

International Accompaniment in Violent Scenarios

A Performative Reading of Peace Brigades International
in Colombia

By

Javier Fabra Mata

Master Degree Program in Peace and Conflict Transformation

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Abstract

Since its first application in Central America in the 1980s, the practice of nonviolent international accompaniment of civil society members threatened with political violence has undergone substantial growth. This thesis provides an understanding of protective international accompaniment as a communicative phenomenon. It shows the intricate dynamics of international accompaniment and its impact on two major interlocutors: the host government and the accompanied, under a discursive focus inspired by Speech Acts Theory.

Taking Colombia's protracted armed conflict and Peace Brigades International Project in the country as a case study, the narrative focuses on both interlocutors in order to unveil their distinctive nature. On the one hand, following the conceptual groundwork provided by the Copenhagen School, it will be argued that there is a conflictive matrix in the relationship between PBI and the Colombian Government, based on the established dialectical competition over securitisation enabled by their differentiated legitimacy. On the other hand, Colombian civil society groups accompanied by PBI receive a pluralist range of benefits, which can be translated into the language of human needs, human capabilities and (human) security, building on the work of scholars such as M. Max-Neef, A. Sen and M. Nussbaum.

Keywords: Peace Brigades International, International Accompaniment, Speech Acts Theory, Security, Securitisation Theory, Political Violence, Human Rights, Human Security, Human Needs, Human Capabilities, Nonviolence.

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Acronyms

AI	Amnesty International
ASFADDES	Asociación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos (Association of Relatives of the Detained-Disappeared)
AUC	Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia)
CINEP	Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular (Centre for Investigation and Popular Education)
CJL	Corporación Jurídica Libertad (Freedom Juridical Corporation)
CREDHOS	Corporación Regional para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos (Regional Committee for the Defence of Human Rights)
ELN	Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army)
FARC-EP	Fuerzas Armadas de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army)
FIDH	Federación Internacional de los Derechos Humanos (International Federation for Human Rights)
FOR	Fellowship for Reconciliation
HRDDCP	Plataforma Colombiana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo (Human Rights, Democracy and Development Coordination Platform)
IA	International Accompaniment
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
LSE	The London School of Economics and Political Science
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OAS	Organisation of American States
OFP	Organización Femenina Popular (Popular Women's Organisation)
OMCT	Organización Mundial contra la Tortura (World Organisation against Torture)
PBI	Peace Brigades International
PIM	Paquete de Información Mensual (Monthly Information Pack)
PIQ	Paquete de Información Quincenal (Fortnightly Information Pack)
PT	Personal Translation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WPB	World Peace Brigade

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I INTRODUCTION

Approaching the Subject Matter

The topic of this research is unarmed international accompaniment (IA) as it has been deployed by the international non-governmental organisation (INGO) Peace Brigades International (PBI) in Colombia. International accompaniment, pioneered by PBI in the 1980s, can be characterised as the physical accompaniment by international activists, of local individuals, organisations or communities threatened with politically-motivated violence. Accompaniment aims to deter the aggressor, taking advantage of the violators' concern about their 'international image'. Whereas the aggressor wants to minimise the political and economic consequences of human rights violations, PBI strives to maximise them. Considering the fact that embarrassing actions witnessed by foreigners can result in economic and political pressure (Mahony and Eguren, 1997), PBI IA acts as a deterrent. As stated in its principles and mandate, PBI's blueprint for creating space for human rights in situations of political violence is conducted in accordance with nonviolence, non-partisanship and non-hierarchical functioning. At present, PBI conducts active projects in Latin America and Asia, offering IA to a wide range of civil society organisations advancing human rights and displaced communities in areas of armed conflict.

State of the Art in Peace Brigades International and International Accompaniment

Since its foundation in 1981, PBI's activities have grown and intensified, gaining greater political and academic attention. The academic literature on Peace Brigades and international accompaniment is much more extensive and accessible than ever, and the growth continues. The first accounts of the PBI discussed its prior nonviolent experiences, principles, foundation and early achievements (Arber, 1999; Clark, 1983a, 1983b, 2001; Dijkstra, 1986; Moser-Puangsuwan, 1995; Moser-Puangsuwan and Weber, 2000; Shepard, 1987; Sinn, 1998; Weber, 1993). In most cases, PBI scholars were themselves founders of PBI, nonviolent activists, or PBI sympathisers.

A second wave of research done by ex-volunteers and academics with experience in the field created the theoretical constructs that could improve the understanding of the dynamics of international accompaniment (Coy, 1993, 1997a, 1997b, 2001, 2003; Eguren, 1999, 2000; Howard *et al.*, 2001; Mahony, 2000, 2003, 2004; Mahony and

Eguren, 1997). Despite newfound academic interest in international accompaniment, there is still need for research on specific case studies and new approaches that deal integrally with the impact of IA on the accompanied, PBI volunteers¹, the local government, other INGOs and other actors. Although some studies have recognized the instrumental role of communication on nonviolent action (Martin and Varney, 2003a, 2003b) and most of the PBI literature emphasised the importance of communication as networking, there is a gap in the literature regarding the constitutive nature and effects of that communicative movement from a discursive point of view².

Peace Brigades International and the Practice of International Accompaniment: An Issue for Peace Studies?

The present study probes the foundations and performative dimensions of PBI international accompaniment from a discursive perspective. This is an issue of broad academic significance for peace studies. An explanatory list of such significance includes the following arguments:

1. PBI IA is a successful tool for peaceful intervention in armed conflicts, bringing together the local and the global.
2. PBI IA fits into the category of nonviolent people's diplomacy (Ruíz Jiménez, 2004), a bottom-up approach to armed conflict intervention to restore peace and an essential element of multi-track diplomacy (Diamond and McDonald, 1996) which has recently made its way into peace research.
3. PBI IA may shed light on the relationship between civil society and state in situations of political violence.
4. PBI IA has a say in security debates, introducing reflections upon securitisation and human security.
5. PBI IA is believed to advance human rights while creating better conditions for achieving a peace built from the grassroots.
6. PBI IA contributes to update taxonomies and conceptualizations on the nature and praxis of nonviolence.

¹ "Volunteer" will be used in an inclusive way, similar to "staff" or "personnel".

² By "Communication" is meant the exchange of information. More specifically, here refers to linguistic and organisational communication as a procedural framework, connecting distinctive interlocutors. "Discourse", on the other hand, is understood as linguistic units or message, and it takes the form of utterances. A communicative analysis would focus on the structures, while a discursive analysis would focus on the content and its performativity.

7. PBI IA strives for a positive peace, in a way that covers much more than the absence of direct violent clashes (Galtung, 1996).

Research Question(s)

After academic reflections on international accompaniment, the inquiry on its internal dynamics and external influence on the surrounding conflictive reality adopted the following preliminary form: *What act(s) does(do) the international accompaniment as practised by Peace Brigades International perform in relation to its stakeholders?*

From a performative reading of PBI IA communicative dimension inspired by Speech Acts Theory, the question of “affecting” must reference two related spheres: the illocutionary (what the utterance itself does) and the perlocutionary (what is done as a result of the utterance). Hence, the research inquiry is reformulated as follows: *In which way(s) does PBI IA interact with their interlocutors and their social environment in the illocutionary and perlocutionary spheres?* The present research will flesh out the knowledge of international accompaniment by framing a performative question on its constituency, which closely links with conceptualisations on nonviolence, power, security and human security.

Research Subject(s)

At the *macro-level*, Peace Brigades International is the subject of this research, since this is the organisation that pioneered the practice of international accompaniment. At the *micro-level*, the research takes PBI Colombia as the research subject, since the agency of the IA relies on it. The selection of Colombia as the case study is due to (1) the complexity of its armed conflict, (2) the length of the project (PBI’s longest), and (3) its size (PBI’s largest). Furthermore, PBI Colombia establishes in the practice of IA dialectical relationships with other actors, becoming crucial interlocutors the Colombian State and local civil society partners. These two interlocutors are also research subjects at the micro-level.

Theoretical Foundations

The theoretical framework of this research derives from J.L Austin, J. Searle, and the Speech Acts Theory, with some influence from Vicente Martínez Guzmán and other scholars. Assumptions about the performativity of language provide the theoretical

grounding for analysing the theory and practice of PBI international accompaniment. IA's most salient approaches, formulated by scholars such as Mahony, Eguren and Coy will be reviewed. These analyses will be complemented by reflections on power and nonviolence following scholars such as Gene Sharp, Joseph S. Nye, Brian Martin, Wendy Varney and Mario López.

The relationship between PBI and Colombian civil society, on the one hand, and the Colombian State, on the other, will be the subject of a discussion of securitisation and legitimacy under performative lens. In this regard, the Copenhagen School and especially Ole Wæver, will be considered. The dialectical process of making security as described by this School will be analysed and complemented with reflections on the nature of the securitising actor and possibilities for competition over securitisation.

Moreover, other interlocutors of PBI, such as the accompanied, and the performativity of the discursive practice of IA will necessitate a review of theories on human needs, human rights, human capabilities and human security, mainly following the works of scholars such as Manfred A. Max-Neef, Amartya Sen, Johan Galtung and Martha C. Nussbaum.

Methodological Framework

In order to clarify the purpose of the study, the theoretical construct is complemented with a discursive analysis of the international accompaniment by Peace Brigades International in Colombia. The empirical data consists of written documents produced by (a) Peace Brigades International, in its Colombia Project specifically or by any of the PBI National Groups, (b) Colombian civil society groups accompanied by PBI Colombia, and (c) other authors (i.e. Colombian authorities, national and international media)³.

The common element in the search, reading and consideration of written documents has been their consistency as "primary voices" (the PBI organisation, PBI volunteers, the individual or collective accompanied, and others). Any assertion about the performative effects of PBI IA in Colombia must get as close as possible to the stakeholders' speech in order to become relevant and avoid "discursive contamination" (noise, second interpretations, loss of content). Hence, priority has been given to those narratives coming from PBI and relevant interlocutors. After a preliminary survey, the category of "relevant

³ See Appendix I, *List of Sources of Textual Data Reviewed*.

interlocutors” for this study corresponds to Colombian State⁴ and Colombian PBI local partners.

In addition, contacts with current and former PBI Colombia volunteers and Colombia civil society representatives accompanied by PBI have been established (1) face-to-face (semi-structured interviews and informal talks with PBI members and Colombian human rights defenders) and (2) by phone and email.

Organisation of the Study⁵

Before exploring the performative nature of IA, it is worthwhile to introduce both Peace Brigades International and Peace Brigades International in Colombia. Chapter II is a chronology of Peace Brigades International and its milestones, including the settlement of the Colombia Project. The chapter, thus, is historical and will situate the research subjects and sketch the distinctive features of international accompaniment.

Chapter III will discuss three of the main characteristics of PBI and the practice of international accompaniment, namely, nonviolence, communication and power. Two approaches to nonviolence will be distinguished, leading then the discussion towards the relationship between the dualistic understanding of power (power-over and power-to) and communication. After introducing the mechanisms by which the practice of international accompaniment works, the chapter will conclude with a performative reading of international accompaniment. As it will be argued, the Colombian authorities, on the one hand, and the accompanied one, on the other, will emerge as main PBI interlocutors in the practice of IA. Chapter III will pave the way for an in-depth analysis of the performative dimension of the practice of international accompaniment by PBI in Colombia.

Chapter IV will focus on the Colombian State, in connection with the illocutionary dimension of the dialectical relationship. The chapter will show the existence of a conflictive matrix in which the Colombian authorities, civil society groups, and PBI compete as legitimate actors over securitisation. As it will be shown, whereas the Colombian State exercises its power-over for keeping its exclusivity over security, civil society groups emerge as counterparts, by employing their power-to for advancing an ontologically different security (human security). The theoretical discussion that opens

⁴ “State” is understood in an inclusive manner, as a set of institutions with authority to govern a given society, from the local to the national level.

⁵ See Appendix II, *Composition and Organisation of the Study*.

the chapter will be followed by an empirical illustration of the dialectical clashes and their performative effects.

Chapter V will cover the other major PBI interlocutor, the accompanied ones, but will follow a different structural conception. The possible performative positive consequences of PBI IA are separated from the empirical data, and then the findings will be read through three lenses (human needs, human capabilities and human security). As it will be shown, PBI IA facilitates the empowerment of the accompanied inasmuch as it increases their capabilities. In this way, PBI IA improves the security of the accompanied in a sense that exceeds physical protection. Moreover, PBI IA reaffirms a positive understanding of security as a mobilising factor. To conclude, Chapter VI will reiterate the most salient points of the analysis of PBI IA in Colombia.

II PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL: ORIGINS, FOUNDATIONS AND WORK

This chapter will approach Peace Brigades International from a historical perspective with the purpose of introducing the research subject. After a description of the main precedents in nonviolent intervention in armed conflicts, the chapter will call attention to PBI's milestones since its foundation in 1981. The analysis then will focus on the current situation and the ongoing projects worldwide, concluding with a discussion on how the project in Colombia was established and developed.

Preceding Peace Brigades International: Close Referents

Although intervention in armed conflicts has adopted the paradigmatic form of armed peacekeeping under the auspices of the United Nations, there have also been many lesser known nonviolent forms of intervention conducted by grassroots organisations. Frequently described as peace brigades, peace forces, and even peace armies, and despite their constitutive differences, they date from at least the time of the League of Nations (Moser-Puangsuwan, 1995; Moser-Puangsuwan and Weber, 2000). Among the several non-governmental unarmed peacekeeping initiatives, successful or unsuccessful, Shanti Sena and World Peace Brigade are seen as the two main precursors to influence Peace Brigades International (Arber, 1999; Clark, 1983a, 1983b, 2001; Dijkstra, 1986; Weber, 1993)⁶.

Envisioned by Gandhi as a major nonviolent force, Shanti Sena was thought of as an interposition corps for national defense that was also capable of controlling riots. During the 1950s and 1960s Vinoba Bhave developed the core points stated by Gandhi⁷ in order to create the Shanti Sena movement in India, which had thousands of Shanti Sainiks, or volunteers, at the beginning of the 1970s. Shanti Sena was used in several of India's riots affecting, following an action model that began days before they arrived in

⁶ See also PIB, *History and Structure*, available at <http://www.peacebrigades.org/history.html> (Last access in March 2006).

⁷ Gandhi wanted to give shape to an army of volunteers willing to sacrifice their lives for peace; moreover, those needed for such an army should serve the community in the long run, and be capable of acting even before the violent conflicts erupted, and to use crisis control tactics during the emergencies. (Arber, 1999). Dijkstra (1986: 397) recalls Gandhi's five conditions that the members of such a force should fulfil: " 1) Bear no arms, not even sticks; 2) Receive no remuneration; 3) Wear Khadi uniforms; 4) Accept voluntary self-discipline, yet be willing to take orders; 6) Practise nonviolence in thought, word and deed".

the area. At that time it was considered important publicise Shanti Sena's participation through the broadcast media, so that locals were informed and other Shanti Sainiks could join the action. Sometimes the non-partisanship of the organisation was underlined in the statement (Shepard, 1987). The action of these peace activists included meetings with local leaders; denying rumours through flyers, meetings, and door to door visits; sending small group patrols to hotspots, persuading troublemakers to abandon their conflictive positions or even interposing physically if needed; working with local activists and groups; and taking part in the reconstruction once the riots were over (Shepard, 1987; Arber, 1999).

Shanti Sena's example of nonviolent intervention was an incentive for the foundation of World Peace Brigade (WPB) in 1962, which attempted to apply the very same idea on a global scale (Arber, 1999). The goal of the organisation was to establish a crisis response group of experts trained in nonviolent methods and tactics, ready to act in armed conflict. Before it was dissolved in 1964, WPB conducted coordinated the international Freedom March into Rhodesia (Zambia). In India, it organised a pilgrimage to settle the Indo-Chinese border dispute, and in the USSR, it sailed a boat to Leningrad and the Arctic sea to protest Soviet nuclear testing (Moser-Puangsuwan, 1995; Weber, 1993). Although it achieved some success, WPB failed to accomplish its ambitious goals and dissolved. The Among the weaknesses of the organisation were the absence of substantial success in its first actions, the inability to recruit volunteers at a time when much of the leadership was captivated by the civil rights movements in the United States; the Indo-Chinese war which placed the WPB Indian contingent in a difficult situation (Weber, 1993: 54), difficulties in communication⁸, and especially a chronic lack of funds (Weber, 1993: 54)⁹. Failures coexisted, however, with partial achievements, especially with regards to the enriched exchange of ideas and testing of peace teams models. Moser-Puangsuwan (1995) cites the value of the lessons learned, saying that "the WPB left behind several empowered activists".

Narayan Desai and Charles Walker were among the activists linked in one way or another to Shanti Sena and World Peace Brigade. They would later be behind the establishment of PBI, working with Paul Hare on the Cyprus Resettlement Project from 1972 until the Turkish invasion of the island in 1974 (Dijkstra, 1986: 402; Sinn, 1998: 25). According to Dijkstra (1986: 402), also involved in the foundation of Peace Brigades

⁸ PBI, *The Founding of PBI*, in <http://www.peacebrigades.org/historydetails.html> (Last access in April 2006).

⁹ PBI, *The Founding of PBI*.

International, two lines converged in the establishment of PBI: one represented by those in contact with the Santhi Sena and influenced by Gandhi's ideas, and another one which wanted to bind the new peace force to the United Nations.

Desai, Walker and Dijkstra, together with Raymond Magee, from Peaceworkers of California (United States) and Radakrishna, from the Gandhi Peace Foundation, India, would agree to have a consultation on the issue to be held in Canada the last day of August 1981 (Clark, 2001).

Consultations in Grindstone Island: The Establishment of Peace Brigades International

Twenty people were originally the maximum number of expected participants in the consultations, but eleven¹⁰ went to the meeting in Grindstone Island¹¹, Canada (Clark, 2001). After several days discussing the concept's adequacy and possible conflicts in locations where a peace brigade could be deployed, the Peace Brigades International was born. The foundational declaration begins:

We have decided to establish an organisation which will form and support international peace brigades. We find this historically and morally imperative. Peace brigades, fashioned to respond to specific needs and appeals, will undertake non-partisan missions which may include peacemaking initiatives, peacekeeping under a discipline of nonviolence, and humanitarian service. We also intend to offer and provide services to similar efforts planned and carried out by other groups¹².

Along with non-partisanship and the promise to act only under explicit local invitation, the declaration on September 4 includes one of PBI's core points: a commitment to nonviolence, and the adoption of a concept of peace which goes further than an *absentia*

¹⁰ The full list of participants and founding members, includes Daniel Clark (United States), Narayan Desai (India), Jaime Diaz (Colombia), Gene Keyes (Canada), Raymond Magee (United States), Mark Shephard (United States), Hans Sinn (Canada), Lee Stern (United States), Murray Thomson (Canada), Charles Walker (United States) and Henry Wiseman (United States). Six of the eleven participants were Quakers (Clark, 1983b), and all of them had some experience with nonviolent actions and peace initiatives. Other people who were consulted with or invited to participate in the first days of PBI, although not present on Grindstone Island were Elizabeth Cattell (United States) Piet Dijkstra (Netherlands), Hildegard Goss-Mayr (Austria), Paul Hare (Israel/South Africa), Michael Hartbottle (United Kingdom), Adolfo Pérez Esquivel (Argentina), Devi Prasad (India), Radakrishna (India), Sulak Sivaraksa (Thailand) and George Willoughby (United States). See PBI, *Founding Statement*. Available at <http://www.peacebrigades.org/founding.html> (Last access in March 2006).

¹¹ The symbolism of the venue is remarkable. In 1965 George Willoughby and Hans Sinn participated in a simulated assault on the island and the nonviolent resistance to it (Olson and Christiansen, 1966, in Clark, 2001; and Martin, 1993: 9).

¹² PBI, *Founding Statement*.

belli. In Galtung's terminology, PBI does not limit itself to the quest for a negative peace, but transcends that. In doing so, it recognizes the higher value of a holistic peace. Moreover, the declaration established the main task of the trained volunteers. In this regard, a distinction between the stages in the intervention is made, one that corresponds with the moments before the outbreak of the armed conflict, the fighting and the cessation of hostility. Every one of these three stages would require its own corresponding intervention (i.e. monitoring, mediating or peacebuilding tasks).

In general terms, the foundational statement shows the will of those present in Grindstone Island to create a new way of intervening in armed conflicts. The idea was inherited from previous nonviolent experiences but with a specific intent to accommodate the contemporary international moment. The principles enshrined in the foundational declaration marked the beginning of PBI. However, other elements would be elaborated upon in the forthcoming years, as the organisation expanded and its members grew in their experience.

The Principles and Mandate incorporated four features that organize and give sense to PBI's actions, as reflected in its founding statement. These four features are:

1. A commitment to *nonviolence*, rejecting violence of all kind and from any source. Although nonviolence has been mistakenly linked to passivity, a link that misconstrues its history and character, the essential dynamic nature of nonviolence must not be discarded (Simón, 1991: 49; López Martínez, 2000: 327). Moreover, non-violence is not an unconscious action but a carefully considered decision that requires conviction and fortitude to be executed. It is neither an easy nor a weak tactic, but a weapon of those with strong willpower¹³ (López Martínez, 2000: 328).
2. An *international* character, in a double sense: in its field of action, including armed conflicts worldwide, but also in its inner character, inasmuch as it encompasses national groups and volunteers in and from several countries¹⁴.
3. A *non-partisan* approach to the parties, distancing itself from previous partisan peace interventions (i.e. WPB) with the hope of gaining credit and broadening the base of support (Clark, 1983a: 7). This non-partisanship, however, is not indifference, passivity, or neutrality in the face of injustice and human rights violations.

¹³ Gandhi said: "Nonviolence should never be used as a shield for cowardice. It is a weapon for the brave". (in Attenborough, 1982: 44).

¹⁴ See Appendix III, *PBI Projects, Country Groups and Regional Offices*.

4. *Non-hierarchical* functioning, in which the processes and relationships are important and not the only outcomes.

In that same Declaration of Principles and Mandate, PBI's mission is stated as being the international presence in a plural sense, one which incorporates physical presence, physical accompaniment, public relations, networking, observing, reporting, and building international support networks. In addition, it mentioned other methods that can play a role in peacebuilding, such as peace education and mental health recovery¹⁵.

Unlike Shanti Sena and WPB, Peace Brigades International was less ambitious in its goals and instead of pretending that it had the resources to launch an intervention that could stop a war, it would focus on more modest actions that would contribute to the nonviolent transformation of a conflict. As Charles Walker would comment in his evaluation of the Grindstone meeting, "our determination not to have a second failure [the earlier World Peace Brigade] must moderate zeal with prudent achievable objectives"¹⁶. Those objectives would change with the daily practice and growth of the organisation. As founding member Hans Sinn declared:

When PBI was founded in 1981, we saw ourselves as pioneers of a "World Peace Guard". We knew where we wanted to go. PBI has not developed in a straight line toward its objective. Today PBI is represented in 17 countries, but instead of being known for nonviolent management of conflict between armed forces, we are best known for protective accompaniment and the transfer of PBI skills to native people.

(1998: 25)

Indeed, as pointed out by Sinn, the international presence has mainly covered international accompaniment and observation in the field and reporting. In response to a request from local organisations committed to human rights in a violent scenario, PBI analyses the situation and may establish a mission in the country. This mission would be aimed at broadening the space for peace where armed conflicts could be transformed in a nonviolent manner.

International accompaniment, one of the most novel PBI actions, is based on a simple premise, namely that those who violate human rights do not want to be caught in the world spotlight. PBI describes international accompaniment as follows:

¹⁵ These are reflected in the mandate of PBI agreed by the 2001 General Assembly and its emphasis on protective accompaniment, which amended 1992 Mandate. See PBI Annual Review 2001, available at <http://www.peacebrigades.org/annrept/review02screen.pdf> (Last access in February 2006).

¹⁶ PBI, *The Founding of PBI*. Clarifications in bracket added in the original quotation.

In most instances death squads and other human rights violators do not want their actions exposed to the outside world. Thus the presence of a PBI volunteer, backed by an emergency response network, deters violence directed against local activists. Where possible PBI initiates contacts with all parties to the conflict to inform them of our presence. To increase this effect, PBI forges links with the diplomatic community locally and with media and human rights networks globally.¹⁷

Although a deeper analysis on the protective accompaniment will be provided in Chapter III, it is worth mentioning that protective accompaniment is undertaken by foreign volunteers, who are in the privileged position to express international concern and rally international pressure. Moreover, accompaniment can take several forms, ranging from the accompaniment of communities to that of individuals, around the clock or in the office of a threatened organisation.

First Steps: From PBI International Council to the Projects in the Field

Daniel N. Clark (2001), one of the founders of PBI, offers a diachronic description of the developments from the consultation in Grindstone Island until the first operational project was set in motion in 1983 in Guatemala. The most immediate task was to fill the fifteen positions in the newly organized International Council from a list of eighteen renowned candidates¹⁸. Another priority was spreading the news about PBI via press and journal articles, letters and conversations with interested organisations. The formation of local groups was urged; in the United States the first ones emerged in Walla Walla (New York), and in Philadelphia. The training of volunteers in nonviolent tactics and conflict intervention began at the same time.

According to Clark, the activity in the following months were filled with meetings and consultations with politicians, activists, other groups, and organisations such as the Organisation of American States (OAS) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). With the latter, one discussion was of the possibility of setting up a PBI mission for Salvadoran refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) along the Honduras --El Salvador border. PBI was closely monitoring Central America. All of the wars that were plaguing Central American countries made the area suitable for the deployment of a PBI mission. In addition, the area had caught the attention of an international solidarity movement, which became a key source of funding, volunteers and political support (Mahony, 2000: 139).

¹⁷ PBI, *What We Do*.

¹⁸ Among those who accepted the offer were Argentinean Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1980, singer-songwriter Joan Baez and Ramsey Clark, former U.S. Attorney General (Clark, 2001).

Meanwhile, the first national group was created in Canada, beginning the task of volunteers recruitment and funds assurance. The second International Consultation on Peace Brigades International was held in The Netherlands, in August 1982, along with the first International Council meeting, and the initial meeting of the PBI directorate. Among the most significant agreements reached were: the basing of the decision-making process upon consensus; the decentralization of project organisation, administration, and fundraising under the principle of highest autonomy in harmony with the required consultations for developing an international supportive network; and, the establishment of local and regional networks of contacts and PBI groups which would suggest means of internal communication and contact with related organisations.

Although there were several places where the first PBI team could be deployed, according to Clark (2001), Guatemala offered the greatest potential for success. At that time Guatemala, ruled by the military, was suffering from an armed conflict between left-wing guerrilla movements and the army, and paramilitary. The insecurity and violence had driven many international agencies out of the country. Although bringing the PBI into the country was thought to be a very rash step, there were promising possibilities for working in the field. Another positive factor was the political opening announced by Guatemalan General Efraín Ríos Montt soon after the military takeover that had brought him to power at the end of 1982. In that situation, Clark pointed out that it was essential to know if Guatemalans were willing to exercise the proclaimed rights attached to the announced political opening, and especially if they would see the presence of PBI as a threat, irrelevant or helpful (Clark, 2001).

In order to obtain this knowledge, several contacts were made with Guatemalans in exile in Mexico, and members of the Catholic and Protestant Churches, trade unions, indigenous leaders, members of the US Embassy and government officials, and others. These meetings culminated in three conclusions. First, the diverse and different opinions; second, the widespread popular suspicion of the military government; and third, the opinion that an international team overseeing the situations and denouncing human rights violations could save lives by inhibiting further violence (Clark, 2001).

On 21 March 1983, two days before the state of emergency was to be lifted, the first PBI headquarters were established in Guatemala City. The three-member team, however, did not arrive because one had resigned and another could not obtain a visa.

Eventually two new volunteers replaced them and became the first PBI team¹⁹ (Clark, 2001).

At a series of meetings on PBI in Central America held in Philadelphia in April year, it was decided to extend the team's presence in Guatemala for at least another year and to increase its size to five people. Another decision was the establishment of a Ready Response Brigade for Central America to act in short-term crises (Clark, 1983a; 2001).

The Ready Response Brigade received its first call for action from Nicaragua. As Clark (2001) recalls, "on August 16th, Witness for Peace communicated to PBI the request of the Nicaraguan government for an international presence in Jalapa prior to October 1st, when the Witness for Peace team was expected to arrive." Although the Ready Response units were not yet operational, PBI had alerted its network concerning the Nicaraguan border conflicts and on September 17 a group of ten PBI trained volunteers from California arrived in Jalapa, a town of 9,000 people with many refugees close to the Honduras border. As planned, the group stayed until October 1. During those two weeks, there was no attack on Jalapa, and the mission received the gratitude of both locals and the Nicaraguan junta (Clark, 1983a; 2001).

The Jalapa action was a success story in line with previous peace teams that had interposed themselves between warring groups in order to discourage hostilities. Interposition, however, would not be the tendency of the organisation, and in the following years it continued the model of intervention started in Guatemala and based on international accompaniment.

Later in the 1980s, PBI accepted another assignment in Central America, this time responding to a request for accompaniment from El Salvador (1987-1992). PBI also initiated activities in Asia, where it would maintain a presence in Sri Lanka for nine years, from 1989 to 1998 (1989-1998). PBI would later be active in North America (1992-1999), the Balkans (1994-2001) and Haiti (1995-2001). In addition, it conducted

¹⁹ Some lessons were learnt from these first steps. Among them was the need to apply for a tourist visa for the team members in the field until negotiating the legal status of PBI with the national authorities (Clark, 2001: 28; Coy, 1997a: 87). Now PBI volunteers in Colombia, for instance, are granted special temporary work visas that allow them to do human rights work (see James Savage, "A Volunteer's Letter Home", October 2002, on PBI Colombia webpage). In addition, it highlighted the problems with recruiting volunteers for the field missions, a weakness from which the organisation would not recover for many years (Mahony and Eguren, 1997: 15).

exploratory missions in the Philippines²⁰, Namibia, India/Pakistan, the Middle East (Clark, 1983b: 9), Northern Ireland, Chad, South Africa and the former Soviet Republics (Mahony, 2000: 153).

Peace Brigades Today: Projects and Structure

Peace Brigades now has active projects in Colombia (1994), Mexico (1996/1999)²¹, Indonesia (1999), Guatemala²² (2002) and Nepal (2005), and has received support from fifteen country groups and regional offices which represent the foundations of PBI²³. Each of these groups is responsible for the recruitment of volunteers, fundraising, publicizing PBI's activities, and maintaining and strengthening the political and civil support network in order to safeguard PBI volunteers on the teams and the people they accompany²⁴. While some country groups are well established and include permanent offices and full-time staff, others remain loose associations of volunteers who joined for short-term campaigns (Mahony, 2000: 159).

Regarding PBI's structure²⁵, each project has a Project Committee and a Project Office. For security reasons, the Project Office is located outside the project country, and it is staffed by a Project Coordinator and local volunteers. PBI's organisation chart also consists of the following:

1. The *General Assembly*, which is the highest decision-making body. The General Assembly meets every three years. All country groups and projects send representatives to the General Assembly, which has been held in Canada, Germany, India, the Netherlands and Sweden.

²⁰ Peace Brigades International Annual Review 1998, available in <http://www.peacebrigades.org/annrept/ar98eng.html> (Last access in January 2006).

²¹ In Mexico, PBI is present in a dual manner: with the coalition SIPAZ in Chiapas, since 1996, and with its own project, established in 1999. See PBI Mexico Project, at <http://www.peacebrigades.org/mexico.html> (Last access in March 2006), and PBI in the SIPAZ Coalition, at <http://www.peacebrigades.org/chiapas.html> (Last access in March 2006).

²² The first project was active between 1983 and 1999. For an account of the activities of the first project and the reasons for its closure, together with the latter establishment of a renewed project in the country, see PBI Guatemala Project, at <http://www.peacebrigades.org/guatemala.html> (Last access in March 2006).

²³ As of this writing. See PBI webpage; see also Appendix III, *PBI Projects, Country Groups and Regional Offices*.

²⁴ See PBI, *History and Structure*.

²⁵ See Appendix IV, *PBI Organisational Structure*, and Appendix V, *PBI Internal Correlations and Working*.

2. The *International Council*, set up by the General Assembly to implement policies and procedures, with the authority to make decisions between meetings of the General Assembly.
3. The *International Office*, based in London. Part-time workers in the International Office are assigned to organisational development, internal communication, finances, and administrative tasks²⁶. All decisions within PBI are made through consensus.

Colombia Project

Colombia presents a complex scenario, with a multifaceted internal conflict—regarding not only its roots and origins but also its development, the actors involved, analysis, and goals. Having lasted between 40 and 60 years, depending on the sources considered, the Colombian armed conflict involves two large guerrilla movements (the Fuerzas Armadas de Colombia–Ejército del Pueblo [FARC-EP] and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional [ELN]), paramilitary forces (the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia [AUC]), and the Colombian army. These groups all act in varied geographical scenarios, including jungles, cities, villages, *haciendas*, lowlands, frontier regions, the Caribbean, and the Andes.

This is a protracted armed conflict in which none of the parties have been able to overpower the others, and where civilians have been caught in the crossfire. The human rights situation in Colombia is critical, especially regarding security and protection (with assassinations, massacres, kidnappings, death threats, etc.), but also in terms of social, economic, and cultural rights, as recognized by groups including the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights²⁷.

Although numbers do not tell everything, some are eloquent: from 1988 to 1995, 67,378 people were victims of political violence in Colombia, an average of 23,4 per day²⁸. Between 1994 and 2003, Colombia suffered almost 2.000 massacres which killed more than 10,000 people. In the same period, some 6,300 people “disappeared.” The armed violence generated more than three million IDPs between 1985 and the end of

²⁶ PBI, *History and Structure*.

²⁷ The Colombian Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights launches periodical reports on the situation of human rights in Colombia. Its more recent annual report (E/CN.4/2006/9) was published in 20 January 2006. Available at <http://www.hchr.org.co/documentoseinformes/informes/altocomisionado/informes.php3?cod=9&cat=11> (Last access in March 2006).

²⁸ The Inter-Congregational Commission of Peace and Justice data bank (in Giraldo, 1996: 17).

2004²⁹. In 2003, 700 reported deaths were caused by political violence in Colombia³⁰. One year later, more than 50,000 requests for shelter regarding human rights violations and international humanitarian law infractions were presented to the Defensoría del Pueblo de Colombia³¹. The top four rights that are most often threatened or violated were international humanitarian laws, health, life, and personal integrity. Finally, in 2005 the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (a joint FIDH/OMCT programme) recorded 47 assassinations of human rights defenders, 15 kidnappings and tortures, and 61 arbitrary detentions³².

On 3 October 1994, the first members of PBI Colombia arrived in Bogotá. An exploratory team had already visited the country in May and June 1993, in response to a joint request for accompaniment made by the Association of Relatives of the Detained-Disappeared (ASFADDES), the Regional Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CREDHOS) and the Inter-Congregational Commission of Peace and Justice³³. As PBI had done in Guatemala and El Salvador, it sought information about human rights violations and then evaluated their sensitivity to international pressure. Otherwise, the international accompaniment would be meaningless. In the Colombian case,

The armed forces are under government control, and most analysts believe that many of the paramilitary organisations do not operate without the consent of the army. Consequently, given government sensitivity to international pressure, there was a strong case for accompaniment when the threat came from these sources. Effective protection against threats from guerrilla organisations, landowners' private armed groups, or drug-cartel paramilitary groups was less certain.

(Mahony and Eguren, 1997: 227).

Since the paramilitaries are primarily responsible for politically-motivated attacks, and considering the collusion between them and some public officers³⁴, the assumption that PBI's activity could have a positive impact was plausible. Following a positive evaluation, a Project Committee was established and the Project Office in London was made operational in July 1994. The office in Bogotá then began the process of

²⁹ Local newspaper *El Tiempo*, 26 September 2004. In PIM, No. 22.

³⁰ Human Security Centre, *Human Security Report 2005*, Oxford University Press, p. 73

³¹ XII Report from the Defensoría del Pueblo de Colombia of the year 2004. Available at http://www.defensoria.org.co/pdf/informes/informe_115.pdf? (Last access in March 2006).

³² FIDH/OMCT, *Steadfast in Protest. 2005 Annual Report. March 2006*. Available at http://www.fidh.org/article.php?id_article=3165 (Last access in March 2006).

³³ PBI, *Peace Brigades International: Diez Años de Acompañamiento en Colombia*. Available at http://www.peacebrigades.org/colombia/pbi_cop10a_fotos_es.htm (Last access in March 2006).

³⁴ Even the President of the Republic of Colombia, Álvaro Uribe Vélez, has admitted that AUC has infiltrated State agencies, adding that his government is combating that reality. Spanish newspaper *ELPAIS*, 14 April 2006.

regularisation of its legal status according to Colombian laws³⁵. This process was surprisingly easier than it had been on previous occasions:

Within a few weeks, unlike any previous PBI project, the team was authorized special “courtesy visas”. A few months later, the organisation was duly registered and legally recognized—a process that had taken years for PBI’s projects elsewhere.

(Mahony and Eguren, 1997: 228)

Mahony and Eguren attribute the government’s surprising willingness to allow PBI legal constituency to the political situation. Shortly after being sworn in as president of the Republic of Colombia in August 1994, Ernesto Samper committed himself and his government to respecting human rights and welcomed international scrutiny (Mahony and Eguren, 1997: 5), in an attempt to improve Colombia’s democratic reputation. Facilitating the establishment of an INGO such as PBI could contribute to the achievement of such a goal, and it is easier to replace a failed civil society initiative than an intergovernmental organisation (Mahony, 2003).

Shortly after the establishment of the office in Bogotá, PBI Colombia began its accompaniment services (personal escorting and visits to offices), which soon extended to six human rights organisations. One of them was ASFADDES, whose members were threatened because of its campaign against a government proposal to modify the military laws (Mahony and Eguren, 1997: 228). The Colombian complexity influenced actions by PBI from the outset, deciding to limit its initial activity—already determined by the reduced number of members of the team (between six and nine) and simple structure—to the Bogotá and the Magdalena Medio regions. With this decision, PBI had greater expectations of making its work public and effective³⁶.

PBI Colombia worked intensively in building a network of national and international contacts (Mahony and Eguren, 1997: 227). PBI sought to open channels of communication with the central government, local authorities, the military and Colombian social actors, along with the diplomatic corps, international organisations and any relevant interlocutors to explain their labour, mandate and methods. These meetings were key components in performing a minimum of its daily activity³⁷. The key role that such a strategy of communication plays in the work of PBI Colombia can be noted in the more than two hundred meetings held with authorities at all levels in a single year.

³⁵ PBI, *Peace Brigades International: Diez Años de Acompañamiento en Colombia*.

³⁶ PBI, *Peace Brigades International: Diez Años de Acompañamiento en Colombia*.

³⁷ PBI, *Peace Brigades International: Diez Años de Acompañamiento en Colombia*.

Similarly, embassies comprise another source of support for PBI Colombia, and more than a hundred meetings are held every year³⁸.

According to Mahony and Eguren (1997: 230), PBI Colombia rapidly gained a remarkable coherence, mainly because of the warm response given by Colombian human rights organisations, which saw the great potential of the accompaniment that PBI offered (Mahony, 2000: 154). After the beginning of PBI's accompaniment, ASFADDES and CREDHOS made decided to forgo the use of armed escorts. Although these organisations had accepted a previous government offer of armed protection, both organisations reconsidered that choice. From a PBI perspective, its whole model of protective accompaniment would suffer a critical loss of deterrent efficiency if it were forced to coexist with armed bodyguards (Mahony and Eguren, 1997: 231).

Although ASFADDES and CREDHOS were two of the first local organisations to request PBI Colombia's support, many others would follow. More than fifteen organisations are constantly accompanied by PBI Colombia, to which should be added other individuals and groups co-operating with them. Although it works as a single unit, PBI Colombia consists of four sub-teams operating in Magdalena Medio, Urabá, Medellín and Bogotá³⁹. The number of volunteers in the field has grown from the original 12 in 1994 to 24 in 1998, maintaining a peak of near 40 since 2002. Recently, however, the project decided to reduce the number of volunteers to 35. Although recruitment has not undergone significant difficulties and although local requests for PBI accompaniment are still made, PBI decided to reduce the number of field volunteers for logistical reasons. This reduction was accompanied by an increase in the length of volunteers' service to 18 months. The extension of service acquires relevance in terms of benefiting from the volunteers' expertise, especially in light of the amount of the time devoted to training and preparation. Prior to actively joining the project, each volunteer undergoes training on Colombia, the principles and action of Peace Brigades International, and the monitoring and function of international accompaniment.

As shown above, PBI's mandate is far from limited to accompaniment. As stated by PBI Colombia⁴⁰, its areas of work include not only creating a network of protection but also training in psychological healing, restoration of the social fabric and the resolution of conflicts through collective work in seminars and workshops. In the original

³⁸ PBI Annual Reviews.

³⁹ See Appendix VI, *PBI Colombia Distribution of Teams*.

⁴⁰ PBI Colombia, *PBI Colombia's Objectives and Areas of Work*. PBI Colombia webpage, at <http://www.peacebrigades.org/colombia/colobjectives.html> (Last access in March 2006).

conceptualisation of the organisation, tasks related to education and reconciliation occupied a prominent position. In the early years, PBI offered advice and workshops on nonviolence in Guatemala, and “in 1987 the PBI team [in Guatemala] took the first steps towards institutionalizing ‘Peace Education’ as an ongoing part of its work” (Mahony, 2000: 155). These forms of peaceful conflict intervention have included workshops on nonviolence, conflict transformation, negotiating methods, political analysis, and psychological support. These were, in essence, the constitutive tasks of the PBI project in Haiti (1995-2000), more than international accompaniment as protection. Returning to the Colombian project, one of its five objectives is sharing “teaching experiences (reconstructing the social fabric, training for psychosocial healing and conflict resolution) so that they can be used in line with the general aims of PBI's work in Colombia”⁴¹. It would be misguided to dismiss this dimension of PBI Colombia; between 1998 and 2002 more than two hundred of these workshops were conducted for more than three thousand people⁴².

Conclusion

Since its foundation PBI has grown exponentially in terms of operational work and international recognition and respect, and despite many challenges. The original conceptions of PBI as a continuation of a traditional nonviolent interposition between belligerents have undergone substantial changes since 1981, giving way to concretisations linked to the new practice of international accompaniment of threatened individuals and groups. Following a model based on nonviolence, non-partisanship, internationalisation and non-hierarchical functioning, PBI has evolved into an international non-governmental organisation and spread its activities from Latin America to Asia.

The protracted internal conflict in Colombia has resulted in tremendous political violence. In such a hostile environment, at the beginning of the 1990s some local groups were attracted to the idea of international accompaniment and contacted the PBI. Since its establishment in 1994, Peace Brigades International Colombia has been actively promoting human rights in the country, not only through international accompaniment but also by organising activities intended to reconstruct Colombia's social fabric. Through the years, PBI Colombia has been expanding its presence on the ground to meet the increased demand, and adapting to the complexities of the Colombian conflict.

⁴¹ PBI Colombia, *PBI Colombia's Objectives and Areas of Work*.

⁴² Annual Reviews.

III

INTERNATIONAL ACCOMPANIMENT

AS PRACTICED BY PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL

After setting the historical parameters under which PBI and PBI Colombia must be characterised, this chapter examines international accompaniment, embarking upon a deeper analysis of three constitutive elements that were introduced in the previous chapter: nonviolence, communication and power. As it will be shown, in order to approach international accompaniment it is necessary to reflect on nonviolent action, which is one of its fundamental elements. Moreover, nonviolence in terms of communication relates strongly to power considerations. After describing the internal dynamics of international accompaniment, the communicative approach will be apprehended in discursive terms by exposing the performative dimension of the communicative reality. In doing so, the premises for an analysis of the discursive performativeness of PBI international accompaniment will be set, advancing the discussion that will be developed in the next two chapters.

Nonviolence and Communication

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the work of PBI is guided by nonviolence, which in this case is interrelated with the principles of truth and justice. As included in the final statement from the PBI council meeting in Vedchhi, India, in 1986, PBI “respect[s] the humaneness and value of every person, and [is] dedicate[d] to the defence of life, liberty and the rights of all” (in Dijkstra, 1986: 392-393).

The nonviolent action contributes to breaking the vicious circle of violence and makes the recovery of politics possible in situations of violent conflict. In rejecting to participate in the logics of violence, nonviolence transforms a military fight into a political struggle, in which discussion, dialogic reason and agreement prevail over violent imposition. Walzer (2000) admits this in his analysis of the nonviolent resistance against aggression, and López Martínez (2001) insists that the contribution of nonviolence to the regeneration of politics, turning the latter towards its origins, is a permanent negotiation process between powers that must be persuasive and peaceful. Moreover, it is not only politics as a whole that benefits from nonviolence, but democracy in particular, since it has historically provided those in disadvantaged positions or “grievance groups” (Sharp,

1990:2) with an available tool for advancing social struggles. In a broader sense, civil society⁴³ strengthens participating not only in a theoretical deepening of citizenship but also in its effective practice.

In this sense, nonviolence can be understood as a way of political communication. Martin and Varney (2003a; 2003b) focus on the communicative dimension of nonviolence as one of its most distinctive features. Communication constitutes an integral part of nonviolence, both from the type of nonviolence that has been hitherto characterized (principled nonviolence) and from a pragmatic nonviolence. Whereas the former avoids any form of violence as an imperative moral commitment, the latter understands nonviolence as a pragmatic option, that is, the best choice resulting from a rational analysis of a given situation⁴⁴. Translating it into a weberian classification of the forms of social conduct (Weber, 1962: 59), principled nonviolence would correspond to a value-related conduct while pragmatic nonviolence would fit into the category of goal-oriented conduct.

The paradigmatic exponent of what is meant by principled nonviolence is Mohandas Gandhi, who repeatedly underlined how the nonviolent action is so intertwined with love, truth and the soul that it would be impossible to disentangle these elements. Nonviolence, in this sense, includes a compromise with the respect of life as supreme value, along with justice and a sense of duty towards the others and the building of peace (López Martínez, 2001: 208). Scholar Gene Sharp, on the other hand, is recognized as one of the most prominent advocates of pragmatic nonviolence. From a pragmatic point

⁴³ There is no agreed definition on the meaning of “civil society”, and the term has been invoked by the whole gamut of ideologists and intellectuals. My understanding of its meaning is in essence close to the definition that the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) does of it, in which civil society refers to the arena of voluntary participation in collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. This definition, as many others, gives civil society a theoretically distinctive nature outside the state, family and market, although in practice the boundaries between them are blurred. It embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and forms, and a varying degree of formality, autonomy and power. Under this inclusive definition that stresses its diversity, the “good intentions” of civil society cannot be taken for granted: groups acting in this realm might advocate for controversial issues or openly against principles included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for instance. In spite of this, civil society has been historically linked with the notion of minimising violence in social relations and with the use of reason in human affairs in place of submission based on fear and insecurity, or ideology and superstition (Kaldor, 2003: 3). Moreover, with the end of the Cold War and the intensification of the phenomenon of globalization, civil society has bypassed national boundaries to recreate itself in an international, global or even transnational form based upon a complex relational network (Anheier *et al.*, 2004; Kaldor, 2003; Keane, 2003; Smith *et al.*, 1997). PBI matches this definition, working to deal nonviolently with political violence and moving into the international arena. See LSE, Centre for Civil Society, “What is civil society?”, at http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what_is_civil_society.htm (Last access in March 2006).

⁴⁴ This distinction, although theoretically pertinent, is not always clear in the practice of nonviolent action since both share an operational dimension.

of view, violent actions are eventually discarded because of the reservations of feasibility, efficiency (the lower the economic resources, the weaker the armed capacity), and credibility (the bloodier the fight, the lower the level of sympathy for the cause). Simón (1991: 51-52) emphasizes efficiency and credibility as reasons to relinquish the violent struggle and acknowledges the risk that the resulted system of social organisation would base itself upon violence to remain in power.

In the cardinal work *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (1973) Sharp groups the nonviolent methods in three broad categories, each of which can be approached in communicative terms (Martin and Varney, 2003):

Method:	Examples:	Communicative Dimension:
1. Protest an Persuasion	Speeches, Declarations, Banners, Picketing, Processions, Political Mourning, Silence...	Communication mainly linguistic aimed to persuade the opponent
2. Non-cooperation (Social, Economic, Political)	Boycotts, Strikes, Refusals...	Transmit information about the organisation and its capacity for action. A sort of symbolic communication
3. Nonviolent Intervention (Psychological, Physical, Social, Economic, Political)	Sit-ins, Fasts, Overloading of Facilities, Seeking Imprisonment...	Transmit information about the organisation and its capacity for action. A sort of symbolic communication

PBI's actions to a certain extent update Sharp's classification, introducing a new type of nonviolent intervention in armed conflicts that relies intensively on communication, both bi-directional, through dialogue, and unidirectional, with the transmission of messages aimed to show that one is powerful enough to carry out an action. Broadly speaking, communication is understood as the process of exchanging information and it can take many forms and involve several processes.

Communicational processes and networks lay the foundations of Peace Brigades and the international accompaniment. A brief list of communicative interaction takes into consideration several levels, namely: firstly, a well-established intra-organisational communication that connects quickly the teams on the ground, the project office in the country, the international office and the international supportive network permits the practice of IA; secondly, PBI lobbies internationally for getting support towards its work and exercising pressure on stakeholders of the armed conflict; thirdly, PBI itself conducts

meetings with authorities and diplomatic corps on a regular basis, to inform them about its activities.

In this study, the communicative analysis of PBI IA is mainly focused on linguistic organisational communication, at two interrelated levels: internal, within the several organs conforming PBI, and external, that is, with exogenous actors—the host State, other states, the accompanied, international organisations, and so on. PBI external organisational communication is basic in the functioning of IA. Furthermore, the study of the language used by members of its speech community (discursive study) is crucial in understanding the performative dynamics of IA .

Conceptualising Power from PBI's Nonviolent Action

Nonviolent action wields power (Sharp, 1973). In order to advance its objectives, PBI needs effective power, which arises from the sense of legitimacy that the organisation holds and that I will discuss deeper in Chapter IV. Moreover, PBI power relies on the PBI external communicative level, since it comes from the effective management of the supportive international network.

What is meant by power? In social sciences, power can be understood as the ability of a social actor to act and to get others to do what they otherwise would not (Weber, 1962; Sharp, 1973). Under this conceptualisation of power as relational phenomena of constraint or domination, Nye (1990a, 1990b, 2004a) distinguishes between hard and soft power: in international relations, hard power is linked with military capabilities and their uses to impose on the others, whereas soft power refers to attraction and persuasion rather than forceful imposition. Hard power implies coercion, which relies on military means. Soft power, on the other hand, deals with attraction, in which credibility is essential (Nye, 2003). In this sense, the major asset of PBI is its own credibility, linked with its history and especially the strength of its network and the ability to mobilize it. In accordance with this view, PBI holds a soft power as an INGO backed up by an international network operating on several levels, which allows the organisation to improve its positioning in relation to its counterparts (such as the host government) in the balance of power. Describing the nature of NGOs' power, Nye (2004b) states that “NGOs do not have coercive ‘hard’ power, but they often enjoy considerable ‘soft’ power—the ability to get the outcomes they want through attraction rather than compulsion. Because they attract followers, governments must take them into account both as allies and adversaries.” The power of PBI derives from its ability to attract supporters. However, this power provides

a source of coercion as it pretends to stop certain practices that go against determined international conventions. Thus, the soft power held by PBI is coercive in its goals to deter human rights violations. PBI rarely attracts the perpetrators of such violations due to the higher moral status of its cause.

As shown in PBI's case, changes in power are produced by the use of coercion as a nonviolent technique⁴⁵. According to Sharp (1990: 16), "nonviolent action becomes coercive when the struggle group succeeds, directly or indirectly, in withholding to a major degree the necessary sources of the opponents' power", in this case its international image. Power is to a certain extent framed into a unitary and exclusive understanding oriented towards coercion. An alternative epistemological approach incorporates an openness of the term with an awareness of its capacity for action, understanding it as diverse, shared, horizontal, dynamic and inclusive.

There are two types of power: power-to (also power-of-being) and power-over. The former is in the realm of potential and development. It includes, among others, power-with (the solidarity of behaving in coordination, redoubt of the kantian unsociable sociability), power-for (training, learning, and developing the inner aristotelic potentials), and power-against (the competitive capacity to fulfil objectives without intentionality of domination) (Simón, 1991). The power-over is related to situations where there is an imbalance in the power-to.

Power is multiple and multidimensional, not a monopoly in the hands of others (mainly the state and its apparatus) that exercise it over a passive subject. Civil society encompasses (a certain amount of) power. As López Martínez and Muñoz (2003: 3-4) stress, "if power is potentiality and possibilities, if we managed to channel and spread them as creative forces [...] we would be exercising our principle of self-government, extending what we call our freedom"⁴⁶.

Under this conceptualisation, PBI makes the exercise of the power-to possible and its work aims to balance power relations between the actors in conflict. It opens the way to empowerment, self-recognition and recognitions of the others and the capacity of action that bears an influence on the social fabric. Empowerment, along with other

⁴⁵ Sharp (1990: 15-16) identifies four mechanisms of change, namely: conversion, accommodation, nonviolent coercion, and disintegration.

⁴⁶ Personal Translation (PT) from Spanish.

possible effects of PBI's international accompaniment, will be covered in Chapter V, when considering the acts performed by PBI IA on those accompanied.

The Dynamics and Nature of International Accompaniment

The coercive power of PBI would dissolve if there were not a shared concern among actors in an armed conflict about the projected image and subsequent effects, either positive (funds, military support, and investments) or negative (political exclusion or sanctions). PBI presence on the ground reminds the actors that the eyes of the international community are focused on the conflict and on them in particular. PBI magnifies the possibilities of that pressure, stressing the reactions that would follow any violation of humanitarian law and human rights. It introduces an international variable in the calculation of costs and benefits of violent action.

Traditionally, international pressure for the respect of human rights targets top officials and decision-makers. This strategy overlooks, however, that systematic violations of human rights requires cooperation along the chain of command. Moreover, the international community commonly offers some sort of support (diplomatic, financial, logistical) to those in danger. However, as Mahony (2004) points out in his analysis of the functioning of IA, international pressure in favour of human rights has been put in practice repeatedly for decades. It is no longer a novel practice; and states, the major recipients of criticism concerned with its international reputation, have had time to develop a full range of countermeasures to avoid the negative effects of that pressure⁴⁷. Mahony (2004: 7-9) refers to these countermeasures as deflectors. One of the most common deflectors is the use of propaganda aimed at damaging the credibility of the organisation denouncing the violations and also the victims. In this way, organisations and victims can effectively be labelled as subversives or terrorists, gaining the understanding and indulgence of peer states and international governmental organisations.

Moreover, there are multiple buffers by which states absorb international pressure, including the establishment of governmental agencies to deal with human rights defenders. In this way, the accused State feigns concern and willingness to solve the problem. Smokescreens allow decision-makers to defend themselves, arguing that they are not responsible for the atrocities even recognising their existence. Such is the case

⁴⁷ On governmental responses to human rights accusations, see Cohen (1996).

with paramilitary activity and death squadrons acting in collusion with authorities. The lack of discipline can also be seen as a justification for the leaders to distance themselves from the abuses.

According to Mahony (2004: 8-9), a good accompaniment strategy complements and magnifies international pressure for various reasons:

1. The volunteer accompanying the threatened is directly visible for the possible aggressors.
2. PBI extends the pressure along the chain of command with meetings at all levels, both within the armed forces and the civil institutions, assuring that the message about the international pressure reaches everyone, thus increasing the sense of responsibility.
3. The volunteer's presence in the field increases the profile and the sense of support.
4. The volunteer's presence is a sign of political abnormality in regard to human rights, counteracting the effects of the State buffers.
5. With foreigners on the front line, the respective embassies and governments are necessarily more involved, transferring more pressure on the highest political levels.
6. Even if PBI failed to deter an attack in spite of their presence, it would raise the alarm and activate its emergency international network immediately.

This is a model of intervention that relies on a communicative body. This can be observed: in the dialogues with the military and civil authorities informing PBI presence on the ground; in the meetings with diplomats and other actors (NGOs, voluntary charities, community-based organisations, international organisations); in the use of the emergency network response, and; in the diffusion of materials (bulletins, briefings, press releases) relating the observed facts in the field of human rights violations and the latest developments. All in all, the communicative movement generates the necessary requirements for PBI to work.

As stated by Mahony and Eguren (1997), the concept of political space⁴⁸ is necessary to understand the positive effects achieved by putting together a foreign volunteer and a local activist:

⁴⁸ Political space as used in this study refers to the existing space (possibilities) for carrying out a politically-oriented social action.

Each actor in a complex conflict situation, whether a soldier or a human rights activist, perceives a broad array of possible political actions and associates a certain cost or set of consequences with each action. The actor perceives some consequences as acceptable and some as unacceptable, thereby defining the limits of a distinct political space. (1997: 93)

International accompaniment alters these limits, increasing the available political space to the accompanied while reducing the space for immunity of the aggressor. In spite of international accompaniment, however, there will still be actions of unacceptable consequences for the accompanied. Acceptable consequences may change over time and they depend on the accompanied: for some, torture or the killing of a relative marks the highest bearable point, while for others the threshold is the first death threat. Likewise, the understanding of what is acceptable differs when considering the aggressor.

Mahony and Eguren (1997: 94-95) recognize the factor of uncertainty associated with unforeseeable consequences and the acceptance or rejection of those consequences. For the activist, a death threat might mean an unbearable form of psychological torture. After a year of such threats on a daily basis, the same activist may become accustomed to it. A dictator can foresee an international reprimand as a reaction to the slaughter of a peasant community, but eventually he will discover that such a negative reaction can be handled without much trouble. In this sense, the function of international accompaniment refers to the expansion of the available space, increasing both the real and the perceived limits.

International Accompaniment and Communication: Performative Dimensions

Mahony and Eguren (1997: 98) believe that deterrence is all about perception. It could be added that communication is a key factor in the construction of perceptions. As shown, the achievement of a real increase in the political space of the accompanied involves transmitting the message to the aggressor that his or her actions will have certain costs. In frequent and persistent contact at all levels, without threats but showing potential, the accompaniment becomes effective as a protective measure⁴⁹. Moreover, the physical presence of the volunteer helps to guarantee that the message is received. The accompaniment of local activists and communities also has an impact on those accompanied in their perception of being accompanied in a personal and an emotional sense. At this level, interpersonal communicative interaction also plays a definitive role.

⁴⁹ Those contacts, on the other hand, are also necessary to protect the foreign volunteer working in the field.

The communication produced by PBI is neither carried out in a vacuum nor neutral in its results; it has consequences such as empowerment or deterrence. From a philosophy of language in line with the Speech Acts Theory, as stated by J.L. Austin⁵⁰ (1975) it can be affirmed that the communicative message (discourse) not only *says* things in the sense of referring to but also *performs* an activity in itself. All forms of verbal communication, both written and oral, generate an action by the mere fact of existence. As Austin (1975: 12) puts it, “to say something is to do something, or [...] by saying or in saying something we are doing something”.

This performative dimension of the utterance at the internal level is known as illocutionary act or force, and it implies a compromise with one another: taking into account that to say something is equal to doing something, not only what we say is important but also the force behind what is said, that is, what we try to do when stating something (to admonish, to warn, to threaten and so on). It is in the illocutionary act where the connection between the speaker and the listener is established through the illocutionary effects. If I seriously promise that I am going to do something, I am compromising myself to do it, and the understanding occurs when the listener takes up the force of what is said (Martínez Guzmán, 2001: 199).

In every utterance there is present an illocutionary compromise (or speakers' compromise) because of the force behind the message, and a perlocutionary consequence or action produced as an external result of it. Furthermore, the relational nature of the linguistic act is in itself a recognition of the other: thanks to the linguistic life, the individual comes into existence as a social being:

[...] this linguistic bearing might well qualify as something essential to who these subjects are, something without which they could not be said to exist; their linguistic bearing toward one another, their linguistic vulnerability toward one another, is not something simply

⁵⁰ Originally formulated by Austin as lectures at Harvard in 1955 and compiled posthumously in 1962 in the largely referenced *How to do things with Words*, the Speech Acts Theory has caught the attention of many not only in the realm of the ordinary language philosophy or philosophy in general but in several other disciplines. Austin's work was continued by Searle and debated and criticised in one way or another in some of the writings of Derrida, De Man, Benveniste or Bourdieu, to mention a few. The very same foundations of the Speech Acts Theory have paved the way to innovative approaches in linguistics, sociology and literary studies, along with feminist theory (Butler), security studies (Copenhagen School) or peace studies (Martínez Guzmán), among other fields in social sciences. The Speech Acts Theory has opened up a full range of possibilities and equally generated controversy and debate, deserving an extensive list of academic works. A detailed study of it is further beyond the scope of this analysis, which does not get bogged down in all the particularities of Austin's work but remains close to its salient points regarding performativity and their applicability in the theory and practice of PBI's work.

added on to their social relations to one another. It is one of the primary forms that this social relation takes. Butler (1997: 30)⁵¹

Applying this to PBI's model in the framework of meetings, networks, and interlocutors, from a focus on its performativity it is possible to map out distinctive relations at several levels⁵². Interlocutors in PBI communicative relations include authorities, people accompanied, volunteers, the supportive network (including both "anonymous" citizens and high-level contacts) and members of the civil society (local/international). Each receives a similar message, with changeable illocutionary forces linked to compromises, and with different perlocutionary effects depending on *a posteriori* interpretation.

Communicative processes, the utterance with an illocutionary force and a perlocutionary act, require a speaker and a listener to perform an activity that entails interpersonal compromises, consolidating a social bond. Martínez Guzmán (2001:199) refers to that bond as "communicative solidarity", a necessary union for the communicative understanding to be possible. As far as PBI is concerned, the compromised word means in the first place an encounter between Colombian civil society and the "global civil society". Solidarity, intrinsic in the communicative relation, is rescued. Violence starts with the rupture of that communicative solidarity (Martínez Guzmán, 2001: 200).

Conclusion

Nonviolence, either from a pragmatic or from a principled view, enables PBI action by recreating itself as a source of power (-with; -over). PBI nonviolent action of IA embraces both the power-over and the power-to. Regarding the former, PBI attracts support from a variety of actors mainly because of its nonviolent character and successful history of intervention in situations of political violence. That attraction produces a valuable social capital that transforms itself into a coercive power, increasing the power-over of PBI; thanks to it, IA can deter politically-motivated aggressions. For that to happen, strong communicative networks must be fully active. At the same time, PBI IA can be understood in terms of power-to inasmuch as it relates to potentiality, possibilities or more accurately, capabilities.

⁵¹ Although Butler distances herself from Habermas and claims of universal community of speech, at this stage both authors agree on the interpretation of social life as social interpellation, as I do here.

⁵² See Appendix VII, *PBI Communicative Relationships and Performativity*.

Furthermore, PBI international accompaniment is made possible and reinforced by a complex communicative work. The performative implications of the discourse, both as an illocutionary and a performative act, and the communicative processes directly or indirectly linked to PBI are constant in its daily activity, establishing a complex relational network. This relational compound should be studied from a focus on the interlocutors, especially the host State and the accompanied. In the following chapters, an analysis of these actors will unveil the characteristics of PBI's relationships, bringing a security perspective into the discussion. The next chapter will explore the relationship with the host government (the Colombian government). From a security perspective rooted in the research done by the Copenhagen School, it will be shown that PBI and the Colombian authorities compete over securitisation, leading to a conflictive relationship that is not exempt from dialectical fights in which every actor will exercise its power-over in order to impose its view of the content of security (National Security / Human Security).

Regarding the second interlocutor, the accompanied, Chapter V will argue that local partners benefit in different ways from the international accompaniment offered by Peace Brigades International Colombia. Practical examples have proven that protection is only one of the benefits of international accompaniment, and its primacy over the others (empowerment or international visibility, for example) will be questioned. It will be shown that PBI IA permits the exercise of power-to, enabling the capabilities of those accompanied. PBI IA, thus, acts within the realm of human security.

IV

PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL AND THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT: COMPETITION OVER SECURITISATION

What is the discursive nature of the relationship between PBI and the Colombian government? In the following pages I will answer this question, starting from the assumption that there is a conflictive matrix at the very core of that relationship, one that relies on the competition over security between those entities. I will demonstrate that NGOs working on human rights are legitimate actors that can (and do) participate in the logics of securitisation, a realm that the State usually claims as its own. In this sense, a dialectical “fight” over securitisation between these two actors is likely to break out, in which the State will try to keep its perceived monopoly over security (power-over). Whereas the State disguises a traditional national security concern behind a novel façade, civil society agents strive to bring a human security agenda to the foreground.

The last part of this chapter will argue that State attacks on civil society organisations entering the securitisation process have illocutionary effects and presumably have highly dangerous perlocutionary effects. Moreover, civil society organisations can protect themselves thanks to the power of a strong communicative network and its performativity.

Security, Securitisation and Competition

There have been two main approaches in security studies. The first, the orthodox or traditional realist or neo-realist approach, deals with a sort of hard security whose core is the State and its protection, mainly by military means. The other approach defends the necessity of widening the concept of security to include other referents. The clash between advocates of the former and the latter has led to an ongoing debate about the nature of security studies⁵³. Additionally, the normative debate covers policy-making arenas, in which the traditional perspective of ‘national security’ is confronted by the emergent ‘human security’ claim.

A powerful new approach has been supplied by the Copenhagen School’s focus on the construction of security issues. Hence, the shift is made from the content of security to

⁵³ For a better understanding of that debate, see for instance Buzan *et al.* (1998).

the process of securitisation. This means that there is no existing ontological security matter, but rather a process of social construction that is inseparable from the discursive practices of labelling something as a security issue⁵⁴. An issue becomes a security issue in the practice of securitisation, understanding it as a speech act. Recalling the oft-cited words of Wæver,

With the help of language theory, we can regard "security" as a *speech act*. In this usage, security is not of interest as a sign that refers to something more real; the utterance *itself* is the act. By saying it, something is done (as in betting, giving a promise, naming a ship). By uttering "security," a state-representative moves a particular development into a specific area, and thereby claims a special right to use whatever means are necessary to block it.
(1995:55)

In this sense, security refers to an existential threat to a referent object, entering in an emergency situation where a response is required in order to guarantee its survival. Hence, security justifies exceptional action. It is within that precise invocation that the power of the securitisation hinges: as a speech act, by the mere fact of saying something, something is done. Security does not refer to a pre-existential reality but performs an action in itself; it is a self-referential practice (Wæver, 2003: 11). In the process of securitisation an issue is relegated to the realm of security, with the features inherent to that condition (emergency, exceptionalism, survival). As the Copenhagen School has pointed out, a public issue can occupy in any particular time and place three possible locations or conditions, ranging from non-politicised (the state does not deal with it, so its visibility and resonance are extremely low), politicised (the issue is part of public policy, requiring government decisions and resources) or securitised (the issue constitutes an existential threat, creating a situation of exceptionalism where 'extreme' actions beyond the limits of a political normal procedure are required) (Buzan *et al.*, 1998: 23-24)⁵⁵.

According to this conceptualisation of securitisation as the establishment of an existential threat with a saliency to a referent object, the role of intersubjectivity becomes crucial, by introducing the relevance of the audience. More precisely, the audience has the power to accept the validity of a security movement made by a securitising actor, and transform it into a successful securitisation where extraordinary measures can be taken in order to neutralise the identified existential threat. As a speech act, there is a condition of

⁵⁴ As it has been identified even by its members (Wæver, 2003, 2004), the key features of the Copenhagen School theoretical approach are securitisation, sectors and regional security complexes. In the interest of this chapter, only securitisation will be considered here.

⁵⁵ As Buzan and others have recognized, the political sphere is where the issues should be discussed, under conditions of normality, transparency and public debate: "Basically, security should be seen as negative, as a failure to deal with issues as normal politics" (Buzan *et al.*, 1998: 29). Although unavoidable in some situations, securitisation is not a desirable choice due to its embodied exceptionalism.

acceptance of the utterance validity by the audience (person or group); furthermore, as underlined in the previous chapter, the comprehension is effected when the audience takes up the force of what is said (Martínez Guzmán, 2001: 199).

The process of securitisation consists of four key elements: 1) referent object; 2) securitising actor; 3) audience; and 4) functional actors. The referent object is what is currently threatened on its existence and deserves to be secured. The referent object may vary according to spatio-temporal specific limits; the securitising actor makes the security movement. As Wæver (2003: 11) points out, traditionally the distinction between the referent object and the securitising actor was at times nonexistent, being the State the entity threatened and the one claiming it. With the widening of security to include, for instance, the environment, the division is necessary. The audience comprises those who have to be convinced to accept the security movement in order to complete the securitisation of an issue. Finally, functional actors are not directly involved in securitisation but have the capacity to influence the dynamics of the sector⁵⁶.

Although all of these elements are, to a certain degree, necessary (especially the first three) and crucial, the concept of a securitising actor deserves higher theoretical development in order to proceed with the analysis of the competition over securitisation and de-securitisation. What is the nature of the securitising actor? Who is a securitising actor? The Copenhagen School analysis does not offer a completely satisfactory characterisation; although it seems to go beyond the traditional view of giving the patent to the State, the parameters are not clear enough and the question of the necessary conditions for recognised as a securitising actor are not explicit.

In the earlier quotation Wæver states: “By uttering “security,” a *state-representative* moves a particular development into a specific area [...]” (1995:55)⁵⁷. Does this mean that non-state actors cannot be legitimate securitising actors? More recently, Wæver (2003: 22) dealt briefly with the question, concluding that empirical studies on state and non-state actors who compete for the power to securitise and de-securitise are required, leaving the door open to an affirmative answer⁵⁸.

⁵⁶ The Copenhagen School frequently identifies five sectors: military, political, economic, societal and environmental.

⁵⁷ Emphasis added.

⁵⁸ Indeed, Wæver (2003: 11) does not mention the state anywhere in his new reformulation of the securitising actor, characterising it simply as “the one that makes the argument about a threat to the referent object”.

The question of the ontology of a securitising actor does not make sense in a vacuum; the securitising actor is socially constructed and recognised by a political community in a given period and space. Its nature is, once again, inter-subjectively constructed and not independent of its social environment. The securitising actor needs to be accepted as such. In other words, it needs to hold a strong legitimacy. Without that weight of legitimacy, how could a securitising actor receive the necessary acceptance from the audience of a given security movement?

Political theory has stressed two interrelated and interdependent sources of legitimacy in contemporary times: popular sovereignty and human rights (Habermas, 2001). States, according to that premise, are legitimate actors inasmuch as they are the result of the popular sovereignty expressed in democratic means, which is linked to a minimum system of rights⁵⁹. That system is the object of expansion under which universal rights must be implemented and protected. In compliance with these statements, the State is a legitimate securitising actor with regard to its national domain. Under this reasoning, and bringing back the Colombian scenario, the Colombian State has an irrefutable status as a legitimate securitising actor.

The Colombian State, however, does not hold the patent for securitisation. The “human rights source” of legitimacy creates the conditions for the growth of new securitising actors, which benefit from the universal nature of such rights. Human rights have a primary ethical constituency and a legal recognition⁶⁰ that cross national boundaries, and they provide the grounds for alternative public personalities. Hence, social movements with public personality in Colombia not only claim to promote human rights but are also legitimised by them. The recognised right that everyone has to promote and to strive for the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms⁶¹ provides a strong source of legitimacy for non-state actors such as Human

⁵⁹ On this relation, it is worth recalling Habermas’ words: “The desired internal relation between human rights and popular sovereignty consists of this: human rights institutionalize the communicative conditions for a reasonable political will-formation. Rights, which make the exercise of popular sovereignty possible, cannot be imposed on this practice like external constraints” (2001: 117).

⁶⁰ “In the developing world, ratifying international human rights covenants has become a condition of entry for new states joining the family of nations. Even oppressive states feel obliged to engage in rhetorical deference toward human rights instruments.” (Ignatieff, 2000: 290). Despite its weakness, the existence of an international legal corpus hardly can be dismissed, not even pointing out the absence of a supranational political authority or state-like law enforcement mechanism (Beitz, 1991: 243).

⁶¹ Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (A/RES/53/144), 8 March 1999; Resolutions E/CN.4/RES/2000/61, E/CN.4/RES/2001/64, E/CN.4/RES/2002/70 and E/CN.4/RES/2003/64. See also the Charter of the United Nations and

Rights, Democracy and Development Coordination Platform (HRDDCP), a network made up of more than 80 Colombian civil society organisations most of them very well-known both nationally and internationally. Some of its members are accompanied by PBI, as ASFADDES, Jose Alvear Restrepo Lawyers' Collective, the Colombian Commission of Jurists, as well as Popular Training Institute or The Association for Alternative Social Advancement "Minga". In sum, both the Colombian State and HRDDCP hold legitimacy, a requirement for making a securitising movement.

The question of legitimacy runs parallel to the felicitous conditions of the speech act discussed by Austin (1975). To consider the speech act a felicitous one it must have:

1. A conventional procedure
2. Suitable participants and circumstances
3. A procedure carried out by all participants in a suitable way
4. Completion of all the procedure steps
5. Correspondence of thoughts, feelings and intentions
6. Proper behaviour of the participants

Wæver translates these conditions into the logic of the securitisation speech acts by identifying three facilitating conditions:

- 1) the demand internal to the speech act of following the grammar of security and constructing a plot with existential threat, point of no return and a possible way out;
- 2) the social capital of the enunciator, the securitising actor, who has to be in a position of authority, although this should neither be defined as official authority nor taken to guarantee success with the speech act; and
- 3) conditions historically associated with a threat: it is more likely that one can conjure a security threat if there are certain objects to refer to which are generally held to be threatening-be they tanks, hostile sentiments, or polluted waters. In themselves they never make for necessary securitisation, but they are definitely facilitating conditions.

(2003: 14-15)

The second of these points is directly linked to the question of legitimacy and the nature of the securitising actor; this, in the understanding here supported, can be either the State or a non-state entity. When considering the defence of human rights as a source of legitimacy there is an obvious danger of excessive openness, giving to almost everyone

the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This legal dimension co-exists with the wider and controversial nature of human rights as ethical demands: every right of the individual corresponds to a freedom, from which other individuals are to a certain extent responsible in a determined manner. As Sen (2004: 321) puts it considering the human right not to be tortured and its translation into freedom from torture, "the perfectly specified demand not to torture anyone is supplemented by the more general, and less exactly specified, requirement to consider the ways and means through which torture can be prevented and then decide what one should, thus, reasonably do".

the power of securitisation. When talking about social capital, however, a power consideration is embodied: as previously seen when considering the distinctive nature of the international accompaniment, legitimacy helps to gain support, which in turn provides *the position of authority* to which Wæver refers. Moreover, the risk of openness is avoided thanks to the 'grammar of security', a concise way of interweaving the procedural dimension of the speech act pointed out by Austin⁶².

Regarding the Colombian case, it is not surprising that the State, which fits into a depiction of a weak state on the verge of collapse⁶³, swings periodically between the choice of 'politisation' or securitisation of the issues, in a tendency where securitisation seems to be institutionalised⁶⁴. In the institutionalisation of security the drama, existential threat and exceptionalism are all converted into constants. This is unequivocally the case when talking about the Colombian government under President Álvaro Uribe Vélez, which in 2003 made public its programmatic agenda, entitled *Defence Policy and Democratic Security*⁶⁵ as a road map for his administration. On the one hand, the explicit mention of "security" can contradict one feature of the institutionalised securitisation as it has been characterised by the Copenhagen School, the needlessness of employing the term "security" since other concepts are synonymous⁶⁶. On the other hand, it reaffirms how important security was (and is) in Uribe's agenda, in which it occupies the same privileged space as "democratic".

A first reading of the title shows these and other elements, raising reflections about how and what it means to combine democracy and security. President Uribe responds to

⁶² Herein lies one of the criticisms of the Copenhagen School's securitisation theory. There are situations where an issue cannot be securitised because the victims do not have a voice (Hansen, 2000). Wæver (2003) has accepted the criticism and commented on it. Although this matter goes beyond the scope of this thesis and certainly deserves higher discussion, this thesis assumes a limited understanding of the Speech Acts Theory, where only its procedural aspects are relevant, ignoring its 'common language' dimension. This same positioning seems to be behind Copenhagen School writings. This shows a lack of focus with both positive and negative repercussions.

⁶³ Undeniable indicators that permit the label of the Colombian state as weak and partially collapsed are the inexistence of a monopoly of violence, along with the incapacity of the state to exert total control of all areas of Colombian soil. In addition, the claimed infiltration of paramilitary forces in Governmental agencies and the accusations of corruption are other elements to be taken into consideration when considering the "healthiness" of the Colombian State.

⁶⁴ Buzan and others have pointed out that securitisations can be either ad hoc or institutionalised (1998: 27-29). Although the authors have security at an international level in mind, the analysis is just as valid at an internal national level.

⁶⁵ It will be referred to *Democratic Security* from now onwards. Document in Spanish, available at http://alpha.mindefensa.gov.co/dayTemplates/images/seguridad_democratica.pdf (Last access in May 2005).

⁶⁶ "Constant drama does not have to be present, because it is implicitly assumed that when we talk of *this* (typically, but not necessarily, defence issues), we are by definition in the area of urgency [...]" (Buzan *et al.*, 1998: 27). Emphasis in the original.

these reflections in the introduction to the document. From the President's words, it is worth highlighting three aspects: first, the relationship between security and democracy⁶⁷; second, the attempt to create some distance between national security and what is meant by democratic security, which it is intended to relate to human security⁶⁸; and third, the negation of internal armed conflict and the insistence on calling it terrorism⁶⁹.

While ruling out a comparative analysis between what is stated in the Democratic Security and the outside reality and declaring it either true or false, let us make an internal reading of it from an interest on its felicitous conditions, along the lines of Speech Act Theory and the Copenhagen School's theory of securitisation. In this sense, each of the conditions for a felicity securitising movement are included in the official position of the Colombian State. Terrorism is set up as the actor that poses an existential threat to the common good of democracy represented by the State, and by extension all rights and liberties⁷⁰. The democratic foundations of Colombia are threatened, and a forceful global response is needed, encompassed in the *Democratic Security* policy. The legal and moral legitimacy of the State emanating from popular sovereignty and human rights gives the securitising actor an advantage, partially thanks to the facilitating conditions⁷¹.

Hence, the Colombian State creates a securitising movement where democracy is at risk, moving into the realm of exceptionalism and expecting the audience's approval and support for its policy. Furthermore, the State repeatedly asks Colombians for their collaboration and comprehension. Even the International Community is involved in the fight against those "terrorists" who threaten the democratic foundations of Colombia.

But the State is not the only player in the game of securitisation: from the public space voices of the civil society are raised, usually critical of the "democratic health" of the country. Why? Which is the interest behind the securitisation movement? What are its benefits? In securitising a referent object, the level of attention increases dramatically. An

⁶⁷ "There is no contradiction between security and democracy. On the contrary, security guarantees the space for disagreement, which is the oxygen of every democracy" (PT from Spanish). *Democratic Security*, 2003, p.5.

⁶⁸ "Democratic Security is what is required to guarantee citizens' protection" (PT from Spanish). *Democratic Security*, 2003, p.5.

⁶⁹ "The antipodes of the Democratic Security is terrorism [...]. Against terrorism only one response is possible: to defeat it [...]. Colombians will not give in to this threat [...]" (PT from Spanish). *Democratic Security*, 2003, pp. 5-6.

⁷⁰ The original term in Spanish used in the document, "Estado de Derecho" links both state and the rule of law indissolubly.

⁷¹ Regarding these conditions, the President's reference to specific and cruel attacks linked with the "terrorist" is illustrative. Among others, the President mentions the murder of a child in Fortul, Arauca, by the use of a bicycle with a bomb attached to it. *Democratic Security*, 2003, p.5.

urgent action is required if we want to preserve the object in danger. Political attention comes too little and too late; what is needed is emergency action. In addition, the Colombian State seems comfortable in the securitisation realm and deals with the issues under security logics; taking this into account, other actors wanting to make an issue public probably will prefer to securitise rather than politicise it in order to attract more attention. This is the case of HRDDCP, which constitutes, it will be argued, a grand securitising actor.

Coinciding with the first anniversary of Uribe's government, HRDDCP launched *The Authoritarian Spell*, a best-selling but controversial report on the situation of human rights. The experience was repeated in 2004 and 2005, with the release of two new and detailed reports (*Re-election: The Spell Continues* and *Beyond The Spell*, respectively)⁷².

All reports share with the Democratic Security program defended by the Colombian State at least a semantic commitment to democracy and to fundamental democratic values. And, as it will be shown below, HRDDCP participates in the logics of securitisation with its reports, but with a substantially different focus and goals, beginning with the acceptance of an internal armed conflict, one that involves not only guerrilla groups but also the paramilitaries, inflicting severe damage in multiple areas.

HRDDCP reports provide an alternative view of the democratic situation of Colombia, one that is highly critical of the official view. With this in mind, it is not surprising that HRDDCP has highlighted that it has no intention to become the Government's opposition. As stated in the Presentation in *Re-election: The Spell Continues*,

we reiterate that *our intention is not to mount political opposition* to the government, and much less to surreptitiously replace the political parties and social movements that fulfill this role. Our product is more specialized, and perhaps as such it is more valuable: to provide a guidebook to *what should be public policy* based on unconditional and comprehensive *respect for human rights*, from our perspective as non-governmental and social organisations. In this sense, it is an exercise with a view to the future, to which we commit ourselves from here to the end of the current term in office, as well as for governments to come. And we hope to rise to the challenge every time with greater objectivity, proactivity, and commitment, in building the society we seek: a *Colombia based on social justice, equity and democracy for all*.

(2004: 8-9)⁷³

⁷² All three reports are available at <http://www.plataforma-colombiana.org/embrujoinicio.htm> (Last access in March 2006).

⁷³ Emphasis added.

Although a public personality is held by HRDDCP, there is no claimed interest in being politically recognised. Although Ignatieff's (2000: 292) claim that "effective human rights activism is bound to be partial and political" is debatable, what seems to have been sufficiently proven is that internal criticism in times of armed conflict is likely to be understood in terms of political opposition, and human rights advocates are forced into the debate of how to distinguish human rights position from political opposition (Cohen, 1996:535). In this regard, HRDDCP's aim is to influence public policy by reminding the State of its duties towards human rights. In this quotation, like in all three reports, underlies the assumption that democracy is not truly implemented, that there are many steps to be taken and risks to be confronted, and finally that the State has failed to accomplish its democratic tasks. The situation is critically understood in terms of having a "deficient" democracy which not only should be improved but not undermined. Hence, to a certain extent, democracy, social justice and fundamental rights are at risk as a result of an intricate matrix, and there is a need for protection. In other words, there is a need for securitisation.

Although less evident than the one made by the state, a securitising movement is made by a non-state actor such as HRDDCP. There is a securitising actor carrying on a securitising movement under the legitimacy coming from human rights and accomplishing with other elements of the grammar of securitisation.

Despite the fact that in the statements coming from HRDDCP members there is also a sense of emergency, in this case the claim for exceptionalism is reduced. The securitisation movement aimed to be converted to a securitising process is forcefully linked with the principles of a "human security" focus on the protection of the individual and his or her social group. Protection can be understood in an inclusive manner, covering not only political violence but also illiteracy (right of education) or disease (right to health), among others. These other dimensions are included in HRDDCP reports, following the broad understanding of human security first introduced by UN in the 1994 Human Development Report and some years later characterised by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan (2000) in the following manner:

Human security in its broadest sense, embraces far more than the absence of violent conflict. It encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and health care and ensuring that each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfil his or her own potential. Every step in this direction is also a step towards reducing poverty, achieving economic growth and preventing conflict. *Freedom from want, freedom from fear and the*

freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment –these are the interrelated building blocks of human – and therefore national security. (in Edson, 2001)⁷⁴

HRDDCP's efforts are aimed at securitising the issue: in doing so, human security becomes a priority, as the Democratic Security does. Although both securitising actors (the State and HRDDCP) have an interest in co-opting part of the others' reasoning to avoid being related to radicalism and to gain the audience's support, the internal dynamics and content of security differ. The subsequent question to be discussed is their ability to complement each other.

Reintroducing the securitising perspective, the competition over securitisation between the State and non-state actors, HRDDCP in this case, in Colombia comes to light, even if the process of securitisation is slightly different. As shown, HRDDCP does not call for authorisation to break the rules of law with impunity but rather to boost the legal framework. Nevertheless an existential threat to a referent object is perceived and an overwhelming response is required.

Putting this competition in terms of power as it was characterised above, the Colombian State zealously attempts to keep control over security and what can be labelled as a security issue. The Colombian State exercised its long rooted power over the matter of security, being aware of the benefits attached to securitising an issue. The exceptionality and emergency of security, whether "national" or "democratic", is highly attractive for the State if it wants to "get others to do what they otherwise would not", as power was previously depicted.

Colombian civil society actors coming together under HRDDCP take a stand for other type of security, that is, human security, and its focus on the individual and the social group. For advancing their human security agenda and compete with possibilities of success with the Colombian State, they also employ a power-over coming from social attraction. But this is not their most significant type of power. Behind HRDDCP relies a power-to or creative force, intimately related to personal and collective capabilities.

As defended so far, there is an ongoing competition over securitisation in Colombia between the State and other counterparts, one of whom is the HRDDCP, a platform agglutinative of many NGOs and civic initiatives, some of them accompanied by PBI, with a strong legitimate voice. Considering the nature of every social competition, in

⁷⁴ Emphasis added.

which the main participants' aspiration is that their own interests prevail, the upsurge of tensions between those taking active sides in the process is not surprising. Weber (1962: 85) defines competition as "a 'peaceful' struggle [...] carried on as a formally *peaceful* attempt to obtain control over opportunities and advantages which are also coveted by others."⁷⁵ Whereas a struggle is characterised by flexibility in the use of physical (direct) violence, in a social competition actors play according to some sort of known rules. The "peaceful" character relies on that feature, although Weber himself acknowledged how violent a competition can be. Furthermore, as in the Colombian case, limits between physical violence and verbal or discursive violence are at times blurred since statements are not exempt from performative consequences beginning at the illocutionary level.

Tensions in competition have crystallised on dialectical clashes between the Colombian State and members of the civil society, sometimes targeting specifically some organisations. Regarding PBI and its practice of the international accompaniment in Colombia, in spite of its claimed non-partisanship character the organisation cannot dissociate from those accompanied by them, which because of their public personality and active social involvement face the dialectical attacks of the government, not to mention the direct violence and other reprisals. In addition, as a human rights INGO itself, PBI might also be seen by the host Government as an opponent. In the next section a concrete case with dialectical clashes and its performative effects will be analysed, understandable from the logics of securitisation and the desire of gaining the audience's approval.

Dialectical Clashes

During the swearing-in ceremony of the new Chief Commander of the Colombian Air Force on 8 September 2003, Álvaro Uribe Vélez delivered a speech in which, after lauding the military and its contribution to the homeland, labelled the INGOs as "politickers of terrorism"⁷⁶. After ignoring the existence of armed conflict in the country and limiting it to a problem caused by "rich terrorists". Uribe said

Whenever it appears a policy of security to defeat the terrorism in Colombia, when the terrorists begin to feel weak, immediately their *spokesmen* are sent to speak of human rights.

Many of those critics have been taken from the FARC webpage. They are not ashamed, they have no limits. They publish books in Europe based on rumours and calumnies. They know that its only weapon is the calumny that hypocritically hides behind human rights.

⁷⁵ Emphasis added.

⁷⁶ In Spanish "politiqueros del terrorismo".

These gentlemen should be aware of the determination to defeat terrorism and its followers. One of our political decisions is to isolate terrorism and in order to achieve that goal, *we are going to capture all those that break the law by complicity or by concealment. [...]* Here there have not been carried out raids as the *politickers of the human rights* defend arbitrarily. Here there is a policy with a strategy. And that strategy demands in one of its points to isolate the terrorists, capturing honestly all their helpers. And the *politickers* speak of human rights of social policy. Oh my God! They and the terrorists who they defend have produced the social collapse of the Nation. How forgetful they are. [...]

These *prophets of the disaster*, who do not see lights but when the terrorism wins, talk about democratic restrictions. Which ones? Colombia has the best freedom of press and freedom of opinion of the entire world. [...]

While the *politickers of the human rights* defame taking advantage of the freedom of press of Colombia, this morning the authorities and the public opinion of the Huila certified that a year ago 17 mayors of that department could not attend their offices. Today three of them maintain difficulties and one doubts. And this is ignored by *politickers of the human rights [...]*.

For that reason the fact that they begin to shake and make public does not surprise us. Some months ago in London⁷⁷ they already attempted to deceive once more the international opinion to restrain the aid to Colombia. An international opinion which ignored them.

People in Europe began to give account that here there are some *dealers of human rights* that all the time request aid from the European Union and other organisations, simply to maintain themselves. They have made from that a *modus vivendi* and they need those resources to restrain the action of authority of the State, which is the way to defeat terrorism⁷⁸.

Uribe's statement on human rights defenders was made some hours before the celebration of the National Day of Human Rights and almost simultaneously with the release of *The Authoritarian Spell*, the extremely critical report of the first year of the Uribe Government's human rights policy, written by the HRDDCP.

The disapproval of Uribe's words came quickly from NGOs, associations and pro-human rights groups, both national (HRDDCP, Colombian Confederation of Nongovernmental Organisations, Civil Society for Peace Permanent Assembly, Colombian Workers Unitarian Trade Union and others) and international (including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, PBI), along with intellectuals and Colombian artists, national media, diplomatic corps, United Nations (mainly through UNHCR and UN Office in Colombia), several North American senators and congressmen, and the European Union (EU Delegation for Colombia).

Why such a unanimous and vehement rejection coming from different forums? Returning to the speech, Uribe's words cannot step back from their performative action.

⁷⁷ In July 2003 international donors met in London to discuss the situation in Colombia.

⁷⁸ PT from Spanish. Emphasis added. A full-length copy of the speech is available at <http://www.presidencia.gov.co/cne/2003/septiembre08/13082003.htm> (Last access in May 2005).

The illocutionary force, the message that the listener catches, allocates itself between the denunciation and the threat, and it does not seem to be neither a joke nor praise. With his words, Uribe marks distance between him, the State on whose behalf he acts, the Colombian society that he claims to represent, and the accused organisations, giving rise to the association of concepts such as "terrorism", "human rights", "spokesmen", "politickers", "dealers" or "disaster".

The forcefulness of the response, in its number, origin and nature, shows the capacity of mobilisation of INGOs, activating its global supportive networks in an attempt to neutralise or minimise the perlocutionary effects of Uribe's utterance.

The direct perlocutionary effects of his statement broadcasted both nationally and internationally, have to do fundamentally with the reduction of the political space available for advocates of human rights in Colombia. In this manner, the physical integrity of human rights defenders, critical voices, and their companions is put in danger. Uribe's word is not "only" the individual, anonymous word of citizen Uribe, but that of the head of the government, and as such it represents the entire state apparatus. When Uribe speaks, so does the Colombian State, and in this case that State is sending a dangerous message which forces the nation, the citizens, the paramilitary groups, the Army and the Colombian police, to see human rights defenders as FARC or ELN members. In fact, it is hard to distinguish this speech from others made by the paramilitaries, forces responsible for more than seventy percent of the attacks against the civilian populace and practically all those against union leaders and human rights defenders.

This is the case of the Autodefensas Campesinas Bloque Central Bolívar, column of the AUC. In a communiqué dated on 19 September 2003 and entitled "Why are dogs barking?"⁷⁹, this column supported Uribe's denunciation of NGOs, targeting as criminal organisations NGOs accompanied by PBI, such as José Alvear Restrepo Lawyers' Collective, CREDHOS and OFP⁸⁰. But the verbiage of this paramilitary group did not stop there; it reached the international arena. Shortly thereafter, in its interpretation of the *Stop Uribe* campaign carried out by some nongovernmental organisations on the occasion of a presidential tour in Europe, this paramilitary group denounced the presence, "cunning and perverse, [of] the FARC guerrilla, whose presence in some European

⁷⁹ "¿Por qué ladran los perros?" (PT from Spanish)

⁸⁰ The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, FIDH/OMCT, Press release, Geneva, 2 October 2003. Quoted in PBI Colombia PIM No. 10, September 12 – October 12 2003. Available at <http://www.peacebrigades.org> (Last access in September 2005).

countries is of public knowledge”⁸¹. According to the statement made by this group, inserted as a leading article in their official webpage on 12 February 2004, both the planned task and the conclusions of a meeting between the organisers of the “campaign-against-Uribe”, the Belgian Committee for Colombia, “demonstrate the surreptitious and criminal support (or connections?) between these ‘inoffensive committees’ and the terrorist guerrillas which destroy Colombia.” Assistants to that meeting were Amnesty International (AI) Vlanderen and AI BF, along with the Service of Peace and Justice (SERPAJ) from Spain. The text by the paramilitary concludes with the following paragraph:

We made clear here that the terms of the present leading article, were not in any manner inspired by feelings of endorsement or solidarity with the national government, who of course does not require them. We have conceived the expressions and denunciations against the mentioned NGOs, only in support to beautiful pleonasm of the *true truth*, that in times come to a head in the European opinion, generally badly informed. It comes also in defence of the democratic institutions and against the armed communist onslaught, and obviously with the aimed to prove over and over again, how the FARC agencies in Latin America and Europe make under the mantle of its “humanitarian mission” the political work.⁸²

From these final words followed that: a) the AUC, armed actor in the Colombian conflict with a length record of blood, in the list of terrorist organisations of the State Department of the United States and the European Union and at the moment sunk in a process of demobilisation strongly criticised⁸³, denounce the complicity of human rights defenders with the FARC, who supposedly used the humanitarian issue to protect themselves. An accusation similar to that made by Uribe; b) the AUC are aware of Uribe’s statement and, although denying any feelings of endorsement or solidarity with the national government when conceiving the text, seem to subscribe to it in its totality. While an international reaction of condemnation to his words takes place, Uribe finds endorsement in the AUC.

⁸¹ PT from Spanish. Available at <http://www.bloquecentralbolivar.org/detalle.php?Id=1418> (Last access in May 2005).

⁸² PT from Spanish.

⁸³ The Law 975 of 2005 (“Justice and Peace Act”) regulating the process of de-mobilisation of AUC was adopted by the Colombian Congress in June 2005, and approved by the Government one month later. According to the Colombian Government, up to April 2006 28,357 paramilitary members were demobilized collectively, handing 16,077 firearms. (See Reliefweb, 4 April 2006, in <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/LSGZ-6NKCO6?OpenDocument> ; Last access in April 2006). The official version of the de-mobilization process contrast with the critics and doubts voiced not only by Colombian civil society groups but also by international organisations alienated with the Colombian Government theses such as the OAS. Whereas NGOs have criticised the alleged impunity facilitated by that law and described it as barely a face washing, the OAS Mission in Support of the Peace Process in Colombia points out in a report presented in Washington in March 2006 the existence and continuation of the activity of paramilitary groups supposedly demobilized. On the OAS report, see newspaper *El Tiempo*, 1 March 2006, quoted in *Actualidad Colombiana*, No. 427, <http://www.actualidadcolombiana.org/archivo.shtml?x=1049> (Last access in April 2006).

From the president's statement, consistent with the bipolar logic of the "friend/enemy" of the armed conflicts, it is inferred that the interests of the government clash with those of the NGOs, establishing a binomial relation between NGOs and the enemy. As Cohen points out, one of the possible governmental responses to critical voices (reports) is a counteroffensive or "shoot the messenger" strategy, especially when it comes from inside:

Claims by local human rights organisations or media are simply responded to within the society's political culture. A more accountable government defends its legitimacy; a more authoritarian government declares all criticism as illegitimate. Thus, internal critics of the Peruvian government are "pro-Sendero," of the Sri Lankan government, "pro-Tamil," of the Israeli government "PLO sympathizers." Human rights organisations are presented as mouthpieces or fronts of the opposition--terrorists, national liberation movements, or ethnic separatists.

(1996: 535)

In the Colombian case, the words of the head of state, qualified to command, that is, to issue orders, can transmit that message of animosity to subordinates, slipping in along the chain of command the impression that the NGOs are the enemy of the State. In addition, Uribe speaks from the generalisation, without pointing out to specific organisations or by providing evidence, spreading the stain and its burden on all the NGOs.

As mentioned before, PBI's strategy requires open communicative channels with the authorities. But, what happens if those authorities, after listening to the president, consider an INGO like PBI as subversive and as politickers of the terrorists? The deterioration in its public image, a main asset, degenerates into a situation of greater vulnerability, for the volunteers but especially for the accompanied ones.

Uribe's words hamper the interlocution with social agents and increase the already high national polarisation, contradicting both international agreements and even governmental directives. One of the most well-known documents under the former categorisation is the Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms⁸⁴, approved by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1998 with Colombian vote for. At the national level, to mention the Presidential Directive No. 07 from 1999, "Endorsement, Communication and Collaboration of the State with the Organisations of Human Rights", approved before Uribe took office, the already described Democratic Security document released in 2003

⁸⁴ A/RES/53/144. Available at <http://www.un.org/issues/docs/d-hr.html> (Last access in May 2005).

and finally the Directive No.09 on Policies of the Ministry of National Defence in the matter of protection of Unionist's human rights and Human Rights Defenders issued in July 2003⁸⁵. The Presidential Directive ordered all public servants to refrain from questioning the legitimacy of the human rights organisations and its members, which act in agreement with the constitution and the laws; to make no affirmations that disparage, harass or incite the harassment of the same organisations, and; not to make public or private statements that stigmatize the work of these organisations. Moreover, the Democratic Security document recognizes the value of the NGOs as social interlocutors and the necessity of protecting the dissident voices, whereas the Directive No. 09 from the Ministry of National Defence reiterates the validity of the Presidential Directive, arranging that it will have to be strictly applied.

Despite the debate, and the pressure on the Colombian Executive, the President of the Republic insisted, in tone and essence, on his harassment towards the human rights defenders on September 11 the same year. Addressing the citizenry of Chita, Boyacá, where a FARC explosive device had exploded the previous day, causing several deaths, the President said:

... where are the solidarity acts, at least the expressions of solidarity, from so many *hablantinosos* [chatterboxes] of human rights? [...] My commitment is to you, not with those who have been defending and allowing the terrorists, their honeymoon is coming to an end. My commitment is to you, never mind what terrorists' sponsors say⁸⁶.

In a letter dated on September 15, Álvaro Uribe responded to Eduardo Pizarro's article, published the previous day in the Colombian newspaper *El Tiempo*. Pizarro described Uribe's criticism of some NGOs as a "serious mistake". In that letter, Uribe affirmed "if the tone of the words offends the sensitivity of some, excuses because of the tone will be offered to them; but we will not have weaknesses in the defence of the security of the Colombians"⁸⁷.

That same day, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Carolina Barco, commented: "I have asked our ambassadors to explain to other governments the fairness of the

⁸⁵ Both directives can be found at <http://www.ciponline.org> (Last access in May 2005), while the Defence Policy and Democratic Security is available at http://alpha.mindefensa.gov.co/dayTemplates/images/seguridad_democratica.pdf (Last access in May 2005).

⁸⁶ The full speech (Spanish) is available at <http://www.ciponline.org/colombia/030911urib.htm> (Last access in May 2005). PT from Spanish. Emphasis Added.

⁸⁷ PT from Spanish. Available at <http://www.ciponline.org/colombia/030915urib.htm>. (Last access in May 2005).

president's words in order to avoid more confusion that could do more damage to the country⁸⁸. Therefore, the international pressure condemning Uribe's speech, carried out by INGOs, seems to have had some impact, inasmuch as the Colombian Government itself had to counteract its effects.

The President, however, refused in December 2003 either to apologize or to explain his words better, in his response to a previous letter signed by many NGOs requesting further explanations⁸⁹. Moreover, Uribe did not hesitate to make later a statement openly attacking INGOs such as Amnesty International⁹⁰.

On 27 May 2004, on a visit the Urabá region Álvaro Uribe Vélez denounced the obstruction to the course of justice by the leadership of San José de Apartadó Peace Community, which had been accompanied by PBI and Fellowship for Reconciliation (FOR). After calling the Community "a FARC corridor", Uribe stated that there "justice is obstructed with foreign support", insisting that "here the Colombians and the foreigners have to obey the Constitution and the law". He concluded by encouraging the police forces "to imprison or even deport these people [international human right defenders] in case they obstructed justice again"⁹¹.

San José de Apartadó declared itself a Peace Community in March 1997, refusing to support any armed actor. By its eighth anniversary 146 community members had been killed and more than 380 human rights violations had occurred⁹². PBI has been offering international accompaniment to the community since 1999, while FOR began its activity three years later.

⁸⁸ Available at <http://www.ciponline.org/colombia/ngos.htm> (Last access in May 2005).

⁸⁹ The letter of response, signed by the legal Secretary of the President Office, can be found at <http://www.ciponline.org/colombia/031231urib.pdf> (Last access in May 2005).

⁹⁰ With regard to it, see Uribe's statement from June 16th 2004. In a police promotion ceremony the President criticised AI for not condemning La Gabarra massacre, occurred two days earlier and in which the FARC killed 34 coca growers. A day later AI made an official statement condemning both the massacre and the President's words. The public confrontation with this international organisation has been reproduced some other times in the following months. One of the latest episodes took place in Madrid on 11 July 2005 at the end of a meeting with Spanish businesspeople and politicians, with a dialectical clash between Álvaro Uribe Vélez and AI, represented by the director of AI Spain, Esteban Beltrán. On the latter, see *El Tiempo*, 12 July 2005; on the La Gabarra massacre and AI reaction, see AI AMR 23/029/2004.

⁹¹ An edited version of Uribe's statement (Spanish) can be found at <http://www.presidencia.gov.co/sne/2004/mayo/27/20272004.htm> (Last access in May 2005).

⁹² San José de Apartadó Peace Community, "Una Búsqueda de Vida ante el Terror y la Muerte. Octavo Aniversario de la Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó", 23 March 2005. Available at http://www.cdpsanjose.org/article.php?id_article=109 (Last access in July 2005).

Shortly before Uribe delivered that speech on the Peace Community, on 15 April 2004 the Constitutional Court passed a sentence which urged the Colombian government and the army to comply with June 2002 judgement by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights urging the Colombian State to adopt provisional protective measures towards this peace community⁹³.

According to FOR, referring to the Peace Community account of the events, on 2 June 2004 policemen and the army entered in San José de Apartadó requesting PBI members to show their documents and announcing that a police station would be built there. Along with asking about community leaders and their activities, the officials insisted on buying some products, even though the Peace Community was prohibited from selling anything to armed groups. Facing the refusal, police and army forces said “in the same way you sell to the guerrilla, you must sell to us”⁹⁴.

Both FOR and PBI activated their respective alert networks in view of the danger implied in the speech of the President. According to PBI⁹⁵, the task of neutralizing or at least blunting the impact of Uribe’s accusations required, in the first place, an international support network to deflect possible attacks against the local members of the Community and against local and international organisations in the field; second, insofar as Uribe had directly accused the PBI, it was necessary to issue an official reminder that PBI complies with the Colombian law; and third, the Government should affirm its support of the PBI, especially in the San José de Apartadó Peace Community.

Following the activation of the international supportive network and several high level meetings, PBI received an invitation from the Colombian Vice-President to a meeting with regional civil and military authorities on 6 August 2004. The letter of invitation gave the permission that the PBI needed to continue with its work.

In January 2005 the Colombian Supreme Court ruled on a guardianship signed by 22 NGOs asking President Uribe for a correction of his 8 September 2003 statement. Although the ruling denied the guardianship, it reminded the President that the

⁹³ The Constitutional Court sentence (T-327/04) can be found at <http://www.uc3m.es/uc3m/inst/MGP/FCISC3.pdf> (Last access in August 2005). For more information on the Inter-American Court of Human Rights’ sentence, see <http://www.acnur.org/biblioteca/pdf/2213.pdf?PHPSESSID=e4f6450f767341212ecf6d309c6c343f> (Last access in 2005).

⁹⁴ FOR, <http://www.forusa.org/programs/colombia/col-pp-FOR-alert-61004.html> (Last access in June 2005).

⁹⁵ PBI Colombia, PIM No. 18, May 12th-June 12th 2004; PBI UK, Newsletter April 2005. Both are available at <http://www.peacebrigades.org> (Last access in August 2005).

information that he had made public had to be truthful and avoid jeopardizing basic rights and the people who defend them. “The sentence calls for responsibility from the civil servants when they speak blithely on the human and the divine issues. The executive, because of the responsibility attached to its post, must be the one who cares the most about the political scope of its statements”⁹⁶, was the leading article of national newspaper *El Tiempo*⁹⁷.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that there is a conflictive nucleus on the relationship between Peace Brigades International and the host Government; this relationship relies on the competition over securitisation, understood as the discursive practice of making security. In Colombia, the coalition of local human rights NGOs and civil groups HRDDCP and the Colombian State have differing programmatic security agendas, expressed in their public statements and manifestos. On the one hand, Uribe’s Colombian Government has compromised itself with a *Democratic Security*, a new wrapping for the old conceptualisation of National Security. On the other, HRDDCP’s goals, expressed for the first time in *The Authoritarian Spell*, are very much in line with a human security agenda.

Because of their differentiated legitimate character, both actors can engage in a discursive competition over securitisation with illocutionary effects. PBI, as a human rights organisation and because of its proximity to Colombian civil society, is likely to suffer the effects of such a competition, as seen in the second part of this chapter which deals with the “Uribe case”. As argued, his words against human rights NGOs in general, and PBI in particular, put them all in real danger, sabotaged their work, destroyed the social dialogue and exacerbated polarisation and agitation. Denying these groups the word, or affirming that one is burdened by terrorism, the President of the Republic of Colombia unleashed the spiral of the violence by breaking the original communicative solidarity. In doing so, he is sowed the seeds of direct violence. Finally, the targeted groups, such as PBI, use international mobilisation to prove their capacity for reaction, the social capital for their work, and their power to use nonviolence against the complex violent dynamics of the Colombian conflict.

⁹⁶ PT from Spanish.

⁹⁷ *El Tiempo*, 21 January 2005. Quoted in PBI Colombia PIM No. 26, January 12 – February 12 2005. Available at <http://www.peacebrigades.org> (Last access in September 2005).

V

PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL PARTNERS: NEEDS, CAPABILITIES AND SECURITY

As seen above, PBI Colombian partners strive to advance a human security agenda, competing with the Colombian Government over securitisation. Furthermore, those local partners are threatened with politically-motivated violence. In this context, is international accompaniment significant? What is/are its effect/s on those accompanied? In this chapter I will respond to these two enquiries about the relevance of PBI Colombia's work for those who are accompanied. The discursive nature of the IA will be approached from an interest in its perlocutionary effects⁹⁸.

IA, I will argue, is not only a means of protecting threatened individuals. Although there is *prima facie* evidence of the effectiveness of IA as protection, the very actors benefiting from it admit the axiomatic fallible condition of IA. But this acknowledgment that IA is not a sure-fire method, despite its great popularity, compels researchers to turn to its other possible effects. What does IA offer beyond personal protection? As outlined in Chapter III and in connection with the opening of the political space, the IA also has a say in the empowerment of those accompanied, linked to a type of psychological encouragement and enhancement of organisational profile and visibility.

In the following pages I will discuss those effects, based upon the assertions made by those accompanied by PBI Colombia. Then the preliminary description will be examined under the lens of the language of human needs, as characterised by Max-Neef. In this way, the compounded nature of IA's impact will be shown, imbuing the debate with a more sophisticated theoretical framework. Although it allows a better understanding of IA benefits, the human needs language fails to grasp the dynamicity of the power-to both exercised and facilitated by PBI IA. This deficiency is, however, rectified in the language of human capabilities stated by Sen and modified by Nussbaum, which focuses on what people are able to do. The capability approach to IA will lead to a final understanding of its constituency and performativity from a human security perspective, stressing its mobilising character.

⁹⁸ In order to do that, priority will be given to the voices of the local partners themselves, considering them as the highest authorised actors to talk about the benefits and shortcomings of IA.

International Accompaniment: Personal Protection and Something More

Paco was talking in the kitchen with Mireya Calixto, a human rights worker in north-eastern Colombia, when suddenly Mireya's husband, Mario, called her name. He was in another room in their home in Sabana de Torres, with Paco's friend Hendrik, and his voice was quiet, scared and shaking. "I ran into the room and there were two gunmen, one pointing his gun at Mario and the other at Hendrik," said Paco. "We were terrified and the children started crying 'Don't kill him, don't kill him!'" As Paco coolly asked what was going on, Mario took advantage of the moment and dashed for the door.

The nervous gunmen demanded to speak to Mario, but Paco explained that he and Hendrik were Europeans. "Please leave, if you want to talk, do it in another way," said Paco calmly. And the men left.
(*The Guardian*, 16 April 1998).

Almost one year after surviving the assassination attempt related in the quotation that took place before Christmas 1997, Mario Calixto was given the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award⁹⁹ in recognition of his efforts towards advancing human rights. In his acceptance speech, he expressed gratitude for Peace Brigades, the organisation which provided him with volunteers such as Paco and Hendrik¹⁰⁰. On PBI's part, the assassination attempt was scrutinised and extensively discussed in order to learn from it. In accordance with its model of action, some months after the incident PBI visited Sabana de Torres with a commission composed of diplomatic staff and international human rights groups¹⁰¹. Mario Calixto's case exemplifies one of the critical moments in PBI Colombia's work, which can be understood as both a success and a failure. Mario Calixto eventually escaped but IA should have dissuaded the would-be assassins long before they arrived at Calixto's home. Although Paco managed to persuade the attackers to leave, it is more likely that their own perplexity and not PBI's deterrence strategy explains their withdrawal.

Although not always as evident as in this case, the protective dimension of PBI Colombia IA cannot be neglected. Among the accompanied it is commonplace to underline the positive effect of the IA in increasing personal safety, which is closely linked to the idea of political space. Moreover, security reaches two interwoven levels, the individual and the organisation or group. "They [PBI Colombia volunteers] have managed to deter direct and severe attacks on organisations and people, giving security to

⁹⁹ "Victims of Colombia's dirty war", *The Washington Times*, 16 November 1998; "Colombian family knows what it is like to be in company of fear", *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 29 January 1999.

¹⁰⁰ Along with PBI, Mario Calixto also thanked another INGO, Amnesty International, saying that "with their work, [they] have allowed many of us today to continue the task of defending human rights". A full version of his speech in English is available at the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial webpage, http://www.rfkmemorial.org/human_rights/1998/1998Doc/MarioEnglish.pdf (Last access in April 2006).

¹⁰¹ *The Guardian*, 16 April 1998.

the work carried out”, said Alirio Uribe Muñoz, 2003 winner of the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders and member of the Jose Alvear Restrepo Lawyers’ Collective, in his speech at Peace Brigades International 20th Anniversary Conference in 2001¹⁰².

Despite its significance, the protection afforded by the PBI IA is not an impermeable shield. As shown before, it depends on the perpetrators’ rationality and an evaluation of further costs and benefits. In spite of PBI attempts to increase the potential costs to the point of making the attack not “attractive”, aggression will not vanish completely. In Colombia, along with the extensive list of successful stories of protection of those accompanied there have been harassment, deadly threats, direct violence and killings.

An element to take into consideration about the benefits of IA as protection involves the evaluative procedure itself. If it works, nothing will happen, so how is it possible to defend the causal correlation between the absence of attacks and IA? A first indirect indicator could be the number of attacks suffered by PBI, “the sick measure of success” described by former PBI Guatemala volunteer Meredith Larson in recalling the attempts to frighten PBI volunteers into leaving (Mahony, 2000: 146). It is therefore worth bearing in mind the verbal attacks and performative effects of the Colombian Government against PBI, as described in the previous chapter. Furthermore, cases of direct intimidation of PBI Colombia volunteers have occurred, as was the case in February 2001. After paramilitary forces threatened the members of the OFP in Barrancabermeja, AUC members told Swedish PBI volunteer Lars Helmerson, who accompanied OFP, that he and others from PBI were AUC military targets.¹⁰³ A second indicator of PBI success, possibly more accurate, relates to the popularity of PBI IA. As Eguren (1999) points out,

the continuous demand for acompañamiento coming from NGOs and the Colombian organisations for displaced people. PBI Colombia has received requests for international presence from all the Colombian NGOs that work with the displaced population in the areas [...] such as Uraba and Magdalena Medio - a demand for international human rights protection that is so great that the PBI teams are unable to meet it.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Alirio Uribe, “Peace Brigades International in Colombia: Successes and challenges in the protection of displaced communities and human rights defenders”, Available at <http://www.peacebrigades.org/conference/es/firstday.php?es> (Last Access in March 2006).

¹⁰³ *The New York Times*, 16 February 2001.

¹⁰⁴ Eguren focuses in this paper on IDPs and NGOs working with them, but the analysis is still valid to the Colombian groups working on human rights issues as a whole.

Why is the demand for IA so great if its measurement is difficult and at some point its deterrence seems to be substantially reduced? While accepting the effectiveness of IA as a protective measure, as recognized by those accompanied and many others, it is likely that other gains are attached to IA. One way of understanding IA that is frequently stressed by the accompanied is to depict it as a form of committed solidarity. Accompaniment, understood in this manner, has an ethical dimension with psychological positive effects: the type of solidarity given by PBI is a close and noticeable one, directly manifested in the volunteers. There is a common ground for the exchange of experiences under very difficult conditions where the risks are present and extremely destructive.

Solidarity, in this sense, transforms itself into a form of personal support that is invaluable in situations of political violence: “The PBI armour-plate our hopes and dreams against the silence and isolation that the merchants of death force upon us”, said Soraya Gutiérrez from Jose Alvear Restrepo Lawyers’ Collective¹⁰⁵, echoing a widespread opinion among the accompanied ones. The sort of accompaniment offered is, in this sense, also psychological¹⁰⁶, and as such it has positive effects on those who are threatened. What is more, this solidarity between the foreign volunteer and his or her local accompanied may contribute to the establishment of bonds not only between them but also between their respective organisations and, in a more global sense, between social movements and civil society. As Coy (1993: 241-242) has put it, “such solidarity builds bridges between peoples, tearing at the interlocking but artificial barriers that define the nation-state system”.

For the organisations there is another positive effect of PBI IA: the enhancement of their profile. Although in the past the transition from a low to a high profile was not always collectively understood as desirable, in contemporary Colombia and linked with the openness of the political space, the increase in public visibility has an impact on international support for the organisation. That international support constitutes valuable social capital that can be transformed into tangible profits, such as funds or protection. This fact is widely recognized by the accompanied. In 2004, PBI conducted through its European Office a survey on the perceptions of and proposals from local human rights

¹⁰⁵ *The Observer*, 27 November 2005.

¹⁰⁶ This positive psychological effect of the IA should not overshadow the specific psychological work carried out by PBI Colombia in the shape of workshops and training in psychological healing, as mentioned in Chapter II.

defenders on the European Union missions' role in protection issues¹⁰⁷. Answers from the Colombian participating organisations¹⁰⁸ have shown a “high level of contacts among Colombian organisations and EU Missions, directly or through International NGOs” and recognized explicitly that “the opportunity for HRD [human rights defenders] to advocate in Europe increase[s] their visibility and diminish[es] consequently threats and risks”.

All these positive effects (protection as personal safety, psychological encouragement, enhancement of the organisational profile, opening of the political space) converge in different manners and constitute, as we will see below, a certain empowerment of those accompanied, both at the individual and the group level.

International Accompaniment as Human Needs' Satisfier

The question of human needs has been asked by many since the ancient times, first occupying philosophical reasoning and more recently psychology and the other social sciences. Although the debate about human needs has a long history, in order to situate the discussion let us go back to the figure of 20th century social psychologist Abraham Maslow. Even though others preceded him, Maslow is a key contributor to the debate on human needs, sharing an understanding of these needs as non-negotiable and fundamental inasmuch as a failure to satisfy them would have negative impacts on the overall system. Furthermore, Maslow (1987) called for a taxonomy of needs, which he established in a hierarchical manner, with physiological needs at the bottom and self-actualisation needs at the top. Critics of Maslow's classification have pointed out that although some hierarchy is present, it would be wrong to understand human needs as a vertical chain in which, the first needs have to be fulfilled before those that are higher up. The same hierarchical structure privileges the satisfaction of certain needs, a movement with perverse effects; finally, the “social component” of human needs is absent, depicting human needs as excessively individualistic.

The determination to remedy these deficiencies is behind the new theories of human needs that are arranged along multi-dimensional matrixes, like Galtung (1994)

¹⁰⁷ *Peace Brigades International Survey on Perceptions and Proposals From Human Rights Defenders on the Role of European Union Missions in Protection*. PBI Brussels, November 2004. Available at <http://www.peacebrigades.org/beo/beopubs.html> (Last access in March 2006).

¹⁰⁸ ASFADDES, the Inter-congregational Commission of Justice and Peace, Freedom Juridical Corporation (CJL), Centre for Investigation and Popular Education (CINEP), Leaders in Action Association (Colombia Peace Planet), The Association for Alternative Social Advancement “Minga”.

does, identifying four needs (survival, freedom, well-being and identity) organised along the axis of actor/structure dependency and material/non-material nature. Another of these typologies was stated by Chilean economist Manfred A. Max-Neef, founder of a human scale development for which development was less state-directed and lost its previous mainly economic rationale. In this sense, Max-Neef's work is aimed to make development a bottom-up practice where human needs at the individual but also at communitarian or social level are the focal point¹⁰⁹.

According to Max-Neef (1991: 18), "fundamental human needs are finite, few and classifiable. [They] are the same in all cultures and in all historical periods. What changes, both over time and through cultures, is the way or the means by which are satisfied". This distinction between needs and satisfiers is a crucial one and helps to understand the universality and specificity of social groups, grasping cultural change as a matter of amendment of satisfiers.

Although Max-Neef does provide a taxonomy of human needs, he takes great care to acknowledge the danger of taking it in isolation and as definitive¹¹⁰. His operational classification is conceived as a matrix in which needs are organized according to two main axes, the existential categories of Being (attributes), Having (institutions, norms, mechanisms, tools), Doing (actions) and Interacting (locations and *milieus*) and the axiological categories of Subsistence, Protection, Affection, Understanding, Participation, Idleness, Creation, Identity and Freedom¹¹¹.

At this point, Max-Neef's typology leaves room for the introduction of a very specific satisfier, the international accompaniment, to see which needs it can fully or partially satisfy. As argued above, the international accompaniment of PBI in Colombia provides much more than physical protection, covering other spheres which fit into the definition of human needs.

¹⁰⁹ In my analysis of IA through a human needs focus I have chosen Max-Neef's classification of basic needs as a theoretical paradigm, because of (a) its better explanatory construct with a critical distinction between needs and their correspondent satisfiers, and (b) its methodological basis. Both authors, however, share similar epistemological concerns and their typologies reflect related underpinnings.

¹¹⁰ Prior to introducing a possible classification of human needs from a development focus, and recognizing the risk to the charge of arbitrariness, some safeguard conditions to be abided by when elaborating such a list are made explicit: it must be understandable; it must combine scope with specificity; it must be operational; it must be critical, and; it must be propositional (Max-Neef, 1991: 29-30).

¹¹¹ See Appendix VIII, *Max-Neef's Taxonomy of Human Needs*.

Satisfiers, as described here, are plural and countless, and they fall into five groups according to their scope (Max-Neef, 1991: 31-37):

- Violators or Destroyers, which in spite of being presented as satisfiers of a given need, do not only wipe out any chance to satisfy that need in the long run but also damage the adequate satisfaction of other needs.
- Pseudo-satisfiers, which produce a false sense of satisfaction of a given need.
- Inhibiting satisfiers, meaning those that over satisfy a given need and may curtail the possibility of satisfying other needs.
- Singular satisfiers, which generate the satisfaction of a given need.
- Synergic satisfiers, which satisfy a given need while stimulating and contributing to the fulfilment of other needs.

Into which group does IA fall? Taking as a starting point that IA is indeed a satisfier of at least one fundamental need, the need for protection¹¹², the list of possible effects upon other human needs expands inasmuch as the accompanied themselves recognize its other benefits. In sum, IA acts as a synergic satisfier, recognized indirectly as such by the accompanied that benefit from it in more than a single manner. A possible reading of IA from a Max-Neef's taxonomy of needs and classification of their satisfiers will give this depiction:

Synergic Satisfier	Need	Needs, the satisfaction of which it stimulates
International Accompaniment	Protection	Affection, Participation, Freedom

Protection is the specific need addressed by IA: the history of PBI, its foundations and mandate show evidence of it. Moreover, Colombian PBI local partners benefiting from IA have stressed protection as a major benefit and a decisive reason for its demand. As a synergic satisfier, IA has also a positive impact on the needs for affection, participation and freedom: the previously remarked solidarity attached to IA stimulates the satisfaction of the need for affection, combining it with a sense of care and contributing to psychological healing. Solidarity and encouragement represent distinctive outcomes (and

¹¹² In my understanding, protection differs from subsistence in the more biological dimension of the latter. As Max-Neef stated (1991: 31), destroyers seem to be particularly related to protection: a supposed satisfier such as arms race or censorship, impairs the satisfaction of needs for subsistence, affection, participation and freedom (the former), and understanding, participation, idleness, creation, identity and freedom (the later).

roots) of IA that take action to satisfy the need for participation. In this regard, PBI Colombia IA is instrumental in the creation of a broader political space for those accompanied, permitting individuals and groups to exercise their rights. The latter is related directly to the need for freedom to develop oneself as an integral human being. On the relationship among participation, freedom and needs it is worth recalling Amartya Sen's depiction of the functions of democracy:

Political freedom is a part of human freedom in general, and exercising civil and political rights is a crucial part of good life of individuals as social beings. Political and social participation has *intrinsic value* for human life and well-being. To prevent from participation in the political life of the community is a major deprivation.

(1999a: 10)¹¹³

Sen, although not employing explicitly the term “need”, elevates (political and social) participation to the category of intrinsic value, which certainly is not a need but shares a high degree of substance and any impediment to its satisfaction must be seen as a major deprivation, since political liberties are central to well-being (Nussbaum, 2000: 96). These effects of IA thus have an elevated significance because of their contribution to avoid the deprivation of participation and freedom.

Every need that is not adequately satisfied produces a human poverty (Max-Neef, 1991: 18-19). The conceptualization of poverty is more than the pitiable economic view of it as an income below a certain threshold; the concept itself expands to a point when it becomes more correct to talk about multiple poverties: poverty of subsistence, poverty of protection, poverty of affection, poverty of participation, poverty of freedom and so on. Each of these poverties generates a correspondent pathology (Max-Neef, 1991: 19). Hence, poverties of freedom, participation and protection, along with some others, engender what Max-Neef (1991: 21) labels as “collective pathologies of fear”. Regarding Colombia, Max-Neef (1991: 42) recalls that during a seminar in Bogotá in 1987, fifty high-ranking university officials and academics from all over Colombia were asked to choose among a list the most serious destroyers affecting the Colombian society. The final list of components included aggressiveness, indifference, obedience, censorship, acceptance, apathy, dependence, alienation, neutrality, uprooting, ideological manipulation and repressive institutions.

The list determined the following analysis and conclusions. If one asks for a description of the Colombian society, the reply may well give an image of a society suffering from a high degree of violence. If one asks for explanations, one may be given a profile of all the different groups that are in conflict and, hence, determine that violence. But, if we look at

¹¹³ Emphasis in the original.

the above list, which is the product of an intense process of introspective analysis, we perceive something quite interesting and probably unexpected. There is violence—a great deal of violence—in Colombian society, but the deep underlying problem, as revealed by the list, was deemed to be fear. Whether that fear is the result of violence or its cause (or both) is difficult—perhaps impossible—to say. But in any case, what appears to be probable, is that the “disease” the patient is suffering from is fear. Therefore, if the remedies prescribed concentrate exclusively on the attempt to cure violence, one may be applying an inadequate or incomplete prescription for the wrong “disease” [...].

(Max-Neef, 1991: 42-43)

The international accompaniment offered by PBI Colombia has a positive impact upon that disease or pathology of fear while addressing protection from direct violence at the same time.

International Accompaniment as Capability Facilitator

IA and its positive effects upon the pathology of fear contribute to the empowerment of those accompanied. As mentioned in Chapter III, the dynamic nature of power permits to characterize it as both power-to (power-of-being) and power-over. Through IA and other mechanisms, human rights defenders and all of those threatened by politically motivated violence find a way to deal with the pathology of fear and mobilise themselves. By exercising their freedom and rights, actors with public personality enhance their capacity of action and revitalize the social fabric. In this sense, IA contributes to materialise the potential, the power-of-being. Max-Neef (1991: 24) highlights in his analysis the double nature of needs: as deprivation, as we have seen so far, and as potential. “[...] to the degree that needs engage, motivate and mobilise people, they are a potential and eventually may become a resource”. Although accurate in its description of needs as potential for action, that same potential for action should not be reduced to crude impulses, since the mediation of satisfiers is always present. First at all, it is fundamental to remember that the conceptualisation of needs endorsed here, overcomes their outdated and limited characterisation as essential for survival and characterises them as essential assets for a *good* survival. They are *sine qua non* conditions and a failure in its satisfaction will develop a negative impact in the overall (human, individual and social) structure. This is the way that human needs are described here, and in this sense there is no room for hierarchy. “Human needs must be understood as a system: that is, all human needs are interrelated and interactive”, says Max-Neef (1991: 17), acknowledging the only exception: the need for subsistence. Without the axiological category of subsistence intersecting with being, having, doing and interacting there is no need for protection, affection, understanding, participation and so on since they cannot be experienced *in absentia*.

A second point has to do with the mediation of satisfiers; as shown earlier, those satisfiers are culturally determined. Furthermore, they are individually chosen¹¹⁴ under the skin of wants and intrinsic values, recalling Sen's depiction. They are not needs in themselves, they do not have to be fulfilled, but they have an instrumental value as mediators towards a teleological goal: the satisfaction of a given need. In this sense, wants as satisfiers have a mobilizing nature of their own, though one that is determined by the need itself or by the needs satisfied by them.

Moreover, the empowerment facilitated by IA can be apprehended in terms of an increase in the capabilities of those accompanied. Both Max-Neef and Sen have consecrated a great part of their academic efforts to development, with different foci but sharing a similar interest with holistic development rather than economics. Whereas Max-Neef is the most representative introducer of a development on a human scale in stressing a needs-approach, Sen (1999b: 13) sees development as "the removal of various types of unfreedoms that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency", an approach employed in United Nations Development Programme reports. Development, thus, is all about capabilities, "a person's ability to do valuable acts or reach valuable states of being" (Sen, 1993: 30). The work of Sen and Nussbaum (2000, 2003) has moved the focus from nominal rights (which are intimately linked to human needs) to effective rights expressed in terms of capabilities: what people are actually able to do. To that description of capabilities as "what people are actually able to do" could be added the tag "to provide for their needs". Before going further into the analysis of the capabilities approach at the intersection of empowerment and IA, it seems relevant to clarify the relationship between human needs and human rights¹¹⁵, since both concepts have been employed. Human needs, like those identified in Max-Neef's research, emerge as a moral ground for human rights insofar as rights, to make sense, require a superior justifying principle. Why do human beings have human rights if there is not a need behind them? Human rights make sense because the existence of universal human needs to be satisfied if a truly good life is to be lived. Although it is reckless to affirm that the purpose of human rights is the protection of human needs (Galtung, 1994, 2001) the existence of a profound correlation between them is clear. Furthermore, the language of

¹¹⁴ I acknowledge the controversy that can arise over this point, especially regarding human beings deprived of participation and freedoms, but this is beyond the scope of this study.

¹¹⁵ I will refer exclusively to human rights, as depicted in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted and proclaimed by UN General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948.

human rights runs parallel to the language of human needs, even in its highest legal formula, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The language of human rights, although well-consolidated, presents certain disadvantages in comparison with capabilities rhetoric (Nussbaum, 2000: 96-101; 2003: 38-40), which could also germinate in a categorization of human capabilities. Nussbaum (2003: 40- 43) provides a tentative list of central human capabilities, including ten capabilities expressed in the “being able to” formula¹¹⁶: Life; Body Health; Body Integrity; Senses, Imagination and Thought; Emotions; Practical Reason; Affiliation; Other Species; Play; and Control Over One’s Environment¹¹⁷. Under this classification, PBI IA would produce the following positive effects in terms of increasing local capabilities, that is, facilitate the empowerment of those accompanied:

	Positive impact on Central Human Capabilities of
International Accompaniment	Life, Bodily Integrity, Emotions, Affiliation, Control Over One’s Environment

IA empowers the accompanied in multiple ways, increasing their possibilities of “being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length”, as Nussbaum (2003: 41) partially portrays the capability for life. IA contributes to it inasmuch as it is conceived as deterrence of violent attacks against the physical integrity of the victim. This relates to the second central human capability that is positively affected by IA, bodily integrity, articulated as “being able to move freely from place to place” (Nussbaum, 2003: 41)¹¹⁸. IA empowers the accompanied in the emotions capability since it reduces the pathology of fear, thereby contributing to a certain degree of “not having one’s emotional development blighted by fear and anxiety” (Nussbaum, 2003: 41). Regarding affiliation, PBI IA revitalises the possibilities for the accompanied to engage in social interaction, which in turn “means protecting institutions that constitute and nourish such forms of affiliation, and also protecting the freedom of assembly and political speech” (Nussbaum,

¹¹⁶ As Max-Neef did with his classification of human needs, Nussbaum (2003: 40) also states that her list is an open-ended project in need of further modifications. Furthermore, she recognizes that the points covered are general goals that can be developed by each society in its own manner.

¹¹⁷ Most of these points are consistent with Max-Neef classification of human needs, although formulated in a different manner rooted in epistemological and procedural divergences. It is beyond the scope of this research to carry out a comparative study. For the sake of the investigation, which tries to shed light on the positive effects of PBI IA on Colombian civil society, such analyses will not be made.

¹¹⁸ The effects of IA on this realm are, however, more debatable if body integrity is meant “to be secure against [...] sexual assault and domestic violence; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction” (Nussbaum, 2003: 41).

2003: 42). IA's impact on affiliation is closely related to the capability of control over one's environment, especially in its political dimension of participation.

International Accompaniment as (Human) Security Contributor

IA satisfies not only the human need for protection but also for affection, participation and freedom. The failure to satisfy these needs unavoidably leads to several poverties that are behind a "collective pathology of fear". This pathology notably reduces the power-to of those suffering its consequences. In other words, the capabilities of the affected are limited and hence their needs are unsatisfied. IA mitigates this negative status and has an impact on several human central capabilities. In this sense, international accompaniment empowers the accompanied.

In Colombia, civilians exposed to the violence attributed to its internal armed conflict suffer to a higher degree its destructive symptoms, both in direct violence against their physical integrity and in the pathology of fear as a whole. As figures and testimonies shown, those accompanied by PBI Colombia are targets of the violence and have to live with death threats and many other physiological burdens¹¹⁹. PBI IA palliates the pernicious effects of violence and expands the political space. International accompaniment becomes, thus, a sort of "security provider" or "security contributor".

The fundamental question is about the ontological nature of security. What is meant by security in this context? It covers the elements mentioned above, overcoming a narrow definition as merely physical protection. Unlike armed escorting, which will influence only physical protection and presents ethical dilemmas and operational controversies, IA encompasses several levels of needs and capabilities¹²⁰. In addition, those INGOs providing their local partners (humanitarian) aid and (development) help in covering other needs (i.e. subsistence or understanding) cannot contribute effectively to the field of

¹¹⁹ In a report eloquently entitled *Living in Fear, Colombia's Cycle of Violence*, Medecins Sans Frontieres (2006) tackles physical and mental health problems in the Colombia focusing on the situation of IDPs. Available at http://www.msf.org/source/countries/americas/colombia/2006/report/living_in_fear.pdf (Last access in May 2006).

¹²⁰ Recalling the refusal of armed protection by ASFADDES and CREDHOS mentioned in Chapter II, the idea of having armed escorts may collide with the programmatic and moral guidelines of human rights organisations, and more especially of those committed to nonviolence. Moreover, an apparent satisfier for the human need of protection such as armed escort can indeed be a pseudo-satisfier or a destroyer.

protection¹²¹. PBI IA is a major contributor to the security of the accompanied, which are competing with the Colombian State over securitisation and strive for introducing a human security agenda, as seen in the previous chapter. PBI IA broadens the freedom from fear of the accompanied and it boosts their capabilities, which links to a positive understanding of security as a mobilising factor. In this sense, PBI IA affects positively the capabilities of those accompanied by them. Civil society individuals and groups facing political violence get a security surplus that enables them to advance a human security agenda.

Conclusion

As stressed by the accompanied themselves, the benefits of international accompaniment exceed physical protection. IA encompasses a plurality of intimately linked benefits. In a reading from a theory of needs, PBI IA acts as a synergic satisfier of multiple needs (protection, affection, participation and freedom). This reading, however, fails to highlight the empowerment facilitated by PBI IA; thanks to it, local partners received considerable enforcement of their power-to, as a capability reading shows. In this regard, PBI IA has a positive impact on several human capabilities. Finally, it is argued that PBI IA, by empowering the accompanied, provides a sort of security that has a positive understanding as a mobilising factor.

¹²¹ Humanitarian and development INGOs working in Colombia can indeed participate in improving the protection of local NGOs by supporting their activity national and internationally, but they are not conceived of as protective organisations.

VI

FINAL REMARKS

As shown in the first chapter, Peace Brigades International (PBI) was conceived to carry out nonviolent intervention in armed scenarios. Building upon earlier experiences in the field, peace activists, pacifists and Quakers gathered on Grindstone Island, Canada, in 1981 and set up the organisation under the principles of internationalism, nonviolence, non-partisanship and non-hierarchical functioning.

In the armed conflicts in Central America in the 1980s, PBI found the scenario in which its action could be tested. Unlike its closest referents (Shanti Sena and WPB), Peace Brigades would not interpose itself between belligerent groups. Instead, the type of protective international accompaniment pioneered in Guatemala in 1983 would be the model of action for the organisation.

International accompaniment of local civil society members threatened with politically-motivated violence is intended to deter further attacks, taking advantage of the fact that certain armed actors are concerned about their international image. In regards to Colombian protracted armed conflict, the case study of this research, there is evidence of connivance or active collusion of the Colombian State in political violence. Since the Colombian State is concerned about its international image and reputation, PBI responded positively to Colombian civil society organisations requesting accompaniment, and in 1994 the Colombian Project was established.

Although PBI's model of international accompaniment has undergone changes through the years as a result of practical lessons, this study argues that communication is a crucial element in the functioning of international accompaniment, and it is deeply intertwined with nonviolence and power.

As shown in Chapter III, communication plays a decisive role in nonviolent action: within PBI itself, it has a logistical value but refers to personal encouragement and social mobilisation (power-to); and in the relation to the teleological goal to be achieved (deterrence, in IA case), inasmuch as it crucial to get support, to establish a dialogue with the stakeholders in the armed scenario (i.e. host State) and to transmit a message of strength (power-over).

Furthermore, the communicative dimension of the international accompaniment includes an underlying question about the performativity at the discursive level, that is, when considering the language employed by the speech community. According to Speech Act Theory, international accompaniment can be read through performative lens considering the messages (utterance) both as illocutionary acts (what is done when saying something) and perlocutionary acts (what is done by saying something).

Two major interlocutors of PBI in Colombia have been identified in this research: the Colombian State, and the civil society (individuals and groups accompanied by PBI Colombia). After laying the theoretical groundwork for the understanding of international accompaniment in terms of nonviolence, communication and power, the discussion then moved towards analysing the first of the interlocutors: the Colombian State. Chapter IV contended that there is a competition over securitisation between the Colombian State, on the one hand, and civil society groups, on the other. As argued, both are legitimated securitising actors competing over securitisation but with different ontological referents (National Security-Democratic Security and Human Security, respectively). That competition can be understood as a struggle of powers in which communication (to attract, to coerce, or to mobilize) is crucial. Moreover, dialectical clashes cannot be divorced from the activity that they perform. PBI, because of its constituency and also by virtue of its social proximity with Colombian civil society groups, has a significant role in this competition.

Those non-state actors striving for human security are empowered by PBI IA, as seen in Chapter V. The sort of protection offered by PBI cannot be merely understood in terms of physical protection, but rather in a holistic sense that includes psychological and socio-political spheres. Thanks to the communicative movement behind PBI and the dialogical relationship with the accompanied, the organisation is able to satisfy not only the need for protection, but also for affection, participation and freedom. Furthermore, those benefits can be read as active inputs aimed to empower the accompanied themselves by increasing their capabilities, that is, what they are actually able to do (power-to). In this regard, PBI IA exerts a positive impact on several human capabilities (life, bodily integrity, emotions, affiliation and control over one's environment). In sum, PBI IA participates positively in the human security dynamics of Colombian civil society.

Finally, new venues of research on PBI IA from performative perspective are opened. New inquiries could either expand the horizons to the analysis to include new

interlocutors (such as the volunteers and their contribution to a global civil society compromised with a human security agenda) or be applied to other projects.

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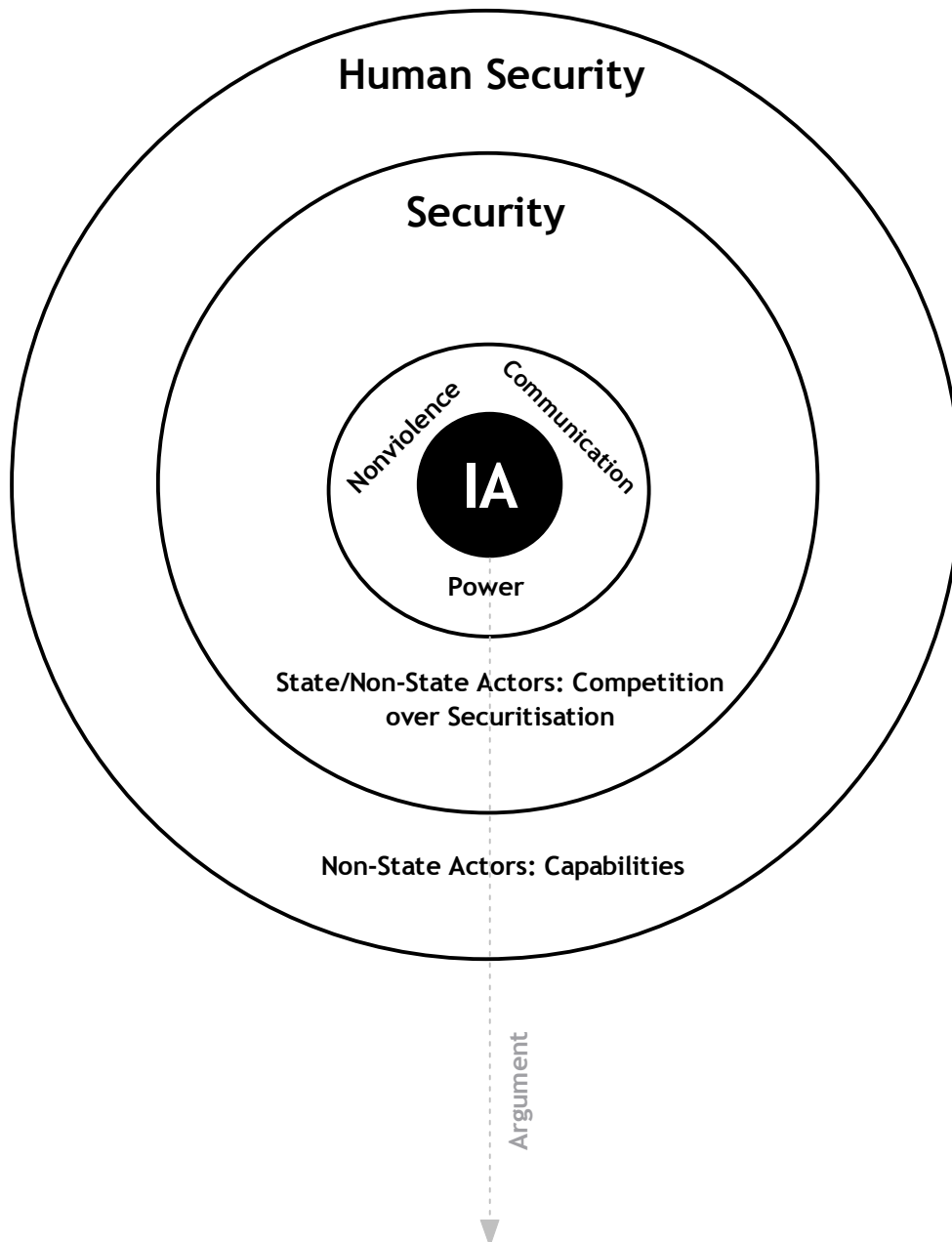
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APPENDICES

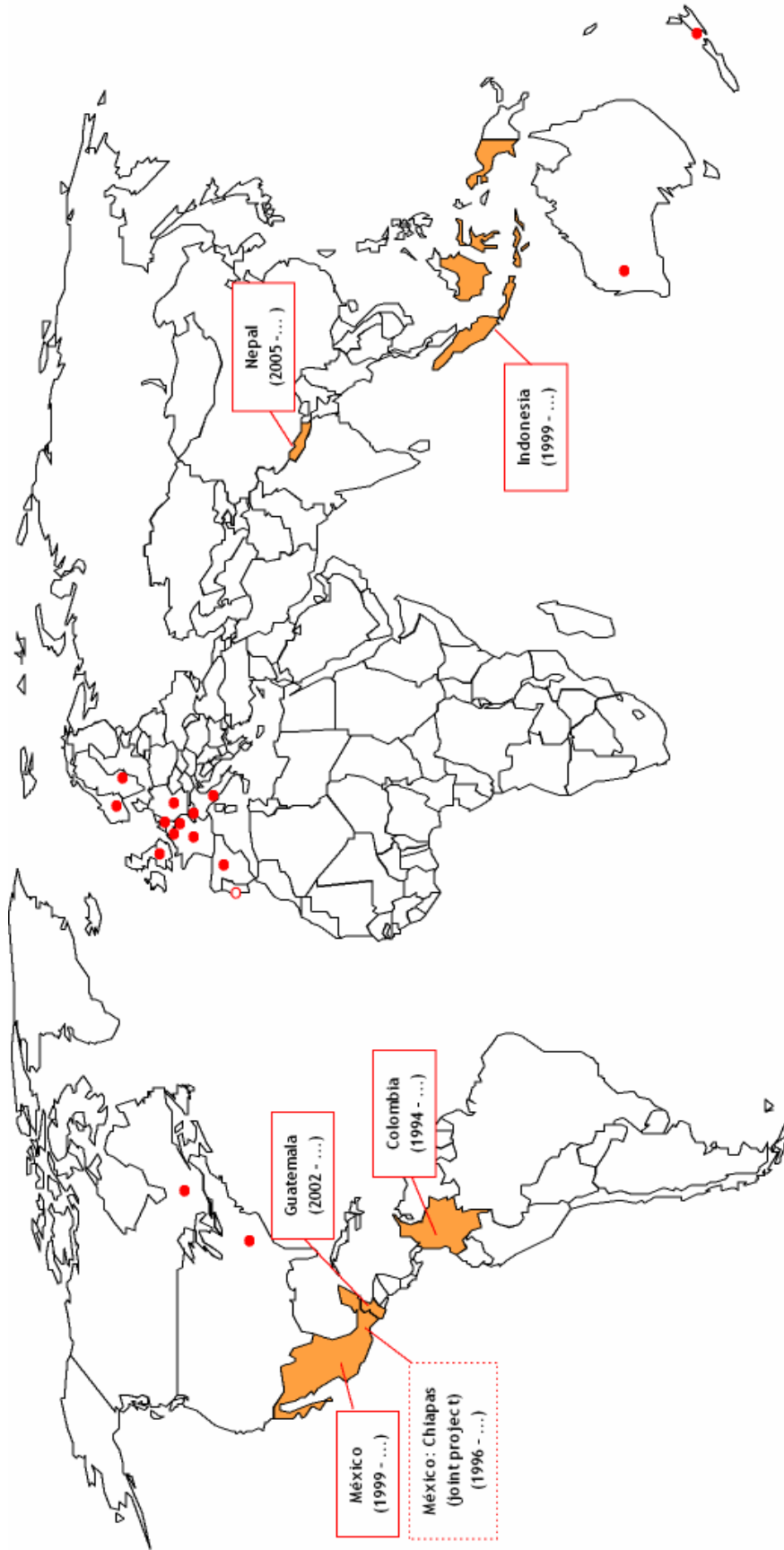
Appendix I: List of Sources of Textual Data Reviewed

Producer:	Product/Material:
Peace Brigades International Colombia Project (1994 – present)	Monthly Information Pack –Paquete de Información Mensual- (PIM), No. 1-38 (Dec. 2002 – Feb. 2006) Fortnightly Information Pack –Paquete de Información Quincenal- (PIQ), No. 145-220 (Jan. 2000 – Dec. 2002) Occasional Reports (12) Other (3)
Peace Brigades International (1981 – present)	Newsletters Conference/Meetings proceedings Annual Reviews Other
Colombian Civil Society organisations (Accompanied by PBI) (1994 – Present)	Statements Reports
Colombian Authorities (2003 – present)	Programmatic Documentation Statements Legal Directives
Others (i.e. national and international media)	Journalistic Accounts Legal Sources (Human Rights, International Humanitarian Law) Other

Appendix II: Composition and Organisation of the Study



Appendix III: PBI Projects, Country Groups and Regional Offices

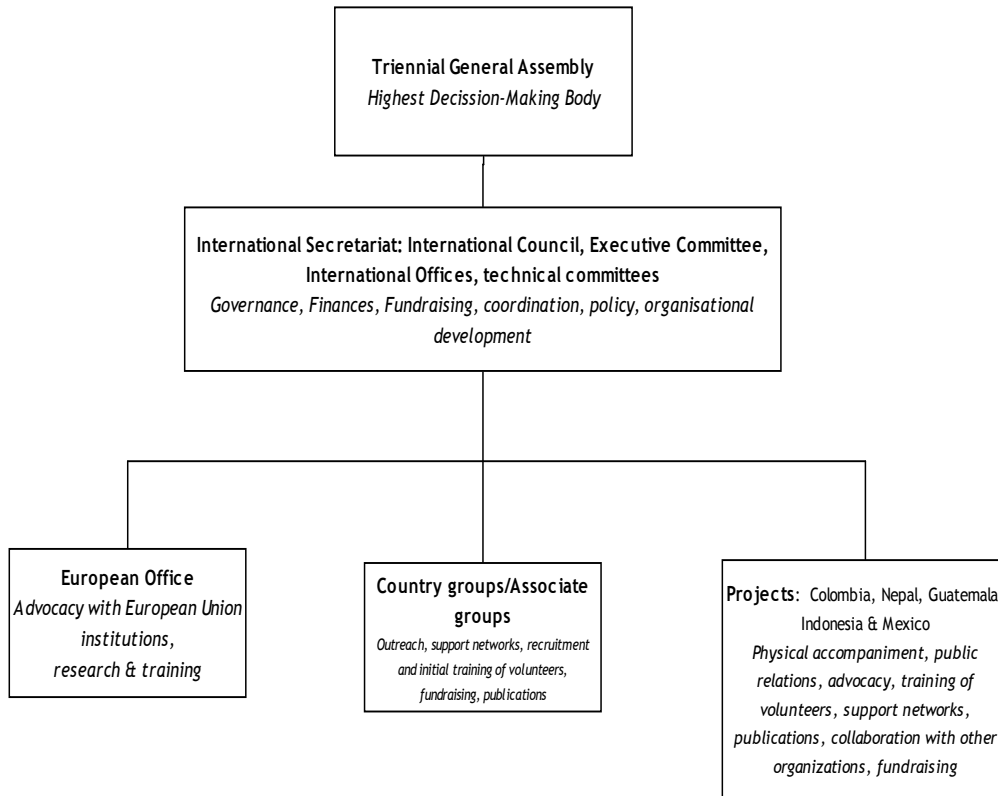


PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL
 Current Projects, Country Groups and Regional Offices

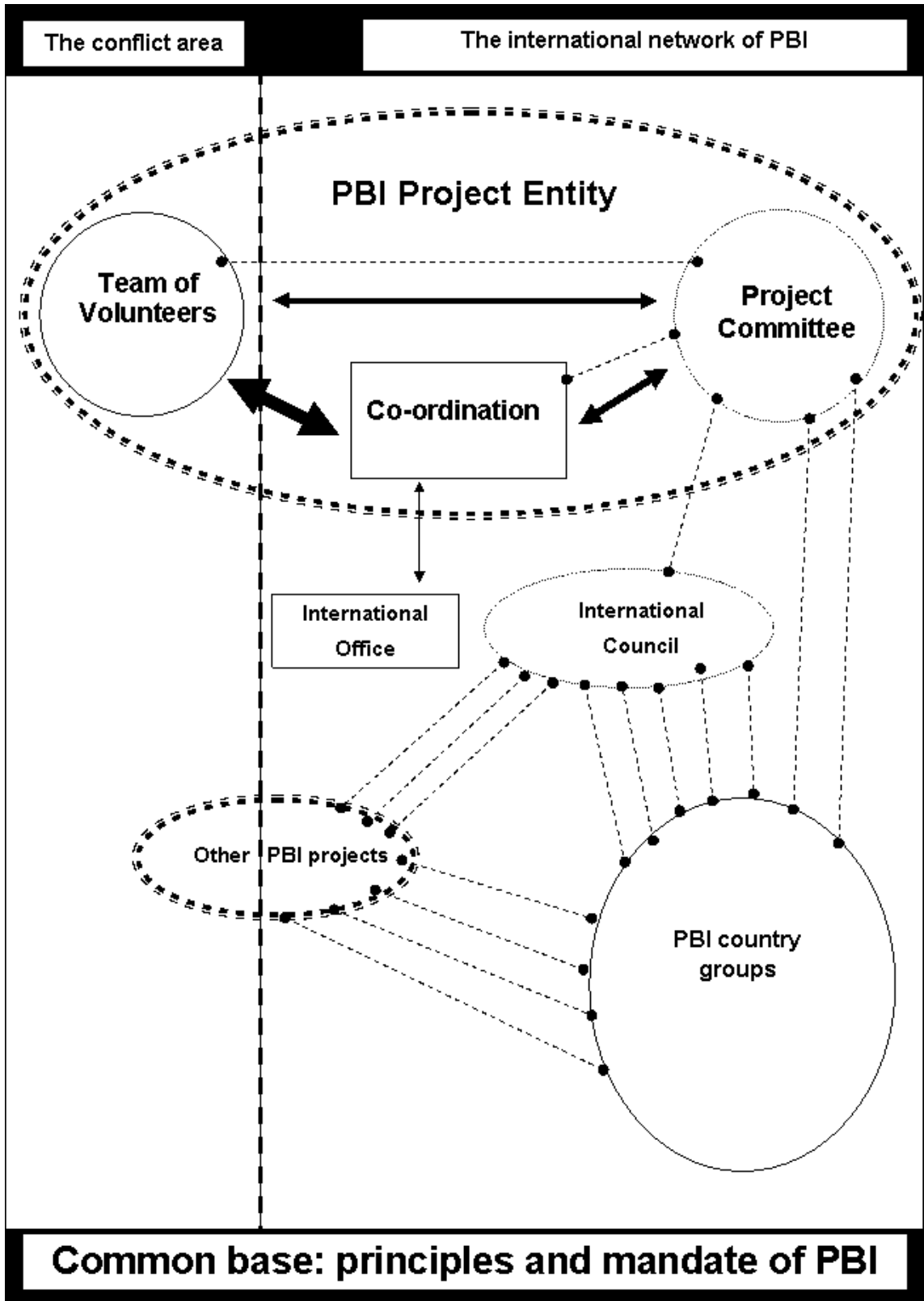
Country Groups and Regional Offices
 Current Projects
 Associate Groups

Source: PBI Webpage; PBI/US Annual Report 2004

Appendix IV: PBI Organisational Structure



Appendix V: PBI Internal Correlations and Working



Source: From PBI Webpage.

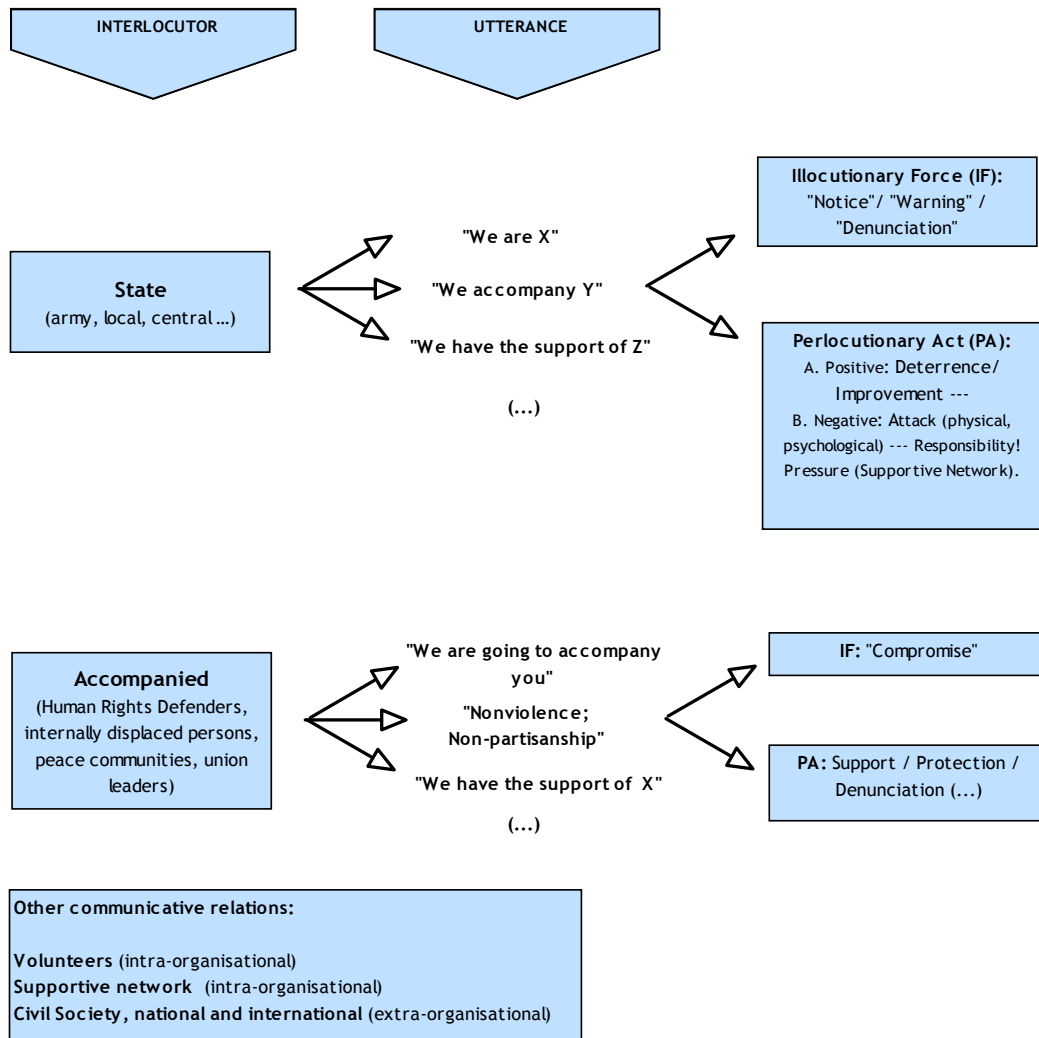
Appendix VI: PBI Colombia Distribution of Teams



PBI COLOMBIA: Distribution of Teams

Source: Based on PBI Information

Appendix VII: PBI Communicative Relationships and Performativity



Appendix VIII: Max-Neef's Taxonomy of Human Needs

	Being	Having	Doing	Interacting
Subsistence	1/ Physical health, Mental health, Equilibrium, Sense of humour, Adaptability	2/ Food, Shelter, Work	3/ Feed, Procreate, Rest, Work	4/ Living Environment, Social Setting
Protection	5/ Care, Adaptability, Autonomy, Solidarity	6/ Social security, Health systems, Work, Rights, Family	7/ Cooperate, Prevent, Plan, Take care of, Help, Cure	8/ Social environment, Dwelling
Affection	9/ Respect, Sense of humour, Generosity, Sensuality, Solidarity, Respect, Receptiveness	10/ Friendships, Family, Relationships with nature, Partnerships	11/ Share, Take care of, Make love, Express emotions	12/ Privacy, Intimacy, Spaces of togetherness
Understanding	13/ Critical conscience, Curiosity, Intuition	14/ Literature, Teachers, Educational policies	15/ Analyze, Study, Meditate, Investigate	16/ Schools, Family, Universities, Communities
Participation	17/ Dedication, Solidarity, Determination, Dedication, Respect, Sense of humour	18/ Duties, Responsibilities, Work, Rights, Privileges	19/ Cooperate, Dissent, Express opinions, Interact, Share	20/ Associations, Parties, Churches, Neighbourhoods, Settings of participate, Interaction
Idleness	21/ Imagination, Tranquillity, Spontaneity, Curiosity	22/ Games, Parties, Peace of mind	23/ Day-dream, Remember, Relax, Have fun, Brood	24/ Landscapes, Intimacy, Privacy, Free time
Creation	25/ Imagination, Boldness, Inventiveness, Curiosity, Autonomy	26/ Abilities, Skills, Work, Methods	27/ Invent, Build, Design, Work, Compose, Interpret	28/ Spaces for expression, Workshops, Audiences
Identity	29/ Sense of belonging, Self-esteem, Consistency	30/ Language, Religion, Work, Customs, Sexuality, Values, Norms	31/ Get to know oneself, Grow, Commit oneself	32/ Social rhythms, Everyday settings
Freedom	33/ Autonomy, Passion, Self-esteem, Open-mindedness, Boldness	34/ Equal rights	35/ Dissent, Choose, Run risks, Develop awareness, Commit oneself	36/ Temporal/ spatial plasticity

Source: Max-Neef (1991: 32-33)¹²²

¹²² Adaptation from the original taxonomy. The number of illustrative possible satisfiers has been reduced here.