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Reconceptualization of Security in the 21st Century

Spanish volume of leading scientists from Latin America, North America, Europe and India is published on the 70th Anniversary of the Outbreak of the Second World War

Cuernavaca/Mexico and Berlin/Mosbach/Germany. On the evening of 1st September 2009 the director of the Institute for Culture in Morelos, *Martha Ketchum*, and the director of the Centre for Multidisciplinary Studies (CRIM) of the Autonomous University of México (UNAM), *Ana María Chávez*, will present the 888 page Spanish volume: “Reconceptualizar la Seguridad en el Siglo XXI” in the Jardín Borda in Cuernavaca in Morelos (México). Commentators of this book launch will be *Jorge Morales Barud*, the Minister of Interior in Morelos, *Rodolfo Stavenhagen*, the former coordinator for problems of indigenous peoples at the UN, and *Rodolfo Becerril*, President of the Fundación Colosio en Morelos. *Úrsula Oswald Spring* (CRIM/UNAM), a former Minister of Environment in Morelos and the first holder of the chair on social vulnerability at the *Institute on the Environment and Human Security of the United Nations University (UNU/EHS)* in Bonn (Germany) will speak on behalf of the editors and authors of this book.

This volume is being released on the 70th anniversary of the start of World War II and 20 years after the end of the Cold War, two events that marked the end of the dominance of European powers and of bipolarity in international relations. In September 1987 the *Study Group on Peace Research and European Security Studies (AFES-PRESS)* was founded by scholars and peace researchers from 10 European countries in the then divided continent. During the late 1980's the activities of members of AFES-PRESS focused on questions of confidence building and defensive defence with a goal to peacefully overcome the European division. During the 1990's the focus of AFES-PRESS shifted to issues of security and environment in the Mediterranean. Since 2003 the English language Hexagon book series on Human and Environmental Security and Peace, published by the renowned Springer Publishers, became the flagship publication of AFES-PRESS. During 2008 and 2009 the first two of a total of three volumes of an ambitious global and multidisciplinary environmental security handbook were launched in many countries in Europe, in the Americas and Asia, among them at the German Foreign Ministry and in the UN Headquarters in New York.

With this volume the former president of the *International Peace Research Association (IPRA)* and the erstwhile Secretary General of the *Latin American Council for Peace Research (CLAIP)*, *Úrsula Oswald Spring* (Mexico), and the chairman of AFES-PRESS, Hans Günter Brauch, present a selection of texts of the third volume of the Hexagon book series as well as a few new original and many modified and updated chapters in Spanish for a Spanish speaking audience in Latin America and Spain. This volume was published with the support of the Senate of Mexico, of three renowned institutes of the Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and by AFES-PRESS who also distributes this book outside of Latin America. The *Berghof Foundation on Conflict Research* (Berlin) has financed part of the translation.

The volume was introduced by two forewords by the former Vice President and long-term Defence Minister of Spain, *Narcis Serra Serra*, and by the recipient of the alternative Nobel

Prize, *Vandana Shiva* (India). The book contains contributions by the Director General of FLACSO, *Francisco Rojas Aravena* (Costa Rica/Chile), by *Domício Proença Junior* of the Universidad de Brasil and *Eugenio Diniz* of the Universidad Pontificia Católica de Minas Gerais (Brazil), and from Mexico by *Úrsula Oswald Spring* (CRIM/UNAM), *Georgina Sánchez* (UAM) and *John Saxe Fernandez* (CEIICH/UNAM) and from Columbia by *Arlene Tickner*, Universidad de los Andes, and by *Ann C. Mason*, Fulbright Commission, Bogota (Columbia/USA), as well as by *Simon Dalby*, Carleton University(Canada), by *Ole Wæver*, Copenhagen University (Denmark) and by the two German authors *Ulrich Albrecht* and *Hans Günter Brauch* of the Free University of Berlin.

In this comprehensive Spanish book leading authors from Latin America, the USA and Canada, as well as from India, Spain, Denmark and Germany address the global rethinking from the narrow concept of national and military security towards a wide approach of human security that combines ‘freedom from fear’, ‘freedom from want’, and ‘freedom from hazard impacts’. This change was triggered by the end of the Cold War two decades ago, by the process of globalization and by the global environmental and climate change.

A key focus is on the conceptual quartet of peace, security, the environment and development, on the origins of the thinking on peace in the Orient, Occident and with the indigenous Latin American societies as well as on the conceptual linkages between peace and security, peace and the environment and on the environment and security. Two chapters address the philosophical debates on security in Mesoamerica and in Brazil and five chapters discuss the impacts of globalization on human security from below, the role of organized crime as agents of insecurity in the Andean Region as well as the challenges, perceptions and concepts of security on the American continent. The two German authors from the University of Berlin offer a survey on the security concepts in peace research and strategic studies. Last not least, the two co-editors discuss spatial aspects of security, the transition from a security to a survival dilemma as well as perspectives for research and security policy in the 21st century.

Seventy years after the start of the Second Cold War the authors of this volume from the Americas, Europe and India plead for a new understanding of security which tries to complement and overcome the narrow state focused thinking on political and military security and addresses the manifold challenges for human beings and humankind by the repression of governments, underdevelopment and global environmental and climate change.

“The new security threats of the 21st century posed by underdevelopment, environmental destruction, climate change, desertification and water scarcity, degradation and stress are”, the two co-editors from Mexico and Germany argue, “may not be solved any longer with military means. As we are the threat due to our use of fossil energy sources, the military may not be employed to address our unsustainable use of scarce resources.” This requires according to *Úrsula Oswald Spring*, “a radical rethinking and a shift from a narrow military security concept to a wider human, environmental and gender security what poses a huge challenge and opportunity.” A direct consequence of this needed rethinking, *Hans Günter Brauch* argues, is not „a militarization of the environment, but a demilitarization of the notion of security where issues of a sustainable development and a sustainable peace require a close multilateral cooperation in overcoming underdevelopment, poverty and war based on social and international justice and equity.“

At the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War, which took the life of more than 55 million people, *Úrsula Oswald Spring* and *Hans Günter Brauch* call for a new security thinking for the 21st century that puts human beings and humankind into the centre. As the two coordinators of the Friends of Human Security at the United Nations, Mexico and Japan aim at a conceptual change in the thinking and practice of global security policy.

More on this book at: <http://www.afes-press-books.de/html/hexagon_03_sp-mx.htm>