Regional Integration and Democratic Consolidation in the Southern Cone of Latin America

Abstract: Regional integration has been a significant factor shaping the consolidation processes of Southern Cone democratising states. Regional integration strategies have allowed transitional regimes across the Southern Cone to neutralise threats of democratic reversals by military leaders, effectively undermining the longstanding geostrategic rationales used by foreign policy and military elites to justify military intervention in domestic politics. The dramatic rise of interstate cooperation has accelerated and ensured the consolidation of democracy across the region through regional trade blocs, the development of an embedded regional commitment to democracy, and a defence of democracy regime. At the same time, democratisation has enhanced regional economic and security integration strategies, through increased domestic transparency, the impact of prodemocratic ideational forces and the externalisation of democratic principles. ‘Structurational’ analysis of the processes of democratic consolidation in Brazil and Argentina is used to demonstrate the influence of economic integration and the emergent regional security regime on democratic consolidation, as well as the role democratisation played in facilitating these developments in regional integration.

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Democracy ‘broke out’ in the Southern Cone of Latin America in 1983, with the resounding electoral success of Raul Alfonsín following the defeat of the Argentine military regime in the Falklands/Malvinas War. There followed an historically rapid succession of transitions to democracy across the region: in Uruguay in 1985, Brazil, Chile and Bolivia in 1989, Peru in 1990, and Paraguay in 1993. Simultaneous with this regional ‘wave’ of democratisation was a concurrent shift in the foreign policy stances of most states in the region from hostile, geopolitical conceptions of regional relations grounded in the balance of power, to foreign policies oriented toward multilateralism and cooperative security arrangements, evolving into what has recently been described as an emerging regional security regime. Finally, in the mid-1980s, states across the region began to develop and implement a far-reaching programme of intraregional economic integration with significant implications for the organisation of domestic politics and the consolidation of democracy within these states.

Clearly, there is a strong temporal correlation among the emergence of democracy in the Southern Cone, the beginnings of regional economic integration, and the concomitant ‘desecuritisation’ of relations among longstanding rivals in the region. The question is whether and to what extent there exists a causal relationship among these three processes.

In this paper, I contend that in the Southern Cone (I) the desecuritisation of interstate relations was a necessary facilitating cause of democratisation, (II) the establishment of democratic institutions facilitated the rise of regional economic cooperation, and (III) democratic consolidation and enhanced regional economic and security integration have become mutually reinforcing processes (see figure 1).

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1 The ‘Southern Cone’ includes Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Chile and Argentina. In this paper I focus on the role of regional integration in the consolidation of democracy in Brazil and Argentina, with cursory glances at its influence in other regional states. This is not to downplay differences in patterns of democratisation across regimes: in Argentina, the military regime effectively collapsed following defeat in the Falklands/Malvinas war and played little role in the transition, while in Brazil the military remained intact during the transition and maintained its control of national security policy into the 1990s. However, the patterns of influence of regional integration are sufficiently similar across cases to warrant its discussion as a ‘regional trend.’

2 It is impossible to set an exact date for a transition to democratic rule: these dates represent the first free and fair direct elections for the executive in these states. See Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O’Donnell and Samuel Valenzuela, eds., *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1992), and John Peeler, *Building Democracy in Latin America* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1998).


4 The term ‘regional integration’ refers to the overlapping processes of economic integration and intensifying security cooperation. While it is possible to speak in terms of the impact of regional integration generally on democratisation, for analytical purposes it is necessary to disaggregate these two processes and to explain their causal interrelationship.

5 ‘Desecuritisation’ is an unwieldy term which has emerged in the literature to describe the “progressive marginalization of mutual security concerns in favour of other issues.” See Ole Wæver, “Insecurity, Security, and Asecurity in the West European Non-war Community,” in Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, eds., *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 69.

6 Central to this argument is the assertion that regional economic integration and desecuritisation originated in a commitment by anti-authoritarian regional élites to develop a new regional framework for the emergence of political cultures and institutions consistent with the increasingly pervasive international liberal consensus.
This diagram alone provides little analytical purchase on the complex causal relationships hypothesised above. In this paper, I try to ‘unpick’ some of these hypothesised relationships to determine the processes, mechanisms, and structures through which democratisation and regional integration are causally interrelated. I utilise a ‘structurational’ account of regime change, emphasising the mutually constitutive roles of both structure and agency in shaping domestic and regional political outcomes, with particular stress on the central role of élite actors in the democratic transition process.\footnote{For a ‘structurational’ account of the mutually constitutive roles of agents and structures in the globalisation process, see Philip G. Cerny, “Political Agency in a Globalizing World: Toward a Structurational Approach,” paper presented at the British International Studies Association Annual Meeting, Manchester, December 1999. See also R. J. Barry Jones, “Globalization and Change in the International Political Economy,” \textit{International Affairs} 75:2 (1999), 361-63.}

\section*{Significance}
There is some evidence that democratisation destabilises the foreign policies of transitional states, leading to higher levels of conflict with neighbouring states and threatening the consolidation of democracy.\footnote{Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, “Democratization and the Danger of War,” \textit{International Security} 20:1 (Summer 1995), 5-38. For counter-evidence, see Andrew Enterline, “Correspondence: Driving while Democratizing (DWD),” \textit{International Security} 20:4 (Spring 1996), 183-96. Gleditsch and Ward find, on the other hand, that on average democratisation decreases the risk of war, but that particularly uneven transitions increase the probability of war. See Kristian S. Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward, “War and Peace in Space and Time: The Role of Democratization,” paper presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Washington DC, August 1997.} Many regimes in transition ‘behave’ differently from states with stable regimes and, in the absence of constraining conditions, are prone to unstable foreign relations.\footnote{It is important to point out that I am not concerned here with the war-proneness of transitional states, but rather with the negative effects that destabilised foreign relations have on the consolidation of democracy.} External factors, and more specifically regional factors, historically

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{diagram.png}
\caption{Excessive causal complexity: regional integration, security cooperation, and regime change.}
\end{figure}
have played a significant role in destabilising democratic transitions, leading to the stagnation or reversal of democratisation. Given this, the question then arises: what differentiates the impact of the regional and international influences across cases of democratisation? Why have some transitional regimes not been susceptible to negative external, and particularly regional security pressures, while other regimes’ democratic transitions have been stymied by precisely these ‘negative externalities’? My contention is that, in the Southern Cone, regional integration has provided constraints on states’ foreign policies and, in so doing, has enhanced the prospects for democratic consolidation.

**Hypothesised Processes Underlying Causal Relationships**

The transitional regimes of the Southern Cone have, uniquely among cases of democratisation, used regional integration as a means of deflecting the negative endogenous and exogenous pressures which might threaten democracy, and particularly the threat of the seizure of power by the long dominant (and still powerful) militaries in each of these states. Regional integration as a democratic consolidation strategy required the defusing of regional tensions, in part through the transition away from geopolitical conceptions of states’ interests and security concerns in the region, in part through the development of interstate interdependencies through enhanced economic linkages.

Furthermore, democratisation functioned as a facilitating factor for enhanced regional security and economic integration. Regional economic integration plans have a long history of unrealised expectations in the Southern Cone. Democracy served as the ‘condition of possibility,’ creating institutions which fostered transparency, trust, and the development of mutual interests between democratising states. Democratisation thus

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10 The reversals of democratic consolidation by military intervention in civilian-led democratic regimes across Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s can in many cases be traced to perceived failures of the civilian-led regimes to address a range of external threats, whether conceptualised as overt security threats, the failure to deliver sufficient levels of socioeconomic modernisation and development, or the perceived rise of communist insurgencies, either domestically or regionally. See, inter alia, Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, eds., *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

11 To be clear, my contention is not that democratisation led in a linear fashion to increased levels of security cooperation and the shifting of relations from hostility to integration. I am not arguing, in the vein of the ‘democratic peace’ hypothesis, that democratisation in the region has led to peace as a result of the Southern Cone states being ‘democratic’. The states of the Southern Cone are not fully consolidated democracies, and relations between them have not been normalised exclusively as a result of the political regime changes they have undergone. Indeed, my broader argument is precisely the opposite: that democratisation increases the likelihood of war in the short to medium term.

12 The prospect of European Community membership of course played a significant role in leading to and influencing the democratic consolidation paths in Portugal, Spain and Greece, and prospective European Union membership plays a similar incentive role in the new Eastern European democracies, particularly Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia. The important distinction, making the Mercosur case unique, is the absence of the common market prior to the regional transitions to democracy, and the causal role democratisation has had in leading to the successful establishment of the common market and the emergent security regime.

13 This process has, to my knowledge, not been explained in the literature. Andrew Hurrell makes passing reference to “the need to promote regional pacification in order to deprive the nationalists of causes around which to mobilize opinion, to demand a greater political role, or to press for militarization and rearmament.” See his “Security in Latin America,” *International Affairs* 74:3 (1998), 536. However, Hurrell does not elaborate the impact of these moves on democratic consolidation.

14 These are precisely the Kantian factors described by Doyle as underpinning the democratic peace proposition. See Michael Doyle, “Liberalism and World Politics,” *American Political Science Review* 80 (1986). Democratisation does not necessarily entail increased transparency, as evidenced in regime
allowed long term integration trends to come to fruition. These trends then feed back into the process of regime change, enhancing democratic consolidation.\textsuperscript{15}

Democratisation broke down power disparities between interest groups within states: privileged access to governmental decision-making for powerful interest groups is weakened as the allocation of state resources by the democratic regime becomes increasingly publicly accountable and publicly legitimated. Democratisation similarly de-enhances power disparities between states. Insofar as liberal regimes enjoy pacific relations with other liberal regimes, power disparities become less salient and lose their capacity to create fear and mistrust between states. Removing the influence of the military from budgetary processes further reduces and de-accentuates strategic power imbalances.

Shared identities and interests among democratising regimes—particularly Brazil and Argentina—led to the externalisation of domestic democratic beliefs, through which foreign policy was used to enhance the consolidation of democracy domestically. Finally, security cooperation was a “spill-around” effect of economic integration, tied up in a package of agreements on managed trade and technological cooperation integrated into a single strategy. Economic integration arrangements thus contributed to the legitimation of closer security cooperation.

I. Desecuritisation as Necessary Facilitating Cause of Democratisation
Collective security and conflict resolution mechanisms in the Southern Cone were very weak until the 1980s.\textsuperscript{16} Across Latin America, the inward-looking development model within a bipolar balance of power historically had reinforced strategic interests centred on territorial defence.\textsuperscript{17} This introverted developmentalist perspective was complimented by rigidly held geopolitical conceptions of interstate relations as inherently conflictual.\textsuperscript{18} The ideological rationale for the developmentalist and geopolitical doctrines was state-building: the import substitution industrialisation (ISI) model was, “in the military-strategic field, the culmination of the process of creation of a nation-state.”\textsuperscript{19} For most of the century, the geopolitical and national security models in vogue in the Southern Cone military establishments tended to describe international politics as “a zero-sum game, with emphasis on conflict, competition, expansionism, “flash points,” and a balance of power paradigm rather than on cooperation or solidarity.”\textsuperscript{20} These security models were used to

\textsuperscript{15} Thus, democratic institutional structures are conceptualised as the necessary but not sufficient cause of regional economic integration and enhanced security cooperation.
\textsuperscript{19} Varas, 13.
justify continued military dominance in domestic politics right up to the onset of democratisation in the region.\textsuperscript{21}

The origins of regional security cooperation appear prior to the return to democracy in the Southern Cone. Signs of Brazilian accommodation became evident in the latter years of the Geisel government (1974-79), including the 1976 proposal to create an Amazon Pact (formalised in 1978) for coordinated development of the Amazon basin.\textsuperscript{22} Major intraregional negotiations in which strategic interests and territorial disputes were at stake were concluded during the periods of military rule, including the Itaipu-Corpus Treaty in 1979 and the Argentina-Chile Peace and Friendship Treaty in 1985.\textsuperscript{23} Change in the nature of the relationship between Brazil and its continental neighbours accelerated under the government of Figueiredo (1979-85), with his government’s strong emphasis on improving relations and avoiding frictions in South America.\textsuperscript{24} Figueiredo’s visit to Argentina in May 1980—three years before Argentina’s democratic transition and five years before the first (indirect) presidential election in Brazil—marked a dramatic reversal of relations between the two neighbours, relations that had for more than a decade been marked by “intense and often shrill verbal warfare, keen politico-economic competition…, and atomic rivalry with ill-concealed military overtones.”\textsuperscript{25} The two governments, Argentine foreign Minister Carlos Pastor claimed, were now abandoning “competitive schemes” in order to forge “a zone of peace and security that embraces an entire fringe of the South Atlantic.”\textsuperscript{26}

The 1980s witnessed a shift in the perspectives of Latin American elites to an outward-looking growth model within a polyarchic international context, fundamentally reorienting Brazilian-Argentine relations.\textsuperscript{27} In the economic sphere, a series of bilateral agreements were reached between Brazil and Argentina and were taken further by the creation of the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) in 1991 and the establishment of a common external tariff on January 1, 1995.\textsuperscript{28} In the security field, rapprochement involved confidence building measures, arms control agreements with cooperative verification schemes, shifts in military posture toward defensive orientation and declining levels of military spending, as well as a security discourse that avoids the rhetoric of the balance of

\textsuperscript{21} Philip Kelly and Jack Child, “Geopolitics, Integration, and Conflict in the Southern Cone and Antarctica,” in Philip Kelly and Jack Child, eds., Geopolitics of the Southern Cone and Antarctica (London: Lynne Reinner, 1988), 3.
\textsuperscript{22} Selcher 1990, 93.
\textsuperscript{24} Selcher 1990, 94. The Figueiredo government designed an expansion of treaty ties with most South American states and carried out an unusual pace of exchanges of official visits at the presidential and ministerial levels, including the first Brazilian presidential visits to Colombia, Peru and Venezuela, and the first visit to Argentina in forty-five years.
\textsuperscript{26} O Estado de São Paolo (São Paolo), 7 May 1980. Quoted in Hilton, 27.
\textsuperscript{27} Varas, 10.
power and that contrasts sharply with the extreme geopolitical doctrines of the 1960s and 1970s.\textsuperscript{29}

Military expenditure across the Southern Cone began to decline significantly in the mid-1980s, in part due to macroeconomic constraints which required a reduction in budgets and the downsizing of state policies. The defence spending average of 19 Latin American countries dropped 35.2\% between 1985 and 1990, and Argentina’s defence spending fell from nearly 7\% of GDP in 1980 to less than 3\% in 1990.\textsuperscript{30} From 1985 to 1992 defence expenditure in Brazil fell from 22\% to 14\% of the shrinking federal budget.\textsuperscript{31} Reductions in military expenditure have favoured democratic consolidation, but their motive was primarily economic, necessitated by the decline of economic growth and the pressure of debt repayment.\textsuperscript{32}

Reductions in military expenditures, whatever their origin, significantly reduced the power of the militaries across the Southern Cone. Reduced power led in turn to the lessening of the military’s influence in domestic politics, which created political space and a release of constraints which had previously held liberal and democratic forces in check.\textsuperscript{33} In addition to declining defence expenditures, progressive desecuritisation, in conjunction with economic crisis, the globalisation of liberalism and the withdrawal of US support, helped to delegitimise the domestic political role of military élites.\textsuperscript{34}

Moreover, pro- and proto-democratic élites played an active role in establishing conditions which would lead to the defusing of threats of military intervention in civilian-led politics. Argentine prodemocratic élites spearheaded the regional shift from geopolitically dominated balance of power foreign policies. Beginning during the transitional Alfonsín administration, regional integration received high priority in Argentina’s transitional foreign policy, actively pursued through strategies to promote economic integration and political coordination, support democratic government, revive regional multilateral

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{29} Hurrell, “An Emerging Security Community in South America?,” 231. As early as 1988 Brazil had emerged “as continental integrator and peacemaker.” More recently, Brazil appears to have taken a regional hegemonic role as stabilizer and integrator in Southern Cone affairs. “As the strongest military and economic power of the area, Brazil is not only designer and enforcer of continental “rules of the game,” but also the guarantor of territorial integrity and oppressor of serious conflict within or among the region’s states.” Kelly and Child, 2, 7.
  \item \textsuperscript{30} Patrice Franko, “De Facto Militarization: Budget-Driven Downsizing in Latin America,” \textit{Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs} 36:1 (Spring 1994), 47, 54.
  \item \textsuperscript{31} Wendy Hunter, “Politicians Against Soldiers: Contesting the Military in Postauthoritarian Brazil,” \textit{Comparative Politics} 27:4 (July 1994), 436-39.
  \item \textsuperscript{32} Hirst 1998, 103.
  \item \textsuperscript{34} Galtieri had quite successfully delegitimised military rule in the Malvinas/Falklands War for the short term, and the Alfonsín government took advantage of this weakness to further emasculate the Argentine armed forces and to cleanse government of military influence. Nevertheless, the threat of the return to power by the military was never fully undermined, as evidenced by the failed coup attempts in 1987, 1988, and 1990. See Mario E. Carranza, “Transitions to Electoral Regimes and the Future of Civil-Military Relations in Argentina and Brazil,” \textit{Latin American Perspectives} 24:5 (September 1997). In Brazil, on the other hand, the military still held influence over the transitional Sarney government (1985-90), which was not curtailed until the Collor administration. See Wendy Hunter, “The Brazilian Military After the Cold War: In Search of a Mission,” \textit{Studies in Comparative International Development} 28:4 (Winter 1994), 35.
\end{itemize}
institutions, discourage arms races and regional disputes, and keep the Southern Cone clear of East-West disputes.\textsuperscript{35}

The military governments of Argentina were characterised by the presence of combative and authoritarian nationalists with a narrow, parochial and heavily anti-Communist view of foreign affairs oriented to the Cold War. The government of the transitional Radical Civil Union (UCR), by contrast, had many classic liberal members with cosmopolitan and integrationist leanings conducive to cooperative solutions at the continental level.\textsuperscript{36} When Argentina launched its redemocratisation process in 1983, the transitional UCR administration feared that “the region’s authoritarian outlook could entice backward looking sectors within the Argentine armed forces to draw on neighbouring authoritarian regimes to try to relegitimise their beliefs, values, and ultimately, return to power.”\textsuperscript{37}

**Regional Democracy Promotion as a Consolidation Strategy**\textsuperscript{38}

The Alfonsín administration undertook foreign policy restructuring with the express aim of promoting and protecting Argentina’s nascent democratic institutions.\textsuperscript{39} Argentine élites recognised the need to craft a foreign policy compatible with the requirements for consolidating Argentine democracy and which could neutralise any threat to the democratisation process itself. This policy “consisted of an activist posture by Argentina, seeking alliances and cooperation with other states interested in creating ‘democratic fronts’ in the international system.”\textsuperscript{40} Thus, Argentina under Alfonsín pursued foreign policies aimed at convincing its Southern American neighbours to initiate and, once initiated, to enhance the viability of those democracies. Furthermore, Alfonsín frequently used democratic justifications for his activist multilateral foreign policy stances, in issues such as the foreign debt and Central America, as well as an external expression of internal policy.\textsuperscript{41} “In addition, both strategies included a strong normative component aiming at the defence and promotion of democratic values conducive to deepening Argentina’s adhesion to constitutional politics and protection against potential coups.”\textsuperscript{42} This is precisely the sense in which, I contend, the delegitimation of the military’s role in politics was designed by prodemocratic political actors to remove the potential for the destabilisation of democratisation.


\textsuperscript{36} Selcher 1990, 90.


\textsuperscript{39} Fournier, 39-74. As Fournier points out (p.43), it is not only democratisers who utilise foreign policy to serve their domestic political ends: “successive military regimes attempted to transform Argentina’s foreign policy into an instrument for legitimising and perpetuating their practices and rules.”

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., 44-5.

\textsuperscript{41} Selcher 1990, 90.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
The legitimacy of military rule in Brazil derived in part from the imperative to preserve an active defence against Argentina, Brazil’s longstanding rival. In order to successfully delegitimise authoritarian rule in Brazil, it was necessary to undermine the deadly logic of the ‘hypothesis of conflict’, a geopolitical doctrine which dictated that Brazil and Argentina were destined to clash and which provided a substantial rationale for military involvement in domestic politics in both countries. Not surprisingly, then, the most dramatic impact of joint democratisation has been on Argentine-Brazilian relations, in which “the evolution of relations away from the rivalry of the 1970s to their present state of cooperation, through changes of government from military to civilian rule in both countries, has been one of the most positive features of recent South American international relations.”\(^{43}\) The most significant factor accounting for the change in Argentine-Brazilian relations has been the fact that, “from March 1985, both countries were led by democratising élites who shared a belief that they needed a foreign policy to strengthen and integrate their respective strategies of consolidation.”\(^ {44}\)

The delegitimation of authoritarian rule through the gradually declining importance of the military in establishing and maintaining states’ perceived ‘national interests’ has led to the acceptance of democracy as the only legitimate mode of governance. Democracy has come to be perceived by dominant élites as the only form of political organisation capable of building confidence, obedience, and governability, with local backing and international recognition, and the widening of opportunities for establishing policies for sectoral coordination implied by such international recognition.\(^ {45}\)

II. Democratic Institutions Facilitated Growth of Regional Economic Cooperation
While desecuritisation was the facilitating cause of democratisation, the establishment of democratic institutions was in turn the crucial facilitating factor for enhanced regional economic cooperation.\(^ {46}\) Two earlier attempts at regional economic integration, through the Andean Pact and the Latin American Free Trade Agreement (LAFTA), had ground to a halt in the mid-1970s over differences in relative national advantage.\(^ {47}\) In conjunction with changes in national macroeconomic structures and the pressure of the debt crisis, democratic institutions provided the openness and transparency to make economic integration possible. The acceleration of inter-state consultations which took place in the mid-1980s facilitated a more cooperative continental subsystem, first with a high level of consultations among presidents and then with the establishment of formal and informal networks of cooperative associations, including a dramatic rise of transnational relationships among professional and labour classes and political parties, culminating in the emergence of regional security and trade regimes.\(^ {48}\) The Andean Pact, Caricom and

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\(^{43}\) Selcher 1990, 94.
\(^{44}\) Fournier, 46.
\(^{46}\) Here I make an important distinction between economic cooperation, which I argued was facilitated by the desecuritisation of interstate relations, and elaborated economic integration, which in the Southern Cone entails the establishment of the common market, Mercosur. Thus, I contend, democratisation was a necessary antecedent (viz., cause) of economic integration.
\(^{48}\) Selcher 1990, 88.
the Central American Common Market were all revitalised in the mid-1980s, in tandem with the onset of redemocratisation across Latin America.

Of course, regional economic cooperation is not possible in a climate of tense, militarised interstate relations: economic integration programmes such as Mercosur “presuppose a South/South integration between countries… that are ‘on the same side’ as far as international economic and political power relations are concerned.” The combination of external factors, such as the defeat of Argentina in the Falklands/Malvinas War and the evident breakdown of the Inter-American system which it represented, with internal factors such as the legitimation crisis of authoritarianism sparked by the debt crisis and the decline in economic growth, and the resulting transition in most states to civilian-led governments, allowed regional relations to move from a focus on geopolitical balancing to more cooperative positions with shared developmental concerns at their core.

The foreign policy results of the Falklands/Malvinas War for Argentina were not, as some had feared, a spur to try to re-establish status, prestige and regional leadership. “Under the civilian government of Raul Alfonsín… Argentina began to address more objectively and constructively, and in a conciliatory and coherent way, its Latin American (rather that its would-be European) identity, its disadvantageous influence position in South America, and its failures in erratic power-oriented policies and nationalistic rhetoric during the military regime.” Goals included normalising relations with Southern Cone neighbours and bringing Argentina to the position of a reliable and reasonable partner, through:

- The establishment of a South American subgroup, the Lima Group
- Support for the Contradora negotiating forum
- Settlement of the Beagle Channel dispute
- Acceleration of economic integration with Brazil

During the Figueiredo administration (1979-85), the consensus grew in Brazil that its national development could not be planned or achieved separately from that of the rest of South America. The government began several years of emphasising South-South economic and political relationships, a position that logically required a credible improvement in relations with neighbouring states and acceptance of many types of political regimes. The Itaipu-Corpus hydroelectric power controversy with Argentina was settled to both parties’ satisfaction in a matter of months, paving the way for future developmental cooperation. Similarly, the 1984 settlement of the Chilean-Argentine border controversy in the Beagle Channel allowed common developmental concerns to come to the fore rather than the divisive national security issues which previously dominated their bilateral relations. Argentina and Chile followed up on the Beagle Channel settlement with a series of treaties on physical integration and economic

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50 Selcher 1990, 89.
53 Selcher 1990, 94.
complementarity and a 1985 treaty on cross-border cooperation in the Pino Hachado Pass area of the Andean frontier.\textsuperscript{54}

However, desecuritisation of Argentine-Brazil relations was not \textit{sufficient} for the rise of interstate economic cooperation and macroeconomic coordination: the transition to democratic institutions in those two states was \textit{necessary} for economic integration to get off the ground. How, precisely, have democratic institutions created the conditions to enable regional economic integration?

The rational choice IR literature has provided an explanation for increased levels of cooperation between democratic dyads. In trying to explain the “democratic peace”, the institutionalists argue that leaders of liberal regimes might be willing, and indeed might have structural incentives, to provide rents for certain sectors of the economy. However, in democracies, unlike in autocracies, institutional constraints limit their powers to provide rents.\textsuperscript{55} Similarly, some theorists have argued that institutional constraints and high domestic audience costs enable democratic states to ameliorate security dilemmas by clearly and credibly signalling their mutual intentions.\textsuperscript{56}

These institutional explanations do not provide much analytical purchase on the origins of economic integration in the Southern Cone: first, it is generally accepted in the democratisation literature that democratic norms and institutional constraints within new democracies are weak.\textsuperscript{57} Second, it is clear that sectoral interests in several new Latin American democracies, and particularly in Brazil, still retain significant power over governmental policy-making and are thus capable of extracting significant rents from the state.

Instead, in the Southern Cone, the increase in relative transparency entailed by democratisation has been one of two key causal factors facilitating increased cooperation. Democratic institutions, even only \textit{partially} transparent institutions, enhance the credibility of external commitments, in that they make it impossible to discriminate against external actors while providing domestic actors with the freedoms associated with liberal regimes. As Fearon argues, “international crises occur precisely because state leaders cannot anticipate the outcome, owing to the fact that adversaries have private information about their willingness to fight over foreign policy interests and the incentive to misrepresent it.”\textsuperscript{58} Once decision-making procedures are laid open to public scrutiny, they are also made evident to other states: what was private information in non-democratic regimes is made more publicly accessible in even partially democratised regimes. State policies and declared intentions—domestic and foreign—thus gain substantially increased credibility.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 88.
\textsuperscript{58} Fearon, 583.
The more actors discount the communications of others, the more coordination will depend upon identical interests.\textsuperscript{59} The increase in credible information thus reduces the necessity of identity of interests between states for cooperation to occur.

The second key causal factor facilitating the rise of economic integration in the Southern Cone—and the factor shaped by the agency of democratic élites—has been the shared interest in consolidating democracy. Homogeneity in regime type in dyadic relations has been argued to generate shared interests and facilitate the development of information, trust and norms, thus reducing the bargaining, monitoring, and enforcement costs of interstate contracts.\textsuperscript{60} However, élites driving through political reform programmes simultaneously in neighbouring states have increased incentives to ensure that reforms in neighbouring states are successful as well. As Remmer argues, mutual interest in maintaining democratic institutions increases the incentives for cooperation and the honest exchange of information.\textsuperscript{61} Transparency makes economic cooperation possible; shared interests make it attractive to prodemocratic political élites.

**Growth of Economic Cooperation: The Argentina-Brazil Economic Integration Pact**

In the late 1970s and early 1980s the Brazilian and Argentine military regimes had tried to improve their bilateral commercial ties, but had had little success: the lack of domestic transparency translated into an inability of the military regimes to make credible international commitments on cooperative bilateral ties.\textsuperscript{62} Furthermore, the ongoing military tension between the two military regimes undermined the essentially economic arguments in favour of increased cooperation. The Latin American Integration Association (LAIA) was established in Montevideo, Uruguay, in 1980, but made little progress in enhancing regional economic cooperation in South America.\textsuperscript{63}

However, by 1986 bilateral Argentine-Brazilian relations had undergone a substantial transformation and in July of that year Presidents Alfonsín and Sarney signed the Argentina-Brazil Economic Integration Pact (ABEIP). The key to the turnaround in bilateral relations was the transition to democratising, civilian-led governments in 1983 in Argentina and 1985 in Brazil. The ABEIP was intended by both presidents to be a means of reinforcing the consolidation of democracy domestically, further undermining the rationale for military intervention in domestic political change.\textsuperscript{64} Alfonsín made the initiative to begin talks on economic cooperation, believing that enhanced economic


cooperation would end Argentine-Brazilian rivalry and lead to a new pattern of interstate relations.\textsuperscript{65}

Clearly, both states’ transitional leaderships were motivated not only by political objectives, but also by pressing economic concerns. Sarney believed that closer ties with Argentina would help Brazil to exercise a more independent and prominent role in regional politics, while also allowing Brazil to meet its economic and trade needs. Alfonsín recognised that the trade imbalance that had developed during the early 1980s, as well as the low bilateral trade volume, could be at least partially redressed through the reorientation of domestic manufacturing toward the export market.\textsuperscript{66} However, as the nature of information flows in the authoritarian regimes in Argentina and Brazil, and the lack of shared commitments by those regimes to regional cooperation, had previously scuppered all initiatives for closer economic cooperation, the transparency provided by the (even partially consolidated) democratic institutions made the increased cooperation of the ABEIP possible. The ABEIP established six-monthly meetings of the Heads of State, designed to signal to their domestic and international audiences that a new pattern in policy-making at the regional level was underway and should be taken seriously.\textsuperscript{67} The credibility of this signalling was greatly enhanced by the increased transparency and partial accountability that was developing in both Argentina and Brazil.

The economic cooperation programme quickly took on a regional character. In May 1987 Alfonsín and Sarney met in Montevideo, at which Uruguayan President Julio Sanguinetti secured their pledge that Uruguay’s participation in future integration would be negotiated in the near future. Uruguay was formally invited to join the protocols of integration in February 1988, sanctioned in April 1989 in the Act of Alvorada.\textsuperscript{68} In June 1987 Alfonsín and Sarney again met, this time in the Argentine city of Viedma, and announced a new trade currency, the \textit{gaucho}, to be used by Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay in bilateral trade, and which would insulate traders from fluctuations in exchange rates.\textsuperscript{69} After the February 1988 meeting, the ABEIP partners went on to sign another 16 protocols of integration, including reductions on tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade in ‘strategic’ and traditional industries, including petrochemicals, automobiles and agriculture and processed foods.

After March 1988 integrative progress within the context of the ABEIP began to slow down, and by 1990 the integration project had lost much of its momentum. The cause for the slowdown reflects the central role of prodemocratic agents—particularly Alfonsín and Sarney and their supporters—in the integration process: the integration project was driven by prodemocratic and liberalising political élites who came up against an array of structural, financial, administrative and domestic political problems that delayed enhanced integration until 1991.\textsuperscript{70} However, despite worsening macroeconomic circumstances and mounting domestic political pressure, in November 1988 Argentina and Brazil signed the

\textsuperscript{66} Hirst 1988, 8.
\textsuperscript{67} Manzetti, 136.
\textsuperscript{68} Juan Mario Vacchino, “La Integracion Latinoamericana en la Era de la Globalizacion: Desarrollo de Espacios y Opciones de Integracion,” in Ana Carillo, ed., \textit{America Latina en la Era de la Globalizacion} (Caracas: Instituto de Altos Estudios de America Latina, 1996), 108.
\textsuperscript{69} Protocol 20.
\textsuperscript{70} Manzetti, 110.
Treaty of Integration, Cooperation and Development, aimed at creating a free trade zone between the two countries within a decade.\textsuperscript{71} This agreement established the institutional framework on which greatly enhanced economic integration, through Mercosur, was to be built.

\textbf{III. Democratic Consolidation and Regional Integration Mutually Reinforcing}

The decline of geopolitical conceptions of security in the Southern Cone was matched by a rise in interstate security cooperation. In the post-Cold War period, changes in security concepts and practices within and between states in the Southern Cone have been strongly influenced by the wave of democratisation which has dominated the region. Through the institutional constraints imposed by democratically legitimated civilian-led governments, “democratization has constrained the political prominence of the military in most countries and [security doctrines that justified the expansion of military expenditures and the maintenance of political prerogatives by the armed forces] have been gradually deactivated.”\textsuperscript{72} Furthermore, sharing common political values contributed to downgrading previous rivalries and disputes that in the past had hampered cooperative initiatives in this region.\textsuperscript{73} Democratisers undermined the credibility of geopolitical doctrines by enmeshing Southern Cone states’ interests—and creating new, mutual interests—through integration in regional economic and security cooperation regimes. As early as 1988 Kelly and Child were able to conclude that the “negative current of geopolitical thinking has become increasingly anachronistic as the Southern Cone consolidates its democratic traditions and emphasises the geopolitics of cooperation and integration.”\textsuperscript{74}

Hemispheric cooperative security entails “a system of inter-state interactions which, by coordinating government policies, anticipates and contains threats to national interests and prevents the perception of such threats by the different governments from turning into tensions, crises, or open confrontations.”\textsuperscript{75} Democratic institutions have facilitated policy coordination through increased openness and transparency.\textsuperscript{76} Transparency has “enabled progress towards the solution of traditional bilateral conflicts or tensions in a climate of better understanding.”\textsuperscript{77} Increased openness and electoral accountability provided levels of predictability to state decision-making procedures. States’ interests, and the means employed to achieve those interests, were opened to public—and external—scrutiny, enhancing interstate trust. Although prospective in tense, Guedes da Costa effectively describes the impact increased accountability has had, and is worth quoting at length:

“In Latin America, if political debates are to be conducted in a democratic regime, greater internal debates and the evaluation of foreign policy options, for decisions that either support a more redistributive economic model or sustain bilateral and multilateral cooperation in international affairs in general, can be expected. Owing to the need for accommodating different demands and directing limited national resources, the new bargaining processes may imply a greater demand for high volumes of information about the issues under debate and greater evaluation of options for foreign involvement on issues of conflict. This shift may

\textsuperscript{72} Hirst 1998, 102-3.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid., 102.
\textsuperscript{74} Kelly and Child, 3.
\textsuperscript{75} Augusto Varas and Rigoberto Cruz Johnson, \textit{Percepciones de Amenaza y Politicas de Defensa en America Latina} (Santiago de Chile: FLASCO, 1992), 12.
\textsuperscript{76} Fournier, 46.
\textsuperscript{77} Varas, 17.
provoke countries in the region to become more active in seeking new international partners and proposing solutions to common problems, since the introduction of true democracies imposes changes in political patterns, in wealth distribution, and in models of decision-making. 78

It was not only the institutionalisation of democracy that enhanced security cooperation between states. Shared interests and identities in Brazilian-Argentine relations came from a common sense of vulnerability: the conviction of pro-democratic elites that democracy was extremely fragile and democratic consolidation far from assured. 79 In response to this perceived vulnerability, in the mid-1980s pro- and proto-democratic elites across the region took the first tentative steps toward collective security, gradually undermining the geopolitical ‘hypothesis of conflict’ and establishing a framework for interstate cooperation which has helped to ensure democratic consolidation.

**The Contadora Support Group**

The Contadora Group, including Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, was established in January 1983 to provide political space for negotiations between groups in the ongoing Central American civil wars, particularly in El Salvador and Nicaragua. Brazil, Argentina, Peru and Uruguay formed the Support Group to the Contadora Group in 1985. The participation of the Support Group enhanced the political clout of the Contadora peace proposal and was key to regaining the legitimacy of the Contadora forum after the Reagan administration scuppered the first round of talks in an effort to retain US control of the peace negotiations. 80 In addition, the Support Group was able to assist in establishing Organisation of American States (OAS) and UN backing for the Contadora negotiations: in late-1985 the secretaries-general of the OAS and UN issued a joint memorandum which outlined the services which could be provided by each organisation in order to complement or consolidate Contadora’s efforts. 81 By mid-1986, however, the Contadora and Support Groups, now merged into the Río Group, recognised the necessity of allowing the Central American governments to work out their own negotiated settlement independent of external pressures, and withdrew from their formal mediation role.

In August 1987 the five Central American heads of state signed the Esquipulas II agreement, which defined the process for establishing a stable and lasting peace in the region. 82 The Esquipulas II agreement formalised the creation of the International Verification and Monitoring Committee (CIVS), which was made up of the secretaries-general of the OAS and UN, the Central American foreign ministers, and the Río Group. 83 The CIVS was entrusted with verifying the implementation of the commitments in the Esquipulas II agreement and was the last instance of mediation to emerge as a result of the Contadora negotiations. The CIVS served as the verification body for the Central American demobilisation until January 1988, when it issued its final report and was

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78 Guedes da Costa, 52.
80 Frohmann, “Regional Initiatives for Peace and Democracy,” 133.
81 Diéguez, 98.
83 This was the first occasion on which the Secretaries-General of both organisations had acted as full members of an international verification commission in the context of a regional peace accord, giving rise to a completely new relationship between the two organisations. See Eguizábal, 71.
disbanded by the Central American heads of state, who then passed the verification mission to their own foreign ministers.\textsuperscript{84}

In 1989 the Central American states signed the Tela Agreements, which included a plan to establish and implement the UN-backed and US-funded International Committee for Support and Verification (CIAV-OEA) of demobilisation of guerrillas involved in the Nicaraguan civil war, and thus to assist in the consolidation of peace in the Central American region.\textsuperscript{85} Brazil and Argentina both played significant roles in CIAV-OEA, most importantly expressing political backing to both camps and creating an enhanced sense of regional solidarity in opposition to US attempts to control the process.

In addition to its role in the Central American peace plan, Brazil also headed the effort by the Río Treaty Guarantors (including the US, Chile and Argentina) to resolve the Peru-Ecuador border conflict. As Seabra \textit{et. al} point out, these measures indicate a “new moderation of the concepts of sovereignty and non-intervention which differs from the traditional Brazilian posture of distancing itself from regional conflicts and domestic political crises.”\textsuperscript{86} However, it is important to point out that, while Argentina since 1982 has been the region’s leading advocate of collective intervention to establish and maintain interstate peace and to provide external support for democracy in the region, Brazil has been and remains ‘centrist’ on the interventionist-noninterventionist spectrum.\textsuperscript{87} As the participation of the Southern Cone states increased, their role within the peace negotiations became prominent domestic political issues: none of the members of the Contadora Support Group were capable of maintaining their efforts in Central America separate from their own internal agendas. “Contadora mediation was as much a Central American issue as it was a domestic issue in each individual national context.”\textsuperscript{88}

The significance of this increased willingness to interfere in the internal affairs of other states, to take active measures to preserve and enhance \textit{intra-} and well as \textit{interstate} peace in the region, is the fact that this dramatic shift away from the nonintervention norm derives from the gradual ascendance of democratic and liberal principles in the minds of Latin American political élites. Furthermore, it demonstrates the use of foreign policy as one component of the effort by élites to provide democratic stability and ensure democratic consolidation, while also reflecting the projection of those democratic principles into each of these states’ foreign relations. Finally, participation in the Contadora Support Group significantly enhanced the structural capacities of states and the willingness of élite actors involved to coordinate governmental policies, primarily vis-à-vis the Central American peace process. Through the spillover process, the structural capacity and willingness of

\textsuperscript{84} Eguízábal, 71.
\textsuperscript{85} Diéguez, 99.
élite actors to pursue intergovernmental coordination increased across a wide range of sectoral and policy areas.

**Regional Economic Integration: Mercosur**

Economic integration similarly enhanced the capacity of states to coordinate governmental policies and to anticipate and deal with disputes that might have escalated into militarised conflicts. Increased levels of trade and investment and transnational linkages created complex interdependencies between states, proliferating the number and quality of channels of communication between decision-makers in each state. The integration project itself required the establishment of dense networks of institutions and interactions, which has led to significant spillover to security cooperation and redefined material incentives in Brazilian-Argentine relations. Increasing levels of interdependence also promoted increased societal integration, particularly among Spanish-speaking countries, leading to the formation of new conceptions of interest, community and identity which deepened security cooperation between states.89

Brazil’s eventual transition to fully civilian-led democracy provided the impetus for deepening regional economic integration. The movement toward more intensive regional integration gained momentum in the first years of the Collor administration (1990-91), with negotiations among Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and Brazil leading to an increase in participating countries and sectors even before institutional mechanisms were worked out.90 The Act of Buenos Aires in July 1990 created the Latin American Common Market and brought about the innovative Common Market Group, an embryonic version of the EEC. In December 1990 the *Acuerdo de Complementacion Economico* (ACE-24) incorporated the 24 protocols, until then signed only by Brazil and Argentina, into a single coherent framework which was both more flexible and effective than previously.91 Mercosur was signed into existence in March 1991 in the Asunción Treaty, with the goal of establishing, along with the Latin American Integration Association (*Asociacion Latinoamericana de Integracion*, or ALADI), a sub-regional customs union before December 1994. The Asunción Treaty speeded economic integration by creating an automatic mechanism for the lifting of intraregional trade barriers.92

Initially market integration for the Mercosur four was marred by crippling debt repayments of close to 5 percent of GNP. However, by the mid-1990s Mercosur-led integration was beginning to develop trade and economic growth in all of its member states.93 As with the European Union, Mercosur is a long term project aiming to transform the political structure and the societies as well as the economies of the member countries. Unlike the EU, however, Mercosur’s minimal institutional structure gives it the necessary flexibility to adapt quickly to changing international economic conditions and member’s domestic policies. Most importantly among Mercosur’s achievements, a regional consciousness is developing which promises to further enhance cooperation and integration in future.

89 Ibid., 537.
90 Seabra de Cruz, Cavalcante and Pedone, 133.
Regional Disarmament

As with security policy coordination within the Río Group, economic integration and democratisation have increased levels of trust and cooperation sufficiently that Southern Cone states have entered into substantial multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament agreements with cooperative verification schemes. The Collor and Menem administrations forswore nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes in the bilateral accord signed at Foz de Iguazu in November 1990, and Franco’s administration (1992-94) strengthened Brazil’s non-proliferation commitments. In November 1991 Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay signed the Mendoza Commitment, supporting a total ban on the production, development, acquisition or transference of biological and chemical weapons. Then, in 1993, the modified protocol of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, signed in 1968 but never ratified, came into force with full ratification (including Cuban), establishing Latin America as a nuclear free zone. These treaties and accords amount to an armaments limitation regime representing substantial desecuritisation of regional interstate relations.

Collective Conflict Resolution and the Defence of Democracy Regime

As the Inter-American system has evolved in the post-Cold War period, two non-traditional issues have acquired particular prominence: democratic political stability, and the establishment and development of peace forces. The emergence of a regional consensus on the imperative to pursue voluntary, collective measures to resolve interstate conflicts within the region, and the overlapping regional commitment to the defence of democracy regime established by the OAS, are the most obvious and yet complex manifestations of the causal nexus among democratisation, desecuritisation and economic integration in the Southern Cone. These two emergent regimes are both the product of redemocratisation across the region, and reflect the use of regional relations by domestic regimes as one means of ensuring the consolidation of democracy domestically.

Within the Inter-American system there has historically been a close relationship between the peaceful settlement of disputes and collective security. This relationship was clearly established by both the Charter of the Organisation of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (ITRA). However, the Pact of Bogotá, intended to cover the peaceful resolution of interstate disputes, has not been ratified by significant hemispheric actors (eg., US, Canada, Argentina), and the peaceful settlement of disputes has been believed to be covered by the ITRA. Despite widespread belief that the ITRA was the primary institution for the peaceful resolution of interstate conflict, the Treaty has proven to be a weak instrument and its last successful application was in 1975. Argentina tried unsuccessfully to invoke the measure during the 1982 Falklands/Malvinas War and the failure of the collective security arrangement, with US refusal to cooperate,

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95 Rojas Aravena, 116. In December 1991, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela undertook a similar commitment in the Declaration of Cartagena.
97 Rojas Aravena, 114.
99 Diéguez, 102.
led to the virtual abandonment of the ITRA for collective security and conflict resolution purposes.

The onset of redemocratisation across the region has dramatically altered the role and implementation of collective security, which has now taken on a multifaceted character, with intra- as well as interstate conflict resolution and the defence and promotion of democratic consolidation as widely accepted legitimate priorities. The Río Group has been an important, high level integrative body and its success is exemplary of the intersectoral spillover process.

The Río Group

The early 1990s in Latin America was a period of intense activity in the field of military diplomacy, as part of an ongoing process of articulation and coordination between democratic governments. This coordination manifested in visits, consultations, exchanges of information, and the establishment of mutual trust, paving the way for the evolution of cooperation across multiple policy sectors.100 The Río Group, an outgrowth of the Contadora negotiations discussed above, is one means of political consensus-building (concertación) across Latin America. The Group coordinates actions and views in various fields, including security, and has made notable progress in establishing and enhancing political dialogue within the region.101

In 1986, the Contadora and Support Groups merged to form the Río Group.102 The Río Group held its first presidential meeting in 1987, formulating a policy of promoting effective participation on the part of the whole international community in security, the preservation of peace, and cooperation.103 Río Group presidents also agreed at that inaugural meeting to support incentives for regional disarmament and international security, the stimulation of mutual trust, and the encouragement of the local settlement of regional disputes.104 In 1992 the Río Group responded positively to Boutros-Boutros Ghali’s recommendations for the establishment of proactive peacekeeping and peacemaking policies, including the establishment of a UN ‘rapid reaction force’, in his An Agenda for Peace.105

Although formed initially to promote the Contadora process, by the late-1980s the Latin American political scene had changed and the Group has developed a much more South American profile; the Group’s main objective soon became the consolidation of the democratic process in all the countries of the region.106 In the cases of Haiti, Panama, Peru and Venezuela, the Río Group issued a series of recommendations aimed at re-establishing

100 Rojas Aravena, 112. See also Augusto Varas and Isaac Caro, eds., Medidas de confianza mutua en América Latina (Santiago: FLASCO-Stimson Centre-SER, 1994).
102 The original eight members include Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela (Contadora), Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay (Support). Chile, Ecuador, Bolivia and Paraguay joined in 1990.
103 Rojas Aravena, 119-20.
104 Diéuez, 108.
106 Frohmann, 130-31.
peace and democracy. Both Panama and Peru were suspended from the Group following the intervention in domestic politics by their militaries. Peru returned to the Group in 1993, as a result of the measures adopted by President Fujimori to restore democracy. Panama, with a newly elected democratic government, was reinstated as a member in September 1994.

The OAS Defence of Democracy Regime

The defence and promotion of democracy has become a particular priority issue in the post-Cold War agenda of the OAS. The defence of democracy regime, institutionalised in the 1991 Santiago Commitment, represents the culmination of regional integration and democratisation. The promotion of democratic values abroad reflects the principled commitment to democracy in the abstract, while also serving the functional role of assisting in the consolidation of democracy at home.

In the event of an abrupt or irregular interruption of the constitutional democratic process, or of the legitimate exercise of power on the part of a democratically elected government in a member state, the Santiago Commitment requires the Secretary-General of the OAS to convene the Permanent Council which must examine the situation and organise an ad-hoc meeting of foreign ministers to analyse the situation and decide upon specific collective action. The Santiago Commitment has been invoked on four occasions: Peru (1992), Haiti (1993), Guatemala (1993), and Paraguay (1996). In 1997 the Washington Protocol went into effect, amending the OAS Charter to allow the Organisation to suspend a member state whose democratically elected government has been overthrown by force. Significantly, Brazil and Argentina were jointly responsible for spearheading and shepherding through the Washington Protocol in 1992.

The strong and unequivocal OAS response to the overthrow of the democratically elected government of Jean Bertrand Aristide of Haiti, while ultimately ineffective in restoring democratic governance to Haiti, is exemplary of the position the OAS has adopted in the post-Cold War period to threats to democratic survival, and thus warrants a relatively detailed examination.

The OAS has been examining the varied political crises in Haiti since 1986. In October 1991, as a consequence of the overthrow of the democratically elected Haitian president by a military junta, the OAS immediately convened an Ad-Hoc Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to examine the situation, which utilised diplomatic pressure to try to achieve a negotiated political settlement to the crisis. Within weeks, the OAS condemned the Haitian coup and called for an embargo. A mission of foreign ministers visited Haiti three times to communicate these decisions to the military, which led to the opening of dialogue in the search for a negotiated solution. The Secretary-General of the OAS, at the request of Aristide, obtained agreement by OAS members to form a civilian mission to support the restoration of constitutional democracy in the country (OAS-DEMOC). These negotiations led to the adoption of two sets of protocols between

109 Bloomfield, 24.
110 Diéguez, 99.
Aristide and, first, the Haitian Parliamentary Negotiation Committee, second, Prime Minister designate René Théodore. A third protocol was signed with the participation of the United Nations. However, the military junta remained intransigent.

Following 18 months of unsuccessful negotiations, and only days before an international embargo on Haitian exports was to come into effect, the Haitian Congress designated a Supreme Tribunal magistrate, Emil Jonnassaint, as a substitute for President Aristide. The Permanent Council of the OAS replied with a declaration denouncing this designation as illegal, and stating that it considered the whole manoeuvre an act of aggression and defiance of the international community. Further intransigence by the Haitian military junta resulted in UN Resolution 940 (from which Brazil and China abstained), which gave the green light for an indefinite multinational force to act as it judged appropriate.

The significance of the new regional commitment to the defence of democracy regime and the collective resolution of intra- and interstate conflicts cannot be overstated. In the course of a decade, Southern Cone states effected a 180 degree about turn in their fundamental approaches to regional relations. This dramatic reversal in foreign policy stances was the direct result of the region-wide wave of democratic transitions. Participation in and (at least rhetorical) commitment to the defence of democracy regime reflects the attempt by domestic political élites to harness their states’ foreign policies to their ambitions to consolidate their at times fragile democratic regimes. The shared regional commitment by democratic governments to the peaceful resolution of conflict and the defence of democracy regime, in turn, has shaped the domestic political discourses within each of these states and dramatically reduced the likelihood of military intervention in civilian-led politics, thus enhancing the likelihood of democratic survivability.

However, there are some reservations, often among geopolitical strategists within Latin American foreign policy circles, about the effectiveness and appropriateness of the collective security arrangements. For example, Thomaz Guedez da Costa, Research Fellow and Coordinator at the Strategic Studies Centre of the Brazilian Ministry of Strategic Affairs, describes “the low value and low credibility given by Latin America to the existing formal instruments of conflict resolution covering the hemisphere.” According to Guedez da Costa, the Conference of Ministers of the OAS, the Rio Treaty, and the Inter-American Defense Board “laid down guidelines either for potential collective action to resolve disputes among Latin American states or for building a regional response to extracontinental threats.” However, “these objectives remained mostly at the level of the rhetoric of meetings and resolutions; very few concrete measures were taken to ensure, under their auspices, the ending of conflicts in the region.”111

Conclusion
The Southern Cone demonstrates an underlying transition in the ideological stance of political elites across the region from a worldview dominated by state-centred, conflict-dominated conceptions of domestic and international politics, to a worldview in which democracy, the rule of law, liberalism, free markets and regional cooperation structure domestic political agendas. This new perspective, which emerged in the early- to mid-1980s, developed partly in response to domestic crises of legitimacy created by the perceived failure of developmentalism, the slowdown in economic growth, and the debt

111 Guedes da Costa, 47-8.
crisis, and partly in response to external pressures for reform. Rapprochement between Brazil and Argentina facilitated the emergence of democracy and the delegitimation of continued military involvement in the domestic political order and the process of regime transition. Thus, enhanced regional security cooperation and integration emerge as complementary processes, simultaneously making possible and reinforcing the consolidation of democratic institutions and the deepening of democracy. Without the fundamental shift to a cooperative stance vis à vis regional neighbours, these Southern Cone states probably would not now be in the process of consolidating their democracies, as nationalists and the military would have been able to use the perceived threat from neighbouring states to enhance their domestic legitimacy, perpetuating their influence over domestic politics and the transition process.

However, to conclude on a pessimistic note, there remains some cause for concern about the long term viability of the existing transgovernmental institutions and structures established to facilitate regional cooperation. For example, Varas argues that regional organisations such as LAES and the Andean Pact, and hemispheric organisations such as the OAS, have been eclipsed in recent years by non-hemispheric organisations, such as NATO for Argentina, APEC for Chile and Mexico, and the OECD for Mexico, and new regional organisations like the Rio II Group and the Group of Three. These new regional organisations, according to Varas, are more flexible and fluid, and tend to respond better to the new realities of the Latin American countries’ foreign relations. The early 1990s witnessed a shift in the modality of regional relations, Varas claims, in which “intraregional, hemispheric, or extraregional free trade agreements have replaced the “dense” forms of economic interaction… which centred on policies of comprehensive, multidimensional agreements for regional integration.”

In addition, the long term implications of regional democratisation for regional security cooperation are not inevitably destined to be positive. Some theorists point to a potential conflict between the perceived intra- and extra-regional threats which have shaped regional defence policies for the past several decades, and the growing and widespread interest in developing stable systems for economic and political cooperation. Thus, the “traditional perceptions of threat, as well as the new concerns about changes in the regional status quo, constitute an array of negative external factors that define political-strategic interactions in Latin America.” These new concerns about the new regional status quo have led some theorists to conclude that democratic consolidation in the Southern Cone could signify a movement back to a classic security dilemma environment. Such a return to geopolitically determined conceptions of interstate relations would greatly hinder economic integration strategies and revive the now dormant threat of a return to military rule across the region.

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112 Peter Hakim similarly argues that “it is possible… to make an equally compelling case… that the Rio Group and similar initiatives have accomplished very little.” See his “Comment,” a response to Alicia Frohmann’s piece, in Olga Pellicer, ed., Regional Mechanisms and International Security in Latin America (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1998), 142.
113 Varas, 17.
114 Ibid., 18.
115 Ibid., 10.