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War on Drugs in Colombia as a New War

Hereby I declare that this thesis, which I submit as a part of the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Degree Programme in International Development Studies, has been written by me. All information and ideas by others that have been used in the work have been diligently referenced and acknowledged in the study.

Vienna, 7th June

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Zásady pro vypracování

The war on drugs has been declared long ago, but in Colombia it has lead not only to increased drug production, but also to rise in violence and other negative outcomes. Looking closer into this issue, we see that involved actors, like formal government, farmers, cartels, para-militarists, FARC and others, take benefits from the status quo and none of them actually have incentives to finish this war. This fact refers us to the concept of new wars. Thus, this thesis is aimed at analysing the war on drugs in Colombia from the perspective of 'new wars' concept.

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Abstract

A notion of war has developed overtime, and today the concept of ‘new’ wars has become widely spread and discussed within the academic community. According to the ‘new wars’ theory, modern conflicts are different from the conventional ‘old’ wars and, consequently, their analysis require a new approach. This paper aims to examine the war on drugs as one of those ‘new’ wars in order to suggest possible solutions. For that reason, a case study analysis of the war on drugs in Colombia has been carried out. Colombia has been chosen as a representative case due to the severity of the drug trafficking problem in the country and significant measures which were taken to put an end to it, including Plan Colombia. The involved actors were examined, with a focus on their incentives for the ongoing war and gains from it. As a result of the analysis, a conclusion of the applicability of the ‘new wars’ concept to the Colombian case has been made, highlighting all the respective features. Based on these findings, the paper presents ideas to find a way out, according to the ‘new wars’ theory.

Keywords: new wars, war on drugs, Colombia, case study.

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Abbreviations

AUC – United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia

DAS – Administrative Department of Security

DEA – Drug Enforcement Administration

DTO – Drug Trafficking Organisation

DUD – Drug use disorder

ELN – National Liberation Army

EPL – Popular Liberation Army

EVOA – evidence of alluvial gold exploitation

FARC – Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia

IDPs – Internally displaced people

LAC – Latin America and the Caribbean

TNC – Transnational Corporation

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes

USAID – The United States Agency for International Development

WHO – World Health Organisation

WWII – The Second World War

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Introduction

A classic definition of the term ‘war’ given by Oxford and Cambridge dictionaries would describe it as a state of armed conflict between two or more countries or among various groups within one country. This indeed makes the ‘war on drugs’ stand out from the classic notion, as also noted by Paley (2014), war was never before interpreted as a war between a group and a substance. Obviously, this war does not fit into a traditional concept, in which war is usually a clash between armies of several sovereign states. Instead, this is a conflict that combines local and transnational groups involved into a highly profitable and at the same time highly violent ‘business’- drug trafficking. Although, the term ‘war on drugs’ itself would intuitively lead us to a thought that drugs are the main enemy and, consequently, all the engaged groups aim at fighting the drug cartels, the reality has been proven to be much more complicated.

Existing literature and numerous publications talk a lot about ‘war on drugs’ results, its initial motives and applied measures. However, the novelty of this work is to try to fit the ‘war on drugs’ into a ‘new war’ notion and see what research benefits can be extracted from such a classification. Thus, this paper’s objective is to analyze the ‘war on drugs’ from the perspective of a ‘new war’ theory, trying to see what features of it fall into this concept and eventually suggest how this concurrence can be used in finding the way out of the current situation with the illegal drug trafficking.

The paper starts with the ‘new war’ concept overview. The author explains how the notion of ‘war’ has changed throughout the time and specifically focuses on the ‘new war’ term suggested by Mary Kaldor (1999). In this part we are going to discuss what features make a war ‘new’, how it is different from the classic understanding, is there any criticism to this theory and how reasonable it is. The chapter is based on a review of the existing literature on the topic.

The paper goes on to present a case study. Case study analysis has been chosen as a method for this paper in order to narrow the research down to one country. In this regard, there is hardly a country as relevant to this subject as Colombia, since one of the main parts of the ‘war on drugs’ strategy, declared by President Nixon in 1971, was Plan Colombia, later announced by President Clinton. Taking a particular country for a case study, the author tries to identify the main actors of the ‘war on drugs’ there, see their interests and gains, discover interconnections and eventually give evidence to show that the ‘war on drugs’ in Colombia can indeed be classified as a ‘new war’ and, consequently, should be dealt with as one.

In the end of the paper, the author elaborates on the possible solutions for the Colombian case and drug trade in general. Various opinions and suggestions to solve the problem are

reviewed and, finally, the author's personal view is expressed. The 'new war' notion applicability is analyzed here, as well as the ways to integrate this understanding into further research of the 'war on drugs' problem.

Research questions

Thus, the main research questions of the work are the following: What is a 'new war'? What features make a war belong to a 'new war' class? Can we classify 'war on drugs' as one of 'new' wars? How can the concept of 'new wars' be usefully applied to the analyses of the 'war on drugs' in Colombia? What is the driving power for each actor of this war in Colombia? Are involved parties in Colombia really aimed at reducing drug production? And, most importantly, is 'war on drugs' actually an effective measure to combat drug trafficking or drug production and to end the world's drug problem? If not, what alternatives can be suggested, and would not they also get into the traps of 'new wars'?

Internship

During the work on this paper, I was doing an internship at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna. Being part of the United Nations team gave me access to the organization's library, which was particularly helpful in gathering data for the analysis. In addition, I had a chance to meet people who actually work with the region in question and hear their opinions (their personal stories as well as an official UN's position). My colleagues were extremely helpful in suggesting relevant literature and web-sources.

In addition, I was lucky to take part in the 63rd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, where I attended side events devoted to the problems of drug trade in Latin America, in particular: Strategic Lines of the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia in Combating Drug Trafficking at the National Level (Implications and Impact on the Regional Security Context), organized by the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia; Drug Strategies and Action Plans in the Americas for a New Decade, organized by the Governments of Canada, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States, and the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (ES-CICAD)/Secretariat for Multidimensional Security of the Organization of American States (OAS); Revitalization and Expansion of the Principle of Common and Shared Responsibility, organized by the Government of Colombia; Strategies to Enhance cooperation in Latin America for the Interdiction of Drugs and Chemical Precursors, organized by the UNODC Country Office Colombia.

To sum it up, internship with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime gave me a more thorough understanding of the topic of my work and inspired to go above and beyond in my research. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic of COVID-19 the internship was performed remotely for 1.5 month, which means that I missed an opportunity to access more organisation's literature resources and meet less experts working in a relevant area.

1. The concept of new wars

While the 20th century was marked with international conflicts, tensions between states and some civil wars, 21st century is different in that sense. Existing forms of violence cannot be classified as pure war or pure peace (World Bank, 2011). That is what gave space for the introduction of the concept of ‘new war’.

The term ‘new war’ is usually associated with Mary Kaldor and particularly her book ‘New and Old Wars’, first published in 1999. Although Kaldor was not the first one to trace novelty of modern forms of violence compared to the classical wars, her work is the most significant and structured, so that the ‘new war’ concept is often attributed to her. Like that, low-intensity conflicts (Van Creveld, 1991), privatized or informal wars (Keen, 1995), post-modern wars (Hables Gray, 1997), ‘degenerate warfare’ (Shaw, 2000), ‘hybrid wars’ (Hoffman, 2011) – all these were discussed in the academic community, but Kaldor’s latest work – the third edition of ‘New and Old Wars’ (2012) – reflects the features captured by those authors and states once again, with the corrections and editions made with the changing time, the new concept of war, the ‘new war’. We will be using a definition given by her in this book for the current paper. However, to better understand what exactly is new about wars today and where it comes from, it makes sense to look into the history of the research of the phenomenon of war as well.

1.1. Carl von Clausewitz’s theory

One of the most cited works elaborating on the nature of war is Carl von Clausewitz’s ‘On War’, originally published in 1832 and later translated in 1976 (Paret and Howard, 1976). The book focuses on the 18th and early 19th century, talking about the conflicts between nation-states. Taking this into account, Clausewitz’s ideas are sometimes considered irrelevant to modern wars (Schuurman, 2010).

According to Clausewitz, war is a ‘duel’ between two actors, each aimed at imposing one’s will on the opponent by means of force. He points out that the final goal is to render the enemy powerless. Important feature of Clausewitz’s theory is the trinity of violence, chance and purpose, which refer to the initial hatred and hostility between the parties involved in war. Although the forms may alter over time, the author claims that the main goal – to combat the enemy and force your will on him – remains unchanged (Clausewitz, 1832). In all fairness, it has to be added that Clausewitz himself admitted that wars in reality were, of course, different from wars in theory.

Moreover, warfare has a political nature, according to Clausewitz. He claims that “war is a continuation of policy by other means” (Clausewitz, 1832). Once again, the author states that the political nature remains, while political objectives may vary – that is what makes armed conflicts different on surface, but same in the root. In this regard, Clausewitz identifies aims as either concessions, submission or overthrow. Concession would mean obtaining limited area of one state’s interest met by another state through strengthening the bargaining conditions. Submission would mean imposing one state’s will upon the enemy-state by forcing the latter to accept the suggested terms. Overthrow is submission going further, for instance, to the extent of replacing the ruling regime, basically annexing another state, destroying its sovereignty.

In today’s conflicts, however, political nature is not so obvious. It seems that nowadays war is a continuation of economics by other means, and objectives are all in some way related to economic gains. Academics doing research in the subject of war have also noticed the fact that Clausewitz’s theories are not fully applicable for modern state of affairs. That is why his ‘On War’ receives quite a lot of criticism, for example, from Mary Kaldor.

1.2. Mary Kaldor’s theory

Mary Kaldor argues with the statement that the concept of fighting in wars remains the same in today’s world. According to her, not only the form of conflicts has changed, but the nature of conflicts itself. The actors, the goals, the methods of warfare, the sources of finance of the ‘new’ wars are different from the ones, described by Clausewitz. Let us have a good look at what Kaldor calls a ‘new’ war.

First of all, modern wars exist in the context of globalization process, which is new per se. What we witness nowadays is an erosion of the autonomy of states, which consequently leads to the erosion of the state’s monopoly to legitimate organized violence. It means that inter-state and intra-state conflicts are merging. As a result, actors of the ‘new’ wars are internal and external. What is even more interesting about ‘new’ wars, it is hard to tell one from another: which party is state, which is non-state, which is representing interest of a third state or organization etc. Mary Kaldor goes further by saying that “the distinctions between external barbarity and domestic civility, between the combatant as a legitimate bearer of arms and the non-combatant, between the soldier or the policeman and the criminal are breaking down” (Kaldor, 2012).

Secondly, Kaldor highlights the changed mode of warfare. New wars are using new means of fighting. In the past, the primary goal was usually to capture a territory with the use of military forces. Modern wars are characterized by the use of political control over the

population. One's influence is established over an area if this influence is established over 'hearts and minds' of people living there. Vice versa, in order to separate territories, it is convenient to spread fear and hatred between those who live on these territories.

While state military units engaged in old conventional wars were rather similar and unified, actors of today's conflicts are extremely heterogeneous. Units engaged in 'new' wars vary from para-military, local warlords, police forces and criminal gangs to mercenary groups and regular army. Such actors are highly decentralized, unlike those in 'old' wars.

The same applies to the war's economy: economies of 'new' wars are decentralized. Conflicts lead to unemployment and decrease in domestic production. War usually means an interruption of trade and shortage of tax revenue as well. Besides assistance from external parties, there is nothing left for the fighting actors than to finance themselves through criminal activities, such as plunder, hostage-taking, illegal trade and so on. For example, drug trafficking may be a valid financial source in terms of warfare. Anyways, all of these sources require continuous violence and eventually it becomes an integral part of economy. The same thing can be a formal cause of the war, a main source of finance and a major obstacle to finish the war by being the only thing that allows economy to function. It will be demonstrated more clearly further in the paper, on the example of drug trade.

Kaldor's 'new war' concept is discussed a lot in the academic community and receives some criticism as well. For instance, some doubt if 'new' wars are really new (Berdal, 2003). Although we focus on huge events in the past, like both of the World Wars and the Cold War, there were still other more complicated cases. Low-intensity conflicts existed before and they strongly resembled what Mary Kaldor would later call a 'new' war. Addressing these comments, she points out that the term 'new' was used by her in order to exclude 'old', outdated assumptions about the nature of war. 'New' war needs to be dealt with in a new way, so Kaldor's concept provides "the basis for a novel research methodology" (Kaldor, 2013). The characteristics of organized violence are changing, and this has to be taken into account while investigating or modelling a proper policy response.

Another wave of criticism is aimed at the term 'war' itself in Kaldor's theory. If some modern conflicts do not fall into the category of war, as it was defined by Clausewitz, then maybe those are not wars. Wars are becoming obsolescent and what we see now are mostly criminals, thugs, 'residual combatants' (Mueller, 2004). New wars indeed comprise many forms of crime, violence, human rights violation etc. Nevertheless, such contemporary violence follows very similar logic to those conflicts that are widely understood as wars. It seems as no coincidence that 'war on terror' was called 'war'- the way authorities address it is quite militaristic. Furthermore, features of 'new' war suggested by Kaldor can be found in the

situation around ‘war on terror’. Probably, the war on drugs can also be classified as a new war – that is what will be examined in Chapter 2.

A lot has been said on the subject of ‘new’ wars being ‘post-Clausewitzian’(Schuurman, 2010; Strachan, 2007), meaning that Clausewitz’s ‘On War’ can still be relevant to modern conflicts, given that the theory is adapted to nowadays. If traditional understanding of ‘On War’ is reconsidered from a fresh point of view, it will turn out that there is much more in common between Clausewitz’s text and modern challenges than it could seem at first sight. Thus, there is no need for a ‘new war’ concept, since traditional framework is still applicable. To this Mary Kaldor responds by pointing out the failure of Clausewitz’s trinity concept. Since modern wars usually involve a whole network of state and non-state groups, the trinity of “state, army and people” no longer applies. Moreover, to the contrast of Clausewitz’s theory of political nature of any war, narratives of wars today are based on particularistic interests. Mary Kaldor says that norms of war are violated for the sake of rationality. “They are not reasonable. Reason has something to do with universally accepted norms that underpin national and international law” (Kaldor, 2013).

Finally, ‘On War’ notion implies a contest of wills: one aims at crushing the enemy and achieving a final result. In modern wars, however, achieving a final goal does not seem to be what parties are fighting for. ‘New’ war is a mutual enterprise, where all actors need each other to continue their main activity of warfare. Thus, crushing an enemy would lead to termination of main activity with all the consequences like losing source of income. For this reason, ‘new’ wars tend to be long and inconclusive.

1.3. Hypothesis

Some conventional (to a certain extent) wars are still going on today, even though they are more like remnants of the past (Van Creveld, 1996). Examples of current wars in classic sense may include Israeli–Palestinian, Indo-Pakistani and Eritrean–Ethiopian conflicts, as they are mostly fought because of territorial disputes, actors are clearly two sovereign states (with certain assumptions), it is very much likely that both parties want to achieve results and are not fighting for the sake of war itself. Nevertheless, there are more examples of modern conflicts, which seem to be Kaldor’s ‘new’ wars. War on drugs might be one of them. By analyzing actions, moves and strategies of involved actors, the author of the current paper is intended to demonstrate why benefits from war for each actor are greater than the benefits from peace and, consequently, that war on drugs is not a war to stop drug trafficking, but more like a ‘mutual enterprise’ where parties take profit from the ongoing conflict.

2. Case study: Colombia

2.1. Methodology

Case study research method implies doing an investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its natural context, with the use of multiple sources of information (Yin, 2003). The phenomenon of the current research is war on drugs in Colombia. Natural context in this case means considering the phenomenon, limited by space and time. The territory of Colombia would be the limit of space (although some foreign actors might intervene, the field of the research stays within the borders of the country), time frame count starts from the time of implementation of Plan Colombia (2000) going further up until today, so that the results of the Plan's actions can be analysed as well. For the sake of fairness, different kinds of resources are used and for any argument the author has tried to find a counter-argument, both in reliable sources. This approach helps to understand the underlying reasons or motives of the speakers and compare relevance and authenticity of the suggested evidence.

2.2. Conceptual Framework

To set a conceptual framework of a case study, it is required to identify which actors will be included in the research.

The armed conflict in Colombia started in the 1960s as an opposition between Colombian government, Marxist–Leninist guerrillas, the most known of which are the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), and later also involved paramilitary groups. Each of them was aimed at increasing territories of influence. Later, in the 1970s, illegal cocaine trade started rising and it became a major source of profit for the involved parties. Soon, a considerable part of lands belonged to drug traffickers, who, consequently, gained much political power. Growing cocaine flows coming to Northern America from Colombia was a concerning issue for the U.S.A., so in 1986 the United States proclaimed drug trade as one of the major threats, resulting in allocation of significant amounts of resources towards dealing with the drug problem from the supply side.

As the 90s in Colombia were marked with an increased cocaine production and resulting from it security issues, a joint U.S.-Colombian strategy was worked out to fight drug trafficking and associated criminal activities. The strategy got a name 'Plan Colombia', it commenced in 2000. The idea was to reduce trafficking of cocaine and improve security conditions in the country by massive spraying of coca plants, building up military capacity and offering peasants incentives to switch to legal crops. Thus, the general population is also an important actor in the war on drugs. There are a couple of more actors in this conflict, which are more controversial

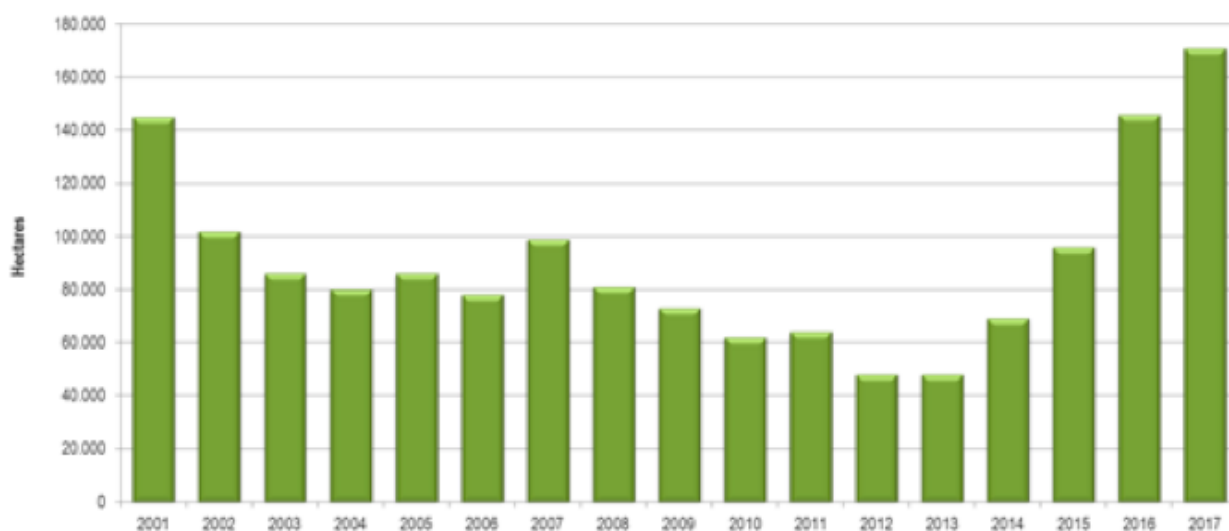
and shadier, those are left-wing guerrillas and right-wing paramilitaries. Different sources picture them in light or dark colours, depending on the nature of the source itself. In order to make sure the study is objective, various sources are analysed and taken into account.

To sum up, the Colombian government, the U.S. government, the FARC (as the main guerrilla group), the paramilitary movements, drug trafficking organisations and, finally, some other involved actors, like farmers and peasants will be analysed as engaged parties.

To have a fuller picture of Plan Colombia it might be useful to take a brief look at the achieved results. The American militarized approach led to an increase in drug trade, coca production and overall strengthening of the Colombian cartels. It is shown in the Figure 1 below, that coca cultivation has indeed grown in the country and in 2017 it hit a record: 171,000 hectares of Colombia's land was used to grow coca. According to the Figure 2, this size of plantations could produce almost 1500 tons of cocaine (UNODC, 2018).

Figure 1

Historical series of area with coca bush at December 31, 2001 – 2017

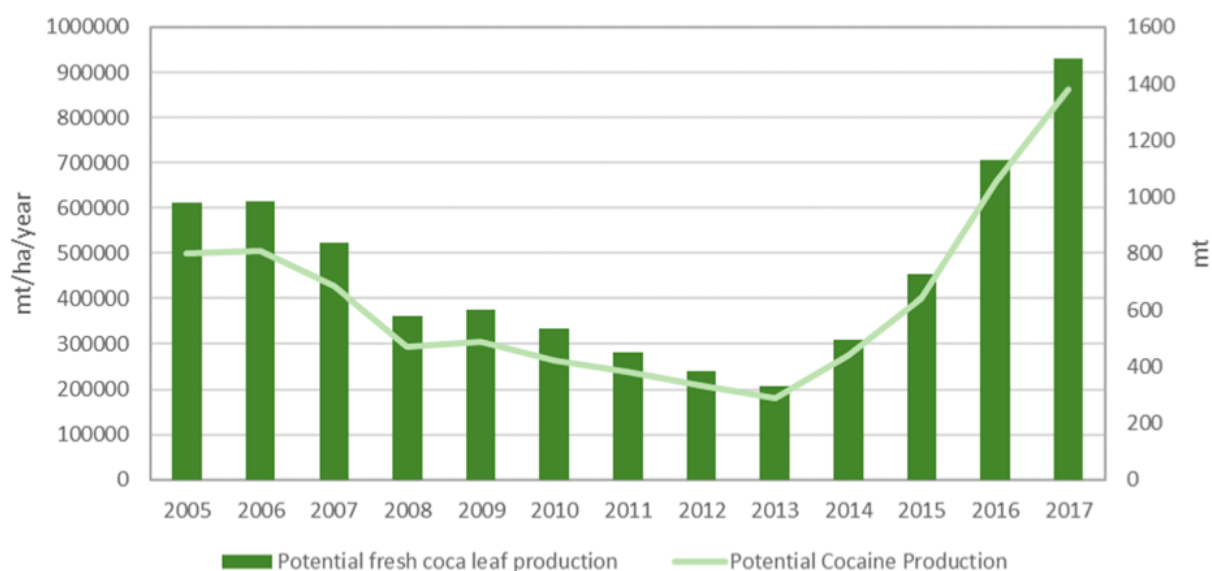


Source: UNODC, *Colombia – Survey of territories affected by illicit crops 2017, 2018*

Available at: https://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Colombia/Colombia_Survey_territories_affected_illicit_crops_2017_Summary.pdf

Figure 2

Potential fresh coca leaf and potential cocaine production, 2005 – 2017



Source: UNODC, Colombia – Survey of territories affected by illicit crops 2017, 2018

Available at: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-](https://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Colombia/Colombia_Survey_territories_affected_illicit_crops_2017_Summary.pdf)

[monitoring/Colombia/Colombia_Survey_territories_affected_illicit_crops_2017_Summary.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Colombia/Colombia_Survey_territories_affected_illicit_crops_2017_Summary.pdf)

2.3. U.S. Government

According to the records of the Global Statistics on Alcohol, Tobacco and Illicit Drug Use Status Report, smoking kills far more people than cocaine-use. However, with the U.S.A. being one of the leading tobacco producing countries, hardly anyone would ever imagine a situation where another state's militaries come to the United States to destroy tobacco plantations with herbicides. Nevertheless, a reverse case when American contractors are spraying glyphosate onto 4.42 million acres of Colombian territory does not meet much resistance from the global community (Isacson, 2019).

Although coca leaves can be grown in Colombia, Bolivia and Peru, the latter two countries hang far behind Colombia in the cultivation of coca (UNODC, 2019). According to the World Drug Report 2019, Colombia is the world's largest producer of cocaine, so no wonder most (if not all) cocaine at the U.S. market comes there from Colombia. In this sense, it seems reasonable to fight drug trafficking in pursuit of protecting the health of the U.S. citizens. However, the activities of Plan Colombia face a lot of criticism for being extremely inefficient. The point here is that those activities are, in fact, efficient for the reasons they were aiming at,

but not for reducing supply of cocaine at the American market. So, the question of discussion here is what the American government was really driven by.

One of the main reasons that most scholars pinpoint is the growing empowerment of the guerrilla movement in Colombia. In fact, American intervention into Colombia began far before the declaration of the “war on drugs”, so it should be understood in a broader framework of the Cold War. Thus, after the end of the WWII involvement of the U.S.A. in the Colombian internal policies has been gradually increasing. There was always a geopolitical interest in the intervention in the region of Latin America, and Colombia in particular, for the United States, especially after Cuban-Soviet connection got stronger. Americans chose to use military means to make sure that a pro-American agenda prevailed in the country.

Looking back into the history of America’s approach towards Latin America, it is worth mentioning The Roosevelt Corollary (1904), which was an addition to the Monroe Doctrine (1823). It was issued to protect the economic investments of the U.S.A. in Latin America. The Corollary justified U.S. activities and interventions in the region. In principal, the efforts were taken to suppress communist interests in the region, and also, to safeguard passage through the Panama Canal. Later, though, it also tackled the promotion of trade, access to oil wells and fighting drug trafficking (Hobbs, 2009). Thus, obviously, Plan Colombia would not be possible without this policy.

Before cocaine even entered the picture, counter-insurgency actions were already implemented in Colombia. Tough military response to any political divides provoked resistance, which eventually resulted into the emergence of the FARC, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. Although in the times of President Nixon counterinsurgency operations in Colombia kept going separately from the ‘war on drugs’, later President Reagan’s administration managed to tie the Cold War objectives with the anti-drug agenda. Talking about the drug problem, Ronald Reagan was concerned not only about health impacts, but also about drugs’ undermining the traditional concept of community, traditional values of the American society (Carpenter, 2003). This kind of discourse aligns well with the ideology of the Cold War. The idea of narco-traffickers being connected to Colombian guerrillas gave more freedom and public approval for the increased interventions by the United States (Boville, 2004). With the launch of Plan Colombia America’s presence in Colombia remained high and now attacks on FARC could be easily justified by the war on drugs. In reality, though, it was mainly done to keep the country away from reforms and, of course, revolutions.

Militaristic approach from the side of the U.S.A. towards the rebels hampered the peace negotiations in the country. As a result, leftist groups were, in a way, nudged to actually resort to

an involvement with the drug industry, because legal ways to finance their activities seemed no longer possible (Marcy, 2010).

Interests of American businesses in Colombia also played an important role in the continuation of the 'war on drugs'. American companies aimed at preserving their access to the Latin American markets, oil-wells and mines. Consequently, they were interested in countries following the capitalistic way. As communist guerrilla groups called for reforms in social policies, fought for the rights of labour and related things, the United States' representatives got concerned that it could negatively affect their enterprises in the country (Stokes, 2005). The 'war on drugs' was a way to respond to those threats.

An ongoing armed conflict obviously needs a sustainable supply of arms. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the United States consistently holds leading positions in the world export of arms. It is indeed favourable for American producers of weapons and defence equipment to provide the supply for the involved actors in Colombia. Ceasefire would mean no market to sell the U.S. originated military products. Thus, it is smart in this sense to provide several parties of the conflict with the arms, so that the powers would be balanced and the war may continue. It is known that the United States supports the Colombian Army with the weapons as a part of Plan Colombia. However, it is also logical to suppose that the paramilitary groups get their arms from the U.S.A. directly or indirectly through collaboration with the official army or serving the interests of foreign corporations operating in Colombia. Moreover, Colombia can be used effectively as a transit zone for the shipment of arms to other Latin American countries, in pursuit of assisting local right-wing movements, like Nicaraguan Contras, for example (Webb, 1998; Grandin, 2006).

The U.S.A. is also reported to have supplied the Colombian militaries with a sufficient number of advanced combat helicopters, manufactured by American companies. Aircraft factories create job places for American citizens, companies get their profit from the governmental contracts - evidently, Colombian conflict brings certain advantages for some businesses. The United States has also assisted Colombian Army with the upgrade of radar facilities, which cost approximately \$28 million (Stokes, 2005).

To sum up, according to a number of scholars, with a closer look it becomes clear that the U.S. 'war on drugs' in general played as nothing else other than an extension of the Cold War. Securing pro-American public sentiment has been brought to 'Plan Colombia' as the main objective as well. It is interesting to note also that the initial draft of 'Plan Colombia' was written in English, not Spanish (Chomsky, 2000). Apparently, it seems that it was more important for Americans to understand the underlying concept of the strategy than to Colombians themselves.

The efficiency of anti-drug measures taken under Plan Colombia is a cause of vivid discussions. However, even if we assume that measures are working and help to reduce coca production in the country, it is still not clear: was the goal to cut drug supply or to cut financing for the communist guerrillas? Another question to ask: does reduction of supply really help to tackle the demand for illegal substances? Researches show that people who use drugs tend to switch to alternatives, so-called new psychoactive substances, sometimes much more dangerous and with less studied effects, in times of limited access to their substance of use (UNODC, 2020). So, if the main priority of the government is the health of its citizens, then the policy should be dealing with the medical implications of drug-use disorders (DUD).

2.4. Colombian Government

As it was already mentioned before, civil confrontation and violence started in Colombia long before the announcement of the war on drugs. The history of Colombian domestic armed conflict goes back to the 1960s. It started with an establishment of two communist guerrilla groups, the FARC and the ELN, who took up arms against the government. Later external powers (represented by multinational corporations with the use of paramilitaries and the American government) entered the war.

So, land and power over those living on that land were major factors of the conflict. As of the beginning of the 21st century, the dominant elites had most of their influence in urban areas, primarily largest cities, and rebels were more powerful in the rural areas. Some specialists in the LAC region suppose that the dominant classes understood that peace negotiations would lead to hurtful reforms such as land redistribution and, consequently, redistribution of wealth (Richani, 2015). Probably, that is one of the reasons why peace negotiations, started by President Andres Pastrana, failed shortly before the start of Plan Colombia. It seems that it was safer for both parties to be involved in military confrontation than to agree to any compromises.

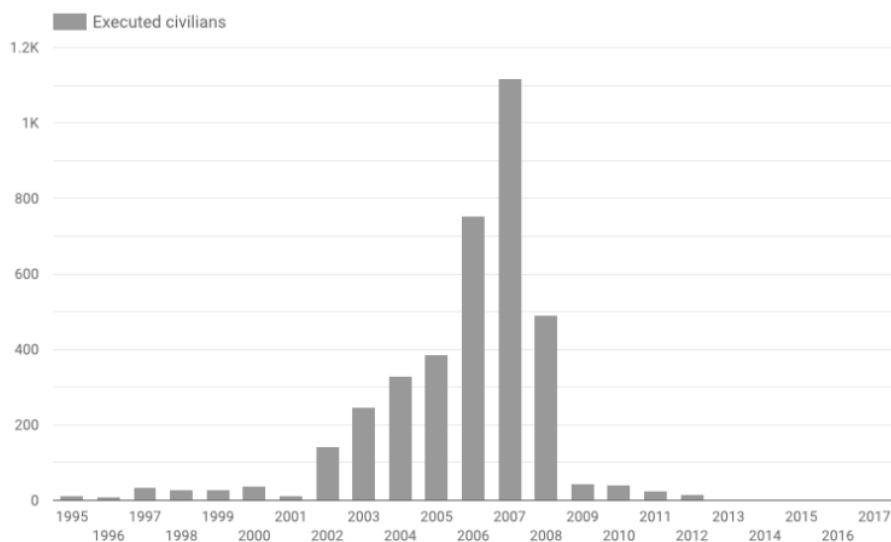
Indeed, right before Plan Colombia was launched (and destroyed all the hopes for reaching consensus among armed groups), peace negotiations in 1999 included topics like human rights, distribution of lands and resources, revision of economic and social policies, justice system reform, international agreements and many others. In fact, significant trust was built between the government and the FARC at that time, which even resulted into the latter's ceasefire for the Christmas time in 1999-2000 (Posso, 2004). Colombian President of that time Andrés Pastrana was determined to establish peace with the guerrillas. In May 1999 he met with FARC's leader Manuel Marulanda to start the formal part of negotiations.

Despite this impression of both government's and rebels' attempts to come to compromise, the peace agreement was never signed until 2016. There were many visible as well as hidden groups with their own interests, who might not be left exactly satisfied with the peace agreement conditions. Furthermore, the prospect of a continuous negotiation process in the middle of a violent war, with no guarantee of success, caused frustrations in all involved actors. The anti-drug campaign launched by the U.S.A. came just on time and was a convenient way to gloss over counter-insurgency operations of the Colombian government. Before that, peace talks seemed to be the only way to deal with the guerrillas, but now with the financial and military support from the U.S. Pastrana's government cancelled on their previous plans and joined the 'war on drugs'. Once again, it was quite convenient when the most powerful state in the world proclaims rebels who fight against your government as 'the most dangerous terrorist group in the hemisphere' and charge them with a very serious offence - drug trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2001). All in all, the United States has been granting significant amounts of aid to Colombia during these last decades. For example, in 2006 it reached \$1.2 billion (USAID Data Services).

Fighting political dissidents by representing them as drug traffickers in the eyes of the general public seemed like a good idea to the Colombian government. To this extent they even created a system of incentives to reward providing information on those involved in drug-trade, actually meaning guerrillas and paramilitaries, and murdering them (Ministry of Defence Directive No. 29, 2005). As it is demonstrated in the Figure 3, his directive resulted into a spike in the number of extrajudicial killings in Colombia.

Figure 3

Extrajudicial killings in Colombia per year



Source: Prosecutor General's Office (2013)

Media says that sometimes militaries would kill innocent civilians and dress their bodies into the FARC or paramilitaries uniform to get a monetary reward (The Guardian, Washington Post). This phenomenon was so widely spread that it received a name - false positives. So, the 'war on drugs' simplified the mechanism of getting rid of inconvenient groups, unfortunately, often at the expense of bystanders from the civilian population.

Another side of the peace-war dilemma is the army. If peace was reached, then President Pastrana's next step would be to cut military funding, in particular retirement benefits (Richani, 2013). The Army is more than satisfied with the allocation of state resources in the times of conflicts and is not interested in losing it, meaning that it is not interested in finishing the war. On contrary, 'anti-drug' agenda brought \$1.3 billion aid, which helped militaries to promote their incentives and ask for more legal freedom, limited external scrutiny of their actions, reduced attention to human rights abuses in context of warfare and so on. Experts sum up that the army's institutional interests became built up into the strategy of a low-intensity war, or, as it will be shown later in this paper, a 'new' war, making coexistence with the guerrillas if not worthy than bearable enough not to be motivated to end it, taking into account the extracted benefits.

The army particularly benefited when President Álvaro Uribe came to power in 2002. His idea of 'democratic security' contributed to the expansion of the army from 203,000 to 283,000 soldiers (Robinson, 2013). During his presidential term, President Uribe also doubled expenditures on defense (Bouvier, 2009). This demonstrates clearly that people whose living depends on security and defense sector gain a lot in the course of 'war on drugs'.

Another thing to be mentioned here is the question of lootable wealth. Some researchers believe that there is a clear connection between lootable resources and chaos. For example, Richard Snyder says that some governments contemplate receiving their share of profits from the extraction of illegal resources, like coca for instance (2004). In the case of Colombia, external intervention from the side of the U.S.A. is a limiting factor for doing that. In a perfect world, of course, the government would put efforts into combating drug production just as much as it is necessary to convince the U.S. DEA and the global community that all measures of the war on drugs are undertaken, and at the same time it would still reap the benefits from illegal drug trafficking. In this sense, 'war on drugs' for Colombian government is a very nice PR strategy that puts the ruling party in a favourable light for the rest of the world.

The president of Colombia, who finally managed to sign a peace agreement with the leftist groups in 2016, Juan Manuel Santos mentioned in his talk with the Guardian's reporter for the Global Development podcast, that making war was much easier than making peace. He specifically emphasized that he knew very well what he was talking about. To stop the conflict is

one thing, but to build a new peaceful order of things is another. Healing the existing wounds (meaning, for example, redirecting financial flows from the military to those sectors that have been at a low ebb for decades due to continuous wars: education, healthcare, infrastructure, social welfare etc.) seems like a very long, very complicated process. In addition, restoring the country after war requires a coordination of institutions, which might be an issue due to overlapping or opposing interests.

Any politician coming to power after the end of war would obviously face obstacles and criticism for any action he/she would undertake, because the country that has been in a war for so many years needs time to get used to peace. So, why would Colombian authorities take such a risk when they can simply blame all country's failures on war, on guerrillas, on paramilitaries, on cartels. After all, the network of actors involved in drug trade is so complicated that theoretically anyone can be set up to be connected to 'bad guys' (who may also vary depending on the context) and, consequently, prosecuted or neutralized. Waging a war on drugs gives full rein to fighting those involved with the drugs, that, given the complexity of the situation, with certain assumptions can be any politically undesirable person.

Finally, when one looks at combat-related fatalities in the Colombian conflict, they will find that for every single war-related death caused by rebels there were 2,4 deaths caused by the Colombian Army (Amnesty International, 2008). Evidently, Colombian government's priority was never to save civilians' lives, they followed other motives, which will probably never be revealed to the fullest. There is nothing left to do but guess what interests they have actually pursued.

2.5. FARC

Guerrilla movement in Colombia consists of the ELN, short for the National Liberation Army, the EPL, short for the Popular Liberation Army and other smaller groups. But the biggest and most influential guerrilla group is the FARC.

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, which is the full name of the FARC, started as a movement of peasants who were aimed at defending their parcels from the state and large landowners. It was founded in 1964 and followed Marxist-Leninist ideology, which, of course, gained particular concern from the side of the U.S.A. Since the foundation, the FARC has been mainly composed by rural populations: small farmers and land workers (Arteta, 1998). In some areas of the country the FARC has become so influential that it literally exists as a parallel government.

Due to its communist nature, at first the FARC could count on foreign sources of finance, like the one from the USSR. However, after the Cold War it was no longer possible, so guerrillas

had to rely on self-financing. As the FARC was particularly influential in rural areas, what they did was charging rent for the protection of peasant populations there. Eventually, all those operating on the lands under the FARC control were forced to pay ‘taxes’. Large landowners, cattle ranchers, DTOs, business representatives and others had to obey to the rules established by the FARC in their regions of control. Disobedience was punished by kidnapping and sometimes tougher penalties. All in all, ‘tax’ collected by the FARC for their protection is estimated by \$300 millions per year (Richani, 2001).

Some scholars suggest an idea that the FARC was not interested in the drug trade at first, and would still look for legal alternatives of income. However, when paramilitaries came to the area to get their share of the cocaine-trade ‘pie’, the FARC had to protect coca growers and prevent their cooperation with the enemies of guerrillas (Rabasa, Chalk, 2001).

As a popular saying goes, power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Although the FARC originated from the idea to stand for the people’s rights, justice and other noble ideas, when they got engaged with the drug trafficking money, it was, of course, hard to resist the temptation to rely more and more on illegal activities as their sources of finance.

The official government failed to meet the needs of simple villagers and gave their preference to larger landowners. In response to this, a lot of people had no other option but to believe in the FARC and follow their lead. Guerrillas, in their turn, got peasants to finance their activities by the above mentioned rent, which was mainly extracted from coca-growers.

It is pointed out by a number of researches that producing crops other than coca or doing other legal activities like breeding animals could be as profitable as growing coca (Riley, 1996; Clawson, 1996). However, the problem is the initial costs. Tom Wainwright mentioned in his book a quote by one of the union leaders in Colombia, who said that pork, poultry or tomatoes are all more profitable than coca, but they need investments, which small farmers simply lack (Wainwright, 2016). Even when the U.S. forces spray poison on the plantations, there are several ways to save the plants or quickly replace them by new ones. Firstly, molasses sprayed over coca plants before herbicides can prevent the damage. Secondly, cutting the stem of a coca bush right after aerial spraying might help the plant to recover and produce again after several months. Finally, peasants usually have extra seed beds prepared to be planted in case of plantation being poisoned. And implementation of all those strategies still costs less than complete restructuring of the whole household in order to grow a different crop or take up a new activity. Taking into account all the mentioned above, we begin to understand why peasants choose to keep cultivating coca in spite of all the efforts of the government to stop it. And since the government

does not realise the discussed factors, farmers have to face off the official authorities and live under the conditions proclaimed by the FARC.

In all fairness, conditions for the farmers and peasants under the rule of the FARC are not so bad, or at least, not as bad as it could be under other counteractors, for example, paramilitaries. Like this, guerrillas set a higher price for a gram of coca paste than paramilitaries (Leech, 2009).

Another reason for the FARC not to be willing to stop the war is the fact that they have already tried to do so and faced deplorable consequences. In 1984 La Uribe Agreement was signed between Belisario Betancur government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. It implied ceasefire, and later these pacific moods resulted into the creation of a political party called 'Union Patriótica'. The UP consisted of representatives of the FARC and also other leftist groups as well as labour unions leaders and social activists (Brittain, 2010). The party supported constitutional reforms, increased political decentralization and pluralism, improvements in socioeconomic policies, land redistribution, greater public access to education and healthcare, nationalization of foreign businesses presented in Colombia and many other initiatives. In 1986 the UP showed better results in the elections than any other leftist party in the history of Colombia (Taylor, 2009).

Even though a formal peace agreement between the FARC and the Colombian government was reached in 2016, it cannot guarantee that the violent conflict will stop. The point is that many rebels are not ready to lay down their arms. First, there is a psychological issue with a military person adapting to a new life outside of war. For example, when the Guardian journalists were interviewing some of the FARC members in 2015, they all expressed their unwillingness to stop fighting, explaining that being a soldier of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia was their whole life and they do not know what to do without it. In the same interview by the Guardian the topic of gender equality was also mentioned. Some female rebels believe that the guerrilla groups are the only places where they are treated equally as men. However, it is not 100% true, according to a number of studies done on this issue (Stanski, 2006; Herrera, 2008), but it indeed might be the case that a lot of women still believe in the idealistic nature of the FARC and would prefer a participating in a continuous conflict as a soldier rather than living a civilian life with all the gender-related troubles common for the Colombian society. Finally, there are some idealists within the FARC who would rather die than cave in to the government, those who are still faithful to the communist beliefs and are not ready to be defeated and, surely, there are individuals who take joy from the criminal activities and are happy to justify their behaviour with an ongoing conflict.

Peace agreement, although seeming to be working in some areas, failed to reach rural areas, where the state presence is limited. Illegal armed groups and criminal structures continue victimizing populations there. As UN Special Representative Carlos Ruiz Massieu has noted, peace cannot be achieved to the fullest if ‘the brave voices of social leaders continue to be silenced through violence’ and if former guerrilla soldiers who have agreed to lay down their weapons continue to be killed (UN News, 2020).

To put it short, if there was no ‘war on drugs’ and the government considered some proven-to-be-effective measures to support the farmers and peasants, then, most probably, rural populations would not be bound to obey to the FARC’s rules. Thus, status-quo with an ongoing war allows guerrillas to tax rich landlords, kidnap those who are refusing to pay the tax, put a taxation on coca-growers and, overall, have an economic mainstay. It turns out that the cost of peace for the FARC is relatively higher than the cost of war.

2.6. Paramilitaries

Paramilitaries represent another powerful armed group in the country and they play an important role in the whole Colombian conflict. They stand as an opposition to the revolutionary guerrilla forces. However, the nature of paramilitarism in Colombia is a very controversial issue, provoking all kinds of discussions.

Some scholars believe that paramilitaries are ‘warlords’ and their uprising happened due to the failure of the state (Duncan, 2005; Marten, 2012). Since public institutions were not able to stop guerrillas from setting their rules over territories, landowners and enterprises (and later also drug lords) had to resort to private ones. There are also researchers who claim that public institutions were diverted from their actual aims and were put at the service of criminal activities instead (Salamanca, 2008; Romero, 2011). Government is said to employ contracted militias for the purpose of fighting domestic opposition while saving the face of the official authorities in front of global society (Zelik, 2015).

The paramilitaries’ alliance with the government refers us to the term ‘para-politics’. While their connections with large landowners and, especially, multinational corporations – to the term ‘para-economics’.

2.6.1. Para-politics

The term para-politics describes the ties between Colombian state officials and paramilitary organizations.

Before the elections in 2006, Colombian journalist Alejandro Santos published his investigation of the connections between The Administrative Department of Security (DAS) and the paramilitaries. The department is accountable directly to the president, which means that Álvaro Uribe was also involved. The DAS was accused of money-laundering, tampering of records and, most importantly, sharing intelligence with paramilitary groups. Jorge 40's Northern Block is said to cooperate with the DAS to assassinate leaders of labour unions, academics and to commit electoral frauds. The former head of the DAS Noguera later admitted talks with Jorge 40 (Holmes, 2008). The computers seized after the demobilization of the latter has proved that the paramilitaries signed an agreement with the politicians to "refound the motherland" (Colombia Reports, 2019). Eventually, more than 60 congressmen and governors were convicted for the use of paramilitary forces to get elected into office.

The most known paramilitary organisation in Colombia was the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, also known as the AUC. They are said to be active in the 2000s and demobilised in 2006. Nevertheless, a lot of sources report that other paramilitary groups are still active today. This is probably a result of a 'betrayal': after the AUC grounded their arms in 2006, President Uribe, who was considered to be the AUC's ideological ally, approved the incarceration of the paramilitary leadership. Naturally, this fact reset all the peace agreements to zero.

2.6.2. Para-economics

According to Colombian Reports, before the 1990s Colombia was marked as a country with the strongest unions in Latin America (affiliation rate - more than 15%). However, in 2010 the International Trade Union Confederation estimated that only 4% of the workforce belonged to a union in Colombia. It is most probably a result of paramilitarism. Large companies promote their interests through private militants, which means worsening conditions for workers more and more for the sake of increased assets and profit maximisation. This phenomenon in Colombia even received a name - para-economics. Anti-leftist extremism is indeed convenient for businesses: death squads that are killing guerrillas may also kill labor rights activists under all the shouting. Multinational corporations that have alleged links with the paramilitaries include British Petroleum, Drummond, Coca Cola, Occidental Oil and Chiquita Brands International (Richani, 2005).

Paramilitaries are no strangers to kidnapping. To put it simple, they might ask 20 million as a ransom, but would agree to take a million for their defending service. Sure enough, after realizing the threat, peasants and farmers will do their best to collect the required million and, consequently, paramilitarism will flourish.

As for the landowners willing to enlarge their acres, paramilitaries served as a good help to persuade small farmers to sell lands and to ‘bargain’. Colombian proverb says: ‘Sell me your land or I’ll buy it off your widow’. With the use of violence and terror at least 3 million hectares were dispossessed, according to the government. Some lands were also kept by the paramilitaries themselves in order to perform drug trafficking activities.

Although para-economics, as a phenomenon where companies use ‘death squads’ to maximize profits by evading labor laws and increasing assets, was mainly common in the period 1990-2000, it still exists today.

As it was already discussed above, the guerrillas were those mainly affected by Plan Colombia. So, when American forces together with the Colombian Army target FARC-controlled areas, they in a way help paramilitaries to come to those territories and establish their control over it. When paramilitaries gain power over coca plantations, they no longer care about peasants’ fate and rights, which makes coca production much less costly, resulting into higher margins, because, as we know, drugs, like any other goods, go through a value-adding chain before they actually reach consumers. Unlike FARC, who are striving after ‘hearts and minds’ of people with their communist agenda, paramilitaries are not bothered with seeking public approval. They fight for the sake of economic gains and, in fact, fear associated with the ongoing war is convenient for that: chaos allows to go on with criminal activities as long as it is needed (Edeli, 2002).

2.7. Cartels (DTOs)

Unfortunately, even though drug trafficking organisations should have been main targets for eradication by Plan Colombia, they found themselves in a comfortable impasse. Instead of fighting them, the U.S.-led strategy has made DTOs agile, wealthy and opportunistic (Bunck, 2012).

In his book ‘Narconomics. How to run a drug cartel’ Tom Wainwright wrote about a so-called “cockroach effect”, which is attributed to the phenomenon of DTOs appearing again and again, no matter how much efforts are put to destroy them. What happens is if you squeeze a cartel in one place, it will most probably bulge up somewhere else. Just like cockroaches, when drug traffickers are chased out of a room, they soon find residence somewhere else in the house, or else other ‘parasites’ will come, meaning the appearance of newly formed DTOs. This is a logically predictable case, as cocaine trade is an extremely profitable business.

In fact, according to an economic concept of elasticity, change in price would not lead to a drop in demand given that demand is inelastic. In case of majority of narcotic substances, cocaine in particular, demand is relatively inelastic (Organization of American States, 2013),

which means that an increased price would more than compensate for the reduction in demand. Obviously, since cocaine is addictive, people who use it on a more or less regular basis will not find it easy to give up the habit for the only reason that the price goes up. Eventually, limited supply drives up the market price. This results in higher overall drug revenues, making drug ‘business’ profitable even if increased costs due to higher risk are taken into account.

Given the above described economic principle, it can be concluded that, as a famous saying states, nature will abhor the vacuum and new drug trafficking organisations will take the place of the removed ones. It happened, for example, when Colombian Police killed Pablo Escobar, Medellin Cartel’s leader. After that, the Cali Cartel filled the void left by the demise of the Medellin Cartel (Paul, Clarke, Serena, 2014). Thus, for drug trafficking organisations continuous ‘war on drugs’ means elimination of rivals. Eventually, small actors are kept from competition and narco-business turns out to be concentrated in the hands of a few large, monopolistic organisations. Due to high risks involved and lack of competition those large organisations generate enormous profits. As it is usually the case in market economy, those who specialize in a specific activity and outsmart the system win in the end. In the circumstances of Colombia, those who win are drug cartels, as they got adapted to the ‘war on drugs’ conditions with maximum profits and minimum rivalry.

To make it clear that the cartels are not suffering losses or any major troubles due to the implementation of Plan Colombia, it is enough to take a look at their revenues in recent times. It is impossible to find official figures of DTO’s activities, but we can still do rough estimations based on the other data that is publicly available. Let us take, for example, year 2017 when cocaine trade was booming. Cocaine production in Colombia was equal to around 1,379 metric tons that year, according to UNODC. Wholesale prices in the U.S.A. (which is the main market for Colombian cocaine, according to the US Department of State) amounted to \$28,000 per kilogram (UNODC). Consequently, we can do the following calculations:

$$1,379 \text{ metric tons} = 1379000 \text{ kilograms}$$

$$1379000 \times 28000 = \$38612000000 \approx \$38 \text{ billions}$$

As a result, \$38 billions could be made by Colombian DTOs in 2017. It is comparable to the annual revenue of a large multinational corporation, for example, Facebook, which accounted for around \$40 billions in 2017. Taking into account cartel’s waiver of paying taxes, we can conclude that significant profits are made by Colombian DTOs every year despite (and, partly, due to) the efforts taken under the ‘war on drugs’ agenda. Today narco-elites do not show off as extremely as their predecessor Medellin and Cali cartels did, but it does not mean they are not there or that they get significantly less profits. The problem is that we do not possess enough resources to fully understand how their criminal systems work nowadays.

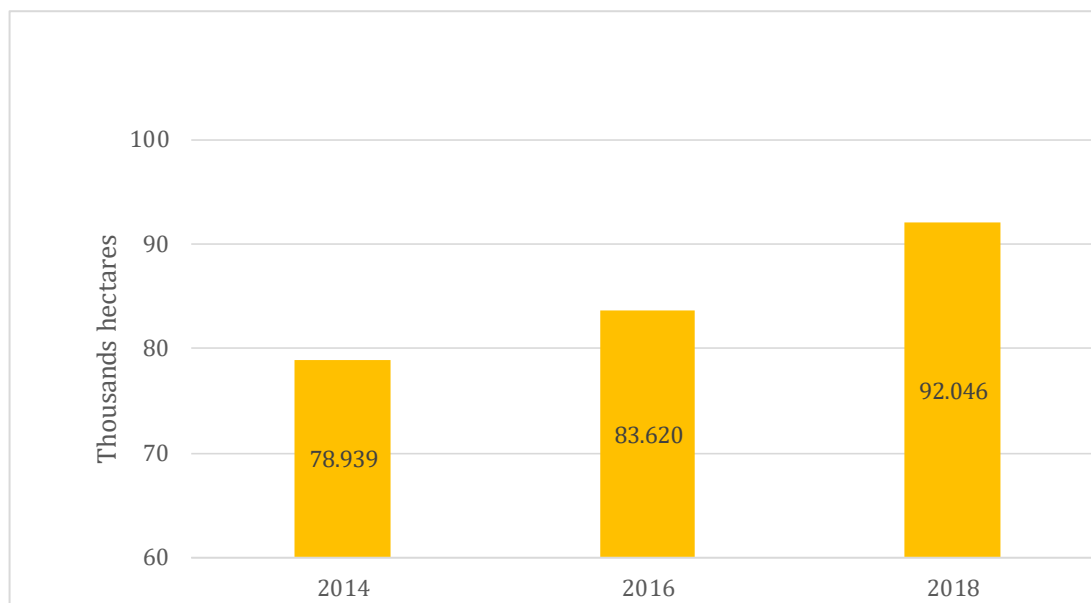
2.8. Multinational corporations

It is worth noting the interests of transnational corporations in the Colombian war. According to Dawn Paley (2014), the whole ‘war on drugs’ agenda is conveniently used as a ‘facade’ that befores underlying displacements associated with TNC’s activities in the country. According to The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Report (UNHCR, 2018), Colombia has the highest number of people who are internally displaced (IDPs) - there are 7.7 million of them. Colombia Reports web portal informs that it is likely to be a result of paramilitary expansion and usurpation of lands. It is also commonly believed, and mentioned earlier, that paramilitaries are there on behalf of transnational corporations. Thus, the implementation of Plan Colombia in one way or another has led to the triumph of transnational interests over the interests of local people.

It is reported by media sources, like BBC, that the focus being placed on other security issues gives space for the thriving of illegal mining, which also serves as a source of income for many illegal groups. In addition, President Iván Duque emphasizes the importance of mining sector for the development of country and does his utmost to support the industry. It particularly concerns gold mines. The gold rush is likely to cause a further increase of violence and displacement in countryside areas, where people are already exhausted from the long-lasting war. For example, murders of land and environmental defenders are already taking place (King, Wherry, 2020). The rise of interest towards gold may make these processes even more severe. Today the COVID-19 pandemic has already driven the prices for gold by 5% up, since investors look for safe forms of ‘deposits’, and it can further enhance the ongoing slaughter of environmental activists.

As it was discussed before, the FARC, although controversial and blamed for serious crimes, tries at least to take certain responsibility for the controlled territories. Like this, they imposed environmental restrictions on the extractive activities in their control areas. After a ceasefire and formal demobilization of the guerrillas, it was no longer valid and multinational corporations and paramilitaries took advantage of a newly appeared void of power for the sake of their economic interests. It is evidently shown in the Figure 4 below (demonstrating the evidence of alluvial gold exploitation - EVOA), that peace negotiations with the FARC led to a sharp rise in mercenary mining. The government of Colombia has supersede rebels from the mining areas, but failed to fill in the vacuum with working measures to mitigate the impacts of large-scale mining. Thus, extractive industries have become especially attractive to the multinationals seeking to receive their short-term profits at the expense of fragile ecosystems of the areas and the unprotected locals.

Figure 4
EVOA Area



Source: UNODC, 2019

Available at:

<https://www.minenergia.gov.co/documents/10192/24159317/EVOA+ingles.pdf>

Thus, the ‘war in drugs’ against the guerrilla movements is beneficial for the mining industry, because the absence of communist control over the areas of their work gives free rein to the corporations, enabling them to neglect environmental and labourers’ rights issues. For instance, Royal Roads Minerals, a gold exploration and development company, states in its website: "Post-conflict environments can be dynamic and often confusing, but they are also a remarkable opportunity for the private sector." ¹

Multinational companies make a great use of paramilitary forces in the country to promote their economic interests (see subchapter 2.6.2. Para-economics). The most famous example is Chiquita Brands International Inc. The company’s officials admitted making payments to paramilitary groups, including the AUC, in the period 1997-2004. Noteworthy, earlier, in the 1990s, Chiquita also paid more than \$800,000 to the FARC and the ELN (National Security Archives, 2017).

The company denies being aware of the terrorist activities of both of the groups, but still has agreed to pay \$25 million fine to the U.S.A. Government. This money, however, will not reach those who were actually affected by the activities of the AUC and guerrillas, and Chiquita has not undertaken any efforts to support family members of the terrorists’ victims.

¹ Available at: <https://www.royalroadminerals.com/investors/>

EarthRights International reports that around a ton of cocaine was transported with Chiquita-owned ships, using Chiquita's private port in Colombia. It is also said to be used for the smuggling of arms for the AUC. Thus, Chiquita Brands International – AUC cooperation was (and maybe stays) mutually beneficial.

Moreover, Chiquita Brands International grows bananas on large plantations in Colombia and has been taking advantage of the civil conflict and 'war on drugs' agenda to purchase lands at a lower price.

2.9. Other actors

A lot of scholars emphasize the drug cartel's ability to corrupt politicians, justice structures, militaries, religious leaders and business elites (Bunck, 2012; McSweeney, 2017). Thus, all those minor actors also take benefits from the 'war on drugs' by receiving their share of 'narco-cash' in a form of bribe, which would be impossible outside of 'war on drugs' narrative. In fact, since cartels are spared from official taxes, they are able to spend millions on bribes. Although it is hard to name a precise figure, it is estimated that cartels in Colombia spend no less than \$100 millions on bribery every year (Fukumi, 2008).

Just like this, Juan Carlos Ramírez Abadía also known as Chupeta, of the leaders of the North Valley Cartel, went really far in his bribes deal. In his book 'Cocaine Nation' (2009) Thomas Feiling tells a story about Chupeta's bribing the Agustin Codazzi Geographic Institute, which was supposed to assist police with the maps to raid Chupeta's labs. He is believed to have paid to be updated on police enquiries about him. Chupeta also paid to the mobile phone company to be aware if his calls are being traced. Every time drug lord needed batches of his cocaine to be transported through certain roads, he would pay around \$8000 to the roadpolice. In the sea his shipments were safe as well, thanks to naval officers bribed with more than \$35000. He is said to have spent around \$1.5 million on Christmas presents to his 'friends' in services (Feiling, 2009). Of course, all those bribed individuals loved the idea of the 'war on drugs' which made it possible for them to get such generous gifts. In the case of Chupeta, another sector of Colombian economy made a lot of profit. That is plastic surgery. He changed himself radically to avoid being caught, and got into headlines of The New York Times, NBC, Telegraph and many other medias (Feuer, 2018).

The Wall Street Journal also paid attention to the rise of plastic surgery in Colombia in their material devoted to Pablo Escobar's profile 'Cocainenomics'². Not only it came in handy for those drug traffickers who wanted to fool the enemies or escape justice (like Chupeta), but

² Available at: <https://www.wsj.com/ad/cocainenomics>

also plastic surgery gained extreme popularity due to newly appeared ‘narco-aesthetic’. It started in the times of Escobar when lots of women sought to get cosmetic surgeon’s help in enhancing curves or tailoring themselves to the western beauty standards. Not always voluntary, but quite often forced by their ‘sponsors’ from the narco-elites. Pablo Escobar made aesthetic surgery seen as socially acceptable and even desirable. In fact, some experts claim that he almost made it unacceptable not to change. Sadly, this phenomenon remains today, even after Escobar’s death. The point is that the continuous war has destroyed all the means of social mobility in Colombia. As a result, for women, especially those left widowed or orphaned, there is no legal way to achieve any level of decent lifestyle. As also noted by the web portal Colombia Reports, the only way left to mean something in the Colombian society affected by drug traffickers is to ‘join’ them as a trophy-wife or just as one of the girls surrounding cartel members at their events. Self-objectification is not much of a choice in the given circumstances, but rather the only way to make any living. As Diana Patino, political expert from Medellin, told Colombia Reports, the body has become their reason for living, their salvation from this society.

That explains the rise of plastic surgery in Colombia in the course of war. Admittedly, these are minor actors in the whole conflict and could be considered as ‘free riders’. In social sciences this term applies to those who benefit from the resource (or situation, in this case) without paying for them. Of course, plastic surgery clinics do not contribute to the war in any ways, but they are enjoying an increased flow of clients due to the occurred circumstances.

For the farmers, who are growing coca plants, the main problem is that no other form of activity would bring them decent money, or at least money sufficient to lead their ordinary humble lifestyle. As it was mentioned earlier, initial investments into a new legal activity are high and most peasants cannot afford it. Secondly, the advantage of being engaged with coca is that cartel representatives/paramilitaries/guerrillas (underline as applicable) come to buy the coca paste or the leaves themselves and growers do not need to travel to the marketplace to sell their crops. Given that the farmers were able to turn to some legal production, it would still be almost impossible for them to reach the point of sale because of the absence of appropriate roads and overall poor quality of infrastructure in the country (Velasco, 2019; Amnesty International, 2020).

There is enough coverage made by international journalists who were accompanying armed forces in their operations to find and destroy coca labs, hidden in the jungle (France 24, Vox, Vice, Al Jazeera). What unites all those journalistic video stories are the sad, devastated facial expressions of the poor peasants witnessing their only sources of income being burnt by military people. Current policy approaches the problem, as the policy makers see it, but does not provide much alternatives for those who are affected. There is one more thing in common that all

those reports share: in the end the labs are restored because farmers have no other options but to keep growing and refining coca in order for them and their families to survive.

To sum up, the 'war on drugs' in Colombia is a very complex phenomenon that in one way or another affects all spheres of life of the local population. Since the country has been in a state of armed conflicts long before the drugs agenda, lots of people have learnt to adapt to the circumstances. In this sense, 'war on drugs' brought new opportunities for some groups of the Colombian population to work out a source of income, to disguise their true intentions and so on.

3. New war features in the Colombian case

Having analyzed the role of every involved actor in the previous chapter, we can conclude that the war on drugs in Colombia is an example of an economic conflict. In other words, every party's main motivation is to maximize economic gain and, as a result, earn associated political power. In theory, it can be done through illegal exploitation of natural resources or through production of illicit drugs. The latter is obviously the case of Colombia.

Scholars are convinced that the war system is led by the involved parties' goals, incentives and calculations, and not always by the potential outcome. It is also true for Mary Kaldor's theory of 'new' wars, which was discussed in the first chapter. Thus, we can see that 'war on drugs' in Colombia is indeed a case of a new war with most of the attributed features.

First of all, it is said that in 'new' wars state and non-state actors are merged in a way that it is hard to tell one from another. This is indeed relevant for Colombian case, especially when it concerns paramilitaries. Their connection with the government stays unclear. Moreover, 'new' wars are globalized, meaning that external actors may participate in conflicts. An erosion of the autonomy of states is typical for the 'new' wars, and in the case of Colombia we see that the United States is an important actor enjoying full rights of an actual participant in the Colombian conflict.

Secondly, 'new' wars are fought by actors of heterogeneous nature. Colombian case fits this characteristic as well. Insurgent rebel groups that are armed, actual Army of Colombia, U.S. representatives, paramilitaries employed by multinational corporations, landowners and, probably, cartels, finally, drug trafficking organizations with an unclear structure and connections – the nature of involved institutions varies a lot. Not a single party resembles one another – that is a feature which was not common in conventional wars. Evidentially, the variety of actors in the Colombian conflict demonstrate the 'novelty' of the war.

According to Duffield (2001), there are no 'civilians' in new wars. People are not considered as individuals, but as members of certain networks: religious, ethnic, racial. The same applies to Colombia. People are classified by their connection with the government, the FARC, paramilitaries and the cartels. A person might be a direct participant of one of the mentioned groups or at least be living in the areas controlled by one of those. Thus, no one stays neutral or just 'civilian'.

'New wars' concept implies that the border between legality and illegality is blurred. Going further with this statement, scholars also point out that war/peace status is difficult to define. In case of the armed conflict in Colombia, at different points peace deals were made both with the guerrillas and the paramilitaries (as mentioned in the respective subchapters above),

however, none of them really stopped the violence and armed confrontation in the country. Another side of this argument may concern the principal idea of the 'war on drugs'. Is 'peace', or a final result, in this kind of war can be achieved only by reducing drug production to zero? Can such a goal justify all the civilian losses, poverty, violence and displacement? Obviously, definition of victory in the 'war on drugs' is a very relative issue, just as it is in the context of 'new' wars.

Another feature of 'new' wars is that they do not only cause political and economical degradation of the state where military actions take place, but also affect other countries in the region. It creates 'bad neighbourhood' with a number of problematic states in the area. Just like this, instability in Colombia is not unique for Latin America. For example, Mexico is experiencing a rise of violence, drug trafficking and armed confrontations.

The adherents of the 'new wars' theory Mary Kaldor say that the rulers of nowadays might resort to warfare because of their uncertainty in governmental control over the territory. For instance, it is widely believed that the major enemy in the 'war on drugs' in Colombia is rebel movement, not illegal substances. In this sense, the government of Colombia uses this war to make sure that it is supported or at least obeyed to by the Colombian people. Such wars might often be directed against civilian population.

The economy of 'new' wars, described by Mary Kaldor, is present in Colombia as well. It is common in the new wars for the involved groups to be financed with the use of natural resources (Studdard, 2004). The continuation of the war economy largely depends on the availability of those. Colombian cocaine, for example, is formally a reason of the war and a source of finance at the same time. This controversy stands in the way of any attempts to put an end to the war. Other means of income existing in modern conflicts include human trafficking, kidnapping, bribery and organized crime. We saw that Colombian insurgent groups are claimed to be using kidnapping extensively for the purpose of demanding ransom and bribery is practiced widely by DTOs. As for the organized crime, it can be said that the whole fact of existence of paramilitaries is a case of organized crime. When scholars touch upon the subject of 'new wars' economy, some of them also mention manipulation of foreign aid, which might be relevant for the Colombian government and the financial assistance it receives under the Plan Colombia.

What is also true both about 'new wars' in theory and particular case of Colombia is that the state revenue tends to fall in times of conflict, provoking little domestic production and overall slowdown of the country's economy. As a result, actors of the conflict have to resort to alternatives for making their living. Very often the only alternatives are those associated with the warfare in the ongoing confrontation. Eventually, they get into a vicious cycle where war forces them to take up war-related activities, and then their war-related activities hinder the end of the

war. In this context, the population has no other option but to be engaged in the illicit activities or shadow economies.

War on drugs in Colombia follows a scenario just like the one described above. The chosen policy has allowed every actor to find their way to adapt to it and stake their claim. A state of peace, instead, will deprive them of their main source of income, power and their main form of activity. As Nazih Richani has also noted in his book 'Systems of Violence: The Political Economy of War and Peace in Colombia' (2013), the war on drugs in Colombia created a 'comfortable impasse', where all contenders prosper. A bounded system of interactions and alliances made possible due to the failure of a state, material gains from the warfare and the existing balance of forces, perpetuates itself. In other words, war brings benefits for the engaged actors, and these benefits outweigh those from reaching peace.

The 'new war' notion also assumes the likely involvement of an important rare natural resource. Cocaine does play that role in the Colombian war. In fact, cocaine gained such an importance in the Colombian reality that it has basically substituted money and has become the source of power. That is why control over territories and people producing cocaine is desired by main actors of the conflict. The greed for power and money lies behind the intention to pursue drug trade or to prevent competing side from obtaining control over cocaine production sources.

This refers us to the "greed versus grievance" theory. It is a debate between scholars of armed conflicts, where some support the greed model (meaning that the actors resort to arms when fighting will improve their well being according to cost benefit analysis) and others believe in the grievance model (meaning that actors are motivated by ethnic, religious or social class grievances).

In the World Bank paper "Greed and Grievance in Civil War" (2000) Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler demonstrated the unfoundedness of the grievance model to explain a civil war. They have concluded that the combatants are more likely to seek economic benefits and, accordingly, follow the greed model. Speaking about war on drugs in Colombia, based on the analyzes performed in the Chapter 2, we can claim that greed is also the case here. Fighting cocaine industry for the sake of the nobelty of this idea, or for the sake of the people's health, does not seem to be true. Case-study analyses showed in detail that each side of the conflict in one way or another seeks monetary gains, or, in other words, is driven by the greed.

Taking into account all the above mentioned, we can conclude that the war on drugs has a number of features inhering in the concept of 'new wars', suggested by Mary Kaldor. The main point, connecting the case study and the theory, is the fact that the outcome of the war is not the priority of the combatants, as there are advantages they can extract only under the condition of the ongoing conflict. So, maximizing positive effects of the confrontation, playing the card of

fighting the drugs problem is a convenient state of affairs for the governments involved (Colombian and American). As for the other armed groups, they find their ways to turn the situation to good account for themselves as well.

4. Possible solutions

The war on drugs, proclaimed by the United States, have evidentially failed. It is widely marked by a number of experts (Buxton, 2006; Keefer, 2008; OAS, 2013; Caulkins, 2014).

What went wrong and what could be done now?

As it has been identified earlier, the war on drugs in Colombia indeed has a nature of a 'new' war. Aspects of a 'new' war which are also present in Colombia require a 'new' approach. So, in order to suggest possible solutions, it makes sense to refer back to the concept.

According to Mary Kaldor (2012), since modern conflicts bear extensive social and economic ramifications, top-down approach will most probably fail. It is hardly possible to find a long-term solution within the present framework. The key here is to restore the legitimacy of the state, so that the control of organized crime can be undertaken by the respective authorities. In terms of political process, it is necessary to rebuild trust in governmental bodies and support for them. It also concerns legal process – it is necessary to ensure a rule of law in order for public authorities to operate efficiently.

The situation in Colombia is the following: weak governance has led to a situation where highly profitable coca plantation lands are controlled either by the paramilitaries or by the guerrillas or where these plantations are destroyed by the state Army in cooperation with the Americans. Livelihood of a great part of the Colombian population significantly depends on coca and related activities. In this regard, starting a war on cocaine was a lost case from the beginning.

Drug trafficking is an attractive path for the actors involved in the Colombian conflict, because as an illegal substance cocaine brings extremely high margins. Another point is that it is a good leverage for manipulation, since all the associated processes should be down on the quiet. Thinking about this, further research may be devoted to analyzing how a situation will change if cocaine is made legal in Colombia, and, consequently, all the activities in the value-added chain are performed under surveillance. Most probably, such actors as the FARC and the paramilitaries would lose a substantive part of their financial basis and will be bound to come to the negotiating table to find a consensus. Speaking of which, it is worth mentioning that there is a long history of potential peace deals between the actors of the Colombian war, which, however, were never really successful. The government has managed to betray both guerrillas and paramilitaries. It also let common citizens down so many times that regaining trust seems almost unreal.

To sum up, war on drugs in Colombia has a form of a 'new' war. Consequently, the ideas spoken out by scholars in respect to this theory, may apply to the Colombian case. Necessary features for the termination of the conflict are the following: strong institutions, restored trust in

the government, civil society dialog, limiting external interventions. The UNODC experts are of a similar opinion. In their ‘Survey of territories affected by illicit crops 2017’ for Colombia, the authors conclude that “the consolidation of peace must be accompanied by institutional presence capable of providing conditions for security and the rule of law”. Thus, according to the UNODC, the main objective is to facilitate and reinforce the role of the public institutions and promote integrated rural development, reduce vulnerabilities and transform the territories of Colombia (UNODC, 2018).

Researches, like James Robinson, for instance, believe that the drug industry issue is an outcome of more deep-seated problems (2013). Drug mafias, guerrilla groups and paramilitaries have totally exacerbated the problems of Colombia, but the main problems still have their source in the nation’s style of governance. Thus, the current way of governance needs reforms and political will to implement them efficiently.

A more specific recommendation for Colombia, targeting the drug issue itself, would be to carry out a crop substitution program. It was mentioned in the peace talks between the Government and the FARC and experts in the region hope for this part to be really implemented. Such a program is believed to be much more successful than the government’s repressive strategy. Indeed, 50% of the forcibly eradicated hectares faced a return of coca plants, against 0.6% of the hectares that were voluntary eradicated (Alsema, 2019).

Although the topic of the current paper is ‘war on drugs’, there is enough evidence to say that ‘drugs’ are not a key figure in this war, but more of an interlink. Sure enough, world drugs problem is a serious matter requiring public attention, but, ironically, in the war on drugs it plays a secondary role.

At the moment large part of Colombian society depends on illicit activities. Economy of the country revolves around cash of illegal origin. Furthermore, armed groups have a capacity allowing for coercion and corruption for the purpose of getting their share of ‘cocaine money’. All in all, any action undertaken in the country would highly risk to be unsustainable due to poor security conditions. Therefore, it is important to restore security in Colombia first and then to take measures aiming at cocaine production.

For the matter of world drugs problem, I would suggest such measures as official regulation of the market of substances and shifting the focus to the demand side. Firstly, regulation will deprive criminals of extra margins and will eventually cut down their incentives to take up the related activities. Moreover, it will leave less space for speculation by other groups. Secondly, working with the demand side seems more reasonable than trying to affect the supply. It has actually proven to be a more effective form of response when it comes to dealing with drug use related issues. Today it is commonly believed that drug use and DUD are a matter

of medical nature and should be treated by the healthcare system. Drug use and DUD are not a criminal case that need actions by the justice system or, like in the case of Colombia, by a military approach.

Policies focusing on the demand side may target prevention of drug use, treatment of drug use disorders and harm reduction. As a part of my internship for the UNODC, I worked with the results from some of the project implemented by the Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Section and had a chance to see concrete evidence of these strategies being effective. For example, Stop Overdose Safely initiative by the UNODC and the WHO which deals with the management of overdose may serve as an example for launching a similar program in the U.S.A. (where most of Colombian cocaine consumers are located). Another initiative is engaging families and communities in drug use disorder treatment of adolescents. Since young people are particularly vulnerable in the matter of drug use, family as a basic social unit of community can serve as an effective tool to prevent or treat DUDs among adolescents.

Limitations

This work is aimed at analyzing the war on drugs in Colombia from the perspective of ‘new wars’ concept. This method is believed by the author to be helpful in finding a solution to the problem of drug use and DUD as well as to help to work a way out of the established system of violence in the country. In principal, a case study of a given country should bring new insights into the subject of problems and consequences of war on drugs in other parts of the world. However, there are certain limitations to the current research and one should take them into account before making conclusions.

First of all, a reader should realize that every country is a different case, with its own historical, political and economic background. In this concern, a case study of Colombia may and should be regarded as an example, an inspiration and a field for further research, but not as a guideline to strictly follow. There is no guarantee that the conclusions made in the course of this study still be true for every country in any similar circumstances. The current research calls for a thorough, detailed approach to study the countries that are now in the state of war with drugs. The author suggests considering ‘new war’ theory for similar cases but does not assert that it will be applicable everywhere.

Secondly, it was impossible to use original sources directly from the country due to the fact that the author does not have a command of Spanish language, so that the data used was limited. Although there were a lot of studies translated to English as well as papers referring to Spanish sources, it might still be an issue for some country-specific details.

Moreover, the volume limit of the work does not allow to go into deeper details while analyzing each actor’s role in the Colombian conflict. Even though case study methodology implies considering a phenomenon in a certain time and space frame, it might be helpful to put more emphasize on the historical processes preceding the war on drugs and Plan Colombia implementation. For the reason of using case-study analysis methodology, a number of relevant issues and processes were not mentioned not to violate the frames of the time limit set.

Finally, war on drugs in general and its realization in Colombia is a process happening in the present. It is a current issue, so that keeping up with the changes and events going on every day is difficult, in a way that the study might need incorporation of newly-adapted changes constantly. Nevertheless, the case-study presented in the paper meets the requirements of a qualitative method of research by setting a fixed frame of the time, used in the analyses.

Conclusion

'New war' theory approach to the war on drugs in Colombia has proven to be relevant, since the features of the Colombian conflict under the 'war on drugs' agenda fit, to some extent, into the notion of 'new wars', suggested by Mary Kaldor (1999). It has been demonstrated clearly in this paper.

At first, the concept of 'new war', developed by Mary Kaldor, has been presented and analysed. This war theory discusses modern conflicts and outlines the drastic difference between new wars and the wars in the past – conventional wars, described by Clausewitz (1832). According to the concept of 'new wars', not only the forms of armed confrontations have changed over times, but the nature of war itself. This study analyses the idea of new wars, looks into the criticism to this new theory and the author's response to it. Having studied the existing literature on the subject, the author of the paper provides a number of characteristics that are believed to be associated with the 'new' wars. Those include an erosion of the state's monopoly to legitimate organized violence, globalized context of war, new means of fighting, heterogeneity of combatants, decentralization of war's economy and some others. One of the principal dissimilarities between conventional and modern wars, however, lies in the fact that combatants in new wars do not aim at imposing their will on the opponents. In new wars combatants often participate in the war for the sake of the warfare itself.

In this paper Colombia has been chosen as a representative case for the 'war on drugs' strategy implementation. Key players of the war on drugs in Colombia and their interests are presented and analysed. Since many different actors are involved in the drug trade (in fact, it has been shown in the study that basically the whole country's population is involved in it in one way or another), most parties of the civil confrontation represent the parties of the 'war on drugs' at the same time. The paper has analysed gains from the conflict and incentives of the involved actors.

As far as the U.S. involvement is concerned, many critics of coca eradication believe that fundamental goal of the U.S. government is to constrict the flow of income to the Colombian Marxist rebel movement, which is heavily funded by the illegal drug trade, rather than combating drugs per se. Colombian government is profiting from the American aid, which might stop flowing to the country if the drug problem is be solved. That is why it is more convenient to keep the status quo and get assistance from the U.S., which can be also used to fight political undesirables. Moreover, according to the former president of Colombia, making war is easier than making peace. For the FARC, armed conflict is a chance to get rent and for individuals in the ranks of the guerrillas warfare is basically a reason to be alive. The role of paramilitary

forces is allowing a distance between official government's policy and unofficial use of illegal means, like terrorism against civilian population (Stokes, 2005). Paramilitaries are also there to defend multinational corporations' interest, not always favourable for the locals. Using illegal means will be impossible once peace is achieved, so, of course, the existence of paramilitaries fully depends on the state of conflict. Drug trafficking organisations get higher profit margins and a kind of protection from smaller rivals due to the 'war on drugs'. A lot of other involved actors, such as, have adapted to the state of conflict and would prefer to keep it going rather than facing changes associated with peace deals.

Thorough analysis of the motivations of the key players in the war on drugs in Colombia helps to clearly identify features of the "new war" theory in the case of Colombia. As the author of 'Systems of Violence: The Political Economy of War and Peace in Colombia' Nazih Richani claims, when economic and political assets acquired by a given actor during the conflict outweigh the initial conditions during peace, we are dealing with a case of a positive political economy. That consequently implies that such an actor has an incentive to keep the war going rather than aiming at an actual victory. In the case of Plan Colombia, victory in the 'war on drugs' would mean the solution of the drug trafficking problem in the country. However, given all the above stated, it can be argued that drug trafficking is not that much of a problem for the involved actors, but more of a mean to acquire power, a source of income, a way to justify certain actions and so on. Of course, under these circumstances engaged parties are not willing to lose it by putting a definite end to the drug issue in Colombia. This phenomenon indeed puts the situation in Colombia on a par with the 'new' wars.

Based on these findings, possible solutions for the existing situation were suggested. Indeed, it is of vital importance to put the armed confrontation in the country to an end. No economic stability, no well-being of citizens, no sustainable development goals can be reached in the existing circumstances. Despite the fact that war economies may work well for the involved actors in the short term, in a long-term perspective they tend to be destructive for the public institutions and economic development of the country. It is true not only for Colombia, but for the majority of new wars. While war economies involve illegal sectors (like drug trafficking in the case of Colombia), they function outside of the country's formal economy. Eventually, there is an imbalance to the side of criminalized economy, and legal economic system can no longer provide people with basic goods and services. As a result, a parallel social structure develops, and a significant part of society appears to be engaged in criminal activity. Consequently, the combating groups take advantage of people's despair and use them and their territory as a base for their criminal actions. That is a vicious circle and only a well-informed

reasoned approach can help to stop the violence, displacement, degradation and impoverishment of Colombia.

Cocaine trade is a highly profitable, ever-growing, easy-operating industry. No wonder it attracts all kinds of people in their search for money and power. Overlapping interests inevitably cause conflicts, especially in places where disparities were pre-existing and deep-entrenched. In Colombia cocaine turns out to be an oil lubricating the historical conflicts among various groups of society: peasants, large landowners, drug trafficking organisations, businesses, rebels, paramilitaries, the government, the army. It is also the main source of easy profit for those groups, in forms of illicit taxes collected by the guerillas or the paramilitaries and in form of bribes. Finally, it serves as commodity to be traded with weapons and favours.

All in all, this work has examined various issues associated with the war on drugs in Colombia, identified 'new war' features of it and suggested possible ways out in accordance with the 'new wars' theory. Further research might be focused on pinpointing 'new wars' characteristics in similar cases, for example, in other Latin American countries involved in the war on drugs.

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