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Managing Security as a Regional Public Good
A Regional-Global Mechanism for Security[1]

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Abstract

Recent decades have seen a fast growth in regional and sub-regional organisations, together with a (slower) increasing recognition by the international community of the need for greater involvement of regional agencies in peace and security. At the same time an enhanced cooperation between the two levels – the regional and the global, is more and more visible.

The ambition of this paper, in the context of the overall theme of examining the role of regionalisation as a mediating level and strategy for global governance, is to assess the growing relationship between the UN and the regional organisations in security, and the consequent opportunities inherent to this conception for UN reform.

To this end, regional security will be treated as a regional public good, to be managed at the regional level, and the development of a framework for cooperation between the UN and the regional organisations will be analysed. Also, the meaning and opportunities of these developments for global governance will be addressed, suggesting a multilevel approach to security governance.

Crisis in Multilateralism: Crisis or opportunity?

In the latest years a number of key changes and challenges have taken place or been reinforced in international relations in the peace and security area. Disagreements related to unilateral enforcement action without the authorization of the Security Council have continued and UN reforms have moved to the centre stage of debate and action. Some regional agencies have also gone through rapid periods of change and reflection and, whether it is the UN or regional or other international organisations, Member States have started to ask more pointed questions about whether or not to fund activities through multilateral agencies or only bilaterally. Critical questions of leadership, efficiency, duplication, transparency, democratic decision-making or accountability related to global organisations are heard more often than before.

As Thakur and Van Langenhove (2005) argue, the paradox of today is that the policy authority for tackling global problems still belongs to states while the source of the problems and potential solutions is situated at transnational, regional or global level. This paradox is very visible especially in the security area - armed conflicts, terrorism or nuclear weapons being some of the main 'problems without passports'. This may be the main reason for the, very broadly publicized (namely by the UN Secretary-General), crisis in multilateralism.

The organising principle of global governance is multilateralism, and the UN lies at the very core of the multilateral system. But as the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan noted "we can no longer take it for granted that our multilateral institutions are strong enough to cope with all the challenges facing them"[2]. Equally so, one can say that the state-based system of cooperation and sovereignty itself have become increasingly problematic.

Indeed, we seem to be in a period of crisis of confidence in the ability of multilateral institutions to meet the challenges of our times. The High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change outlined the unprecedented challenges the UN faces in the near future.   There are more demands, higher expectations, greater visibility and public scrutiny than ever before - and often, diminishing resources.

Furthermore, collective security has not been functioning in the manner envisaged by the UN Charter. The developments of the past years have put severe strain on many of the traditional principles and tenets of multilateral security. The conflicting doctrines of sovereignty, use of force, and right to intervention, limit the simple state-to-state approach to multilateralism and increase this paradox.

But the moments of crises usually carry the seeds of opportunity. And the present momentum is asking for the renovation of the multilateral system through the adoption of far-reaching reform measures. One pertinent solution can be the development of a middle layer of governance between the state level and the global level – a regional level approach to multilateralism, giving further strength to the regional engagement in security. The question is if regionalism and regionalisation can provide a satisfactory solution for the above-mentioned paradox – and a way out for the present crisis in multilateralism.

Regionalism has been becoming a major trend, perhaps a reflex of the feeling that the nation-sate has become an unnatural, perhaps even dysfunctional unit for organizing human activity. And the inception of regionalism itself, is somewhat related to security issues. The European Union, then the Coal and Steal Community, was created to keep the rivals of the Second World War away from conflict. Studies have concluded that regional organisations do help to create webs of functional links, which then improve relations between the member states. Functional interdependence promotes a sense of common identity or community among members; raises the threshold of tolerance because perceived benefits exceed perceived challenges; raises the cost of violent conflict, and provides mechanisms, experience and expectations of 'integrative solutions' (Ramesh and Van Langenhove, 2005).

There is indeed a place for regional governance in the multilateral framework of global governance. Establishing a more effective cooperation and a more adequate, innovative and future-oriented distribution of labour between the UN and regional and other intergovernmental organisations is more and more acknowledged as the key for rehabilitation of multilateralism, and that cannot be put aside.

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[2] UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, Address to the UN General Assembly, September 2003.

The growing interest in cooperating with the regional and other intergovernmental organisations in security can therefore be seen as a catalyst for the creation of a global-regional security mechanism. Taking this into account, some questions and proposals are advanced:

- Is regional security a public good? If security is a right of all peoples, and therefore a 'pure' public good, and if security is becoming more and more a regional issue, then this is to be considered as a regional public good, and to be managed as such - at the regional level.
- The consequent acknowledgment is that regional organisations must have an important role in the reform of the global body – the United Nations, bringing in the advantages of a multilevel approach to security in global governance.

In order to support these assumptions, first, a conceptual framework will be put forward – through the concept of *Regional Public Goods* - security then being presented as a regional public good, to be managed at the regional level. Considering that both the global and the national level are, alone, imperfect and unable to deliver peace and security – the proposal is therefore to develop an inter-level or multilevel cooperation in peace and security.

A second part will therefore analyse this growing cooperation, looking at the recent developments in the relationship between the UN and the regional and other intergovernmental organisations, namely the last high-level meeting between the UN secretary-General and the regional organisations (July 2005), complemented by a third part that shows the evident 'strategic-choice' to engage in this multilevel cooperation process. Finally, the author will look for the missing link – what is missing for this cooperation mechanism to become a reality - addressing the possible critics and shortcomings of this regional-global security mechanism and the ways to overcome them.

Security as a Regional Public Good

If one looks at security as a regional issue (considering its multidimensional and multi-geographical nature), and as a right for all peoples, one will consequently have to agree that this is a *public good* that is not only national or global but also regional in nature and regionally manageable. The concepts of global and regional public goods come therefore in hand to understand the idea of a regional-global security mechanism.

The concept of *Public Goods* comes from the economic theory, traditionally referring to the national economic system, which can be said to constitute the essence of nation building, giving the basis for the political legitimacy of the modern welfare state. The existing concept lies on two assumptions:

- Non excludability: Those who do not pay for the good cannot be excluded from it;
- Non-rivalry: the consumption of the good by one person does not affect the availability of that good to others.

The current interest in international public goods is a consequence of the erosion of national sovereignty, territoriality and authority caused by globalisation, and raises the difficult question of how public, as distinct from private goods, can be identified, financed, produced and distributed on the global and regional level.

Public goods can be classified according to different criteria. Following a rather geographical aspect, and taking into account their jurisdiction and their benefits coverage (Kaul and Mendonza, 1999) they can be local, national, regional/transnational or global.

Thus, as goods can be potentially public they can also be potentially global. Common concerns bind all people. Everyone wants to participate in a fair, stable global market economy. Everyone seeks an end to diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. Everyone hopes to benefit from nature. And everyone desires peace and stability. Global public goods can therefore be defined as "goods whose benefits extend to all countries, people, and generations" (Kaul, Grunberg and Stern, 1999).

Global public goods should thus be seen, as argued by Kaul and Mendoza (1999), as a result of globalisation. As a result of globalisation, many people in the world feel a pervasive uncertainty and sometimes even a loss of personal security. Indeed, the clamour against globalisation could be interpreted as a call for better provision of global public goods - as a general public voicing its demands for a more effective say in global public matters – so that globalisation can one day deliver on its promise as an opportunity for enriching the lives of all people.

Following this logic, the concept of global public goods tells us that we are facing just one major challenge: how to rethink and reorient public policy-making to catch up with today's new realities of interdependence and globalisation. Reforming the process of public policy-making is therefore key to managing globalisation better. In many global issue areas, countries are now finding cooperation more and more necessary to achieve national goals. Indeed, the fate of many nations has become increasingly intertwined, transforming what were once national policy issues into regional issues – and regional issues into global ones.

These developments led to a new concept to be defined – the one of regional public goods. While, as noted above, global public goods are defined as "goods whose benefits extend to all countries, people and generations" regional public goods are defined as:

"a class of public goods in between national and global public goods. They benefit spillover communities that, depending on the problem to be addressed, can range from a couple of neighbouring countries to a continent or hemisphere. Their production typically requires cross border collective action that engages all (or most) of the members of the spillover group. Exceptionally regional public goods may be provided by one or a few leading nations motivated by a combination of self-interest and broader objectives. International public goods,

and regional public goods, include the knowledge, the regimes, and the standards and rules that are required to address cross-border problems or to engender desirable cross-border externalities; the institutions that monitor and enforce the rules and regimes; and the benefits that arise and are shared indiscriminately among countries." (Ferroni, 2002)

Peace and security, as well as law and order, are both non-excludable and non-rival, and therefore public goods. Every human being is naturally entitled to them and so they are often mentioned as 'pure public goods', where the sometimes blurred distinction between private and public causes less problem – there is no doubt that security is public – private provision of security defines a mafia system (Söderbaum and Hettne, 2004). The fact is that in reality, these 'pure' public goods hardly exist and collective actions to ensure adequate levels of provision are necessary. Their provision has been mostly of national nature, but with globalisation the distinction between national, regional and global public goods is very blurred, and new levels of provision become necessary.

The question comes at which level these 'pure' public goods are better managed. The comparative advantage of regional cooperation differs from one region to another, but in most issue areas where public goods are underprovided there is a specific role for regional cooperation within an integrated multi-level and multi-tiered approach. The distinction between global and regional public goods is not very sharp, but it is clear that some 'problems without passports' can be better solved at the regional level, security being one of them.

The development of the regional organisations and the growing need in the UN for a 'helping hand' in security have led to a growing cooperation that seems to reflect the vision of security as a regional public good – regional security as a primary condition for the well being of the region's population, and therefore to be provided by the region, not only at the state-level but at the regional level. The question lying here is to find the regional dimension of security in order to use the concept of 'regional security'. And indeed, many authors are already doing so.

Buzan and Waever (2003) put forward the concept of regional security complexes, advocating the regional level as the appropriate one for security analysis. Since most threats travel more easily short distances than long ones, security interdependence is normally patterned into regionally based clusters: security complexes. Normally two extreme levels dominate security analysis: national and global. Because no nation's security is self-contained, the first level is not in itself a meaningful level of analysis. And global security refers to an aspiration, not a reality. So, it is a given that none of these levels can efficiently deliver peace and security. The region, in contrast, refers to the level where states or other units link together sufficiently closely that their securities cannot be considered separate from each other.

Since decolonisation the regional level of security has become both more autonomous and more prominent in international politics, and the end of the Cold War accelerated this process. Without

superpower rivalry (with the end of colonization and later on with the end of bipolarity) local powers have more room for manoeuvre. Thus the international security structure can be better understood through the regional lens. In the same line, Lake and Morgan point out "efforts to cope with violent conflicts, as well as to achieve order and security, will primarily involve arrangements and actions devised and implemented at the regional level" (quoted in Tavares 2004:16).

Söderbaum and Hettne (2004) consider peace and security to be one of the six regional public goods for which regional cooperation can provide, considering that this field is one where regional cooperation has a great potential. The success stories are still only a few but one can already point out different ways in which regional processes have accounted for the achievement of peace and security:

- As cooperation processes: because the regional states are the most concerned and the first to act in order to restore stability. This was the case for ECOWAS, having changed its economic cooperation nature (ECOWAS was originally designed in 1975 to promote co-operation in trade and economic activity) to intervene in the local conflicts that were affecting the stability of its region (i.e. in Liberia and Sierra Leone),

- As integration processes: the creation of regions of peace through economic cooperation and integration. Regional integration complies an indirect and long-term peace-promoting dimension namely in transforming a dangerous regional security complex into a regional security community. Tavares (2004) refers to regions as peace tools, giving the example of Europe/European Union. Europe is a zone of Peace where the last interstate war was waged in 1939-45 and the possibility of new outbreak was contentiously erased decades ago. The roots of the EU were based on political and security considerations - the desire to create a region of peace, forging a relationship between two rival countries (Germany and France) through the interlocking of their national economies through the European Coal And Steal Community.

- And through the modern, broad concept of security – encompassing development and economic aspects that the regional organisations provide for. The EU has been developing its crisis management capabilities but at the same time is using its development and financial assistance instruments to promote peace, democracy, human rights and rule of law, touching the roots of conflicts (i.e. in the Balkans through the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe).

The link between regionalism and security becomes even more evident with the development of the 'new regionalism'. The metamorphosis in the nature of regionalism, from its almost exclusively economic and defence dimensions towards a more complex multi-sector comprehensive movement - involving political, cultural, economic and security issues in the broadest contemporary sense - is transforming regional organisations (even if until now in a very loose and ad-hoc way) making them more suitable to respond to security challenges and provide security as a regional public good.

Due to the close relationship with globalisation, contemporary regionalism is fundamentally different from the type of regional cooperation and integration that emerged after the Second World War. The new regionalism forms part of a global transformation creating a most complex multilevel system of

governance, in which many actors apart from the state interact vertically between levels as well as horizontally.

Regional organisations have been developing capacities in dimensions that go over the simple crisis management and permit a response at other stages of the crisis cycle. By analysing a conflict in its distinct stages of evolution, it is shown how conflict management can be redirected not only towards the root causes of conflict, but also towards the rather neglected post-conflict reconstruction phase. For a more structured approach to conflict, the 'new regionalism' organisations are now definitely more suited to act.

The more sceptical author, such as Diehl, will argue that regional organisations are not well suited to respond to the conflicts arising in their own regions, raising problems such as resource constraints, organisational weaknesses, lack of neutrality, and the pressure of the regional hegemon (quoted in Söderbaum and Hettne, 2004:22).

But the fact is that also the global organisations suffer from their own problems. Multilateral peacekeeping comes many times too late. Regional response is faster, better informed, and more eager to deliver, because security and stability are essential for the well-being and development of the region as a whole. One reason for focusing on regional cooperation is the lack of politically grounded problem solving at the global level.

Indeed, institutionalisation and effectiveness are two dimensions to look at. As Söderbaum and Hettne (2004) note, the degree and quality of institutionalisation is a key factor in explaining the effectiveness in regional cooperation. Even if we agree that the global level is more institutionalised than the regional level, the fact is that institutions at the global level are less effective in dealing with many global and regional challenges. Conflict management usually comes too late and not with the right means. The international community seems to be able to deal with only one crisis at a time.

At the regional level there is a push effect (the problems are directly felt in the region and ask for immediate response) and there is also a comparative advantage in closeness, better understanding of the problem and better ability to decide and intervene quickly. International organisations and institutions operating at the global level are often treaty-based and highly dependent on the constituent states, whereas regional organisations, where power is pooled to a higher degree, tend somewhat to be more autonomous and have better instruments to make their decisions abiding and respected. The push for stability is also much bigger. A good example is the case of Darfur. In Sudan, in 2004, the AU sent 4,000 troops to the Darfur region while the UN Security Council was swamped in discussions on whether the violations really constituted genocide (Leonard, 2005).

An exclusive focus on the regional level would however also be misplaced. The interlinkages and the thin line between regional and global public goods ask for cooperation and not competition. A regional

organisation can, better than the immediately concerned states, take the role of mediator in ethnic conflicts in terms of culture and values, and still be closer to the parties than the extra-regional mediators. But because the regional actor itself is not perfect (issues of a controlling hegemon and partialities are examples), it should always be complemented at the global level (namely through the respect for the primacy of the UN Security Council in peace enforcement and more generally in peace and security).

Furthermore, and again argued by Thakur and Van Langenhove (2005), regional governance is not incompatible with and does not negate global governance. On the contrary, it has the potential to strengthen global governance. The regional logic has always been inherent to the global body – the UN being organized in regional commissions and agencies. Globalisation itself increases the incentives for states to pursue more cooperative security policies, especially at the regional level.

In a situation where there are intense relationships between globalisation and regionalisation the choice is not simply between national, regional or global. The interdependence is too strong to separate the three levels – there is a complex multilevel relationship that needs to be addressed and structured in a clear way – this is the stepping stone for a real cooperation framework between the global and regional bodies.

The optimal form of peacekeeping and more generally security management combines the legitimacy of multilateral interventions (UN) with the high efficiency in terms of closeness and commitment of regional interventions. The optimum is therefore to achieve an inter-level cooperation. This optimal form security management seems to be the strategic choice that the international community is now trying to pursue. The next part of this paper will be devoted to the development of this inter-level cooperation between the global and the regional bodies in security.

The growing Cooperation between the UN and regional organisations

It is clear that the UN is serious in seeking to develop a 'regional-global security mechanism' for the 21st century. Two phenomena in particular characterise to date the experience in strategic planning for that goal: increased interest from the 'regionals' themselves and the development of a normative framework of co-operation between them and the UN.

The fundamental relationship between universalism and regionalism in security doctrine has been shaped by the UN Charter. The Charter allows for regional security arrangements for the maintenance of peace and security as a support to the primary role exercised by the Security Council, but there is no pre-fabricated mechanism. In this first constitutional phase, the notion of regionalism was still in its infancy, this being very likely one of the reasons for a weak treatment of the regional level in the UN Charter. But the 50s followed with a burst of unparalleled creativity in regional institutional building in

Europe, spreading to Africa and Asia in the 60s and the Caribbean and Pacific in the 70s, and supplemented by 'late-comers' in the 80s and 90s – when a global network of regional (and sub-regional) agencies was finally in place.

In the 90s, the UN began to act in the recognition of the potential for greater involvement of the regional agencies in a co-operative relationship with the UN, in the pursuit for international security. In January 1993 the Security Council invited regional organisations to study ways of strengthening their functions in peace and security and, within this context, to improve co-ordination with the UN. In the course of the year the Secretary-General signalled his intention to develop a 'set of guidelines' governing such co-operation and this was welcomed by the General Assembly (A/RES/48/42: par.63, 1993).

A series of meeting have since then been held between the global body and the regional agencies, first with the Secretary General and later with the Security Council (two until now), focusing on the range of peace and security challenges – counter-terrorism, conflict prevention and management and peace-building.

Six high-level meetings have been held between the UN Secretariat and regional agency heads. The first four meetings (held between 1994 and early 2001) focused on preventing armed conflict and strengthening the 'fabric of peace' through global-regional co-operation. Subsequent to September 2001, the fifth high-level meeting with the UN Secretary-General (held in July 2003) reflected the changed security environment, focusing this time on terrorism.

These first five meetings allowed for the development of a 'framework for co-operation' comprising modalities for conflict prevention and principles for peace building. Furthermore, some overall principles for co-operation had been laid down, such as the UN primacy in all crises, a flexible and pragmatic approach in responding to crises, a clear division of labour between the global and the regional bodies, and regular consultations between the organisations. However, these were still just principles, and no structure had yet been laid down for a permanent cooperation framework.

However, the latest meeting, (July 2005), seems to have introduced procedural and palpable innovations of potentially far-reaching significance, the Secretary-General having called for a "common vision of a global architecture of peace and security with interlocking capacities based on the comparative advantages of the global and regional institutions" (UN A/60/341-S/2005/567, 2005).

The preparations for the Sixth High-Level Meeting were more thorough than before, with six working groups (focusing on particular areas such as 'Dialogue among Civilizations', Civilian Protection, Terrorism and Human Rights, 'Lessons Learned from Field Experience' in Peacekeeping, Disarmament and UN Reform) producing specific recommendations for action to strengthen the regional-global mechanism, which adopted in their totality.

The participants agreed to have annual meetings, and coincide them with the Security Council meetings of the same nature, showing their commitment to make the cooperation more permanent. In the same line, participants agreed to strengthen the UN supporting structures, which have just become permanent but still are in their inception.

But more important than this, and a potentially far-reaching development was the agreement by the UN-regional leaders to establish a Standing Committee from within their own ranks. The Committee would meet between high-level meetings in order to oversee the further work of the working groups and streamline the process of strengthening the operational partnership (UN A/60/341-S/2005/567, 2005).

In addition to the high-level meetings between the secretary general and the regional and other intergovernmental organisations, three Security Council meetings were held, the latest on in October 2005.

In April 2003, the Security Council met, under Mexican presidency, for the first time with regional agencies, with the objective to engender an 'interactive dialogue' between the Council and regional organisations, marking perhaps a 'new stage' in international relations, since the current situation then prevailing obliged the Council to identify courses of action that would strengthen international security. Only six organisations attended (AU, ECOWAS, EU, LAS, OSCE and OAS) under the theme 'The Security Council and Regional Organisations: Facing New Challenges to International Peace and Security'.

A second meeting took place in July 2004 under Romanian presidency, this time with the aim of identifying new methods of co-operation between the UN and regional organisations and developing innovative approaches to conflict resolution and stabilization processes. This meeting was attended by seven international organisations (AU, CIS, EU, LAS, NATO, OSCE and ECOWAS) and a Presidential Statement was produced. The Council concluded that regular dialogue on specific issues between it and regional organisations would bring 'significant added value' to UN-regional co-operation for peace and security, based on 'complementarity and comparative advantage'.

In the latest meeting, in October 2005, a resolution was endorsed [S/RES/1631(2005)] concomitantly pointing in the direction of further developing the idea of a regional-global security complex. The states noted the growing contribution of regional and sub regional organisations for international peace and security and recognized the need to support capacity-building and cooperation at regional and sub regional level in this area, namely in conflict prevention, peaceful settlement of disputes, peacekeeping, crisis management, post-conflict stabilization, and also on the areas of counter-terrorism and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

It is clear from the above that the United Nations is serious in seeking to develop a 'regional-global security mechanism' for the 21st century, visible not only in the increased interest from the 'regionals' but also in the development of a normative framework of co-operation.

Regional Security in the UN Reform

The strategic choice of developing a regional-global security mechanism is indeed being reflected at the process of reform that the global body – the UN – is going through. The recommendations for reform that have been presented by the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenge and Change in November 2004, reiterated in the Secretary-General's Report "In Larger Freedom" of March this year and finally endorsed in the UN Summit of last September, do show that regional security is starting to be seen as a regional public good, and should be treated at the regional level also, and not also at the global level, in an inter-level cooperation.

The High-level Panel and the UN Secretary-General in his report "In Larger Freedom" acknowledged the importance of regional and other intergovernmental organisations to meet the challenges of the future, as outlined by them, and recommended that their cooperation with the United Nations should be significantly strengthened.

The High-Level Panel Report concluded that "The Security Council has not made the most of the potential advantages of working with regional organisations", considering that there still exists potential for a stronger partnership between the UN and regional organisations. The ability of the Security Council to become more proactive in preventing and responding to threats "will be strengthened by making fuller and more productive use of the Chapter VIII provisions of the Charter". Recent experience has demonstrated that regional organisations can be a vital part of the multilateral system. "The key is to organise regional action within the framework of the Charter and the purposes of the United Nations, and to ensure that the United Nations and regional organisations with which it works do so in a more integrated fashion than has up to now occurred (UN A/59/565, 2004 and Graham and Tavares, 2005).

In order to reach these objectives the Panel puts forward a group of recommendations, namely that cooperation and consultation between the UN and regional organisations be expanded and formalised in an agreement. The Panel's recommendations were 'fully endorsed' by the Secretary-General and conveyed to Member States for consideration.

The Secretary-General's Report "In Larger Freedom" goes further, the Secretary-General undertaking to "introduce memoranda of understanding [MOUs] between the United Nations and individual organisations to participate in meetings of the UN-system coordinating bodies when issues in which they have particular interest are discussed" (UN A/59/2005, 2005). The Secretary-General also

suggests that the UN and regional organisations should play complementary roles in facing the challenges of international peace and security.

These issues were debated at the 60th summit session of the General Assembly in September 2005. The Summit Declaration - which should be a critical document for UN reform and for the overall international community, "supports a stronger relationship between the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organisations, pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter" (UN A/RES/60/1, 2005).

In addition, the Summit document recognises the 'important contribution' being made by regional organisations to peace and security, and the importance of forging 'predictable partnerships' between them and the UN. Global leaders therefore resolved to:

- Expand consultation and co-operation through formalised agreements between the respective secretariats, and as appropriate, involvement of regional organisations in the work of the Security Council;
- Ensure that regional organisations that had the capacity for conflict prevention or peacekeeping consider the option of placing such capacities in the UNSAS framework;
- Strengthen co-operation in the areas economic, social and cultural fields.

This document also puts forward a number of recommendations that relate to the cooperation with regional and other international organisations, namely to reaffirm collective security, which rests on 'effective co-operation … against trans-national threats' facing a 'global and interdependent world', to be tackled at the global, regional and national levels (UN A/60/341-S/2005/567, 2005).

Even if the summit was not considered a success, and the endorsed propositions on regional cooperation in security can still be considered shy and slow, one important trend can be acknowledged: the UN is committed to take forward the strategic choice of developing a global-regional security mechanism, having admitted its inability to supply peace and security at a global level alone. The question however is if the regional structures in place are developed enough to sustain such an ambitious mechanism.

The Missing Link

The goal of this paper was to present the concept of regional security as a public good, to be seen and managed as such, this being a key solution to the present crisis in multilateralism - reflected in the UN reform process and in the envisioned strategic choice of a global-regional security mechanism. However, in order for the regional-global security mechanism to develop in a healthy and sustainable manner, a high level of security regionalism must be achieved in all regions. This is not yet the case, and therefore may lead to more sceptical views, contending that this regional-global mechanism is doomed to ostracize the less structured regions. This paper wishes however to challenge this view, believing that the process of regionalisation is not isolated in each region and – itself as a product of

globalisation, is spreading from region to region and will continue doing so, the regional-global security mechanism being a further push forward in this sense.

While many authors have been pushing for the global-regional cooperation in security, the sceptics still argue that the regions are not yet developed enough to be a partner to the UN in peace and security, and that this process will neglect the regions where regional structures are still in its inception or even inexistent. Many of the sceptical voices against the so called regional-global security mechanism argue that it will be unfair for some regions to rely on regional organisations' representation and monitoring (taking the burden out of the UN) because some regions do not have yet the necessary structures to enter in this cooperation and will therefore stay 'cornered' from the rest of the world.

However, the present reasoning is the opposite and goes together with the new concept developed by Leonard (2005) of *Regional domino effect* – arguing that this process will have the opposite effect - leading to the development of new regional processes, because no country wants to 'fall behind'. Many countries are realizing that they need to "belong to a club to have a seat at the table".

The new powers (like Japan, South Africa and Nigeria) have looked at the way the EU has given tiny countries the ability to shape their destiny on the world stage. They have seen that regional clubs can help foster democracy, speed up the integration of countries into the world economy and help to develop common solutions to problems that cut across borders. This regionalism is not about autarchic blocs at war with one another: it is about clubs that promote global development, regional security, and open markets for their members. And as each region develops their own arrangements, they will cumulatively have an impact on world order.

Referring to the EU as a catalyst, Leonard argues that a 'Community of Regional Entities' could become the primary co-ordinating body of the UN. This would not necessarily have to replace the Security Council and the General Assembly, but the forum for regional organisations would be the best place to deal with the two most pressing issues of the global agenda – development and peace-keeping (Leonard and Gowan, 2004). As the momentum for regional organisations picks up, great powers like the US will inevitably be sucked into the process of integration. If they embrace it, they will enhance their power and by doing so, they will be acting as 'midwives' for this emerging new world order (Leonard, 2005:143).

Leonard goes further; arguing that EU's strategy of fostering interregionalism is also a catalyst for the creation of new regional integration and cooperation processes that in the long term will benefit the regional-global cooperation. As the biggest donor in the world, Europe can use its aid to promote intra-regional cooperation, tying money to economic integration, regional infrastructure projects and regional organisations' contribution to security. One example is EU aid for AU's peacekeeping efforts (African Peace Facility).

In the same line, Suomi (2005) refers to the concept of 'globalizing regionalism' as a way to benefit regional organisations, their members and international threat management. The key according to Suomi is to institutionalise regional organisations' connectivity with each other and with international organisations, and to drive the regional organisation system toward common global threat management work through regular consultations, expert advice, and smartly targeted and designed joint activities (Suomi, 2005:21).

Also Press-Barnathan (2005), looking at the different stages of security regionalisation, suggests that the recent shift to unipolarity of recent years (simultaneously a reflex and cause of the crisis in multilateralism) has created a further incentive to invest in security regionalisation - for the regional states to invest more in regional security management.

In the same line, Gowan, together with Leonard, put the accent on building regional organisations' capacities so as to compensate for the UN's weaknesses. In the long term, the objective should be to try to spread the "European Effect" – the translation of co-operation on immediate economic and security issues into an acceptance of multilateralism as the primary method for *all* problem solving: what Robert Cooper has called the post-modern order (Leonard and Gowan, 2005). Thus, the focus here is also on regionalism and especially *new regionalism* as a solution to the crisis in multilateralism.

Finally, going even beyond new regionalism, Van Langenhove and Costea (2004:14), introduce the 'third generation regional integration' characterized by world-regions playing a role on the world stage: regions acting within global international regimes and organisations, which seem to fulfil important functions in global governance, including contributing to peace and security at the regional level.

It seems therefore that regionalisation itself is developing towards the global level, creating an intricate network of relations that leaves no choice but to embrace multilevel multilateralism as the strategic choice for global governance. The development of a regional-global mechanism for security will act as one more catalyst for the spread of regionalism, the less regionalized regions realizing that their nations must unite in order to have a stronger voice at the global level in security.

Conclusion

The question posed before was if regionalism and regionalisation could provide a satisfactory solution for today's 'frustrated multilateralism'. And for answering it, the present paper applied the concept of regional public goods to security, supporting the ideas for the development of a regional-global security mechanism. It is clear that security is more and more becoming regional and that the provision of this 'pure' public good is insufficient both at the national and global levels. This lack of capability from both national and global actors to provide security is one of the main causes of the present crisis in multilateralism. The solution seems to lie in the simple concept of regional public goods, and at the

regional management of this pure public good – through an inter-level approach that does not neglect national, regional or global actors.

As noted above, the strategic choice both at the academic and political level is going towards the creation of a real multilevel regional-global security cooperation mechanism, a new approach to global governance that may be the most important innovation in international politics and global governance of the 21st Century. It is, at least for now, a good start for overcoming the present crisis in multilateralism.

The regional dimension of security cannot be separated from the global order. The literature of the new regionalism is filled with considerations about the positive or negative impact of this process on the global level of governance, that is to say, on the present multilateral system. Therefore regionalism not only offers an alternative to multilateralism but mainly a partnership solution for the crippled multilateral institutions that are now trying to reinvent themselves.

The work of the academic world is showing – in this particular area at least – to be of crucial importance for the development of the political thinking in the international community, both at the regional and at the global level. This demonstrates the growing value of joining the academic world to the real polity world and is therefore a big stimulus for continuous research and work in this area.

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