

# ‘Security from Below’<sup>1</sup> in Contexts of Chronic Violence

Alexandra Abello Colak and Jenny Pearce

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**Abstract** At the same time that the field of security moves away from traditional state-centred perspectives towards a human-centred understanding of security, contemporary states seem to be incapable of protecting people from increasingly complex forms of insecurity. Inadequate and inefficient public responses have contributed to the erosion of the idea of security as a public good, especially in contexts of chronic violence. In this article, we suggest that in these contexts ‘security from below’ could help analytically and in practice to humanise security provision by focusing attention on the lived experiences of insecurity, by encouraging participation in debates about the local and universal values that should inform state responses and by enabling people to demand a people-centred but publicly delivered form of security. Rethinking security from below is not a suggestion for replacing the state; it is instead an attempt to increase the capacity of communities and local level actors to articulate their demands for better security provision based on agreed norms and under democratic principles in which security must be at the heart of all struggles for equitable development and social justice.

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## 1 Introduction

Traditionally, the field of security policy has been associated with conservative worldviews, which focus on order and avoidance or management of conflict. Security provision has been about specialist agencies, expert analysts and top-down policy approaches. As an academic and policy field it is highly gendered (Tickner 1995) and state-centred (Morgenthau 1948 is just one example among many). It has focused on threats to strategic national state interests from without and also within. However, over the past two decades, this has been challenged from various quarters. There has been a move to widen the meaning of security and to recognise that it is not just about the state but also about citizens. Security, it is argued, is linked to the wellbeing of communities, and this must include protection from hunger, disease, violence and repression, as well as consolidation of democracy and social justice (UNDP 1994). The idea of human security encourages governments, policymakers and other organisations to give value and attention to a broader range of threats to life than is normally recognised, particularly in the global South.

However, this shift from state-centred to human-centred security has uncovered the weakness of the state and the difficulties it faces in protecting people from complex forms of insecurity. It has also increased international and social demands on states, which are now asked to protect their citizens from chronic threats in a particular moment in history during which their ability to provide even basic protection from physical violence and attack is in crisis and undermined by global phenomena. The spread of ‘new wars’ in the global South has highlighted the limitations of state security provision, but there are also growing problems of urban and rural violence in countries that had postwar peace agreements and even in those which have experienced no war at all. For example, in the mid-1990s, the number of homicides among young men aged 15–44 in Brazil was higher than that of Colombia, a country recognised to be in the midst of a civil war (Krug *et al.* 2002).

This weakness of the state security response has contributed to a gradual erosion of the idea of security as a public good, as well as loss of faith in state security provision. Many people already

depend on private and informal forms of security and justice provision. Wealth and poverty determines the choice: private security firms on the one hand and local gunman on the other. Some now argue for a shift from the focus on state provision in favour of more support for non-state providers in post-conflict and fragile states. They include commercial, informal and community forms of justice and security delivery (Baker and Scheye 2007: 154). In many such contexts, it is argued, the state sector will simply never deliver in the short to medium term and alternatives need to be found based on local realities.

‘Security from below’, we argue, should not be a substitute for security as a public good. The challenge, however, is how the latter can be constructed in contemporary contexts of multiple violences and insecurity, with weak states, corrupt and non-accountable security institutions and with powerful global networks trafficking arms and drugs that foster violence and further erode the state’s legitimate monopoly over the means of violence. Rather than widen the idea of security to embrace ever more areas of human interaction, we need to ‘humanise’ security provision, or make it *people-centred but publicly delivered*, and in ways that promote non-violent forms of human interaction, encourage civil participation and protect women, children and vulnerable youth from abuse. We believe that ‘security from below’ is about encouraging people to think about their security as they do about their food, livelihood and human rights; it is of equal importance.

Security provision must be provided by public institutions, but it needs to be founded on agreed norms and shared values. It also has to respond to contextualised needs in ways that are legitimate and respectful of human rights. These norms may well have to be constructed from ‘below’. Developing norms and principles which are compatible with public provision may be one of the particular challenges of our times, and there are contexts today where it is not yet conceivable that the state can or will take on the task. Indigenous and community forms of justice may be the only viable forms in some contexts. However, there are many challenges on what is meant by publicly agreed norms and shared values, when these have not yet been democratically constructed. While there may be a need to recognise transitional community-level

security and justice forms, these should, we argue, contribute to building universal norms, which can help construct effective state provision rather than substitute for it.

In order to analyse how ‘security from below’ could help humanise security provision in contexts of chronic violence,<sup>2</sup> our article begins by exploring the implications of the discursive shift from state-centred to citizen- and human-centred security. Drawing mostly on examples from Latin America and based on our initial research activities in Guatemala and Colombia, we then explore the signs of the crisis in practice, as well as the community, market and donor agency-led responses to it that have emerged. We critically analyse their limitations and question how we can move from failing public provision to security as a fairly distributed and effective public service. We finally argue that ‘security from below’ in the specific contexts under discussion, could help analytically, and in practice, to build norms and principles to inform contemporary security approaches. By drawing attention to real and diverse contexts of security provision, ‘security from below’ seeks to focus on the relevance and effectiveness of prevailing forms of public and non-public security provision. It asks how far these facilitate participation for social change and democratic development? If security is to be judged by such criteria, it requires new debate to be opened up at the grassroots level, democratically embedding a sense of what is right and appropriate in communities, which have become subjected to the arbitrary imposition of certain concepts of perverse ‘order’ in the name of security.

## **2 From state-centred to human-centred security**

As an academic field and as a policymaking enterprise, security has been dominated by a Western understanding of world politics. It has been focused on the protection of the international system born in Europe in the seventeenth century which regards state sovereignty and power competition as the driving forces of international life. Over the last two decades, however, traditional theories focused on state survival and power preservation have been challenged. By denying the alleged universalism and neutrality of realist definitions of security obsessed with state security and survival (Wendt 1992; Cox 1981) and criticising the restrictive focus of traditional security studies as inadequate

to contemporary realities (Booth 1991; Wyn Jones 1999), scholars and policymakers have been invited to consider individuals and communities as the main referents of any security endeavour. New feminist perspectives have also challenged the exclusionary traditional discourse of security by exposing its deep connections with hierarchical social relations between women and men, rich and poor and insiders and outsiders (Tickner 1995: 180). It is now widely accepted that the protection of individuals and their liberties and the creation of contexts that enable human wellbeing are the main challenges of this century.

All these contributions and the pre-eminence of the concept of Human Security after the publication of the UNDP *Human Development Report* in 1994 have contributed to taking security out from the secrecy and closeness associated with intelligence, military and defence circles. Although there is still no agreement on the definition of Human Security, it is generally accepted that it places the protection and welfare of individuals as the primary concern of any security approach, something that seems difficult to achieve through traditional military means. Human security is not only a comprehensive concept, it is also a campaign to open up security thinking to new fields and to bring security practices closer to contemporary human problems. Appealing to the core idea of 'humanness', this broadened concept has made 'security' a concept of relevance to the left as well as the right, to women as well as to men, to the global South<sup>3</sup> as well as the global North, to non-Western societies and to academics and practitioners of almost all sciences and fields.

This discursive shift in the field of security has raised new demands on the state. Under the new paradigm, the state loses its preponderance but gains responsibilities. Contemporary states must not only protect individuals and communities from a wider set of threats, but they should also create conditions for wellbeing and social justice, be respectful of democratic values and human rights and be accountable to citizens. All this when rather than strengthening their infrastructural capacity, states have increasingly lost their ability to restrain the impact of transnational phenomena, to maintain their legitimate monopoly of coercion and to be responsive to local needs.

The human-security approach suggests multi-layered and multi-area interventions and implies new political and institutional landscapes at national and international levels to protect individuals and communities. However, state institutions have not substantially changed or properly adjusted in that direction over the last two decades. On the contrary, despite national and international attempts to reform the security sector in many countries, traditional assumptions, practices and values are still deeply entrenched in state institutions and social groups. Public responses to insecurity very often slip towards authoritarianisms and they also lack transparency and accountability. Citizens in heightened states of fear are often encouraged to support hardline and authoritarian public responses. At the same time, neoliberal globalisation has reduced the emphasis on building public coffers or increasing public provision, and it has made the possibility of handing over the provision of some services to private actors that are regarded as economically more efficient than the state attractive, including security.

One of the most evident signs of crises in security provision is the lack of effective protection from physical violence, the basic aspect of security. An estimated seven million violence-caused deaths occurred in the world, 75 per cent of them civilian, between 1993 and 2003 (Smith and Braein, quoted in Hurwitz and Peake 2004: 1). Internal wars as well as an increase in the levels of crime and delinquency around the globe, especially but not exclusively in growing urban concentrations of the global South, are responsible for most of those deaths. In its many forms, violence is increasing in urban as well as in rural areas, affecting the lives of millions of people, which produces a growing sense of insecurity that paralyses cooperative social interaction, decreases wellbeing, obstructs democratisation and undermines the states' credibility. In Latin America where, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), violence was the first cause of death in 1999, violence seems to be growing at an epidemic pace. The growth in homicide rates has affected countries with historically low rates such as Costa Rica and Argentina, as well as countries with a history of internal wars and high levels of violence, such as Colombia or El Salvador.<sup>4</sup>

It is not our aim to discuss here the causes of this increase in the levels of violence but the

responses that have emerged and their limitations. However, it is worth highlighting that only in some cases the levels of violence are linked to the legacy of fought wars or, as in Colombia, partially fed by the ongoing conflict. But in all cases, violence and a sense of insecurity are being fostered by the opportunities offered by globalisation for illegal trafficking of drugs and arms, by the negative effects of forced implementation of neoliberal reforms in deeply unequal societies, by intergenerational processes of violence transmission, by the failure of current public policies and state institutions, by the expansion of a dominant consumption-orientated culture and by a problematic and manipulated socialisation of youth in both the global South and the North.<sup>5</sup>

It is in this context that public security provision, as it is conceived now, is proving ever more inadequate for the task. It is not only inadequate in terms of the quantity and resources dedicated by the state to protect communities, but also in the quality of the provision and its assumptions about the best way to tackle insecurity. In many cases, the state does not have a legitimate monopoly of violence and certainly not over the entire territory, and where there is provision, it often abuses rather than protects the population.

In some contexts, the crisis has led to the *emergence of parallel communities* where coercion is exercised outside the institutional framework of the state. This is the case even where states are relatively strong (e.g. Brazil) as well as where they are weak (e.g. Guatemala). In these communities the state is not normally capable of providing basic services, including security, and its intervention is often intermittent, reactive and disciplinary rather than protective. One of the characteristics of these parallel communities is that state institutions such as the police are not the main, best equipped, or even desirable providers of protection. Alternative actors often connected to lucrative illegal or informal economic activities replace the state and often act interchangeably as coercive ‘protectors’ for some sectors of the population, creating protection rackets.

In these communities, the state–society relationship is often characterised by mutual distrust and even resentment. One of the most critical examples of areas where coercive

protection is provided outside the institutional frontier of the state is the case of Comuna 13 in Medellín, the second biggest city of Colombia. For more than three decades, armed groups have fought for the control of this area. Citizens living there have demanded protection from the violent domination exerted by the armed groups, including threats, murders, massacres and forced displacement. Their desperate demands for protection have been temporarily met by successive armed groups that replace their opponents, only to use similar techniques in their attempt to exterminate them and to gain control of the territory and of their people.

It was not until 2002 that the state attempted to retake control through a military operation. Given the excessive violence used, this state intervention was initially difficult to differentiate from the many other interventions by coercive actors in the past. However, Operación Orion, as it was called, has been seen as a successful step towards the pacification of the Comuna 13. Nevertheless, six years later it is evident that the intervention has not managed to remove the deep causes of violence in the Comuna. It is not yet clear whether the state is the only effective provider of security in the area, or the reduction in the number of crimes is due to a deep transformation in the community. Although the local government has tried to reform traditional politics, supported the demobilisation of former combatants and opened spaces to local participation, in terms of security, the police and other state bodies still do not have absolute control over the situation. There are powerful actors in the city who people still fear, who provide some sort of order and decide the fate of whoever is seen as a threat to their interests.

The crisis in security provision makes more problematic the *lack of connection between the state’s objectives and local communities’ needs*. In the context of violence, communities need to be protected and helped to build more secure environments. However, public security provision tends to focus on eliminating enemies or competitors to state territorial control and not on mitigating the perverse effects of insecurity and violence on people’s lives. Sometimes the methods used by the police and military forces increased unrest, fear and insecurity among the local population. Lack of communication between communities and police institutions not only makes it harder

to identify priorities for responsive security provision but also detracts from the legitimacy of the methods used by the state in 'securing or pacifying' dangerous areas.

In Colombia in 1994, surveys were carried out to ask citizens their views on the service provided by the police, which revealed systematic distancing between the police and local communities. Recognition of this has, in some cases, promoted the implementation of community-policing approaches. These contain seeds of an alternative way of seeing public provision, as measured, for instance, by whether people feel secure, rather than the number of criminals arrested. However, in practice, community police are often not valued by the rest of the police, undermining the trust in them. In Medellin, we found that the community police were seen as the 'soft' even 'feminised' side of the hard, masculine and 'real' policeman's work; their reputation was useful when police colleagues were needed to be deployed in the community or gather intelligence, but it then eroded when community police were included in police military style operations (Abello Colak and Pearce 2008).

Another symptom of the crisis is the *exaggerated social expectation from applying hardline measures*. Given the desperation for relief from insecurity, many groups are not only adopting aggressive attitudes towards crime but are also supporting a more aggressive state response towards insecurity problems. Hardline responses are focused on increasing police patrols and attacks on 'dangerous areas' and are implemented by targeting 'suspicious individuals'. In Central America, where the problem of gangs is out of hand, responses have included increasing sentences, reducing the age limit for arrests in order to prosecute younger offenders, and enabling police to arrest people on suspicion of belonging to a gang. In some cases, having a tattoo has become a determining factor for being arrested. Other responses have been urban military operations on areas seen as dangerous, like those carried out in Colombia and Chiapas, Mexico, with summary executions as the outcome.

Hardline measures give rise to three sets of problems: (1) they exacerbate social tensions through their reactive and punitive targeting of certain social groups 'problematic communities'; (2) they deepen existing gaps between the level

of protection that different sectors of society receive from the state; and (3) they delay reforms to security provision that could make it more preventive and less reactive, and impede dealing with fundamental problems. As the case of Medellin shows, hardline measures can give the initial impression that the state is tackling the security problems, but they cannot prevent future violence. Rather, a tense calm is created until new groups emerge.

From a citizen's perspective, public security is failing, especially in the most violent contexts and where protection from physical attack is needed. However, security remains important to the survival of citizens and communities, and some responses to the crisis have emerged. Some of these are *led by the market for protection and the commoditisation of security*, others are responses *led by communities* and others are responses *led by international donor agencies*. In the next section we explore the main features of these responses and their limitations.

### **3 Responses to the crisis in security provision**

#### **3.1 Market-led initiatives**

One of the most lucrative businesses, in the context of violence, is the provision of security. The market for protection is growing and becoming highly competitive. A growing number of private companies are offering protection to national and multinational businesses, banks and individuals. The privatisation of security is not an exclusive phenomenon of the global South. In the European Union, Canada and Austria, the number of private guards has already exceeded the number of police officers (Richani 2002).

However, in the context of chronic violence, leaving security in the hands of the market runs a greater risk. The creation of a private space for the profitable provision of security can be easily manipulated by powerful coercive actors. In some cases, the state supervises the process, but not in ways that are democratically accountable or transparent. One example is the experience of Las Convivir created in Colombia. These were private forms of security, supervised and authorised by the state with around 9,633 men. In rural areas they were quickly controlled by powerful elites and narco-businesses to serve their interests and to cover more vicious forms of private security already in place, like paramilitary forces. In highly insecure contexts it is very

difficult for a weak state to ensure that criminal actors do not co-opt the very lucrative private security business. By profiting from insecurity, the latter can also further undermine the state's capacity to improve public provision. In Colombia, almost \$150 million annually is being spent on private security (Richani 2002: 92); money which could finance better police forces through taxes and to improve the public security sector.

The other problem with the privatisation of security is that protection becomes a commodity and even a privilege. Deciding what is punishable, what is worth protecting, by what means and based on which values cannot be the result of a decision left to the market or private interests. Whoever is capable of providing security in a given society is also entrusted with power and has leverage to impose a specific social order by managing social conflict and deciding what is acceptable or punishable. In Colombia, this means that paramilitary groups, even ones which have officially been demobilised, often impose rigid social norms around dress and behaviour in the areas they control. Similar patterns have been found in other areas of the world where community authority is under *de facto* paramilitary, militias or drugs lord control. It is the poorest communities that are most exposed.

### 3.2 Community-led initiatives

There are other responses originating in *community initiatives*. Some are based on traditional indigenous values and on a long history of local conflict management within communities. Some of these traditional forms of justice and conflict management may conflict with Western values and understandings of the state. Customary law is sometimes in tension with state justice and security, with mutual denials of legitimacy, while elsewhere customary law and state institutions may coexist with customary law acknowledged and recognised by the state. These forms of justice provision are sometimes the only available forms of security in violent contexts and need to be recognised. They respond to the immediate concern of how to create some sort of immediate order and seem to be good at responding to local needs. However, they may also be rigid and reproduce traditional discriminations on ethnic or gender lines. It is important to explore the values behind them, how they respond to minority rights and what kind of relation they can have with the state.

There are other more extreme community responses to wrongdoing, such as street justice and lynchings in rural (and sometimes urban) communities in countries like Guatemala. These highlight in a dramatic way, the extent of the failure of security and justice provision, as well as how the sense of abandonment in communities can lead to even more violence. In the end, such kinds of responses leave communities vulnerable to manipulation and facilitate their stigmatisation by other sectors of society that consider them savage, primitive and ignorant.

We would like to highlight, however, that sometimes other (more positive) forms of community-led responses to violence can emerge. We have witnessed how people can organise themselves and stand up to violence in countries like Colombia and Guatemala, where civil society organisations have tried to create spaces for action that delegitimise violent actors (Pearce 2007b). There are numerous examples of how civil society participation is promoting social change, fostering municipal development initiatives and improving women's capacity to participate and to challenge political and social violence.

Greater participation does not immediately or automatically translate into a change in security provision, but it affects the way in which state and society interact – potentially affecting assumptions about what the state should do and protect and, in consequence, about the kind of state that is being constructed. Community and civil society participation is prompted by the desire to defend fundamental rights and to empower people to act against conditions that are seen as life or livelihood threatening. Such participation can help to build public opinion, to disseminate a sense of rights, to encourage people to challenge the *status quo* and to engage citizens in addressing issues of security, human rights and the rule of law (Pearce 2007b).

### 3.3 International donor agency-led initiatives

The third kind of response to the crisis in security provision is *led by donor agencies* through their support to security sector reforms (SSRs). Their focus is on state institutional transformation. Such reforms, however, suffer from their lack of local embeddedness. In some cases, like in Guatemala, they have had qualified success in fostering cooperation between civil society organisations and state institutions in designing

security policy (although in a weak state context, such as Guatemala, this does not easily impact on actual public security provision). But this does not mean a better connection between the state and the wider society (Pearce 2006). In fact, civil society organisations have tended to become less responsive to the needs of local communities, especially in rural areas. SSRs have focused more on training and adoption of new values by police and military institutions, but less on supporting communities and citizens to gain their own understanding of issues and build their own consensus on the kind of security they need.

In sum, none of the three responses discussed totally addresses the problem. Security provision needs to be based on agreed norms compatible with universal values, equitably provided and should be responsive to local needs. Some community-led responses are trying to tackle the issue of lack of effective provision and draw on indigenous values. However, they cannot respond to the complex challenges and problems that create insecurity in this century without improved state provision. To tackle insecurity today, it is necessary to develop robust political commitment, strong anti-corruption enforcement to prevent mafias from permeating institutions and urgent attention to the socioeconomic contexts of insecurity.

#### **4 Rethinking ‘security from below’**

We suggest, therefore, that we need to progress beyond these different modes of crisis response, and reaffirm that security be regarded and provided as a *public service!* The idea of rethinking ‘security from below’ is not a suggestion for the replacement of the state. The latter is still the only actor that could guarantee that public goods and services are provided, and not sold or administered according to the rational choice logic that guides markets. ‘Security from below’ is a call to increase the capacity of people to think about their security and to define collectively the values and norms that should inform state provision. It is a call to find ways to increase accountability of the state, not to foreign investors or economic elites, but to common citizens. It is also an attempt to increase the capacity of communities and local level actors to articulate their demands for a better security provision under democratic principles in which security must be at the heart of all struggles for equitable development and social justice.

In order to rethink security and to develop new practices, academic research on security needs to develop a better understanding of the daily experiences of victims of insecurity and also of police officers working in contexts of violence. The analysis of security provision requires research that is commensurate with the complex reality on the ground. To help people to think about the norms and values which should serve as foundations for public provision of security and to improve their capacity to control it, it is necessary to get closer to people’s everyday lives in violent contexts and to the difficult work of police officers and other state officials in such contexts. While there are many abusive and corrupt officers, our work with the community police in Medellin suggested that many are devoted to public and community service but that the prevailing police structures are a disincentive to their endeavour.

We believe that research methodologies involving people in the co-production of knowledge<sup>6</sup> in the field of security could help to increase the possibilities of articulating alternative visions of security that are locally relevant and that can have an impact on public institutions. Action research can also have an impact on society’s capacity, as well as on state willingness to agree on norms and values for a more efficient form of security provision.

Encouraging people to think about their security can enable problem areas to be recognised and addressed: for example, the fact that men and women, old, poor and privileged experience insecurity in different ways, means that provision should be adapted to particular needs. People can also be encouraged to think of which local values or local capacities can inform public security policies; in some cases this will include indigenous ways of conflict management. Mainstream approaches could learn from some of these time-honoured experiences.

The greater intensity with which insecurity affects people’s lives demands new thinking and new practices. The idea of ‘security from below’ could help state institutions to open channels to communicate with communities and to respond to local needs. There are examples of how opening institutional and political spaces for participation encourages civil and community actors to communicate differently with the state and to build better oversight of state institutions.

In Medellín for example, advances have been made with monitoring mechanisms for the municipal development plan that allow social organisations and the private sector to have a say in the municipal planning process. Such accountability mechanisms could be adapted and extended to security issues. Of course, this would require a cooperative attitude from the state and support from political authorities. Such was the case in Medellín, with the election of independent Mayor Fajardo and the use of the constitutional recognition of participatory planning systems achieved in Colombia in 1991.

We hope that the idea of ‘security from below’ can encourage academics, authorities, communities and civil society organisations to think about security in a different way. We also hope it can help the latter to articulate their needs from the perspective of their lived experiences. They need to participate in debate about the local and universal values that should inform policing approaches and state responses. Nevertheless some civil society organisations resist participation in debates about security; they see security as the domain of the conservative political right that is more interested in preserving social order than in social change. Resistance from within state security institutions can also be expected. These attitudes need to be overcome so that people with agendas for social change take the security dimensions of these agendas seriously and help to strengthen a public provision which will guarantee freedom to challenge the *status quo* by democratic means.

## 5 Conclusion

We stress the need to recognise that security is something more than eliminating threats to human and social life. It is a public service that should be fairly and *effectively* provided by the

state through *mechanisms that guarantee the peaceful management of social conflict and the de-escalation of violence*. These mechanisms should comply with three requirements: *they should be informed by universal as well as local values and respectful of human rights; they should be agreed by society and responsive to local needs and they should not create more fear or insecurity among populations*. ‘Security from below’ has nothing to do with vigilantism or *de facto* civilian responses to their insecurity.

In the context of complex urban and rural violence, accountable, effective and inclusive public security, which does not create more fear in its implementation, is a vital component in enabling the poorest to rebuild their communities and reduce the violence within them. The lack of basic physical security is an impediment to social change and progress in the poorest communities of the global South and the North that affects the lives of all in society. Daily violence and crime affect human interactions, democratic participation and public life. These problems are increasingly affecting neighbourhoods and communities, and they are linked to global dynamics as well as national and local problems. In the face of inadequate and inefficient forms of public security provision, new forms of provision will continue to appear, some of them in the form of a lucrative business, and not driven by social public interest.

We hope that the development of ‘security from below’ thinking and practice can help to prevent the manipulation of people’s fear and desire for protection for political or economic purposes. It focuses our attention on the lived experiences of insecurity and how people can shape their security on the basis of their own needs as well as universal norms, and be empowered to demand it from the state.

## Notes

- 1 This was the term used in the Colloquium for Global Security Transformation, which took place in Sri Lanka in September 2007.
- 2 By chronic violence we refer to the context in which rates of violent death are at least twice the average for high- and low-income countries, respectively; where these levels are sustained for five years or more and where frequent acts of violence are recorded across several socialisation spaces, including the

household, the neighbourhood, the school, intercommunity and the nation-state (including disproportionate acts of violence attributed to state security forces) (Pearce 2007b).

- 3 The Final Report ‘Human Security Now’ published by the Commission on Human Security in 2003 is a good example of how the problems of the global South are reshaping the security agenda. It identifies six critical issues on human security: protecting people caught



- up in violent conflict, protecting people on the run, especially migrant and displaced populations, protecting people in countries recovering from violent conflict, protecting people from poverty, recognising the link between health and security and guaranteeing access to basic education and knowledge.
- 4 Although there are variations across the region, the general tendency has been towards increased violence and the countries with the highest homicide rates are El Salvador, where the number of deaths per year in the 1990s exceeded the average during the war in the 1980s, Colombia, Venezuela and Brazil.
  - 5 Young men in particular are affected by lack of self-esteem (Pearce 2007b). On gender issues in violence, see Pearce (2007a).
  - 6 Co-producing knowledge recognises different kinds of knowledge that can be brought to bear on a problem and engages thinkers and practitioners in a joint endeavour to develop new knowledge relevant to context. Different kinds of knowledge range from the academic forms of propositional and analytical knowledge to the experiential knowledge of actors in their contexts.

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