Development aims to boost a country's economy and increase overall well-being.

In developed countries, these advances are reflected in a population with higher standards of health, education, and quality of life, as well as a more dynamic and resilient economy. These conditions, in turn, allow for greater protection and influence in the international arena.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that security and development are fundamental to a nation's prosperity and stability. While security guarantees protection against internal and external threats, development promotes the sustained improvement of the quality of life and well-being of the population. Both components are deeply interrelated and are indispensable for ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of the national project.

Effortful Measures of Global Multilateralism

Since the beginning of the new millennium, the United Nations has recognized humanity's potential to advance peace, security, disarmament, demobilization, conflict resolution, human rights, democracy, and good governance.

In this context, the Secretary-General of the UN stated the following in his report A/59/2005:

[world leaders] vowed to protect the vulnerable and meet the special needs of Africa. And they agreed that the United Nations needed to become more, not less, actively engaged in shaping our common future. Five years later, a point-by-point report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration would, I feel, miss the larger point, namely, that new circumstances demand that we revitalize consensus on key challenges and priorities and convert that consensus into collective action. (paras. 6–7)

In this report, the Secretary-General argues that development and security are intrinsically interrelated and that both depend on full respect for human rights. He emphasizes the need to act simultaneously in three fundamental dimensions: development, security, and human rights.

This means that, to achieve sustainable development and lasting security, it is essential to guarantee the unrestricted respect for and effective promotion of fundamental rights. A lack of development can lead to tensions and conflicts, while insecurity undermines efforts toward economic and social progress. In this sense, human rights constitute the foundation upon which peaceful and prosperous societies are built.

Furthermore, when considering the role of leadership in governance oriented toward security and development, it can be understood as:

An integrated approach that involves the coordination of public and private entities, government institutions, NGOs, non-state actors, international agencies, and ultimately, society, in the formulation and implementation of public policies aimed at promoting security and sustainable development within a socially organized community. (Echeverri and Sotomayor, 2010)

From this perspective, it can be inferred that security and development are interrelated and that effective public policy strategies require addressing both dimensions simultaneously. In this context, governance

implies collaboration and the coordinated management of resources and efforts to address security and development challenges comprehensively, ensuring the participation of multiple actors and promoting social stability and progress. (Krasner, 2001, p. 245)

In formulating modern public policies, it is essential to analyze the convergence between security threats and development opportunities, particularly in an increasingly interconnected and globalized world. Contemporary societies face an environment characterized by high levels of violence, profound inequalities, armed conflicts, poverty, terrorism, organized crime, and the actions of non-state actors. These phenomena have far-reaching effects, including forced displacement, mass migration, increased crime, and institutional destabilization.

However, this same global context is characterized by abundant resources, considerable technological potential, and broad access to international markets, the strategic exploitation of which can boost economic growth and contribute to wealth and well-being.

Nevertheless, despite the existence of numerous international reports and indices that assess levels of security and development in nations—such as the Global Terrorism Index, the Human Development Index, the Global Peace Index,

the Rule of Law Index, and the Human Security Index—most of these tools tend to address both dimensions separately. That is, they rate variables that appear to affect only one of the two areas (security or development), without considering cross-cutting factors whose characteristics can provide valuable information applicable to both spheres, given their combined impact on the stability and well-being of societies.

Even with a broad set of fixed variables used to measure levels of security or development, these would not be sufficient for a complete and accurate assessment. This is because security and development are distinct concepts with specific dimensions that often require different indicators.

For example, variables used to measure security levels include homicide and crime rates, the incidence of armed conflict, the degree of military control, objective conditions, and subjective perceptions of security. These indicators are also used to assess the political stability and physical security of a region or country.

Conversely, the variables used to measure development typically encompass a broader range of dimensions, such as economic growth, education, health, gender equality, access to essential services, quality of life, and poverty reduction. These indicators are designed to assess a society's well-being and sustainable progress.

While some security-related variables may be linked to certain aspects of development—such as political stability and investment capacity—they are insufficient to assess key dimensions, including education, health, and quality of life. Therefore, a comprehensive assessment of development levels requires specific indicators that enable adequate analysis of these areas.

In short, although security-related variables can provide valuable information on stability and control in a region, it is necessary to use a broader set of development indicators to evaluate a society's social and economic progress comprehensively. By complementing each other, the two sets enable an understanding of different dimensions of a nation's overall well-being.

In this context, the guiding question for this research is: Does the fragmentation and lack of integration between public policies on security and development pose risks and threats that compromise the nation's interests?

Findings from research and analyses examining the relationship between development and security policies across contexts often use indicators such as the Human Development Index, violence rates, peace indices, or political stability indicators to measure progress in these areas.

In light of the above, academic institutions dedicated to the study of security and development should promote a culture oriented toward formulating

comprehensive public policies. To move in this direction, it is essential to consider the following key aspects: i) adopting a holistic approach that recognizes the interdependence between the components of security and development; ii) fostering the participation of stakeholders in the design and implementation of public policies, including directly affected communities; and iii) maintaining a perspective focused on achieving sustainable results.

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first addresses *governance* as an effective tool of public management, considering genealogical features, a brief epistemological foundation, and lines of inquiry focused primarily on security and development. This analysis demonstrates how governance, in addition to fostering coherence and coordination among various institutions, helps avoid duplication of effort and ensures the efficient allocation of public resources.

In the context of security and development, effective governance contributes to conflict prevention and management, promotes citizen security, facilitates access to justice, and strengthens citizens' trust in state institutions. Furthermore, the practice of good governance in the formulation and implementation of public policies creates favorable conditions for economic and social development, poverty reduction, and the sustained improvement in quality of life.

The second part evaluates the Security, Defense, and Citizen Coexistence Policy using risk theory and complexity science. This section begins with an introduction to the risk equation, conceived as a representation of the interplay among threat, vulnerability, and exposure. Based on this conceptual framework, a policy analysis is developed using a risk- and complexity-based approach to examine its coherence, effectiveness, and adaptive capacity in the face of the country's strategic challenges.

Theoretical Framework

The content of this work is analyzed in light of the proposal formulated by the UN in its report, *In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all*. From this comprehensive perspective, this document is a relevant precedent supporting the research hypothesis.

The UN report A/59/2005 highlights the need for a comprehensive approach that brings together development, security, and human rights as fundamental pillars of a broader vision of freedom and well-being.

The report focuses on theorizing the interdependence between development, security, and human rights. It also advocates a broader perspective on the

development agenda, orienting it not only toward improving economic conditions but also toward strengthening security and effectively protecting human rights. Lastly, it emphasizes the need to address the structural causes of insecurity, recognizing that it can stem from a lack of opportunities, inequality, social exclusion, and human rights violations.

Integration of Public Policies on Security and Development

Security and development are fundamental pillars of a nation's well-being and stability. Security is defined as the State's capacity to protect its citizens, territories, and resources from both internal and external threats. This protection encompasses multiple dimensions, including national defense, effective law enforcement, crime prevention, cybersecurity, public health, physical security, economic security (including financial stability and the protection of critical infrastructure), and food security. Together, these elements constitute an essential state that safeguards national sovereignty and guarantees collective well-being.

On the other hand, national development refers to economic growth and social progress, aimed at the sustained improvement of the population's living conditions. This dynamic includes poverty reduction, the promotion of equal opportunities, and access to quality education. Development seeks to consolidate a robust economy and increase overall well-being.

In this sense, a developed country is characterized by a healthier, better-educated population and greater productive capacity, which enhances its projection and influence in the international arena.

Based on these considerations, it can be stated that the integration of public policies on security and development constitutes a substantial contribution to strengthening governance. This assertion is supported by several reasons, including:

- It enables a comprehensive approach: The coordination of public policies on security and development allows for a joint and holistic approach to the challenges facing contemporary societies. This approach implies considering not only physical security, but also its interrelationships with economic, social, and political factors inherent in development. Thus, a comprehensive approach is more effective in mitigating the structural causes of insecurity.
- It contributes to conflict prevention: The coordination of public policies on security and development promotes conflict prevention by addressing

the structural conditions that often give rise to violence and instability. Promoting inclusive development and reducing social tensions decreases the likelihood of armed conflicts or violent demonstrations.

- It allows for the optimization of resources: Coordination among various government entities and responsible agencies contributes to more efficient management of public resources. This institutional coordination not only avoids duplication of effort but also promotes a more strategic and coherent allocation of funds, geared toward implementing projects that simultaneously address security and development objectives.
- It strengthens resilience and sustainability: Coordinating public policies on security and development can strengthen a society's resilience to threats and crises by promoting sustainable development systems. This approach entails strengthening the economy's adaptive capacity, protecting the environment, and ensuring access to essential services, including health and education.
- It encourages community participation: A comprehensive approach fosters the participation of local communities in decision-making and the implementation of public policies. This inclusion strengthens the legitimacy of government actions, enhances social ownership of interventions, and enables more contextualized and effective responses, particularly at the local level.
- It promotes long-term objectives: Coordinating public policies on security and development fosters long-term planning and sustainable development, moving beyond perspectives focused solely on immediate solutions. This enables lasting improvements in the population's quality of life and security levels.

In short, by enabling a more comprehensive and effective approach to social challenges, this integration makes a substantial contribution to governance. It also contributes to societal stability, well-being, and resilience, thereby promoting a safer and more conducive environment for the development of its citizens.

Promoting a Culture that Integrates Security and Development in Public Policy Formulation

Adopting an approach that recognizes the interconnections among security and development components entails formulating and implementing strategies and public policies.

The following are some ways in which it is possible to advance this integration:

- Multisectoral approach: Fostering collaboration and coordination among the various ministries and government agencies responsible for security and development.
- Participation of local stakeholders: Involving local communities in decision-making and the implementation of public policies. This participation ensures that policies are contextualized and effectively cater to the needs and concerns of each community.
- Combined indicators: Employing indicators and metrics that allow for the evaluation of progress in development and security. These measurement tools can provide a more holistic view of the situation and the progress achieved.
- Human rights-based approach: Placing human rights at the heart of strategies and public policies. This implies guaranteeing the effective protection and promotion of civil and political rights, as well as economic, social, and cultural rights.
- International cooperation: Fostering collaboration with the international community and multilateral organizations to address global challenges that affect both security and development. This cooperation can encompass areas such as combating terrorism and organized crime, and promoting initiatives for sustainable development.
- Evaluation and continuous learning: Establishing systematic evaluation mechanisms to regularly measure the impact of public policies on security and development. The analysis of results should enable the identification of best practices and areas for improvement, thereby facilitating the reformulation and adaptation of strategies based on the evidence obtained.
- Transparency and accountability: Guaranteeing a high level of transparency and accountability in the implementation of public policies. This is a fundamental condition for strengthening citizen trust in state institutions and ensuring the efficient and responsible use of public resources.
- Encouraging participation: Stakeholders can participate in the formulation and implementation of public policies on security and development, including affected communities.

In this regard, Bazúa and Valenti (1995) state:

the development and consolidation of a competitive and free political market based on equal conditions and opportunities for organizations or individuals with different government projects gives rise to genuine sociopolitical competition and the development of civic culture because it constitutes a kind of socio-systemic school in which the typical citizen tends to adopt a worldview of the public sphere and the state centered on the full application of the rule of law for their individual well-being and the public good.

Promoting a culture of participation in public policymaking offers significant benefits to citizens by empowering individuals and giving them a voice in decisions that directly affect their lives. This approach not only strengthens the transparency, accountability, and legitimacy of government policies but also helps develop more effective and satisfactory solutions.

Below are key considerations for encouraging citizen participation in public policymaking on security and development.

- Clear and open communication: Establishing communication channels with stakeholders is fundamental to fostering their participation. Informing them about the objectives, the policymaking process, and the expected outcomes of the public policy facilitates understanding and strengthens trust in institutions.
- Early involvement: Involving stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of public policies fosters a sense of ownership and commitment to the country's development.
- Active listening: Addressing the concerns, needs, and proposals of stakeholders, as well as fostering an environment where they feel heard, valued, and respected, not only builds trust but also promotes sustained involvement in the formulation and implementation of public policies.
- Training and education: Stakeholders, especially affected communities, should have access to academic programs that allow them to understand the issues and processes related to the formulation and implementation of public policies. This is essential to ensure informed and effective participation.
- Local facilitators: Appointing facilitators or mediators to act as a liaison between communities and government authorities can be a powerful strategy to boost citizen participation and overcome cultural or linguistic barriers.
- Meaningful participation: Ensuring that stakeholder participation is substantive, and not merely symbolic, so that their opinions are considered

in decision-making and contribute to the design and development of public policies.

- Transparency in decision-making: This involves clearly communicating the criteria and rationale behind the decisions made, as well as ensuring that the relevant results and justifications are publicly accessible.
- Joint monitoring and evaluation: Designing and implementing, together with stakeholders, monitoring and evaluation systems that allow for rigorous and sustained tracking of policymaking, guaranteeing their participation in feedback and continuous improvement processes.
- Recognition and rebuilding of trust: When community trust has been affected by negative experiences, it is essential to implement tangible measures aimed at rebuilding it, prioritizing accountability and fulfilling commitments made.
- Celebration of achievements: Recognizing and celebrating the achievements and contributions of stakeholders not only reinforces their sense of accomplishment but also strengthens their commitment and continued participation.

To build a robust political culture on security and development, it is necessary to adopt a strategic vision that prioritizes the sustainability of results. In this context, the following aspects must be considered:

- Education and awareness: Strengthening civic education and collective awareness of the importance of security and sustainable development is a strategic component for consolidating active citizen participation. This strategy should focus on promoting an understanding of structural challenges, possible avenues for intervention, and the impact of public policies aimed at the common good.
- Continuous participation: To guarantee the legitimacy and effectiveness of government action, it is crucial to promote citizen participation in decision-making processes and the implementation of public policies. This requires establishing institutional mechanisms that allow citizens to regularly express their opinions, concerns, and proposals, ensuring their incorporation into the formulation, implementation, and evaluation stages of these policies.
- Transparency and accountability: Maintaining high standards of transparency in public management and policy implementation.

This implies disseminating relevant information, including budgets, expenditure, and results achieved, so that citizens can evaluate the progress, effectiveness, and impact of public policies.

- Focus on prevention: To address the challenges linked to insecurity and underdevelopment, it is necessary to prioritize preventive approaches over reactive or short-term solutions. This implies addressing the structural causes of these problems to design interventions that promote lasting, sustainable transformations.
- Investment in education and training: Investing in education and training programs that enable interested citizens to understand the issues and processes related to the formulation and implementation of public policies and, at the same time, enhance their leadership skills.
- Long-term strategic planning: Developing strategic plans that bring together concrete goals and objectives in security and development, accompanied by evaluation mechanisms that allow for adjusting and optimizing strategies according to the conditions and needs of the context.
- Partnerships and cooperation: It is essential to promote cooperation between the government, civil society organizations, the private sector, and the international community. By creating strategic and sustainable partnerships, a synergy is achieved that maximizes available efforts and resources to address long-term challenges.
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation: Implementing monitoring and evaluation systems that allow for measuring progress and adjusting public policies based on the results obtained.
- Promotion of accountability: Fostering the internalization of individual and collective responsibility, emphasizing the impact of human actions on the common good.
- Effective communication: Developing effective communication strategies to explain the benefits of public policies on security and development, and show citizens how they can contribute to their success.

Governance for Security and Development

Through a comprehensive participatory approach, it is essential to ensure effective integration between security and development. This aims to guarantee the effectiveness, sustainability, and positive impact of the policies and measures implemented. In this sense, good governance requires the inclusive participation of

diverse actors and the promotion of transparency, accountability, and respect for the principles of law and justice.

Addressing governance processes involves understanding a complex adaptive system. For this reason, we will analyze how, from an integrated security and development perspective, informed decision-making based on evidence and dialogue among the sectors involved can be ensured.

To achieve effective security and development, good governance practices require transparent decision-making and robust accountability mechanisms. These allow citizens to monitor and participate in public management. Furthermore, inclusion and equity in public policy design and resource allocation are fundamental to mitigating inequalities and strengthening social cohesion.

Inter-institutional collaboration and coordination, along with effective risk management, are essential for anticipating and responding to emerging threats and challenges in security and development. Together, these practices contribute to institutional stability and the sustainable growth of society.

Contemporary global challenges, such as terrorism, interstate conflicts, and environmental crises, have highlighted the interconnectedness of security and development. In response to this complexity, more recent approaches have adopted a comprehensive perspective that seeks solutions that address both dimensions. This approach recognizes that security and development are not antagonistic but complementary.

Governance, a fundamental tool for managing public affairs, is characterized by its comprehensiveness, meaning it can coordinate diverse actors, levels, and sectors. This characteristic requires complementarity, based on a symbiotic relationship among all system components. Through a well-structured governance dynamic, it is possible to chart a path toward long-term institutional stability and societal well-being.

In this context, governance is essential for achieving adequate levels of security and development. This perspective is theoretically grounded in the UN report, which maintains that development, security, and human rights are interdependent pillars, whose joint progress is indispensable for building more just and stable societies.

This essay aims to explore innovative processes for implementing good governance practices that, within the security and development framework, foster the development and implementation of public policies. These policies must be designed and structured to coordinate the capacities of all state bodies and structures, while also integrating the participation of the private sector, international agencies, and civil society.

The main benefit of treating security and development as a single unit is their ability to reinforce one another. Security, by creating a stable and predictable environment, drives economic growth and sustainable development. On the other hand, effective development helps reduce the structural causes of conflict and insecurity, such as inequality, poverty, and limited opportunities. This relationship establishes a solid foundation for achieving stability and social well-being.

Analysis of the Security, Defense, and Citizen Coexistence Policy

This section analyzes Colombia's Security and Defense Policy for the period 2022-2026, applying the concepts and risk approach previously discussed.

The analysis is divided into two parts. The first part introduces the risk equation, highlighting its function as a comprehensive model that integrates threat, vulnerability, and exposure. The second part focuses on the Security, Defense, and Citizen Coexistence Policy for the period 2023-2026.

This analysis also underscores the need to promote inter-institutional coherence and coordination, which are crucial for avoiding duplication of effort and ensuring efficient resource allocation. Within the framework of security and development, good governance fosters conflict prevention and management, strengthens citizen security, facilitates access to justice, and reinforces public trust in its authorities. Furthermore, effective management of public policy formulation and implementation creates an environment conducive to economic and social development, reducing poverty and improving the quality of life for the population.

The Security, Defense, and Citizen Coexistence Policy aims to guide the actions of the Colombian State and society to protect national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and collective well-being. This policy was developed by the Ministry of National Defense through a participatory and inter-institutional process that facilitated the formulation of diagnoses and strategies. The analysis focuses on identifying threats, vulnerabilities, and risk components, along with proposed strategies for managing them.

Topic 1 explores the risk-based approach, beginning with an explanation of the risk equation, which integrates the dimensions of threat, vulnerability, and exposure. Subsequently, each component is described, detailing the types of threats, the dimensions of vulnerability, and the degrees of exposure. The discussion is grounded in theories of risk management, resilience, and complex adaptive systems. The section concludes with an analysis of the applicability of this approach to the study of public policies in security and defense.

Topic 2 analyzes the Security, Defense, and Citizen Coexistence Policy for 2023–2026, using a risk-based approach and the principles of complexity science as a frame. Following a general introduction to policy, this section analyzes the threats, vulnerabilities, and levels of exposure that shape Colombia's security landscape. The interrelationships among these variables are then explored using conceptual frameworks derived from complexity theory. Subsequently, current policy strategies aimed at risk management and strengthening institutional and social resilience are examined. The section concludes with a reflection on existing limitations and challenges, as well as recommendations for implementing the proposed strategies effectively.

Risk-Based Approach

The Risk Equation

Risk can be defined as the probability of adverse events occurring that adversely affect a society, system, or population. From an analytical perspective, risk is conceptualized as a function of three elements: $\text{risk} = \text{threat} \times \text{vulnerability} \times \text{exposure}$.

A threat is understood as an external factor—natural, technological, social, or multifaceted—with the potential to damage or disrupt a system. Vulnerability, on the other hand, refers to a system's internal susceptibility to negative impacts and is conditioned by physical, social, economic, political, and environmental factors. Finally, exposure is defined as the extent of a system's contact with one or more threats.

The equation indicates that risk intensifies when any of its three components increases. Consequently, to minimize risk, it is essential to address each of these elements:

- Threat mitigation
- Reduction of structural vulnerabilities
- Reduction of exposure through strategies such as distancing or the implementation of barriers

Furthermore, it is crucial to analyze the interrelationships between threats, vulnerabilities, and exposure, as these tend to be reinforced by cumulative loops and cycles.

Types of Threats

There are multiple types of threats that can endanger a society's security. The most important are:

- Natural threats: Natural disasters—such as earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, or droughts—can have a significant social and economic impact.
- Environmental threats: Ecosystem degradation, pollution, loss of biodiversity, and climate change.
- Social threats: Various forms of violence, such as crime, terrorism, and social conflicts, threaten integrity, stability, and social cohesion.
- Economic threats: Financial crises, economic contraction, and speculative bubbles.
- Political threats: Institutional instability, corruption, polarization, and loss of legitimacy of public institutions.
- Technological threats: Industrial accidents, failures in critical systems and infrastructure, and cybercrime.
- Health threats: Infectious diseases and epidemics.

These threats can manifest themselves in an interrelated manner, causing cascading effects and feedback loops. Therefore, it is essential to analyze their interdependencies when assessing risks.

Dimensions of Vulnerability

The vulnerability of a society or system is determined by various internal factors that increase its fragility and susceptibility to potential threats. The main dimensions of vulnerability are:

- Physical and geographical vulnerability: Location in areas prone to natural hazards, fragile materials, or precarious construction.
- Environmental vulnerability: Degradation of ecosystems and overexploitation of natural resources.
- Economic vulnerability: Poverty, inequality, informal employment, and lack of productive diversification.
- Social vulnerability: Exclusion of groups, disintegration of the social fabric, and normalization of violence.
- Political vulnerability: Institutional weakness, corruption, lack of legitimacy, and polarization.
- Technological vulnerability: Fragile infrastructure, non-redundant systems, and uncritical technological dependence.
- Ideological and cultural vulnerability: Fundamentalism, intolerance, sexism, and racism.

Only through a comprehensive analysis of these dimensions is it possible to define actions to reduce vulnerabilities and enhance resilience.

Degrees of Exposure

Exposure refers to the degree to which a system is proximate to or in contact with specific threats. This can vary depending on geographic location, activities carried out, and the presence of natural or artificial barriers.

The categorization of exposure levels is established as follows:

- Negligible or no exposure: There is practically no interaction with the hazard.
- Low exposure: Natural, structural, or social barriers significantly limit contact with the system.
- Medium exposure: The hazard occurs with moderate frequency, and its impact is limited in scope or severity.
- High exposure: The hazard is constant and imminent, with severe impacts on the system and few mitigating barriers.
- Extreme exposure: Constant, direct, and intense contact with the hazard. There are no containment barriers.

It is crucial that territories, communities, and activities with high or very high exposure to certain hazards be the focus of priority actions aimed at reducing their vulnerability or controlling the associated hazards.

Conceptual Foundations

The risk approach is based on various theoretical frameworks from the social sciences, natural sciences, and engineering, including:

- Complex systems theory conceives of societies as complex adaptive systems, formed by multiple interrelated elements.
- Chaos theory analyzes how certain seemingly random behaviors depend on the initial conditions of dynamic systems.
- Resilience theory discusses the capacity of systems to absorb disturbances and reorganize themselves.
- Disaster risk management seeks to reduce risk through preventive and mitigation actions.
- Risk engineering evaluates the probability of failures or negative incidents in complex technological systems.

- Risk psychology studies how individuals and groups perceive risks, and how these perceptions influence their decisions and behaviors.

By considering elements of the system, society, and human behavior, the convergence of these disciplines provides a more complete and nuanced view of risk.

Application to Public Policy Analysis

This approach guides and strengthens various public policy areas by providing an analytical framework that links threats to vulnerabilities and exposure. Its application is especially relevant in areas such as:

- National defense and security policies aimed at identifying external and internal threats, as well as strengthening institutional capacities
- Natural disaster management policies aimed at reducing vulnerabilities, strengthening early warning systems, and optimizing response capabilities
- Public health policies focused on the surveillance of infectious threats and the mitigation of vulnerabilities
- Environmental policies that integrate climate and ecosystem risk assessments to guide adaptation strategies and increase resilience to climate change
- Critical infrastructure protection policies aimed at reducing its exposure to threats and its level of structural and functional vulnerability
- Social policies aimed at mitigating socioeconomic vulnerabilities that amplify risks

The proposed approach facilitates the identification of different types of threats, multiple dimensions of vulnerability, and intersectoral linkages, thus contributing to more effective governance of complex risks.

Identified Threats

The policy establishes a set of threats considered relevant to the security and defense of Colombia:

- Persistence of illegal armed groups and criminal networks linked to drug trafficking, illegal mining, and other illicit economies
- Growth and proliferation of transnational structures engaged in drug trafficking, arms trafficking, human trafficking, and various related criminal activities

- Institutional weakness and corruption that facilitate the infiltration of criminal organizations into state structures
- Environmental degradation and significant loss of biodiversity as a result of deforestation and other associated environmental crimes
- Escalation in the severity and incidence of extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, floods, and prolonged droughts, with adverse effects on ecosystems and food security
- Emergence of new threats, such as cyberattacks targeting critical state infrastructure and the economic system

An Adequate Vulnerability Analysis

Among the main vulnerabilities that amplify the risk from these threats, the policy identifies the following:

- Structural poverty, social inequality, and economic insecurity that particularly affect populations in remote rural areas, where the state's presence is limited
- Absence or weakness of government institutions and the rule of law in various areas of the national territory, which limits the institutional capacity to confront illegal activities and criminal dynamics
- Insufficient protection for vulnerable populations, such as social leaders, human rights defenders, and ethnic communities, who are generally victims of forced displacement, confinement, and other forms of violence
- Deforestation in jungle areas, driven by unsustainable practices and the consolidation of illegal economies
- High economic dependence on extractive industries, vulnerable to climate change, such as agriculture and livestock farming
- Lag in digital security in the face of the increase and sophistication of cyber threats

Exposed Territories and Populations

The policy identifies the following territories and population groups as especially exposed to the threats described:

- Border municipalities, hard-to-reach rural areas, and coastal areas are used as corridors for drug and arms trafficking.

- Jungle regions are affected by agricultural activities and illegal mining.
- Intermediate-sized cities are vulnerable to the expansion of micro-trafficking and the consolidation of criminal gangs.
- Young people in situations of unemployment or precarious employment, particularly in contexts of high social exclusion, are highly susceptible to forced or voluntary recruitment by illegal armed groups or criminal gangs.
- Social leaders and human rights defenders become targets of threats.
- Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities located in strategic territories face high risks due to the presence of illegal armed groups.

Strategies for Resilience

Given this scenario, the policy proposes strategies to strengthen resilience—defined as a positive adaptation process that enables the absorption, response, and recovery from disruptions. Among these strategies, the following stand out:

- Strengthening institutional legitimacy through the promotion of transparency, accountability, and the fight against corruption.
- Reinforcing coordinated intelligence, interdiction, and prosecution capabilities with the aim of dismantling criminal networks.
- Designing and implementing academic programs aimed at the substitution of illicit crops and the elimination of illegal economies.
- Progressively expanding state institutions in highly vulnerable areas.
- Developing policies that reduce poverty and expand opportunities for advancement.
- Protecting high-risk populations, such as social and community leaders.
- Updating doctrine and strengthening operational and institutional competencies to address current and emerging challenges.

Challenges and Limitations

To develop viable, realistic plans, it is essential to recognize the multiple challenges and limitations involved in implementing these strategies.

- Complex inter-institutional coordination given the cross-cutting nature of the problems
- Budgetary constraints and a shortage of qualified personnel
- Difficulties in strengthening the state's presence in areas controlled by illegal groups

- Community distrust of institutions perceived as illegitimate or corrupt
- Deeply entrenched criminal interests, which hinder their dismantling
- Effects of environmental degradation and climate change
- Plurality of divergent interests
- Difficulties in coordinating the responses of national and territorial authorities

The identified constraints require progressive strategies focused on concrete, achievable objectives, including continuous learning and the capacity to adapt to contextual changes.

Conclusions

The Security, Defense, and Citizen Coexistence Policy, analyzed from a risk-based perspective, reveals a diverse range of multidimensional threats and the territorial vulnerabilities that exacerbate them, especially in specific communities.

The policy brings together essential strategies to strengthen systemic resilience. However, it also acknowledges the significant challenges to effective implementation stemming from fiscal, institutional, and political constraints.

Therefore, it is necessary to adopt a strategic, gradual, and adaptive approach that prioritizes viable short-term goals while integrating a long-term, transformative vision. Likewise, it is crucial to monitor results and impacts, incorporating lessons learned to continuously adjust strategies in response to changing environmental dynamics.

Finally, effective risk management demands high levels of coordination among multiple actors and sustained political will, recognizing the systemic and multidimensional nature of security and defense challenges.

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Chapter 8

Anthropology of Violence: A Review from the Haitian Perspective*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.08>

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Abstract: Violence is a phenomenon that has hindered state consolidation in Latin America. In this context, Haiti represents an emblematic case, marked by ungovernability and insecurity, whose consequences have had a considerable impact at both the national and regional levels. Violence exacerbates and perpetuates the multiple barriers that impede the country's economic, political, and social development. This chapter aims to analyze the Haitian case, focusing on the effects of violence on national development. To achieve this, a qualitative methodology is employed to collect information from primary sources, specifically Haitian citizens. The results lead to the conclusion that expressions of violence—physical, structural, and cultural—are the consequence of a complex interaction of endogenous and exogenous factors that have contributed to perpetuating an environment of instability that limits the possibilities for sustainable development in the country.

Keywords: Anthropology of violence; direct violence; structural violence; ungovernability; insecurity

* This book chapter results from the research project "Culture of Peace and Its Relationship with Security in the Western Hemisphere," conducted by the Masa Crítica group at Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto," which is categorized as A1 by the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (Minciencias) under code COL0123247. The views and results presented are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the participating institutions.

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APA Citation: Barrientos Martínez, B. R., & Noguera Salas, M. (2026). Anthropology of Violence: A Review from the Haitian Perspective. In A. Cerón Rincón & V. Torrijos (Eds.), *Culture of Peace: Reflections Drawn from the Notion of Security* (pp. 163-183). Sello Editorial ESDEG. <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484.08>

CULTURE OF PEACE: REFLECTIONS DRAWN FROM THE NOTION OF SECURITY

Print ISBN: 978-628-7818-47-7

ISBN digital: 978-628-7818-48-4

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25062/9786287818484>

Human Rights and IHL Collection

Sello Editorial ESDEG

Escuela Superior de Guerra "General Rafael Reyes Prieto"

Bogotá D.C., Colombia

2026



Introduction

Haiti's history is marked by a succession of dictatorships and more than a hundred internal armed conflicts, which have hindered its social, political, and economic development. These internal crises, which persist into the 21st century, have had serious consequences, including coups d'état, instability in presidential governance, the suspension of electoral processes, and the emergence of radical social movements, including insurgent groups. Complicating this situation is a geostrategic factor: Haiti's location in the Caribbean and its proximity to the United States.

Due to its strategic location, Haiti has become a vulnerable and fertile ground for drug and arms trafficking. This problem is exacerbated by the proliferation of unauthorized airstrips and clandestine docks along its extensive coastline, which facilitates illicit activities. As a result, challenges related to national security, territorial control, and institutional governance intensify.

The situation in Haiti deteriorated drastically after the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse. This assassination unleashed a wave of violence and political destabilization, allowing criminal gangs to rapidly expand their influence and consolidate their control over various urban areas. Consequently, the first five months of 2023 were particularly bloody, with a 28 % increase in the number of fatalities, totaling 1,446 deaths. This relentless cycle of violence has led several analysts to warn that, should current conditions persist, social problems could worsen, further increasing concerns about the stability of the Haitian state.

Haiti's land and sea borders are highly vulnerable due to a severe shortage of material and human resources in key institutions, including the National Police, border patrols, and the Coast Guard. These agencies, essential for the control and security of border areas, lack the operational capacity necessary to confront

the challenges posed by criminal gangs. As a result, Haiti's borders have become highly permeable, facilitating the trafficking of people, weapons, and illegal goods.

Corruption has been an endemic problem in Haiti, reflecting profound institutional weaknesses and fragmented governance. According to the Corruption Perceptions Index, the country ranks 171st out of 180 nations assessed, placing it among the states with the highest perceived levels of corruption globally. This situation underscores the scarcity of state resources, the high incidence of organized crime, and persistent political instability. In the last 35 years, Haiti has had 20 presidents—a figure that illustrates the lack of continuity in political leadership, which has hindered the development of a solid and functional democracy.

The objective of this chapter is to analyze the phenomenon of violence in Haiti, its manifestations, and its impact on the country's social, political, and economic structures. A qualitative methodology is employed in a case study, enabling a contextualized examination. The information is processed using primary and secondary sources, an approach that facilitates the interpretation of the social and cultural dynamics that shape and perpetuate the conflict in Haiti.

This chapter is organized into sections that address the stated objective. First, the methodological aspects are presented, detailing the methodology adopted, the case study design, and the sources used. Second, the anthropology of violence is addressed as a theoretical approach, providing the conceptual framework that guides the analysis. Third, an overview of violence in Haiti is offered, describing its manifestations, causes, and consequences. Subsequently, an analytical triangulation is developed to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon, integrating theory, data, and context. The chapter concludes by synthesizing its findings and reflections.

Methodological Aspects

Qualitative methodology offers a deep and contextualized understanding of complex phenomena in specific settings by focusing on the analysis of the "how" and "why" of their emergence and evolution (Martínez, 2006). In this sense, the case study is particularly useful for addressing the dynamics of violence in Haiti.

Two data collection techniques are employed: document analysis and semi-structured interviews. The former involves the systematic examination of primary sources, including official reports, academic research, newspaper articles, and institutional documents. This technique enables reconstruction of the most relevant events of the last decade, providing a basis for subsequent analysis.

Conversely, the semi-structured interview is based on a set of questions classified into two types: opinion and knowledge-based (Hernández et al., 2014). These questions were structured around three categories: direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence. This not only allows us to capture individual perceptions of the phenomenon but also to understand the knowledge constructed around its causes, manifestations, and consequences.

Regarding the semi-structured interviews, two Haitian professionals participated, whose backgrounds and perspectives provide valuable, complementary contributions to the analysis. On the one hand, Jean Gary Apollon, a journalist and social communicator, provided a critical and experiential perspective, based on his direct experience as a witness to the episodes of violence that have marked the country's recent history. On the other hand, Abdaham Victoire Moncoeur, a mechatronics engineer and social activist, contributed through his commitment to development and education in Haiti, reflecting on the structural implications of poverty and inequality and on the role of the international community in shaping the Haitian context.

The information is processed through triangulation, which integrates three fundamental elements: the analytical categories of violence, the socio-historical context of the violent phenomenon in Haiti, and the analysis of the interviews conducted. This process enables the comparison and integration of data from different sources, thereby strengthening the interpretive validity of the conclusions. Furthermore, this triangulation informs and consolidates the theoretical approach of the anthropology of violence.

Anthropology of Violence as a Theoretical Approach

The anthropology of violence is a theoretical approach that allows us to understand violence not as a univocal or closed concept, but as a complex, multifaceted phenomenon deeply rooted in specific sociocultural contexts. It is important to emphasize that this perspective requires the convergence of an anthropological approach—which prioritizes situated, relational, and contextual understanding—and the study of violence as a social, symbolic, and structural fact. Thus, this perspective denaturalizes violence, questions its cultural normalizations, and examines its forms of reproduction and legitimation within society.

The anthropology of violence lacks a universally agreed-upon definition. Within the framework of this work, an analytical approach is adopted to examine the phenomenon from an anthropological perspective. This implies understanding

violence not only as a physical or visible act, but as a social and cultural construct that takes multiple forms, is embedded in diverse contexts, and operates at different levels. By focusing on human behavior, symbolic meanings, and social structures, anthropology offers essential analytical tools for exploring how violence is produced, reproduced, and naturalized within the everyday fabric of societies.

Recasens (2004) argues that, among the discipline's various branches, social anthropology is a relevant field for conducting a comprehensive analysis of violence, as it incorporates the methodological and theoretical contributions of ethnology and ethnography. Furthermore, the author points out that violence, when it emerges in a society, manifests itself in the ways of life it impacts or from which it originates. Consequently, it can be inferred that violence is configured within sociocultural relations and is in constant interaction with the normative and axiological frameworks that structure and legitimize certain social practices.

For Recasens (2004), social anthropology is a particularly relevant analytical framework for the study of violence. This is because the discipline examines the evolution of humankind and its cultural and social productions over time and across different geographical contexts. In this regard, anthropology allows us to investigate the origin, processes of transformation, and functioning of the cultural and institutional complexity of societies (Berdichewsky, 2002).

Following this same logic, various works have emerged that address the phenomenon of violence from an anthropological perspective, each with different approaches and emphases. The contributions of Garriga and Noel (2009) stand out, who problematize the concept from a theoretical perspective; Rosenberg (2012), who examines violence in urban contexts from an intersectional perspective; Baños (2005), whose proposal draws on biological approaches; and Tello (2013), who offers a methodological approach centered on the ethical dimension of the phenomenon.

Despite the diversity of approaches and perspectives on how to address violence from an anthropological standpoint, the authors agree on several key aspects. Among these, they emphasize the need to conceptualize violence in terms of its nature and the multiple ways it can be understood, depending on the contexts in which behaviors associated with the phenomenon manifest. They also share an interest in investigating the origins of human violence: is it a biological manifestation, a learned response, or a behavior elicited by social interaction? This type of questioning represents a significant step forward if the aim is to develop a rigorous scientific approach to the study of human violence and, thus, to the multiple consequences it has had—and continues to have—in contemporary societies.

However, one of the most definitive works on violence is Jiménez's, whose objective was to establish its origins and the various forms it takes, paying particular attention to the factors that trigger violent behavior in humans. In his study, Jiménez proposes a particularly useful conceptual framework for this chapter, as it offers a way to group the different scenarios of violence based on their manifestations. Inspired by the theoretical contributions of intellectuals such as Johan Galtung and Pierre Bourdieu, the author revisits the categories of direct, structural, and cultural violence (Galtung) and the notion of symbolic violence (Bourdieu) to integrate them into a single concept: hybrid violence.

From this conceptual integration, Jiménez concludes that "man is conflictive by nature, but violent by culture and education" (2019, p. 9). He also argues that human beings live in a state of naturalized hybrid violence, that is, in a scenario where different forms of violence—direct, structural, cultural, and symbolic—converge and become normalized.

By this logic, this chapter addresses the phenomenon of violence in Haiti, a country that, in recent decades, has become one of the main cases of insecurity in Latin America. In this context, it is essential to understand the causes and dynamics of this phenomenon and to reflect on the lessons this case can offer other countries in the region, particularly Colombia.

The types of violence previously mentioned are treated as analytical categories. The Haitian case is approached using a methodological strategy inspired by anthropology. In addition to identifying and describing violent behavior in the country, this chapter proposes a typology of violence as a conceptual guide, setting aside, for methodological reasons, the extensive theoretical discussion surrounding its definition and manifestations.

Direct violence is defined as the material and immediate action carried out by an individual, generally a product of aggressive impulses inherent in human nature. However, from a temporal perspective, Galtung (2016) distinguishes among three types of violence: direct, structural, and cultural. Thus, direct violence is conceived as a specific and observable event; structural violence, as a sustained process with long-term fluctuations and dynamics; and cultural violence, as a persistent state that legitimizes and naturalizes other forms of violence in the collective imagination.

To contextualize the types of violence, Jiménez (2019) proposes a classification that breaks down direct violence into three subcategories: physical, psychological, and verbal. These are characterized by causing harm to a subject without any type of intermediation (subject, action, object). Structural violence, by contrast, refers

to forms of violence that operate through social institutions and structures. It manifests as an injustice that prevents the satisfaction of the basic needs of certain groups or individuals. Finally, cultural violence is understood as the normalization and legitimization of violence within a society that occurs through values, beliefs, discourses, and traditions that justify and perpetuate it.

Finally, Jiménez (2019) highlights that, as conceptualized by Bourdieu, symbolic violence is the invisible facet of structural violence. This indirect form manifests itself in relations of power and domination. That is, the dominated subject is unaware of their subjugation; in fact, they recognize and legitimize it. Symbolic violence resides precisely in its capacity to render invisible the delegitimization inherent in the violent act, thus achieving tacit acceptance through the internalization of potential benefits or advantages.

Haiti: Current State of a Country Affected by Violence

When it comes to studying violence and its multiple consequences, Haiti emerges as one of the most emblematic cases in the Latin American context. Former (2007), based on various studies, argues that Haiti “is a kind of living laboratory for the study of affliction, regardless of how it is defined” (p. 65).

The Haitian reality, characterized by decades of political instability and institutional disorganization, seems to have normalized chaos as a permanent condition, leading to a form of social resignation. In this context, building a culture of peace would require structural and symbolic transformations of the political and social reality, as well as a process of acculturation that enables the reconfiguration of behavioral patterns.

Currently, the concept of *complexity* encapsulates the situation in Haiti. This notion allows us to grasp the multidimensional nature of the violent phenomenon affecting the country. From an anthropological perspective, this reality can be explored through the logic of the violence triangle. This perspective will be applied to the analysis of empirical data and interviews to provide a deeper understanding of the manifestations and dynamics of this phenomenon within the Haitian context.

To develop an accurate picture of violence in Haiti, it is necessary to address a key challenge: the reliability of the available data. This limitation hinders the characterization of the phenomenon and, consequently, prevents a realistic approach to its causes. A preliminary systematization of data from the international press and from governmental and non-governmental organizations has been conducted. This information has been classified according to the manifestations and typologies of violence over the last five years.

Table 1. *Types of Violence According to Governmental Organizations and the International Press*

Manifestation of violence	Number of victims	Type of violence	Source	Year
Homicide	600	Direct	United Nations	2023
Kidnapping	31	Direct	Unicef	2021 - 2022
Food emergency	4.5 million	Structural	Amnesty International	2022
Kidnapping	395	Direct	Statista	2022
Homicide	846	Direct	Statista	2023
Homicide	144 thousand	Direct	Deutsche Welle	2023
Sexual violence	98	Direct	France 24	2022
Internal displacement	165 thousand	Direct Psychological	United Nations	2023

Source. Adapted from Amnesty International (2022), Deutsche Welle (2023), Florencia (2022), France 24 (2023), UNICEF (2021), and United Nations (2023a; 2023b).

It is evident that, instead of moving towards building alternatives aimed at reshaping a persistent culture of violence, Haiti is currently experiencing an intensification of this problem, the structural and situational causes of which are still not entirely clear.

In this context, and following the previously developed logic, interviews were conducted with Haitian citizens to explore, from their own perspectives, elements that contribute to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of violence in the country, as well as to identify possible lessons applicable to security and institutional stability.

Direct Violence

Currently, Haiti is experiencing an alarming spiral of violence, characterized by a sustained increase in human rights violations. Various reports from international organizations agree that criminal gangs (e.g., the G9) are primarily responsible, seeking to control certain territories to satisfy their economic and political interests. According to these reports, there are more than 70 active gangs in the country, involved in crimes such as homicide, kidnapping, and forced displacement.

This reality raises key questions: Where do these gangs come from? What are their political objectives? The interviews reveal aspects that are generally not addressed with sufficient specificity in official reports or pronouncements by the international community.

Professor Jean Gary and Adaham Victoire caution that, while the existence of approximately 80 criminal gangs in Haiti has been estimated, this figure is uncertain and, therefore, cannot be considered conclusive. However, they agree that approximately 90 % of these organizations are based in the country's capital. Likewise, both point out that the emergence and strengthening of many of these gangs are closely linked to electoral processes.

Given the extremely low voter turnout, armed groups storm "voting offices"—referring to polling stations or ballot boxes—to fraudulently introduce large numbers of votes in favor of specific candidates. This practice also constitutes one of the gangs' main political objectives. However, those interviewed also note that many members of these organizations are illiterate, which forces them to arrive armed and with pre-marked ballots.

While the exact origin of Haitian criminal gangs is not entirely clear, it is essential to consider their close relationship with the political sphere, particularly with the instrumentalization of electoral processes as a means to legitimize power through vote manipulation. However, this explanation is insufficient to understand the extreme violence perpetrated by these groups, which raises further questions about the reasons that lead them to resort to practices such as homicide and kidnapping, including the abduction of minors.

In this context, the interviewees highlight two key factors for understanding this dynamic. First, they point out that many members of these gangs lack formal education and any ethical or moral guidance. Second, they emphasize the absence of an effective state presence in matters of security, which allows these abuses to continue with complete impunity.

The gangs are out of control. They kill children, they kill women, they kidnap people because they have a gun, and who is going to confront them? They are uncontrollable. Even politicians sometimes fear them. This has become a cultural issue; you put a gun in their hands and tell them it is a profitable way to make money. The violence is more prevalent in the capital and has a negative impact on daily life. The population feels threatened, and security is a constant concern. Furthermore, lack of education and illiteracy contribute to the manipulation of people into joining these gangs. Violence also hinders tourism development, despite Haiti's potential to be an attractive destination. (J. Apollon, personal communication, June 6, 2023)

Gender-based violence in Haiti is rooted in culture and a lack of education. The lack of development and the influence of certain powerful groups have

allowed violence against women to persist. Besides, some gangs have been used to exert control over the population, including through violence against women and girls. (A. Victoire, personal communication, June 6, 2023)

From this perspective, it is evident that in Haiti there is a close relationship between the political sphere and violence, with the former often triggering the latter. While the persistence of violent acts, such as homicides, injuries, and kidnappings, is undeniable, it is crucial to consider the role that weapons play in the execution of these acts.

In this regard, an apparent contradiction emerges: Haiti is among the poorest countries in the world, with more than 60 % of its population living in poverty and 24 % in extreme poverty, and it has recorded meager economic growth (World Bank, 2020). This reality raises profound questions: Where do the weapons come from? Who finances or sponsors the armed groups?

Politicians direct these criminal groups, providing them with what they need. They exist to obtain personal benefits. So what happens? These politicians also create their own armed branches, even within the public forces, since it is impossible to obtain these weapons without some form of contact within the navy or the police. On the other hand, there is arms smuggling. From where? From Miami, from the United States. (J. Apollon, personal communication, June 6, 2023)

Professor Apollon's observations coincide with what various sources have reported regarding the illegal trafficking of weapons to Haiti. For example, at the end of 2021, Gorder, from the think tank InSight Crime, documented several arrests of U.S. citizens of Haitian origin. These individuals were attempting to smuggle firearms hidden in their luggage, using air or sea transport. In these operations, short- and long-range weapons were seized, such as AR-15 rifles, 9mm pistols, ammunition, assault rifles, and Uzi-type submachine guns.

Investigations identified that the origin and destination of these individuals were linked to various U.S. states—such as North Carolina and Florida—suggesting the existence of transnational networks involved in supplying weapons to Haitian armed groups.

Additionally, Gorder (2021) argues that the United States is the main supplier of illegal weapons entering Haiti:

Due to its lax gun purchase regulations and its proximity to the Caribbean, the state of Florida is the largest supplier. A prime example of this came to light in 2019, when a Florida gun shop owner was accused of conspiring with Haitian government officials, including a senator, to smuggle 166 undeclared semiautomatic weapons into the Caribbean country. (p. 10)

Following this logic, Gorder (2021), based on estimates by the UN and the National Commission for Disarmament, Dismantling, and Reintegration, indicates that between 250,000 and 500,000 illegal firearms are circulating in Haiti.

Lederer (2023), from the international publication *Los Angeles Times*, reported an increase in arms trafficking between Florida and Haiti, characterized by the high degree of sophistication of the weaponry involved (.50 and .308 caliber and automatic machine guns). According to the journalist, the *modus operandi* involves using intermediaries to acquire weapons in jurisdictions with less restrictive legislation. Once in Florida, the weapons are concealed among everyday consumer goods and transported by sea to Port-au-Prince. In some cases, shipments are diverted to the Dominican Republic, where intermediaries smuggle the weapons into Haiti, taking advantage of weak customs and border controls.

According to a report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, a firearm legally purchased in the United States for an estimated \$400 to \$500 can be resold in Haiti to criminal groups for prices reaching up to \$10,000. This disparity in cost reignites one of the most troubling questions surrounding this phenomenon: How is it possible that a country where approximately 80 % of the population lives in poverty has the economic capacity to sustain such a lucrative and expensive market?

Professor Victoire agrees on the need to dismantle a deeply ingrained myth: that Haiti is a poor country. In his argument, he maintains that this perception ignores the existence of abundant natural wealth, which has historically been underutilized or mismanaged:

[...] to begin with, we can say that Haiti is a country that is too rich to be poor, it is too rich a country... because Haiti has many natural resources that could develop the country, but without management, there is no development. But if we appear to be a poor country, why are powerful nations so interested in this poor country? Why are the United States and some technology companies so interested in Haiti? These are questions we ask ourselves. (A. Victoire, personal communication, 2023)

Structural Violence

At this point, it is pertinent to question the idea that Haiti is, in essence, a poor country, inviting a more complex reflection on the structural dynamics that underpin this perception. While large sectors of its population face severe poverty, this diagnosis needs to be nuanced. These structural effects are compounded by natural disasters and state weakness, which deepen conditions of vulnerability.

However, Apollon and Abdaham agree that Haiti is not a poor country and that the real problem lies in the extreme concentration of wealth and the inefficiency of its redistribution:

The pursuit of power in Haiti is linked to the acquisition of wealth and resources within the country. Although we are among the poorest countries in Latin America, we possess natural resources that can be exploited. Political families, such as the Duvaliers, have amassed fortunes by plundering the country. Inequality is evident, as 5 % of the population owns the majority of the wealth. (J. Apollon, personal communication, June 6, 2023)

Within the framework of structural violence, poverty should not be understood as a single cause but rather as an expression of multiple, intertwined dynamics—e.g., the concentration of wealth, institutional weakness, environmental disasters, and corruption. However, attributing the generalization of violent behavior solely to these factors is reductionist, as it omits the complexity of the social, cultural, and historical dynamics that also shape its configuration.

Apollon and Victoire highlight the role that education—or, more precisely, its absence—plays in the current Haitian social crisis. They both point out that there is a relationship between educational deficits and the proliferation of violence, as if these phenomena were inherent to the country's reality.

Violence is more prevalent in the capital and has a negative impact on daily life. The population feels threatened, and security is a constant concern. Furthermore, a lack of education and illiteracy contribute to the manipulation of people into joining these gangs. Violence also hinders tourism development, despite Haiti's potential to be an attractive destination. (J. Apollon, personal communication, June 6, 2023)

Educational reform and a stronger focus on education are needed to enable the population to make informed decisions and avoid manipulation. In addition, it is essential to promote social justice and equal opportunities for all.

Economic opportunities must also be created, and investment in the country's development encouraged, so that resources benefit the population as a whole rather than a few. (J. Apollon, personal communication, June 6, 2023)

You do not have the best education system, but we can copy the education system that Colombia has, for example, CENA [sic]. We can establish a similar institution in Haiti to provide technical and technological training, so that young people have the knowledge to defend themselves. (A. Victoire, personal communication, June 6, 2023)

Both professors highlight education as a nonexistent yet crucial factor in shaping the crisis in Haiti. In their view, education is not only a fundamental path to overcoming conditions of violence and social precarity, but it also deepens the vulnerability of large sectors of the population. In particular, they emphasize that people without access to formal education are more susceptible to being co-opted by criminal gangs.

Addressing education in Haiti poses a significant challenge, given the lack of up-to-date, reliable statistics that enable analysis of key aspects of the education system, including its coverage, quality, and structure, as well as its implications for the country's social structure.

According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (2023), the most recent official report, for 2016, reported literacy rates of 83.4 % for men and 82.6 % for women. However, other unofficial sources estimate that, by 2022, the literacy rate had fallen to 61 %, which calls into question both the reliability of the available measurements and the actual evolution of educational access in the country (Lervolino, 2022).

It could be argued that Haiti's literacy rate is relatively high given its historical and structural context, although it remains several percentage points below the regional average. Nevertheless, the country faces serious difficulties in expanding and sustaining these levels.

In recent years, it has been shown that violence is closely linked to structural violence, especially in the area of education. On the one hand, lack of access to education limits opportunities for social mobility, exposing large sectors of the population—particularly young people—to co-optation by criminal gangs. On the other hand, these same gangs act as destabilizing agents of the education system, attacking schools, threatening teachers, and hindering the regular operation of institutions.

In February 2023, UNICEF reported an alarming increase in violence against educational institutions in Haiti, manifested through shootings, kidnappings, and looting perpetrated by criminal gangs. As a result, approximately 72 schools were attacked, leading to the closure of one in four schools by the end of 2021. This situation not only severely impacted access to education but also exacerbated the structural crisis of the Haitian education system.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 60 per cent of Port-au-Prince is controlled by armed groups. When groups target schools, they frequently loot school equipment, including desks, benches, boards, laptops, photocopiers, batteries, and solar panels. Bags of rice, dough, and maize used for school meals—a lifeline for countless children in Haiti—have also been stolen, together with canteen equipment. (UNICEF, 2023)

This scenario paints a picture of growing uncertainty and deepening structural violence, which not only exacerbates Haiti's already critical situation, mired in disorder and chaos, but also transcends the realm of security. Thus, insecurity is not limited to containing the power of criminal gangs; it extends to a deeper dimension linked to fundamental human conditions.

In this context, the primary need is to create a conflict-free environment that enables efforts to be directed toward governance focused on development and institutional strengthening. Only in this way will it be possible to reconfigure the Haitian social fabric on the basis of a culture of peace, rather than the consolidation of a culture of violence, which, in the current context, appears to be emerging as the dominant pattern.

From Cultural Violence to the Culture of Violence

The history of Haiti is unique and complex: it was the first and only country in the Western Hemisphere to achieve independence through a revolt led by enslaved Africans. However, this victory had profound repercussions on the shaping of its political and cultural identity. Although it was an act of resistance against the slave system and colonial oppression, Haiti's independence also gave rise to a series of challenges, both internal and external, that have conditioned its historical and social trajectory.

The struggle for independence left a deep mark on the Haitian psyche. The violence experienced during that period, although legitimized as a form of resistance against oppression, was etched into the collective memory and contributed to

the development of a perception of constant struggle as an inherent part of its historical experience. This narrative of rebellion and armed conflict became a fundamental component of Haitian national identity, conditioning how political and social problems have been addressed in subsequent decades.

The origin of criminal gangs in Haiti is related to the lack of recognition and support from other Latin American countries after Haiti's independence. Although Haiti played a significant role in the independence of other Latin American countries, they did not reciprocate in a meaningful way. Furthermore, the European powers, especially France and Spain, never fully accepted the independence of a country led by people of African and enslaved descent. (J. Apollon, personal communication, June 6, 2023)

In Haiti, one of the cultural aspects that contributes to the consolidation of a culture of violence is the education system, particularly the lack of access to inclusive, quality education. Throughout its history, the country has faced persistent structural limitations in this area, evidenced by insufficient public investment and fragile institutional capacity. This has deprived large segments of the population of the necessary tools to understand, question, and transform their social reality. As in any society, education is a fundamental pillar of development and the primary means of promoting values that foster peace, tolerance, and social cohesion.

In the Haitian context, limited access to quality education has contributed to keeping large segments of the population vulnerable to political manipulation. This condition has fostered the development of a society with limited critical thinking and argumentation skills that reacts impulsively to situations. An example of how the lack of a solid education can fuel a culture of violence is the instrumentalization of criminal gangs by political actors. These groups, composed mostly of people with low levels of education, are easily manipulated and used by corrupt politicians to serve their own interests.

These groups were used to enter polling stations and falsify votes for certain candidates. The lack of education and political manipulation has perpetuated the existence of these gangs to this day (A. Moncoeur, personal communication, June 6, 2023).

Furthermore, a lack of education fosters the proliferation of myths, stereotypes, and prejudices, thereby intensifying hostility and conflict between groups. Education not only fulfills an instrumental function by providing knowledge and skills but also

plays a fundamental role in the formation of values, such as understanding, respect, and empathy. These elements are essential for building more just and peaceful social relationships and constitute a key tool for counteracting the dynamics that sustain and reproduce a culture of violence.

Another determining factor in the consolidation of a culture of violence is the profound economic and social inequality that pervades the country. Despite possessing valuable natural resources, the majority of the population lives in extreme poverty, while a small group concentrates most of the national wealth. This disproportionate concentration of income contributes to a perception of structural injustice and fuels feelings of exclusion and social resentment.

The idea that the political and economic system is designed to favor an elite at the expense of the majority erodes trust in institutions. Moreover, it reinforces the notion that violence can be a legitimate—albeit distorted—way to demand justice, equity, and social recognition.

Corruption is another structural factor that has contributed to the consolidation of a culture of violence in Haiti. The lack of transparency and accountability mechanisms has allowed corrupt politicians and businesspeople to enrich themselves at the country's expense. This situation has eroded public trust in state institutions and fueled the perception that the system has been captured by special interests. Consequently, the belief—especially among the most marginalized sectors—that violence represents a legitimate form of resistance against an order perceived as corrupt, unjust, and oppressive is reinforced.

Violence in Haiti is not an inherent trait of Haitian culture. In reality, external actors have perpetuated this situation to maintain control over the country and its resources. The lack of education is a crucial factor contributing to the rampant violence in the country. Politicians can also manipulate these gangs for their own interests, further exacerbating the situation. (A. Moncoeur, personal communication, June 6, 2023)

[...] Violence in Haiti has multiple causes, but one of the main ones is the lack of education among both criminal gangs and some politicians. These groups can act with impunity and commit violent acts as a result of their lack of education and control. (J. Apollon, personal communication, June 6, 2023)

In Haiti, cultural violence can be interpreted as the expression of a historical legacy marked by struggle and resistance against colonial and slave-owning

oppression. This trajectory, although legitimate in its origins, has left an imprint on the collective memory, thereby contributing to the internalization of violence as an acceptable—and even necessary—resource for social and political transformation.

In addition, factors such as limited access to quality education, economic inequality, and corruption contribute to these challenges. These elements not only perpetuate conditions of exclusion but also reinforce the perception that violence is a valid response to the multiple forms of injustice suffered by Haitian society.

In this way, the culture of violence is revealed in the proliferation of criminal gangs, political violence, and gender-based violence. These expressions have progressively displaced the traditional components of a vibrant Caribbean culture, characterized by oral, festive, and communal expressions.

Given this situation, it is essential to recognize and address the structural factors that fuel this violent culture. This implies, on the one hand, investing in a quality education system that empowers citizens and strengthens their critical thinking. On the other hand, it is necessary to eradicate corruption to restore institutional trust and promote greater economic and social equity. Likewise, it is essential to foster constructive dialogue and strengthen mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of conflicts as pillars of a culture of peace and truly democratic coexistence.

Conclusions

One of the main problems facing Haiti is foreign interference in its political affairs. The country's history has been profoundly shaped by a series of external interventions that have destabilized the political system and eroded trust in democratic institutions. The manipulation of electoral processes and the imposition of international interests—alien to the priorities of the Haitian people—have fostered the rise of corrupt, weak, and illegitimate leaders. This constant interference has undermined national sovereignty and limited the Haitian state's capacity to make autonomous, sustainable, and effective decisions.

Corruption is one of the most serious problems facing Haiti, with profound effects on the state's legitimacy and social cohesion. The lack of transparency and accountability mechanisms has allowed some political and business actors to misappropriate the country's resources. This dynamic has contributed to perpetuating poverty and inequality. Furthermore, by eroding the state's capacity to design effective public policies, corruption has not only hindered sustainable development but has also fostered the proliferation of criminal gangs and increased violence.

Based on the testimonies gathered, Haiti's current situation reflects its complex historical trajectory and a failed coordination among political, economic, and social factors. The material poverty affecting large sectors of the population contrasts sharply with the instrumentalization of violence and crime as mechanisms for obtaining power and accumulating wealth. In this regard, what is evident is not a lack of natural or material resources, but a structural deficit in democratic and institutional terms.

Moreover, education is a fundamental pillar for Haiti's development and structural transformation. However, the lack of public investment in the education system has limited access to genuine opportunities for social mobility, thereby perpetuating inequality and exclusion. The precarious state of educational infrastructure, the scarcity of teaching resources, and the limited teacher training have adversely affected the quality of education. Added to this are political instability and persistent violence in various regions of the country, factors that have hindered continuity and effective access to education, thus deepening a persistent cycle of poverty, vulnerability, and marginalization.

In general terms, the situation in Haiti demands a comprehensive approach and a genuine commitment from national actors and the international community. Violence, poverty, and lack of access to education are the result of a history marked by colonization, foreign interference, institutional fragility, and the unequal distribution of resources. Addressing these challenges requires a coordinated intervention strategy that not only responds to the crisis's immediate consequences but also addresses its structural causes.

It is essential to tackle the structural causes of the problems facing Haiti by designing comprehensive, sustainable, and coherent strategies that ensure the Haitian population's participation in decision-making. Likewise, the international community must responsibly assume its historical role in shaping the Haitian crisis, adopting a cooperative approach that transcends geopolitical and economic interests and prioritizes the well-being of society. Only through a joint effort will Haiti be able to successfully confront current challenges and build the conditions for a more just, secure, and prosperous future.

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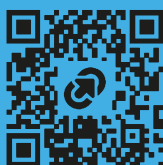
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Culture of Peace: Reflections Drawn from the Notion of Security

The Escuela Superior de Guerra “General Rafael Reyes Prieto” presents this book, the result of a research process, to offer readers a reflection on the contributions of pacifism to the interpretation of the contemporary notion of security. Additionally, it examines elements of the positive transformation of the Colombian conflict. It seeks to examine more closely the relationship between a culture of peace and security, recognizing its complex and multidimensional nature.

To complement these theoretical and conceptual reflections, a methodological approach was developed through the analysis of specific cases in Latin America. These contexts subsequently gave rise to social formations oriented toward resolving conflicts through a culture of peace. These cases illustrate some of the most relevant characteristics of peacebuilding in the Western Hemisphere. Finally, narratives were compiled, and recognition exercises were conducted regarding some of the most pressing conflicts facing 21st-century societies.



ISBN 978-628-7818-47-7

