

New paradigm, greater collaboration? The Caribbean and Latin America in a globalizing world



Annita Deloris Montoute

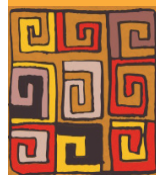
Lecturer at the Institute of International Relations, The University of
the West Indies, St Augustine Campus, Trinidad and Tobago
e-mail: annita.montoute@sta.uwi.edu



Introduction

This paper is concerned with the manner in which the emerging economies, Russia, China, and India (RIC) are engaging with the Caribbean and Latin America in the context of Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the possible implications of this engagement for the future of the Latin American—Caribbean relationship. The paper utilizes a Situation Structural Approach developed by Johannes Muntzschick (2012) as the framework for undertaking the analysis. The history of Latin America and Caribbean relations is characterized by distance, mistrust as well as cooperation and solidarity. During the Cold War the two regions as well as the emerging economies (Russia, India and China) were in solidarity around Third World issues and in the movement towards establishing a New International Economic Order. Today, despite subtle tensions, the relationship is enjoying high levels of cooperation largely facilitated by the processes of globalization. The recent formation of the CELAC provides a platform for really deepening the LAC relationship.

At the same time, globalization has provided a new paradigm, and new opportunities for RIC countries (Russia, India and China) to re-engage with the LAC region. Although RIC countries are engaging bilaterally with LAC countries, there has been increasing engagement with wider LAC groupings. The recently formed Community of Latin American States (CELAC) provides an institutional framework covering all thirty three countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, providing opportunities for the RICs to relate to the entire LAC region. In 2012, CELAC held meetings and formalized relations with Russia, India and China. We argue that RICs engagement with CELAC provides an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between Latin America and the Caribbean. However, Latin America and Caribbean relations in the context of CELAC relations must be strong relative to relations with emerging economies so as not to hinder strong Caribbean—Latin American relations. The paper is organized as follows: first, it undertakes a review of the literature, examining the evolution of the relationship to understand how globalization has changed the relationship; second, it traces the history of Latin America–Caribbean relations with RICs countries, using mainly the Cold War and post-Cold War as points of reference; third, it outlines CELAC’s governance structure and provisions for relating with external actors; fourth, we show how the RICs – CELAC relationship is developing and examine possible implications of this engagement for Caribbean and Latin America relations.



Evolution of CARICOM - Latin American Relations: Latin America - Caribbean relations in the Cold War

Latin America-Caribbean relations have undergone several phases characterized by both distance and collaboration. The nature of the relationship has been largely influenced by the historical experiences and an evolving global political economy. Kirton (2008) posits that historically, discussions on Latin American - Caribbean relations concluded that the two regions, though close geographically were far apart culturally and economically. Bryan (1979:59) concludes that the “colonial history... (and the resulting variety of linguistic, historical, socio-cultural, economic and institutional heritages and traditions) is primarily responsible for the differences in attitude and orientation” among countries of the Hemisphere. Additionally, Latin America became independent way ahead of the Caribbean (ibid) and did so through violent wars whereas the Caribbean attained independence through peaceful constitutional means.

More specifically, collaboration was hindered by ‘colonial bilateralism’ which carried with it different political, social, economic, linguistic and culture experiences. The long colonial dependent relationship that the English speaking Caribbean had with Europe, had profound impact on these societies. Additionally, the fragmented and vertical nature of the colonial experience caused the Caribbean to associate less with each other and their neighbors and more with the colonizing/ hegemonic countries (Mills and Lewis, 1982; Gill, 1995 cited in Kirton, 2008:47; Bryan, 1990:88; Maira, 1983:178). Other factors causing divisions include: tense race and cultural relations and discriminatory immigration laws towards blacks (Bryan, 1979: 78).

As Caribbean countries began to attain their independence, the knowledge and communication gap between the two regions began to be reduced but it also highlighted the differences between them: different economic and social structures, cultural and language differences, different population and physical size. The two distinct histories within which both regions came into being made the Caribbean closer in character to Asia and Africa than to Latin America. In fact, the Caribbean first developed their identity with these regions as part of the anti-imperialist movement. These differences in history and political structure led to tensions and competition in regional organizations (Maira, 1983:178-179). Caribbean diplomats were of view that the Latins used certain laws in regional organizations to keep Black Caribbean nations out (Bryan, 1979:63). Having representative democracies, the Caribbean, in contrast to Latin America that had a long history of authoritarian and military leadership was also a reason

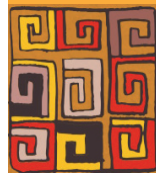


for the distance. Other points of misunderstanding of Latins towards the Caribbean were in relation to the complexities of race relations in the Caribbean, cultural life, political leadership, geography and the Caribbean's prominent role in the Non Aligned Movement relative to its small size (Maira, 1983:178-179). The newly independent Caribbean states, being new to the sphere of international relations and diplomacy, were also cautious in engaging with Latin America in light of the polarizing nature of Cold War politics. Part of Latin America's reservations towards the Caribbean also stemmed from the concerns that the Caribbean's continued formal and institutional relationship with Europe in the post-independence era could cause British infiltration and influence in the region. Fear that the Caribbean's relationship with Cuba could spread Cuban influence was also a consideration for reservations on the side of the Latins. The already strained relations were compounded by border disputes in the 1960s between CARICOM States and Latin American countries —Guyana with Venezuela and Belize with Guatemala (Kirton, 2008: 48).

Despite these differences and challenges, there were signs in the 1960s that the relationship was shifting towards some kind of engagement (Bryan, 1979: 59). Bryan (1990: 89) asserts:

Since the 1960s, the relationship between Latin American States and the Commonwealth Caribbean countries has been influenced by geopolitical factors, the latter's need for economic assistance and the mutual interest of both groups of countries in finding enhanced leverage in the North – South debate through the machinery of collective negotiation.

Maira (1983:180) asserts that the Caribbean began to see Latin America as a possible alternative after 1963 when it became difficult for citizens of the English speaking Caribbean to enter the UK as well as for a source of economic assistance as preferences decreased from the UK. The initial attempt by the English speaking Caribbean to interact with Latin America was not welcomed. Some of this played off in the OAS as the Latins resisted Caribbean States' membership and participation in the OAS. Solid evidence towards collaboration in the 1960s was seen in a number of initiatives between Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela in economic and other areas of cooperation. Further engagement with Latin America was pursued and achieved as Caribbean states began to join regional organizations as the OAS. These encounters morphed into 'diplomatic exchanges', as well as inter and intra bilateral and multilateral agreements in the areas of trade and functional cooperation in the Latin American and Caribbean Regions. Cuba, Mexico, Venezuela and Brazil were showing the most interest at this time (Bryan 1979: 61).



Some Latin American countries (Venezuela and Mexico) attempted to get closer to Caribbean countries in the 1970s (Maira, 1983: 183). This move towards closer collaboration with the Caribbean on the part of Latin America must be understood in light of geopolitical developments. The early 1970s was marked by declining US imposition on Latin America which provided some degree of space for the latter to engage more actively in Third World politics which involved projecting their influence over the Caribbean. Second, the oil crisis provided oil rich Latin American countries (Mexico and Venezuela) with the resources to exercise leverage in the Caribbean and the Third World as a whole. Third, there seem to have been increasing ideological convergence (around social democracy) between the governments of Venezuela and Mexico and some Caribbean states: Jamaica, Guyana in particular (ibid; 1983: 184 – 185).

Caribbean States began to see some Latin American states as potential political and economic partners against imperialism and dependency during the South's struggle (Bryan, 1979: 65) for a New International Economic Order (NIEO). In the 1970s, Latin America and the Caribbean found opportunities for collaborating through groups like the Non Aligned Movement and the Group of 77. Even as interaction increased between the Latin American and Caribbean region, this became a basis for tensions. For example, the growing interest of Venezuela and the provision of development assistance from the early 1970s in the English speaking Caribbean were seen as imperialist in nature mainly by Trinidad and Tobago. The other States saw Venezuela's oil initiative as helping reduce dependency on the North. These divisions among English speaking Caribbean states were reflective of the lack of a policy towards Latin America. The reverse was also true. Between 1979–1984, during the conservative government of Luis Herrera Campins, and with Venezuela's economic crisis, Venezuela did not and was unable to continue to play the role it previously played in the Caribbean (ibid, 1979: 65–74).

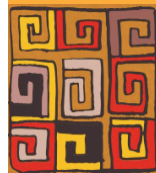
Mexico, like Venezuela, beginning from the 1970s, attempted to assert its influence in the Caribbean as part of its quest for Third World leadership, the movement towards attaining a new International Economic Order and getting the (radical/progressive) Caribbean's support for its international relations agenda. Like Venezuela, Mexico sought to engage in cooperation with CARICOM in contrast to Venezuela's bilateral interaction. By 1976, Mexico shifted away from Third World leadership but engagement continued with the Caribbean. By the early 1980s, its focus shifted away from the Caribbean to the politics of its immediate neighborhood. Economic crisis also forced Mexico to focus within (ibid, 1990: 92 – 94).

Cuba's relations with the Caribbean were a bit different from that of Venezuela and Mexico by virtue of Cuba's geographical location in the Caribbean Basin and the consequent security and economic relevance of this location for the Caribbean. The Caribbean's view of Cuba was more encouraging than towards other Latin American States partly because of what Cuba represented having stood up to the United States. There was also greater knowledge and understanding of each other because of links between Cuba and the Caribbean. The ideological/political diversity in the Caribbean region and the personal friendships Cuba nurtured with some Caribbean leaders also allowed Cuba to bridge political isolation (Maira, 1983: 197). Cuba gave economic assistance to Jamaica and other States but its strongest links (and assistance) were with Grenada from 1979 (Bryan, 1990: 94–95). These relationships allowed Cuba to engage with and provide assistance to the Caribbean without being seen as interfering in the countries' affairs. Cuba's relationship with the Caribbean was also linked to its role in the G77 and the Non Aligned Movement and the search for a new International Economic Order in which the Caribbean played an active role (Maira, 1983: 197). Both Cuba and the Caribbean began to engage increasingly when they were at a crossroads in their foreign policy: Cuba wanting to engage with the Hemisphere and the Caribbean wanting to assert an autonomous foreign policy (Bryan, 1990: 96).

Despite the nuances in engagement of Venezuela, Mexico and Cuba with the Caribbean, they all had heightened interaction around the same time, i.e. during the oil crisis of 1973 and American détente with Latin America. Jointly, Latin American and Caribbean countries undertook joint action outside of the US including the establishment of the Latin American Economic System (SELA) in 1975 and the Committee of Development and Cooperation Caribbean. These efforts were to develop closer economic links between the two regions and for coordinating positions in international fora (Maira, 1983: 195–200). Cuba's role was also diminished especially in the English speaking Caribbean after the US invasion of Grenada (Maira, 1983: 198; Serbin, 1991: 57) and the election of more conservative governments in the region (Serbin, 1991: 57).

Latin American - Caribbean Relations after the Cold War

In 1990, the relationship between the states of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Latin American states



of the Caribbean Basin seemed to have entered a new phase characterized by movement toward convergence, rapprochement, and initiatives of horizontal cooperation (Serbin, 1991: 53)

The 1990s saw a dramatic turnaround in the relationship between the English speaking Caribbean and Latin America tensions. The new phase of globalization made it clear to both regions that they were grappling with similar areas of concern and this almost forced closer collaboration (Serbin, 1991: 58 - 59; Kirton 2008: 50). These common concerns included, the scourge of poverty and inequality, the AIDS pandemic, environmental and security challenges (Kirton, 2008: 50).

The above developments led to a shifting of the *region's priorities and a diffusion of tensions surrounding the border disputes between Guyana and Venezuela and Belize and Guatemala*. The reception of Venezuela to support the admission of Guyana and Belize into the OAS was a reflection of this new mood. This diffusion of distrust created opportunities for closer collaboration. The Caribbean began to acknowledge they had more in common with Latin America than with Africa and the other Third World countries. Latin America too also saw the Caribbean as a potential trade partner as well as for access to the North American and European markets via the preferential arrangements of the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) and Lome. There was also growing realization as in earlier periods that the two regions could work jointly when negotiating with Northern countries. This changing relationship was mainly between CARICOM and Venezuela, Mexico and Columbia and Brazil to a lesser extent which resulted in increasing bi lateral and multilateral undertakings. Venezuela's policy towards the Caribbean (principally Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname and the Eastern Caribbean in the 1990s) was for the promotion of South-South cooperation. Oil cooperation was used as a tool in this regard. Mexico's interest in the Caribbean surrounded attaining regional security and promoting trade. Evidence of warming relations was seen also in high level visits and meetings aimed at closer economic and political cooperation in light of the changing political environment; cooperation in international fora on key issues, creation of the post of Ambassador for CARICOM Affairs by Mexico and energy cooperation (Serbin, 1991: 58-69).

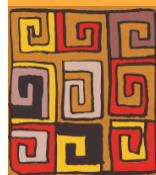
The establishment of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) was an indication that the Caribbean was moving towards some measure of convergence with Latin America. Both regions saw the initiative as an opportunity for closer collaboration. New regionalism arrangements which emerged at the end of the Cold War in Latin America provided spaces for the Caribbean and Latin

America to cooperate on issues of mutual interest such as security and democracy as well as on economic areas (Kirton, 2008: 51). This heightened cooperation does not mean that the relationship was without challenges. These challenges include, competition in regional organization and for access to the same markets; (Saunders, 2005 cited in Kirton, 2008:52), poor telecommunication and communication infrastructure; Latin American opposition and lack of sympathy for the end of EU preferences for Caribbean commodities at the WTO; relatively low interregional trade because of expensive transportation costs; language differences; lack of knowledge of the needs of each other's markets; limited export promotion (Kirton, 2008:52).

The establishment of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States 2010 is arguably the strongest indication thus far that the two regions are genuinely getting closer. This grouping has among other accomplishments provided a space where third countries, like the European Union and BRICS economies can deal with the LAC region as one entity. The upcoming section examines the background, to current RICs engagement with the LAC region to understand how the relationship has evolved over time. We therefore provide, below, an overview of LAC - RICs relations in the Cold War context.

Background: Russia, India and China relations with Latin America and the Caribbean during the Cold War

Soviet–Latin America relations were consolidated in the 1960s and 1970s during the Cold War era, during which time diplomatic relations were established with most Latin American states. Relations were however closest with Cuba which shared membership of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON). The USSR also developed close ties with “the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, the Popular Unity government in Chile (1970-1973), the New Jewel regime in Grenada, and the Velasco regime in Peru (1968-1975).” Argentina-Soviet trade relations were also established when the latter imported grain from Argentina in the 1980s after the US grain embargo from Argentina. Despite these warm relations, the USSR was still careful at first not to upset the US which had strong strategic interests in Latin America. This caution changed into a deliberate strategy in the 1970s and 1980s as the US became more powerful, to promote anti-Americanism and to challenge US hegemony in the region (Smith, 2009:2).



In the case of India, initial contact was made with the Caribbean region in the indentureship period in the 19th century. During India's struggle for independence in the 20th century, Indian leaders became familiar with heroic struggles for freedom in Latin America and frowned upon US domination of the region. India and Latin America first came into direct contact in 1927 at the International Congress against Imperialism when Nehru observed the common developmental challenges between the two regions. Following independence, India opened embassies in several Latin American countries. This was accompanied by the visits of Nehru to Mexico in 1961 and Indira Gandhi to Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Colombia, Venezuela and Guyana in 1968. India's relations with Latin America flourished in the 1960s and 1970s as the country expanded economically and reached out to far away regions to sustain this growth. This economic engagement was necessarily accompanied by increased political engagement with these regions. Other high level visits were made subsequently in the 1970s and 1980s but these were far less than LAC visits to India. At the time, Indian concerns surrounded respect for sovereignty, universal nuclear disarmament, reduction of inequality between developed and developing countries, the peaceful resolution of disputes, support of the principles of the UN charter, anti-colonialism and racial discrimination (Chaudhary, 1990: 28–49 cited in Shidore 2013:9). LAC supported India on issues relating to the Third World under the New International Economic Order umbrella, however, most LAC countries were not supportive of India's national and regional political interests during the Cold War period because of the former's alliance with United States and the fear of communist encroachment in the region. Consequently, LAC States did not support India in the UN on several issues. Indian–LAC political relations were constrained in the Cold War period because of the lack of economic interactions due to Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) strategies of both parties as well as lack of transportation and communication infrastructure to facilitate linkages (Shidore, 2013: 6-10).

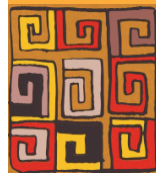
Since 1949, after the establishment of the New China, LAC relations were principally based on 'people-to-people exchanges' (China's Policy Paper on Latin America and the Caribbean 2009). During the Cold War, China's relations with Latin America revolved around issues of non alignment. China's relationship with Latin America in the early 1960s was a response to anti-Americanism and opposition to Washington's high handedness (Xu 1994: 151 cited in Dosch and Goodman, 2012:6). China was particularly interested in Cuba's model of government infiltrating through the wider region. The Cuban model did not have much traction for most of the Cold War period because Latin American dictatorships were widely opposed to communism as a system of government. By the 1970s and 1980s,

China had established diplomatic relations with major Latin American States which both parties used for their mutual benefit of getting support when needed in international fora (Dosch and Goodman, 2012:7). We now examine the newest phase of the relationship of the BRICS group as a whole with the LAC region; we subsequently zero in on the RICs relations with the CELAC.

The BRICS and Latin America and the Caribbean in the Post Cold War Period

The very reasons that brought the Caribbean and Latin America closer are some of the same reasons that reopened Latin America and the Caribbean to new players. The emergence of the BRICS economies on the global stage and in other regions happened simultaneously with the newest phase of globalization in the 1990s. Globalization, via liberalization policies, created avenues for the BRICS countries to grow and at the same time, propelled them to go further afield to seek opportunities to fulfill the demands that globalization had placed on them. At the same time, the increasing opening up of the LAC countries since the 1990s has facilitated this engagement. The BRICS countries have been extending their tentacles to the Latin America and the Caribbean region since the 2000s for several reasons. They have been seeking new trade and investment opportunities in Latin America as the latter has been experiencing steady growth and showing great investment potential. For China, the extraction of raw materials is very important for maintaining its rapid economic growth. They are also seeking to establish a multipolar world and Latin America and the Caribbean are strategic in this regard by virtue of the latter's proximity to and being under the US sphere of influence. This position has been articulated in relation to Russia (Smith 2009:4). The financial crisis in the West, the perceived US decline vis a vis other powers and greater opportunities for South-South cooperation have also served to heighten relations with the LAC and other regions (Shidore, 2013: 5). The need for collaboration in multilateral fora is also a reason for pursuing the relationship with Latin America and the Caribbean. Local and regional politics in BRICS countries also motivate relations with Latin America. For instance, the One China policy has been a reason for China's engagement with Latin America as Taiwan seeks to garner and has won support in that region (Jörn, and Goodman, 2012: 7-8).

Countries from Latin America and the Caribbean have not been passive in this relationship with BRICS countries. They have actively



responded to BRICS overtures and have proactively pursued the relationship. The LAC region sees relations with emerging economies as countering US hegemonic influence in the Region. Kirton (2008: 52) advances the view that “there are signs of renewed hegemonic postures by the United States in the region and increased cooperation between CARICOM and Latin America could provide a counterweight to US intervention.” Nineteen LAC countries have Embassies and Consulates in Russia; twenty three in India; nineteen in China and sixteen in South Africa. Latin American countries have been visiting BRICS countries with the aim of attaining higher levels of LAC–RICS partnership. For example, in May 2013, the Cuban foreign minister went to New Delhi and spoke of the need for greater cooperation between India (and other BRICS) countries with CELAC. Cuba, Haiti, Costa Rica and Chile have sought cooperation with Russia for the development of Latin America–Russian relations (Mahapatra, 2013).

Current RICs – LAC and Approach

Traditionally, Russia, India and China related to Latin America and the Caribbean countries bilaterally. More recently, we are seeing emerging countries initiating policy and other frameworks for engaging with the LAC group as one entity. For example, India launched the FOCUS LAC Program in 1997 to conduct trade and economic relations with the LAC region as a group. On the Caribbean side, India includes CARICOM countries as well as the French Departments of Martinique and Guadeloupe, the Netherlands Antilles and the US Virgin Islands in FOCUS LAC (India Ministry of Foreign Affairs). China too, took a LAC approach when in 2008, it released a policy paper on Latin America and the Caribbean, providing guidelines for LAC–China relations not only in economic but also in political, cultural and social spheres. These developments were taking place as the Latin American and Caribbean countries were seeking to bring the two regions together.

RICs and the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States

In 2010, the Community of Caribbean and Latin American States was created, providing an institutionalized forum for third countries, to engage with LAC as one entity. We provide an outline of CELAC’s objectives, governance structure and policy guidelines for engagement with external actors. We note first and foremost that

the objective of CELAC is for deepening integration between Latin America and the Caribbean. The objectives of CELAC are as follows:

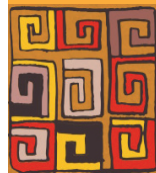
...deepening political, economic, social and cultural integration of (the) Region, to revitalize and...strengthen... regional unity...as well as to develop ties of solidarity and cooperation among the Latin-American and Caribbean countries (Procedures for the Organic Operation of CELAC).

The governance structure of CELAC is as follows: The Summit of Heads of State and Government, which is the highest organ and the supreme body of CELAC; the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs which essentially adopts and implements the decisions of the Heads of Government Summit; the Pro Tempore Presidency which functions as the Secretariat of CELAC and provides institutional, technical and administrative support; the Meeting of National Coordinators which links the Pro Tempore Presidency to the member states; Specialized Meetings which “address areas of interest and other priority areas for the promotion of unity, integration and regional cooperation” of ECLAC; and the Troika. We examine in more detail the functions of the structures of the CELAC—the Summit of Heads of State and Government, the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Presidency which have responsibility for managing external relations.

The Summit of Heads of State and Government has the responsibility of, among other things:

defin(ing) guidelines, policy guidelines, priorities, and... establish(ing) strategies and action plans to achieve the objectives of CELAC; and (a)dopt(ing) policy guidelines and strategies for relations with third countries or other organizations or international, regional or sub regional intergovernmental forums (ibid).

The responsibilities of the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, include among other things, adopting and implementing decisions and resolutions of the Summit of Heads of State and Government; coordinating the positions of member states in global governance bodies; promoting and developing political dialogue and consensus on issues of interest to the CELAC; proposing legislation and amendments as are necessary for the functioning of CELAC; approving of member states proposals to take to the Summit of Heads and Government; coordinating and promoting positions on central issues of interest to CELAC. The Pro Tempore Presidency is responsible for coordinating the annual dialogues with other



regional blocs and significant members of the international community (ibid).

In 2012, CELAC held meetings with Russia, India and China to establish a formal working relationship between the two parties. Meetings of CELAC Troika Ministers and individual RIC countries in 2012 formalized the latter's relations with CELAC. In the case of China, arrangements were made for the establishment of CELAC-China relations and a forum for the annual meeting of Foreign Ministers. Subsequently, a China-LAC cooperation forum was proposed with CELAC. For India, Ministers met to finalize multilateral cooperation and to coordinate positions in international fora; agreed on the establishment of an India-CELAC Business Council, an India-CELAC CEO's Forum, an Energy Forum was proposed and an agreement for a Scientific Forum. In the case of Russia, Ministers agreed to have regular political and cooperation dialogue to collaborate on various issues of global concern including, the preservation of the rules and principles of international law within the context of the UN: reinforcement of the world financial and monetary system; the promotion of democracy, human rights, international peace and security, environmental protection, energy security, sustainable economic development and social justice. They also agreed to have regular meetings to strengthen Russia-CELAC relations and the possibility of a Russia-CELAC meeting (SELA, 2013: 19 - 22). We undertake below a brief analysis of what this possible engagement between the emerging economies mean for CELAC and by extension relations between the two regions in CELAC.

Implications of RICs engagement with Latin American – Caribbean Relations in the Context of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States

In this section, I make some preliminary observations on what this increasing engagement with the RIC economies could mean for the integration of Latin America and the Caribbean via the CELAC. This will be done using an analytical framework (a situation structural approach) developed by Muntschick (2012) for understanding the effects of external actors on regional cooperation. He maintains that traditional theories of regionalism are used to explain regionalism among developed countries and more so the European experience. This makes these theories Eurocentric and renders them ineffective

for explaining regionalism in the South. Although some theories have attempted to look at the facilitating role of Europe on regional arrangements, they have not examined the potential negative impacts external actors may have on regional cooperation. The situation structural approach fills this gap by considering the “impact of interregional relations and external actors ...which is applicable to all regional integration projects regardless of their geographical location (Muntschick, 2012:3). The theorist maintains that regionalism in the South especially among less developed countries:

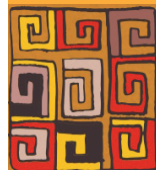
are more prone to exhibit a pattern of...strong and asymmetric extra regional interdependence to powerful external actors in many central issue areas (particularly in the field of economy), the latter are likely to be, for structural reasons, in a position of having the potential to exert influence on the establishment, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism in the South. Hence, Southern regionalisms’ success is more likely to depend to a significant degree on external actors’ policies that are beyond the region’s scope.

Based on empirical work conducted on regionalism and external influence, Muntschick (2012:20) confirms that structural factors can result in external parties either facilitating regionalism by providing for their needs or hindering regional cooperation by providing “attractive extra regional alternatives that surpass that of regional arrangements. This is likely to occur as external actors are not prone to having altruistic motivations in promoting regionalism elsewhere. Muntschick (2012:20) proposes three hypotheses for investigating the impact of external influence on regionalism:

H 1: The weaker the overall intraregional interdependence is in relation to weak extra-regional interdependence, the less likely it is that the emergence, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism will occur.

H2: The stronger intraregional asymmetric interdependence is in relation to weaker extra-regional asymmetric interdependence, the more a state in a regional power position will influence the emergence, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism and the less vulnerable it will be to negative external interference.

H 3: The stronger extra-regional asymmetric interdependence is in relation to weaker intraregional asymmetric interdependence, the more vulnerable the emergence, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism are to negative external interference and it is less likely that a State in a regional power position will be able to exert influence.





The CELAC was established only in 2011 and formal relations with RIC countries were established barely a year ago. I do not seek therefore to make any definite conclusions based on existing trends or patterns. What I attempt to do here is to show using the hypotheses; possible directions that could emerge out of CELAC's relationship with the emerging economies and which would by extension affect the integration of Caribbean Latin America. According to the first hypothesis, if CELAC is weak and CELAC - RIC relations are also weak, then the regionalism project on the whole will be weak. In other words if both intra and extra regional relations are weak, then regionalism on the whole is not likely to be effective. As it stands, CELAC has not developed a deep level of integration among its members. Its structures are relatively loose and it operates largely on the basis of inter-governmental meetings. The suggestion that CELAC needs to overcome the challenge of "fully integrat(ing) member states internally, while respecting political and ideological diversity" (Dlamini, 2010); indicates that there is the view that there is room for strengthening the internal cohesion of the group. Although institutionally, the arrangements allow for flexibility and embrace the diversity among the countries of the region, the ideological bonds, the solidarity, friendships, good will and the common opposition to a US led regionalism agenda in the region are factors that the group could use to build on and strengthen going forward. In terms of CELAC-RICs relations, the proposals are for relatively loose frameworks of cooperation, comprising of forums for dialogue, regular meetings and intentions to formulate joint positions in international fora. The point is for CELAC to build on and strengthen common interests between Latin America and the Caribbean without necessarily developing crippling and slow bureaucratic structures that sometimes accompany deeper levels of integration. The CELAC group needs to maintain a strong relationship with RICs for several reasons, including to 'piggyback' on the leverage that latter have in international fora; to capitalize on the RIC financial resources for various intra-regional initiatives, possibly via the BRICS Development Bank. Two considerations are relevant here: A strategic relationship with the RICS must be pursued while ensuring that the latter's interests do not drive the agenda of CELAC and that intra CELAC relations (relations between Latin America and the Caribbean) always remain above CELAC relations with RICs.

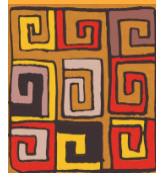
The second and third hypotheses can be interpreted as follows: CLACS will not be as vulnerable to the external influences/interference of a RIC country if there is/are a powerful State or States within CELAC which is/are more powerful than an external powerful partner. This powerful state or states within CELAC will therefore be able to influence the functioning and direction of the group rather than the external powerful party. If the opposite is true, then the powerful

external partner will be able to influence/interfere in CELAC's future direction. These two propositions offer some hope for the future of CELAC as Brazil, a BRICS economy is a member of CELAC, which should counter balance the influence of one or more of the RIC countries.

When the Goldman Sach's report was released in 2001, calling the world's attention to the BRICs group, the relative weight of the BRIC countries according to GDP criteria was as follows in descending order: China, India, Brazil and Russia (O'Neil, 2001). Recent projections for 2050 continue along the same vein, with China and India being way ahead (Hawksworth and Chan, 2013). In addition to economic differences, there are asymmetries politically. In global governance, BRICS members have different levels of political clout. For instance, "Russia and China are established global powers with permanent seats on the UN Security Council. India, Brazil and South Africa aspire to global influence, but are for now relegated to the position of regional powers" (Toloraya, 2013). This should be a cause for concern for Chinese and Indian dominance according to hypothesis 3, as Brazil seems to be in a weaker position than China and India. What makes a difference in this case is that there are other strong players (Venezuela and Mexico) in CELAC which can play a role at keeping the balance. Therefore, it is not likely that a Chinese agenda for example will dominate or interfere in the affairs of CELAC. In any event, it is important to ensure that the contributions of RIC countries are monitored to preserve the integrity and independence of the group. It is also essential to ensure that intra CELAC countries are strongly and genuinely integrated, in particular, the Caribbean and Latin America to protect members from pursuing links with RIC countries which may weaken the CELAC group. On a final note, shared philosophies among CELAC and RIC members could also lead to convergence of interests rather than domination or interference.

Conclusion

In conclusion, in engaging with the RIC countries, the objectives of the CELAC must always be at the forefront, i.e. to pursue deeper integration between Latin America and the Caribbean. Of course, cooperation with emerging economies is important in this regard as these emerging powerful actors could foster various wider South-South cooperation arrangements which could serve to albeit, organically; bring the Caribbean and Latin America closer. Emerging economies could help build the necessary physical and social infrastructure to facilitate deeper integration. This can only be realized if CELAC is clear on the direction it wants the integration



process to go. It is important therefore for the Caribbean, not just CARICOM and Latin America to present a unified position on what they want to accomplish in the CELAC and how they want to further integrate the group. The group can therefore strategize on how to capitalize on the benefits from RIC engagement collectively, which minimizes the threat of countries seeking these benefits bi laterally in a way that weakens the group. When this is done successfully, the group will be less vulnerable to external domination.

Bibliography

- Anthony, Bryan, T. (1990). "The Geo Political Environment: Latin America." In *Peace, Development and Security in the Caribbean: Perspectives to the Year 2000*, edited by Anthony T. Bryan, Edward Greene and Timothy Shaw, 85 – 101. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan.
- Anthony, Bryan, T. (1979). "Commonwealth Caribbean – Latin American Relations: Emerging Patterns of Cooperation and Conflict." In *Contemporary International Relations of the Caribbean*, edited by Basil A. Ince, 56 – 78. St. Augustine: Institute of International Relations.
- Chaudhary (1990: 28–49) cited in Shidore, (2013). *New Frontiers for South South Engagement: Relations Between India and Latin America and the Caribbean*. New Delhi: Indian Council of World Affairs.
- China's Policy Paper on Latin America and the Caribbean. http://english.gov.cn/official/2008-11/05/content_1140347.htm
- Dosch, Jörn and. Goodman, David S. G. (2012). "China and Latin America: Complementarity, Competition, and Globalization." *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, vol. 41, no 1: 3-19.
- Geaory, Toloraya (2013). "Can BRICS unite on global agenda." RICS Direct. <http://russia-direct.org/content/why-brics-not-weapon-be-used-against-somebody>
- Green, Gerard (2013). "Relations between Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and the BRICS: Locating a Caribbean Space." Regional Meeting on Latin American and Caribbean economic relations with emerging countries (BRICS) Brasilia, Brazil, November 18, SELA.
- Hawksworth, John and Chan, Danny (2013). "World in 2050 The BRICs and beyond: prospects, challenges and opportunities," PricewaterhouseCoopers. http://www.pwc.com/en_GX/gx/world-2050/assets/pwc-world-in-2050-report-january-2013.pdf
- Henry, Gill (1995). "Association of Caribbean States: Prospects for a quantum leap", North – South Agenda Paper. Florida: North – South Centre Press. cited in Kirton, Mark, (2008). *Caricom Latin American Relations, Past Experiences, Current Trends*. Report of

the Symposium. Latin American and Caribbean Relations Within an Evolving Global Context.

India Ministry of External Affairs. <http://www.mea.gov.in/>

Indo-Asia News. "Latin America, Caribbean could work with BRICS: Minister." Indo-Asia News service, New Delhi May 27, 2013. http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/latin-america-caribbean-could-work-with-brics-minister-113052700976_1.html

Kenny, Dlamini (2012). "The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) in South-South cooperation." Institute for Global Dialogue. 25 September. <http://www.igd.org.za/home/236-the-community-of-latin-american-and-caribbean-states-celac-in-south-south-cooperation>.

Luis, Maira (1983). "Caribbean State Systems and Middle Status Powers: The Cases of Mexico, Venezuela and Cuba". In *The Newer Caribbean, Decolonisation, Democracy, and Development*, edited by Paget Henry and Carl Stone, 177 – 204. Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues.

Mahapatra, Debidatta Aurobinda (2013). BRICS see greater role in Latin America. Russia and India Report. June 3, http://indrus.in/world/2013/06/03/brics_see_greater_role_in_latin_america_25721.html

Mark, Kirton, (2008). "Caricom Latin American Relations, Past Experiences, Current Trends." Report of the Symposium. Latin American and Caribbean Relations Within an Evolving Global Context, 47 – 55. Paramaribo, November 28 and 29.

Muntschick, Johannes (2012). "Theorizing Regionalism and External Influence: A Situation-Structural Approach." Paper No. 2, Mainz Papers on International European Politics.

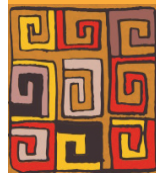
O'Neill, Jim (2001). "Building Better Global Economic BRICS." Global Economics Paper No: 66. Goldman Sachs. September 29. <http://www.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/archive/archive-pdfs/build-better-brics.pdf>.

Procedures for the Organic Operation of CELAC. Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

Saunders, Ronald (2005) cited in Kirton, Mark, (2008). Caricom Latin American Relations, Past Experiences, Current Trends.

SELA (2013). "Latin American and Caribbean Relations with Russia, India, China and South Africa Extra-Regional Relations." Regional Meeting on Latin American and Caribbean economic relations with emerging countries (BRICS) Brasilia, Brazil 18 November.

Serbin, Andres (1991). "The Caricom States and the Group of Three: A New Partnership between Latin America and the Non-Hispanic Caribbean." *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Summer): 53-80.



- Shidore (2013). *New Frontiers for South South Engagement: Relations Between India and Latin America and the Caribbean*. New Delhi: Indian Council of World Affairs.
- Smith, Mark, A. (2009). "Russia and Latin America: Competition in Washington's 'Near Abroad'?" Defence Academy of the United Kingdom.
- Xu, Feng (1994) in Abraham F. Lowenthal and Gregory Treverton (eds) cited in Dosch, Jörn, and David S. G. Goodman. 2012. "China and Latin America: Complementarity, Competition, and Globalization". *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 41, 1, 3-19.

