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Public Security and Police Reform in the Americas

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Insecurity is a powerful force in private life and in politics, and fear and apprehension about crime and violence are driving change throughout the hemisphere. With few exceptions, the general pattern in the Americas was a significant increase in crime and violence in the mid-1980s and again in the mid-1990s. This pattern appeared on a global scale as well, for reasons that are not entirely clear. These trends clearly burdened the economies and societies of the affected countries. They complicated democratic governability as well, although we lack systematic, comparative studies (Bailey and Godson, 2000). The main exception to these trends in "common crime" was the United States, where crime rates peaked about 1990 and then declined over the decade (see Blumstein and Wallman 2000). But the sense of well-being brought by declines in crime was shattered by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In sum, whether due to criminal violence or terrorism, the issue of insecurity has risen to the top of the public agenda throughout the hemisphere.

This book examines the experiences with public security and police reform of six countries in the Americas: Brazil, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico, and the United States. Our selection of cases (see table 1.1) includes countries representing the largest and smallest in size and population, federal and unitary in governmental organization, post–civil war and relatively pacific, in the midst of democratic transition and fairly well consolidated. *Public security*, as we use the term, differs from *national security* in that it emphasizes protection of persons, property, and democratic political institutions from internal or external threats. National security, in contrast, emphasizes protection of the state and territorial integrity from other state actors, as well as

from transstate actors, such as organized crime, terrorism, and the like. Apprehension about crime and violence against persons in their daily lives throughout the hemisphere puts priority on public security.

Along with the overviews of public-security challenges and responses, we present examples of police reform drawn from the same countries. The police play a central role in political life, and their roles in democratic systems—as Miguel Cruz emphasizes in his chapter on El Salvador—are especially significant. They are the active, visible presence of democratic governance. Their respect, or lack thereof, for civil and human rights sets the tone of government–civil-society relations. And their effectiveness in preventing and repressing crime is a crucial measure of government competence, which in turn affects the legitimacy of democracy as a political regime.

Police reform refers to improving police forces' operational efficiency and effectiveness in preventing and repressing crime as well as to strengthening their democratic ethos and accountability. Police reform is the most frequent first response to perceptions of increased insecurity, and we present a case for

1.1 General country information, 2002

	Population (millions)	Population growth rate (annual %)	GDP per capita[a] (thousands)	Unemployment rate (rates total)	Poverty level[b] (%)	Gini coefficient (2001)
Brazil	174.5	1.2	4,644	10.5	22	0.59
Chile	15.6	1.1	5,436	7.8	22	0.56
Colombia	43.7	1.5	2,274	15.7	55	0.57
El Salvador	6.5	1.9	1,763	10[c]	48	0.51
Mexico	100.9	1.5	3,713	2.1	40	0.52
United States	288.4	0.9	31,977	5	13	0.41

Sources: World Bank Development Indicators, http://www.worldbank.org/data/countrydata/countrydata.html; International Labor Organization, http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/kidm/index.html; Human Development Report 2001, http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2001/en; Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía, México, http://www.inegi.gob.nx/inegi/default.asp; Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censo, Argentina, http://www.indec.mecon.ar; Instituto Brasileiro de Geografía e Estadística, Brazil, http://www.ibge.gov.br; Latin-Focus.com, 2003, http://www.latin-focus.com.
[a]GDP/per capita based on constant 1995 US$.
[b]Data correspond to 2001 for Colombia, Mexico, and United States; 1999 for El Salvador; and 1998 for Brazil and Chile.
[c]Data correspond to 2001, *CIA World Factbook*, 2003, http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook.

each country that opens a window onto some aspect of governments' efforts to use this instrument. Our selection of police-reform cases was not guided by a single criterion, as, for example, the most typical, most publicized, or most successful. Rather, the cases tell us stories about reform efforts that are interesting in particular national contexts. Our cases cover efforts to demilitarize the police in Colombia, Chile, and El Salvador; the creation of a business-oriented nongovernmental organization (NGO) in São Paulo to promote police reform; community self-help in Mexico to counter a hostile and ineffective state-police force; and a negotiated effort to improve relations between police and the African American community in a U.S. city. The stories illustrate vividly how factors such as political pressures, technology, scandal, leadership, culture, myths, and embedded corruption interact to affect change. Along with the overviews of public-security policies, they provide material to help us extract lessons about the success or failure of policy initiatives.

Although this book is mostly about Latin American countries, we include the United States. As shown in table 1.1, the United States is much more populous, wealthy, and economically equal and enjoys much higher rates of employment. Most discussions of policy problems are premised on the notion that the Latin American and U.S. cases are like apples and oranges. In contrast, we believe that a strength of this collection is to bring the U.S. case into a common framework of public security with other countries in the region. We emphasize two rationales. First, there is little mutual understanding of the different types of public-security challenges faced by the United States and by the other countries of the region. Sheer distance from the terrorist attacks of September 11, combined with a general antipathy in the region toward U.S. unilateralism in foreign policy, especially the March 2003 attack on Iraq, help explain the lack of understanding to some degree. Similarly, the U.S. public—including informed elites—has relatively little appreciation of the severity of crime and violence in the rest of the hemisphere and of their multiple impacts on the polity, economy, and society. For example, as Portes and Hoffman (2003, 70–74) point out, crime and violence have become significant push factors for outmigration from Latin America to the United States. Ignorance about each other's security situation leads the United States and the other countries of the hemisphere to misperceive and misinterpret actions and policies and to "talk past one another." These gaps in understanding may complicate efforts by the American republics to negotiate a successor to the 1947 Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, viewed by many as an outdated relic of the Cold War. In short, the multiple challenges of

insecurity in effect compel us to include the United States in a hemispheric context.

Second, Latin American political leaders, under siege from public demands that something must be done about crime and violence, have cast about anxiously for quick answers. Many of their ideas are drawn from the U.S. experience, which is seen to represent something like best practices. Frequently, the transplanted ideas are not well understood, and they may produce unexpected (often unwanted) results. An apt example is zero tolerance (sometimes called broken windows), drawn from New York City's perceived success and considered for adoption in Brazil and Mexico. A better comprehension of the institutions and values that shape U.S. experience can help guide selections, or at least it can illuminate the problems of policy diffusion from one national setting to another.

Dual Transitions and Public Insecurity in Latin America

Beginning in the late 1970s and continuing to the present, most of the Latin American countries experienced profound changes in both economic and political systems. These structural and institutional changes both coincided with and partially account for the upsurge in crime and violence. On the economic side, countries began transitions away from import substitution industrialization (ISI), with its emphasis on market protection and state-led promotion of domestic industry and toward greater emphasis on promoting trade and investment externally and deregulating the domestic market. ISI had been pursued to one degree or another throughout the region since the 1950s. While important advances in industrialization had been achieved by the 1970s, the overarching pattern was one of an inefficient industrial plant, unable to compete internationally in price and quality, and a public sector overburdened by multiple programs of economic promotion, regulation, and social welfare. Without exception, the countries experienced recurring and often severe bouts of inflation, along with balance-of-payments problems and fiscal deficits. The energy crises of the 1970s, with negative impacts on both oil-exporting and oil-importing countries, set the stage for the abandonment of ISI in the 1980s.[1]

The economic transition to more open markets brought pain and sacrifices in the short term (and possibly in the long term as well), along with important benefits. Fiscal crises forced cutbacks in a variety of public programs, which in turn caused layoffs in public employment and the reduction or elim-

ination of subsidies. Governments retreated from industrial-promotion activities and began to sell off assets through privatization programs in, for example, telephones, transportation, agricultural-product processing, and a host of other activities. Reduction in tariffs and other forms of import barriers exposed economies to new pressures across the board, pressures that many domestic industries were unable to absorb. On the positive side of the ledger, most countries reduced fiscal deficits and overall levels of inflation and made progress on a variety of administrative reforms, including decentralization.

At the same time that Latin American countries experienced economic shocks, many of them (with Colombia as an exception) underwent complex transitions from different forms of authoritarianism to formal, that is, electoral, democracy.[2] The routes and circumstances varied. Of the countries included here, Brazil and Mexico followed a more gradual, negotiated path; El Salvador's democracy was negotiated in a formal treaty in 1992, ending its decade-long civil war; and Chile's seventeen years under military rule (1973–1990) ended with a peaceful plebiscite. Whatever the route of the transitions, the forms of democracy that emerged tended to be shallow and fragile (with Chile as an important exception). These democracies (including Colombia's) met the minimum requirements of competing parties, periodic elections that were reasonably clean, and elected leaders that exercised at least some degree of control over their bureaucracies. But constitutional guarantees were unevenly enforced, legislative bodies and courts operated ineffectively, subnational governments (states, provinces, cities) were generally inefficient and starved for resources, and democratic political culture and engaged civil society were generally lacking. Outside of the urban middle and upper strata, law enforcement was typically precarious, perverse, or nonexistent (Mendez, O'Donnell, and Pinheiro 1999).

Guillermo O'Donnell (1994) insightfully characterizes these emerging regimes as a type of delegative democracy. This is a species of democracy that in his view meets minimal criteria of procedural democracy but lacks horizontal accountability in the sense that powerful presidents are not checked by effective legislatures or courts. O'Donnell questions whether these new democracies will naturally evolve toward forms of representative democracy, with better enforcement of constitutional rights, more effective horizontal accountability, and more robust civil societies, or whether they will suffer what he calls a slow death of violence, corruption, inefficiency, impunity, and poor-quality decision making. Some countercurrents, however, such as more assertive legislatures and courts and more active civil-society organizations,

suggest a more nuanced picture. Latin American democracies may be moving beyond the delegative image that O'Donnell sketches.

This dual economic and political transition of the 1980s and 1990s coincided with a sharp increase in crime and violence. This, in turn, triggered fear and insecurity, often out of proportion to the situation. Since there appeared to be a near-universal increase in crime and violence (again, with the United States the exception), we cannot assign a direct causal role to the dual transition. Even so, several linkages appear significant. The economic changes that brought greater underemployment in the formal sector, a burgeoning informal sector, and inequality in income and wealth also popularized the consumer tastes of the postindustrial, wealthy countries. That is, men and women lost jobs or endured income losses at the same time that they were bombarded with advertising and images of the good life from advanced postindustrial societies (Oxhorn and Ducatensziler 1998; Portes and Hoffman 2003).

On the political-administrative side, the new democracies inherited feeble state capacity to formulate and implement programs. Weak capacity was further undermined by fiscal crises. Among the feeblest of the institutions were those expected to confront the upsurge in crime and violence: the police, courts, prison systems, and agencies charged with social rehabilitation. In some cases, such as El Salvador and Mexico, the transition to democracy meant challenges to old systems of control in which political elites had negotiated extralegal and corrupt arrangements with police to manage the crime problem.

In all, structural and institutional changes created circumstances that contributed to the upsurge in crime and violence. We should emphasize that crime and violence have long been chronic problems throughout Latin America. The democratic transitions of the 1980s and 1990s created more open political and social systems, and these in turn both magnified perceptions of insecurity and generated pressures on elected officials for prompt solutions. Politicians took up crime control as a campaign banner and competed in offering tough anticrime programs. Perceptions of insecurity were further magnified by mass media, which both enjoyed greater freedom from government control and confronted the pressures of market competition. In this context, crime coverage—especially by television—generally increased in volume and graphic intensity. A nonobvious effect of media coverage was to broadcast the heightened sense of insecurity from the main urban centers— where problems of insecurity were usually more severe—to the smaller towns

and countryside, contributing to a sense of insecurity in these areas often out of proportion to reality and unrelated to urban crime and violence (see, e.g., Smulovitz 2003).

Diagnosis of the Problem of Insecurity

A fundamental obstacle to grasping the dimensions and dynamics of the public-security problem in the hemisphere is the lack of accurate, reliable, and comparable data on violence, crime, and fear of crime, along with indicators of their societal-political impacts. The quality of the data is generally poor and unreliable, with relatively few exceptions. One of the several implications of this diagnosis deficit (Llorente and Rubio 2003) is the space it opens for criminal policy to be shaped by ideology, improvisation, or emulation of foreign experience—a theme that recurs in several of our cases.

Lacking standard terminology and data-collection methods about varieties of types of crime across regions and countries, and even within countries, the most reliable estimate for trends in criminality is the homicide rate, taken to mean intended, nonaccidental deaths per one hundred thousand persons. The assumption is that, by and large, other forms of crime tend to covary with homicide. To provide a context by which to interpret the Western Hemisphere, the world average homicide rate in 2000 was 8.8; for high-income countries, it was 2.9; for low- and middle-income countries, it was 10.1. In regional terms, the rate for Africa was 22.2; for Europe, 8.4; and for the Americas as a whole, 19.3 (World Health Organization 2002). Table 1.2 shows that the United States, Anglo Caribbean, and Southern Cone approximate the world average, while the rest of the hemisphere exceeds it by magnitudes between two (Mexico) and seven (Andean region). Homicide rates generally increased throughout the Western Hemisphere from 1984 to mid-1994. With Colombia as the main outlier, the Andean region registered the fastest increase (over 100 percent) and the highest overall rates (51.9), followed by Central America and the Latin Caribbean, up 20.6 percent to 21.1.

Table 1.3 shows that in the countries examined in this book, homicide rates peaked in the early 1990s and subsequently declined (with the exceptions of Argentina and Brazil, which registered considerable increases, and Colombia, which held steady at a rate eight times the world average).

National averages, however, mask important subnational patterns. First, the homicide rates in certain urban regions are far above the national averages. Brazil's national homicide rate was 25 in 1999, but much higher in ma-

1.2 Homicide rates in North and Latin America and the Caribbean, 1984 and 1994 (per 100,000 inhabitants)

Regions	1984	1994
Central America and Latin Caribbean	17.5	21.1
Andean region	25.2	51.9
Anglo Caribbean	5.2	8.7
Southern Cone	5.4	6.2

Source: Arriagada and Godoy (1999, 17); Federal Bureau of Investigation, Index of Crime 1982–2001, http://www.fbi.gov/filelink.html?file=/ucr/cius_00/xl/00tbl01.xls.

jor cities: for example, Recife 65.4, São Paulo 51.1, and Rio de Janeiro 37.8.[3] Second, violence tends to be concentrated among young men in the ten- to twenty-nine-year age bracket. In this respect, Latin America has the world's highest homicide rates, as seen in Colombia (84.4) and El Salvador (50.2) (World Health Organization 2002). Closely related to this is a phenomenon reported by several of our contributors, that is, there are strong indicators of a culture of violence among young, mostly urban, males.

Victimization surveys are a useful tool to assess crime situations cross-nationally and over time. However, for a variety of reasons, such as cost, political sensitivity, and distortion by media, there is little experience with such surveys in the region (with the United States as a clear exception). Lacking reliable comparative data, we can report specific results for national cases, which can provide a partial impression of overall tendencies.

In the countries included in this volume, we have victimization surveys for Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, and the United States.[4] In all of these cases the surveys were done by a government agency. For Colombia, El Salvador, and the United States, the surveys were done nationwide, whereas in Chile coverage was limited to the main urban areas. In Colombia, Brazil, and Mexico,[5] several public-opinion surveys were done by private entities for publication in mass media. Unfortunately, in many of these countries the survey items regarding victimization do not relate to the same types of crimes. Still, there is useful information that allows us to characterize the regional crime problem.

Several trends are apparent: (1) there is an important gap between fear of crime and crime as measured by various means; that is, there is more fear

than warranted by reality; (2) victimization is increasing at even higher rates in medium-size cities; (3) only 25 to 30 percent of crimes are reported to the police; (4) ordinary, violent crimes are reported at even lower rates; and (5) one of the main reasons given for not reporting a crime is distrust of the police (with Chile and the United States as exceptions).

Crime and violence have an impact on democratic governability. A key trait of democracies should be trust, not only toward public institutions but also among citizens. Citizens in Latin America evince limited trust in public institutions. A recent survey (figure 1.1) found that between 1997 and 2003 public trust tended to decline throughout the region (Latinobarómetro 2003). Specifically, lack of trust is greatest toward political parties and the two institutions that are keys to public security: the justice system and the police. For example, those expressing trust in the judiciary declined from 33 to 27 percent between 1996 and 2001 (Latinobarómetro 2003).

In general, low levels of interpersonal trust are a defining feature of Latin American political culture (Lagos 2001). The reasons for such low levels vary by country, but they create contexts for the development of more social and territorial segregation. That is, distrust tends to discourage citizens from in-

**1.3 Homicide rates in six Latin American countries and the United States, late 1970s–2000 (per 100,000 inhabitants)**

Countries	Late 1970s, early 1980s[a]	Late 1980s, early 1990s[b]	1995[c]	2000[d]
El Salvador	—	138.2	117.0	42.9
Colombia	20.5	89.5	60.8	65.0
Brazil	11.5	19.7	19.3	25.0
México	18.2	17.8	15.4	12.5
Chile	2.6	3.0	1.8	1.9
United States	10.2	9.4	8.4	6.1

[a]Arriagada and Godoy (1999, 17).
[b]Arriagada and Godoy (1999, 17).
[c]Pan American Health Organization, http://www.paho.org/Engl; Instituto de Medicina Legal de El Salvador; Ministerio del Interior Chile, www.interior.gov.cl.
[d]Pan American Health Organization, http://www.paho.org/Engl; Ministerio del Interior Chile, www.interior.gov.cl; National Vital Statistics Reports, vol.50, n.16, CDC, United States, 2000, http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/pubs/pubd/nvsr/50/50-16.htm.
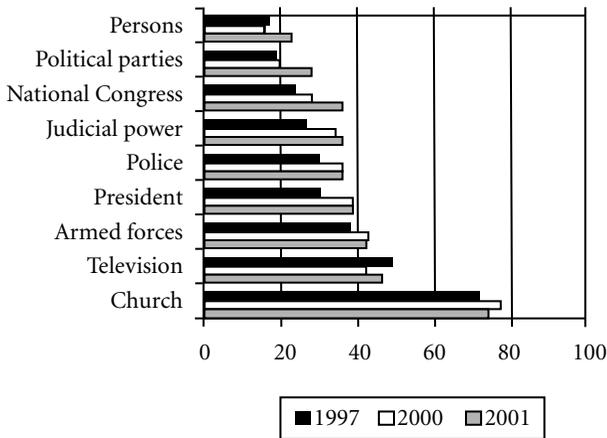
FIGURE 1.1 Trends in trust in Latin America, 1997–2001
Source: Latinobarómetro, 2003.

teracting freely in public spaces, such as city plazas, parks, and commercial establishments, and encourages them to seek refuge in gated communities and fortified homes. The situation is dramatic in countries such as Brazil, in which levels of interpersonal trust were at 4 percent in 2000 (Lagos 2001).[6]

A key issue that characterizes the problem of insecurity is fear of crime. As noted in the literature (Walklate 1998; Rotker 2000), fear of crime is a highly sensitive issue because it affects not only crime victims but also those receiving images about crime, either directly or as filtered by various means. In that sense, a common element of daily life in cities worldwide is the perception of insecurity. Crime in itself cannot fully explain the levels of fear of crime found in most cities. Chile is an excellent example of the role that citizens' increasing fear of violent crime has on setting the public-policy agenda (Dammert and Malone 2003). In contrast to those in Chile, victimization surveys in Colombia show substantial declines in fear of crime. In 1999 about 60 percent of households reported feeling unsafe in their particular city; in 2002 that figure had dropped to 44 percent. The change in Bogotá, the national capital, was most dramatic. Whereas in 1999 Bogotá recorded the highest rate of insecurity, in 2002 measures of perceptions of insecurity declined by half, and the capital ranked last among the major cities (Fedesarrollo 2003). While fear of ordinary crime declined rather steadily in the United States, fear of terrorism—which is both a crime and an act of war—spiked in the aftermath of September 11 and remained at high levels.

Responses to Public Insecurity

While interstate wars—with threats to state institutions and territorial integrity—have diminished in importance throughout the hemisphere, internal and transnational crime and violence of various types increased in the 1980s and the early 1990s. The shift calls attention to challenges to public security, which differs in important respects from national security (summarized in table 1.4). National security focuses on protecting the state or state institutions from both external and internal threats. The external threats are posed by both the conventional military forces of hostile states and transnational actors. Threats to national security may be posed by internal subversion as well. For example, threats posed by organized crime or terrorism can be both internal and external in nature. Responses to these threats usually center on state institutions, especially military forces. Public security, in contrast, involves the protection of persons, property, and democratic political institutions against both internal and external threats of violence or intimidation. In its simplest daily manifestation, public security refers to the physical and psychological safety of persons from threats from natural disasters or from actual physical aggression by others.[7] "Others" may include ordinary criminals or politically motivated terrorists. The primary targets are civilians, although state institutions may be attacked as well. Responses to public-security threats, both internal and external, are led more by police, law enforcement, and intelligence services. Military forces may also play a significant role. Public security emphasizes civil rights and rule of law, which imply both effective governmental law enforcement and citizens' safety from extralegal or illegal coercion by state officials. Finally, public security, like national security in the context of the Western Hemisphere, includes protection of democratic institutions.

Put another way, countries of the Western Hemisphere typically confront a mix of both public- and national-security threats. Both types of threats can take external and internal forms. National-security threats target state institutions and state attributes, such as sovereignty and territoriality, and the responses are typically led by military forces. Public-security threats target individuals, and law-enforcement agencies are the lead responders.

The sources of threats to public security are principally crime, violence, terrorism, and domestic institutions characterized by incompetence, corruption, and impunity. Throughout much of Latin America and the Caribbean, the principal threats are multiple forms of crime and interpersonal violence;

1.4 Issues in public and national security

	Who or what should be protected?	Who or what present threats?	What forms do threats assume?	What are state responses?	What are societal responses?
National Security	• State and key state institutions • Sovereignty and territorial integrity • Political stability and internal order • Democracy and individual freedoms • Economic growth and competitiveness	• Nation-states and state agencies • Trans-state actors, including terrorists, organized crime • Structural, non-actor threats from population movements, environmental degradation, etc.	• Disputes between sovereign states • Aggression by rogue states, especially from weapons of mass destruction • Corruption by organized crime, especially drug trafficking • Attacks by transnational terrorists or by domestic terrorists	• State-centered responses: military, diplomatic, and intelligence • Coalition building • Regional cooperation (bilateral and multilateral approaches to drug trafficking and terrorism, as well as increasing intelligence sharing)	• Mobilization (e.g., citizen support for defense activities) • Vigilance
Public Security	• Personal safety • Personal assets and goods • Rule of law • Democratic institutional development	• External and internal organized crime, especially drug trafficking • Weak internal institutions (e.g., inefficiency, poor training, inadequate resources) • Common crime • Urban violence • Terrorists	• Instrumental, targeted violence and intimidation in public spaces • Diffuse violence by individuals and gangs • Domestic violence • Corruption • Official impunity and predatory law enforcement • Disregard for basic civil and human rights	• Control, prevention of crime • Strengthen army, security forces and police • Outsource security to private sector • Coalition building, regional cooperation • State reforms (e.g., legal framework, police, judiciary) • Increase of prison population	• Citizen participation in public programs • Citizen participation in community organizations and programs • Self-defense and vigilantism • Culture of lawfulness
Citizen, Inhabitant, Human Security	• Economic sufficiency • Physical and emotional integrity • Political, civil, and human rights • Youth and other at-risk groups • Cultural identity	• Poverty • Weak internal institutions • Demographic change and population movements • Resource scarcity • Environmental degradation	• Poor health, malnutrition • Corruption • Targeted and diffuse violence • Emigration/Immigration • Pollution • Natural disasters	• State reform (e.g., improved efficiency; anticorruption efforts) • Expanded social services (e.g., health and education) • Expanded regulation (e.g., environmental protection)	• Building citizen participation, community organization, culture of lawfulness

these threats peaked in the mid-1990s and have remained at a comparatively high level into the twenty-first century. The region also suffers from corrupt and inefficient law-enforcement and judicial institutions. It is important to differentiate between national and public security in countries that have suffered dictatorships and that are struggling to improve law enforcement and justice administration while also promoting human rights. In the U.S. case, crime and violence were significant issues in the 1970s and 1980s but appeared to diminish in importance in the 1990s. The overriding concern pervading the society is about domestic and transnational forms of terrorism. In the U.S. case as well, the concern is the balance between strengthening security and protecting civil rights.

Responses to threats to public security involve both government and civil society. Typically, governments invest resources in hiring additional police officers, and they may or may not strengthen the judicial system at other stages, from crime prevention through investigation, prosecution, imprisonment, and rehabilitation. Additional efforts go toward improving cooperation among security forces, including police, intelligence, military, and border-control agencies. Governments may also privatize some aspects of police or judicial operations. Since the threats are often transnational, efforts are devoted to international cooperation as well.

Somewhat in contrast to national security, public security places greater attention on cooperation between government and civil society. This can assume multiple forms. Some of these are positive, such as citizen membership on police-oversight panels, neighborhood watch or patrol organizations, participation by service organizations in safety training and crime-prevention measures, and the like. Public security requires active civic involvement and the awareness that a civic culture of lawfulness is needed to complement public efforts to construct a society in which the rule of law can be achieved.

Civic involvement can assume negative forms as well, which can undermine the rule of law. Passive negative forms include the tendency toward self-protection through gated communities, fortification of private homes, and expanded acquisition of handguns and other types of personal weapons. Of greater concern are active-negative forms such as vigilantism or contracting for private justice. Increasingly in the 1990s, instances of vigilantism, including lynchings, were reported in parts of Latin America and the Caribbean. Also, it is not uncommon for government police officers to participate in private security. This can take authorized or tolerated forms, such as moonlighting as private guards. It can also take reprehensible forms, such as violent

"cleansing" targeted against homeless indigents, homosexuals, petty thieves, and others perceived as undesirables.

Several other terms frequently appear in the security discourse. Most of these are variations on public security and emphasize protection of persons, property, and democratic institutions. In this volume, *citizen security* is employed in the Brazilian, Chilean, and Salvadoran cases to emphasize protection of citizens from extralegal coercion by state agents. In these countries, which experienced brutal dictatorships, the term emphasizes the legal and real protection of citizens' civil and human rights. *Homeland security* is used in the U.S. case to emphasize that, for the first time since its Civil War of the 1860s, internal security of territory and persons is paramount.

Table 1.5 summarizes the main governmental responses to the threats to public security. Across the board, governments adopted national-level policies, often taking the form of official plans. The general pattern was to adopt tougher, more punitive responses to perceived threats. But a countercurrent of measures aimed at crime prevention and at social rehabilitation was apparent as well.

The federal systems (Brazil, Mexico, and the United States) relied extensively on reorganization and targeted spending to improve federal-state cooperation in law enforcement. Cabinet-level ministries of public security were created in all cases, and national-level police forces were strengthened. This was especially the case in Mexico, as described by Marcos Pablo Moloeznik, which created a new National Preventive Police. National policies in Brazil and the United States were triggered by specific crises. In Brazil's case, Emilio Enrique Dellasoppa and Zoraia Saint'Clair Branco point to the hijacking of a public bus in Rio de Janeiro in June 2000 as a precipitating event. The hijacking was televised nationally and showed, in dramatic fashion, police incompetence and brutality. In the U.S. case, John Bailey emphasizes how the terrorist attacks of September 2001, also televised nationally, traumatized public opinion and led to immediate and extensive federal government responses. The national government reorganized and expanded several national-level police forces, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Transportation Safety Administration, and various intelligence, migration, and border-security forces. Changes also bolstered the U.S. government's access to varieties of private information and eliminated the long-standing separation of law enforcement from intelligence.[8]

In the unitary systems of government (Chile, Colombia, and El Salvador), central government security forces operate directly at the local level through-

out the territories. Lucía Dammert stresses the impacts of the perceptions of increased crime on the Chilean public's demands for effective responses. In the Colombian case, Gonzalo de Francisco Z.—who represented Andres Pastrana's government in various negotiations with guerrilla groups in the 1990s —emphasizes the lack of an overall government strategy to combat the guerrilla groups while also repressing violent crime. Edgardo Alberto Amaya shows how the government of El Salvador confronted the task of founding a new democratic system in the midst of economic crisis, profound distrust among various contenders, and an acute wave of crime and violence.

A theme running throughout all the cases is the complicated relationship between the armies and the police forces. In the countries that suffered violent repression by authoritarian governments, the cases of Brazil, Chile, and El Salvador, the recurring theme is separation of the military from police functions and creation of effective civilian oversight, including ombudsmen and other forms of human-rights guarantors. In Brazil, Chile, and El Salvador, however, the army-police relationship remains complex and closely intertwined. In Brazil and El Salvador, the seriousness of the public-security problem and the perceived ineffectiveness of the police are creating pressures to involve the military in police operations. The debate in Chile revolves more around formal authority over the police forces, which in 2004 still reported to the Ministry of Defense. The issue of army involvement in internal security has not been part of the public debate in that country. In Colombia, the continued mix of guerrilla conflict, drug trafficking, and ordinary crime tips the scales toward a close coordination of the national police and the army.

In Mexico and the United States, military involvement in domestic policing has increased in important respects. Problems of police corruption and ineffectiveness throughout Mexico have led policy makers to involve the military directly, for example, in antidrug operations, as well as indirectly, for example, military officers who are retired or on leave staff numerous police commands at various levels. Terrorism is seen by U.S. officials as both a crime and an act of war. Thus, the U.S. military is being assigned new domestic functions to conduct internal defense operations and to support state and local public-safety forces.

Why is involvement of the military in domestic policing a problem? David Bayley (2001, 38–39) summarizes the main points: "The military's mission is so different from that of the police that each contaminates the other. Democratic policing especially is undermined by military involvement, because soldiers take orders from above rather than responding to the appeals of individ-

1.5 National-level responses to public-security threats

Country	National public security policy	Origins of policy	Principal objections	Short-term results
Brazil	National Public Security Plan, June 2000; National Public Security Fund, 2001; regulate portrayal of violence in media	Increase in violent crime; televised scandal of police incompetence and brutality, June 2000	Elaborate decalogue of goals, including coordinate federal- and state-level government responses to violent crime, fight drug trafficking, gun control, repress cargo hijacking, improve public security intelligence	Plan lacks operational objectives and indicators, no evaluation, plan is mainly symbolic, vested political interests shape or resist federal coordination
Chile	Comprehensive Plan for Citizen Security, 1998; Safer Cities Program, 2000; Twenty Measures to Improve Citizen Security, 2001; At-Risk Neighborhoods, 2002	Increase in crime and fear of crime, early 1990s with newly democratic regime	Reduce violent crime and fear of crime, develop long-term comprehensive crime-prevention plan, increase civil-society participation in crime prevention, increase effectiveness of police control strategies	Mix of punitive with preventive policies, growth of prison population, national application of crime-prevention programs, increased role for Interior Ministry in security policy making, no systematic evaluation of public programs, better coordination with police institutions
Colombia	Neighborhood Security Fronts, 1994; Strategy for Coexistence and Citizen Security, 1998; Plan Colombia, 2000	Expansion of guerrilla conflict and drug trafficking, mid-1980s; Increase in "ordinary" violent crime	Combat guerrilla forces and drug trafficking, eradicate crops, strengthen and modernize police and military, improve police technology and management techniques, increase local influence over National Police	Improved training, equipment, and performance of police and military; decline in ordinary crime, especially in Bogotá; weak local-level security planning; weak information system and overall plan evaluation
El Salvador	National Council on Public Security, 1996; Criminal Procedures Code, 1998; Alliance for Security, 1999; National Defense Law, 2002	Increased violent crime following Civil War	Reduce violent crime, corruption, drug trafficking, and weapons trafficking; eradicate kidnapping; increase civil-society involvement	National Defense Law points to return to old notions of national security, with emphasis on state institutions; weak civilian oversight; improved National Police; improved planning (e.g., statements of objectives and indicators for evaluation)

Country	Policy	Context	Objectives	Outcomes
Mexico	National Public Security System, 1995, with subsequent constitutional amendments and administrative changes	Increased violent crime, including political violence (e.g., 1994); Peak crime rate, 1998	Coordinate federal-state government responses to crime and violence, improve database and information, increase budget in public security, regulate private security	Reorganization; creation of Federal Ministry of Public Security, 2000; creation of Federal Preventive Police, Federal Investigative Police; improved national information system; priority investments in technology and hardware (rather than training); increased arrests and prison population; increased role for military; weak plan evaluation
United States	USA Patriot Act, Oct. 2001; Department of Homeland Security, June 2002	Terrorist attacks, Sept. 2001	Reorganize federal security apparatus, strengthen law-enforcement legislation, remove barriers between law enforcement and intelligence, increase public-private-sector cooperation	Extensive reorganization underway, with numerous problems and delays; internal reorganization and reforms to CIA, FBI, and defense; active profiling of immigrant community, especially young Arab males; tensions with civil rights groups

ual citizens; their use of force is much less restrained, and secrecy is a more ingrained mindset. . . . Policing requires mediation skills, the exercise of discretion in the use of authority, and a facilitative style of supervision." Police are expected to know their community and to use street savvy and negotiating skills to manage disputes and serve the public. Army personnel are expected to carry out operations and accomplish assigned objectives with maximum efficiency and effectiveness. Too often, when assigned to police duties, army personnel are not sufficiently trained or supervised to be attentive to civil rights and legal guarantees.[9] The result in many Latin American cases is human-rights abuses. In the U.S. case, the 1878 Posse Comitatus Act limited direct military involvement in domestic policing, although regular military forces have participated in a number of instances. Military involvement in domestic antiterrorism operations is so new, however, that its potential for abuses remains unclear.

The militaries in Latin America have historically played much more important roles as guardians of patriotism and national order than is the case in the United States (see, e.g., Loveman 1999). Armies in that region have long enjoyed special juridical status, including exemptions from civilian courts and justice.

Police Reform as a Principal Response

Feeling threatened and insecure, governments and the public turned first to the instrument most familiar and closest to hand: the police. Their expectation was that a more efficient and effective police force could solve the security problem, and in many cases the public appeared willing to sacrifice some degree of civil-rights protection for greater security. Such willingness is remarkable in those societies that had suffered under dictatorships. Thus, efforts to promote civil rights and government accountability in the new democracies confronted an additional burden.

The focus on the police suggests that there was little awareness by the public that public security as a policy issue is systemic and integrated. The broader policy issue includes programs and agencies dedicated to (1) crime prevention (education, child care and family welfare, recreation, employment, criminal intelligence, routine patrol, community awareness, etc.), (2) crime repression and investigation (uniformed and plainclothes police, criminal forensics), (3) prosecution (public prosecutors, courts, including judges and administrative staff, defense attorneys), (4) prison system (construction,

maintenance, staffing), and (5) prisoner rehabilitation (job training, employment, personal and family counseling, drug treatment). To be effective, these agencies should be integrated with other public-sector agencies and with civil society. Relying on greater police presence and more crime repression produced many more convictions—not always of guilty persons—but had the negative effects of overwhelming the judicial process and prison system and of relegating rehabilitation to a mere formality. The overburdened judicial system, in turn, became more vulnerable to inefficiency, injustice, corruption, and abuse. And the overcrowded prison system became more violent and dangerous human warehouses, in which much of the teaching and learning involved advanced criminal skills.

For what is meant by *police*, we follow David Bayley (1990, 7): "people authorized by a group to regulate interpersonal relations within the group through the application of physical force. This definition has three essential parts: physical force, internal usage and collective authorization." Police are the executive agents of force; they are authorized to apply it. Internal usage helps distinguish police from military forces. Authorization "is necessary in order to exclude from the term *police* persons who use force within a society for non-collective purposes" (8), such as, for example, robbers, terrorists, and—on occasion—parents and schoolyard bullies. The key is that the police derive authority from the social units that sponsor them. With the exception of the chapter on Mexico, the focus of this book is on the formal-legal police, especially the uniformed forces.

Bayley's approach signals two recurring themes in the study of the police in the Americas. First, the difference between internal and external security has not been sharply drawn historically in Latin America, and military forces have long played the central role in maintaining order.

Second, as Bayley suggests, where legitimacy and authority are in dispute, the role of the police is complicated. This is most obviously the case in Colombia, with its long-running guerrilla conflict, as analyzed by María Victoria Llorente. But it appears in more complex ways as well. Allison Rowland's chapter on police reform in Mexico and the *policía comunitaria* (village police) in the rural areas of the southern state of Guerrero describes a kind of spontaneous self-help by villagers who deeply distrust state-level authorities. The result is tension and conflict between the semiformal community police and the official state force. Azun Candina shows how Chile's much-admired national uniformed police, the Carabineros, allegedly practice a harsher type of policing with young, poor, urban males. The long history of employing El

Salvador's security forces to protect the interests of wealthy groups, according to José Miguel Cruz, undermined their legitimacy in the eyes of the lower social strata. African Americans in the United States are much more skeptical about the observance of their civil rights in comparison with other groups and much more critical of what they perceive to be police brutality and racial profiling of their community, which is the central theme in the analysis by John E. Eck and Jay Rothman of reform in Cincinnati. In all these cases of deep social, ethnic, and racial divisions, the role of the police is controversial and contentious.

Candina's chapter on Chile emphasizes two main dimensions of police reform: operational capacity (police efficiency and effectiveness) and democratic accountability (police responsiveness to political control and respect for civil and human rights). Table 1.6 summarizes the six cases. All of the federal systems deal with regional, state, or local cases, while the unitary systems examine reforms to the national police forces. With the exceptions of the United States and Chile, police reforms were attempted in strongly adverse conditions: the public was demanding quick relief from a perceived escalation of violent crime.[10]

Our police-reform stories involve three arguably innovative cases, that is, the introduction of new ideas, forms of organization, or techniques. A fourth case is clearly a qualitative change, the introduction of a new police institution. Two others might be viewed as incremental, that is, rather limited adjustments to established practices. Paulo de Mesquita Neto's account of the São Paulo Institute against Violence describes a recently created public-private partnership to improve policing and contribute to crime prevention in a metropolitan area suffering acute levels of criminal violence. Joining together business associations, academic institutions, and communications firms, the institute demonstrates a creative civil-society response to improving police efficiency as well as effectiveness. This is a welcome antidote to despair and *fracasomanía* (the ingrained prejudice that governments will fail, whatever they try) regarding crime prevention and repression.

Rowland describes how several villages in the rural southern state of Guerrero, Mexico, confronting increased violent crime, cooperated to counter what they perceived to be ineffective and sometimes predatory state-police forces. The indigenous communities created a local police force made up mostly of volunteers, whose legality is questioned by state authorities. Rowland assesses both the benefits and problems associated with community self-help.

1.6 Police-reform case studies

Country	Locale and time	Causes of reform	Type of reform	Goals of reform	Short-term results
Brazil	São Paulo metro area, 1992–2000	Business community dissatisfaction with police performance	Innovative; creation of new public-private partnership for police reform	Promote civil-society cooperation and involvement in police reform; improve police efficiency and accountability	Improved civil-society involvement in crime prevention and repression; improved police effectiveness
Chile	National Police, Carabineros, 1990–2003	Democratic transition, 1990; perceived increase in violent crime	Incremental; improve police effectiveness, responsiveness to community	Improve civilian control over police; increase local control; increase transparency	Incremental improvement; Carabineros able to control agenda and pace of reforms, emerge in strong position
Colombia	National Police, 1993–2003	Civilian defense minister, 1991; corruption scandals, 1994	Incremental; purge corrupt officers; introduce management reforms	Demilitarize and democratize the police; improve effectiveness, reduce corruption, increase local control	Limited effects; police resist reforms; reappearance of corruption scandals, 2003; police leadership effectively uses the media
El Salvador	National Police, 1994–2003	Democratic foundation in post-civil war treaty of 1992	Qualitative change; foundation of new national police	Reconstitute national police as part of peace process; demilitarize and strengthen political and citizen oversight of security forces	Improved but declining public approval of national police; reinvolvement of military in policing
Mexico	Guerrero, rural southern Mexico, 1995–2003	Increase in violent crime; fear and distrust of official state police	Innovative; regional indigenous police force	Improve local safety conditions; create local force of volunteer and paid officers	Local community support gained, but opposition by state authorities; improved local security situation
United States	Cincinnati, Ohio, 2001–2003	Allegations of police brutality, excessive force against African American community; racial profiling	Innovative; negotiated agreement to new rules of engagement between police and minorities	Implement problem-oriented policing; create new citizen oversight board; new use-of-force rules	Withdrawal of police and African American representatives from agreement; advances in community dialogue and police practices; increased community involvement in policing

Eck and Rothman analyze a significant reform effort in Cincinnati, Ohio, one in which they played important roles as architects and facilitators. The innovation was twofold in creating a negotiating process that effectively involved the major stakeholders and in introducing a technique, problem-oriented policing, that has been shown to be effective in a variety of settings. The outcome shows that innovations can produce mixed results: the police and African American community subsequently withdrew from the formal agreement, but community cooperation in policing was advanced.[11]

Cruz analyzes the case of El Salvador, in which a wholly new national police force was created as one of the central agreements of the treaty of 1992, which ended a horrific civil war. He emphasizes the ways in which police forces serve political ends. In the old regime, the security forces represented the interests of the upper strata and landed groups. For example, national security forces were used to keep order on coffee plantations at harvest times. In the postwar setting, a new national police was constituted with veterans from the guerrilla forces and from the army, as well as new recruits. The process, though ultimately successful, was flawed, and the high public approval of the national police declined over time. Cruz suggests that the reform of the Salvadoran force, while successful in the regional context, fell short, as seen in the return of the military to assume policing functions.

The cases from Chile and Colombia show reform of a more incremental type. The national police of both countries are distinctive in Latin America in that they enjoy relatively high levels of public approval. Candina shows how Chile's Carabineros cultivated a powerful mystique since their foundation in the 1920s and how they used their quasi-military discipline and esprit to recover public support following their repressive role during the military dictatorship of 1973–1990. Police throughout the region have been able to control external efforts to reform them, but the Carabineros have been arguably the most successful. Their ability to co-opt and redefine the notion of community policing is an apt example. To the Carabineros, protection of and proximity to the community—which they have always practiced—constitutes community policing.

Colombia's national police force experienced a significant turnaround in the mid-1990s. It was able to overcome problems of corruption and demonstrate impressive effectiveness in hunting down notorious drug traffickers. However, as Llorente shows, efforts to improve internal organization and procedures were resisted, and corruption scandals reappeared in early 2003.

Fear and apprehension due to perceptions of increased crime and violence

are driving much of public-security policy in the hemisphere. Citizen involvement in democratic processes means that politicians are under acute pressure to craft solutions that are seen to produce results. Acting under pressure and with limited resources, elected officials are forced to improvise, experiment, and treat the symptoms. Even if policy science could produce a consensus on the causes of and remedies for crime and violence, which to date it has not, governments need short-term results that can reassure their publics. Thus, public-security policies in the region reflect complex mixes that lean toward punishment and contain fairly large doses of symbolism, such as highly publicized national plans, special new programs, and the importation of ideas from abroad.

In Latin America, we sense, from polls, media coverage, and informal conversations, that the public perceives that little progress is being made to improve public security and that police-reform efforts do not attack the real causes of police brutality and ineffectiveness. However, this sense of *fracasomanía* may be exaggerated or even wrong. Governments throughout the region have worked rather consistently over the past decade to address problems of public insecurity. The six national cases, with pairs of studies on public-security policy and police reform for each country, suggest that the record is more complex than pessimism warrants.