



Parahyangan Catholic University
Faculty of Social and Political Sciences
Department of International Relations

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**The FARC Counterinsurgency Measures of the United
States through the Enactment of Plan Colombia**

Thesis

Department of International Relations

By

Khalif Rabbani

2014330180

Bandung

2019



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Thesis Validation

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Hereby assert that this thesis is a product of my own work, and it has not been previously proposed by any other party in order to attain academic degree. Any idea and information gained from other parties are officially cited in accordance to the valid scientific writing method.

I declare this statement with full responsibility and I am willing to take any consequences given by the prevailing rules if this statement was found to be untrue.

Bandung, January 14th, 2019

Khalif Rabbani

2014330180

Abstract

Name : Khalif Rabbani
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Title : The FARC Counterinsurgency Measures of the United States through the Enactment of Plan Colombia

The United States had undergone a national drug epidemic that leads to an implementation of drug control policy whose operations involved cocaine eradication at its source, Colombia. The Clinton administration may recognize the close relation between Colombian cocaine production with the country's insurgent group, mainly FARC, but was initially in refusal to be involved in the civil conflict of Colombia. It was only later in Bush administration, influenced by the global campaign of 'War on Terror' that the government took action in responding both issues in Colombia in order to reduce the flow of illegal drugs entering the United States. This research would purpose to analyze the operation conducted by the US government using Counterinsurgency theoretical framework that centralizes upon the strategy to delegitimize the movement of insurgent groups, which in the case of Colombia has an implication towards the Colombian drug cultivation.

Keywords: United States, Colombia, Counterinsurgency, Drug Cultivation

Abstraksi

Nama : Khalif Rabbani
NPM : 2014330180
Judul : Tindakan *Counterinsurgency* Terhadap FARC oleh Amerika Serikat Melalui Pengesahan *Plan Colombia*.

Amerika Serikat telah melalui permasalahan penyalahgunaan obat ilegal secara domestik yang menghasilkan kebijakan pengendalian narkoba yang ditujukan kepada negara penghasil utama, yaitu Kolombia. Pada masa pemerintahan Clinton, Amerika Serikat mengakui adanya hubungan antara produksi narkoba dengan gerakan pemberontak di Kolombia. Meskipun demikian, pemerintahan Clinton menolak untuk melibatkan diri dalam konflik internal negara asing dengan memberikan aksi responsif terhadap gerakan pemberontak Kolombia. Namun, setelah Clinton mengakhiri masa kepresidenan, pemerintahan Bush memberikan tanggapan terhadap kedua isu di Kolombia untuk mengurangi jumlah narkoba yang memasuki AS. Penelitian ini bermaksud untuk menganalisa bagaimana pemerintah AS melakukan operasi luar negeri di Kolombia untuk menanggapi hubungan tak terpisahkan antara produksi narkoba dan gerakan pemberontak. Analisa pada penelitian ini akan dilakukan melalui penggunaan '*Counterinsurgency*' sebagai kerangka teoretis yang membahas strategi untuk me-delegitimasi kelompok pemberontak Kolombia yang memiliki implikasi tersendiri terhadap pertumbuhan kokaina

Kata Kunci: Amerika Serikat, Kolombia, *Counterinsurgency*, Narkoba

Foreword

In the name of God, the almighty. After a specific period of time and challenges met within the process of formulating this research, the thesis titled **“The FARC Counterinsurgency Measures of the United States through the Enactment of Plan Colombia”** has come to completion. This thesis was formulated for the purpose of obtaining a bachelor degree in political science in the Department of International Relations, Parahyangan Catholic University, Bandung.

The aim of this research is to explain the phenomena that was the United States countermeasure engagement in Colombia. In specific, the author will attempt to focus on the implementation of said measure done by the United States in giving an appropriate response towards Colombian illegal drug production and illegal armed group, especially the FARC, that have a regional security implication. The author acknowledges that the research is afar from perfection and therefore would sincerely apologize should there be any error, inaccuracy, and misinterpretations contained within.

Bandung, January 14th, 2019

Khalif Rabbani

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The highest and profound gratitude for *my beloved father, mother, sisters and brother*. All the prayers and care that may not have been asked for yet were still provided with love have no equal amount to what I may be able to repay.

Distinguished friends, ones whose acquaintances I've both had and had not the pleasure of meeting. Thank you for the life lessons that you all have provided along with the companionship during the past few years. No current dreams nor achievements of mine to this point would be possible if it were not for our crossed paths.

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To the one beautiful being whose presence was uncalled for. If it were not for you, I would have disappointed ones who've placed huge beliefs in me. There may be loss of times on which we were left behind with, but there are countless more to come. Cheers.

*For a lot other whom had direct nor indirect encounter and distribution throughout these past few years, **thank you.***

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List of Abbreviations

ADAM	Municipal Level Alternative Development (initials in Spanish)
ARI	Andean Regional Initiative
AUC	United Self Defense force of Colombia (initials in Spanish)
BOS	Battlefield Operating Systems
CENTRIXS	Combined Enterprise Information Exchange System
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DSP	Democratic Security and Defense Policy
ELN	National Liberation Army (initials in Spanish)
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GWOT	Global War on Terror
IACM	Interagency Assessment of Cocaine Movement
MIDAS	Investment for Sustainable Alternative Development Program (initials in Spanish)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSPD	National Security Presidential Directive
PATT	Planning Assistance and Training Teams
SOF	Special Operations Forces
UNDCP	United Nations International Drug Control Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

The issue of illegal drug abuse had a nearly untraceable history which dates back beyond the times before the 19th century. Throughout the years, the evolution of drugs and the course of its usage varied from traditional and medicinal purposes to that of a recreational one. The growing concern which came to be in regards to drugs was its excessive use for the latter. A heavy tendency to use drugs in a recreational manner by individuals bolstered the economic trend of supplying the increase of such demands. This causality would later have a global implication towards other social aspects of a state government, therefore constructing a new point of interest in the landscape of a post-Cold War era.

When it comes to security, political discourse on arms race and other military discussions has diminished in relevance, giving rise to a myriad of other issues to be perceived as subjects of national security by state governments.¹ Narcotics was one of such issue; considered to pose new threats and challenges that requires theoretical and conceptual exploration, as well in development of a proper legal

¹ Griffith, I. L. (1994). From Cold War Geopolitics to Post-Cold War Geonarcotics. *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis*, 49(1), 1–36.

countermeasure. However, the actual complexity of the illegal drug issue exceeds the assumption of health and psychology-related demographic issues. It also resulted in a spill over on the discourse of sovereignty and social stability, even including the politics and economics of a state as well. This is evident with how the United States has reacted towards the threats posed by illegal drugs.

The US has recognized the need to consider the repercussions of illegal drug abuse into its national security agenda. The growing need to address this issue was first made evident by the declaration of 'War on Drugs' in 1970 by US president, Richard Nixon. During his years of presidency, Nixon framed the use of illegal drugs as the number one 'public enemy' of the United States and its citizens.² The declaration then resulted in a US drug policy, as the attempt to efficiently control the distribution of the dangerous drugs circulating amongst the American society. This was intended to be achieved through placing restrictions on legitimate pharmaceutical industries as well as its imports, where the country's policy on drugs would be evaluated and changed in accordance to the changing nature of narco-trafficking. The government also dwelled in its relation to possible contemporary warfare in the future.³

The need for a countermeasure by the United States was caused by their place within the global narcotic market: as the single largest market worldwide, owing to its number of consumers. In 1988 alone, annual consumption for illegal drug reached the peak: almost an amount of six metric tons of heroin, 70-90 metric tons

² Wyrwicz, Anna. (2015). America's Longest War – The War on Drugs. Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora. Jagiellonian University, p. 54-57.

³ Kan, Paul R. "Drugs and Contemporary Warfare." Potomac Books. Inc (2009), p. 5-7.

of cocaine and 6.000-9.000 metric tons of marijuana.⁴ Being the single largest drug market worldwide does not mean that the US was held responsible for its own supply. On the contrary, roughly over 90% of the drugs consumed within US soil was a result of the distribution of cocaine, heroin and marijuana-type drugs originating from its neighbouring region, South America.⁵

The high demand and the subsequent profitability of the United States' cocaine market turned the country into the main destination for South American drug distribution. Peru, one of the countries within the region, was the major producer of coca bush as the raw material for cocaine that dates back to the end of World War II.⁶ In time, Colombia replaced Peru as the region's main producer for the raw materials needed to make cocaine, along with heroin and marijuana.

1.2 Research Problem Identification

1.2.1 Research Problem Statement

Hailing back to an event of drug epidemic in the 1980s, US contemporary drug policies would eventually expand. Initially, their efforts are deliberately limited to internal reactive and preventive measures along the lines of seizing illegal drugs, increasing law enforcement mechanism, establishing rehabilitation centres, and tightened border control. However, experiencing the lacking efficacy

⁴ Griffith. From Cold War Geopolitics to Post-Cold War Geonarcotics, p. 3.

⁵ "Cocaine"; Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment report 2010, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; Accessed on October 12, 2018.
<https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta/4.Cocaine.pdf>, p. 8.

⁶ Ibid.

of such measures, the US contemporary drug policies later included addressing the narcotic issues at its source through targeted foreign eradication efforts.⁷ This implied that the US was willing to engage in a counternarcotic operation outside its border within a foreign country. In the case of this research, the respective country being Colombia.

What the US administration overlooked in their attempt of designing counterdrug measures in Colombia was that the significance of the illegal drugs economy had penetrated deeply into key social institutions within the country. Moreover, the illegal drug activities within Colombia was also a source for the country's internal conflict between the government and Illegal Armed Organizations, such as paramilitaries and insurgent groups. Out of the two distinct groups, one notoriously influential in mobilizing support of the population from the central government is the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), who has *de facto* control of the country's cocaine empire.⁸ The United States was then forced to decide, in either being involved in the internal conflict of a foreign state, or attempting foreign drug eradication but ignoring the intricacies of the Colombian illegal drugs economy along with the involvement of FARC insurgent group.

⁷ Andreas, Peter. "U.S. Drug Control Policy." Institute for Policy Studies. Accessed on October 12th, 2018. https://ips-dc.org/us_drug_control_policy/.

⁸ Otis, John. "The FARC and Colombia's Illegal Drug Trade." Wilson Center, Latin American Program (2014).

1.2.2 Research Scope

This research will specifically be given an analytical and timeframe focus. In terms of analysis, the research would immensely focus on how Colombian coca cultivation and its illegal armed forces are interdependent. Consecutively, the analysis in which the author intends to focus is the US course of action and how it is then well adjusted to face the challenges that Colombia poses.

The analysis done by the author will emphasize on the events that occurred during the timeframe of 2001 – 2008 in the regards stated above. The year 2001 will act as a starting point due to the reason of a significant event that occurred during said year that changes the political landscape of the US in terms of national security, which affected the orientation of US policy in Colombia as well. In turn, 2008 is the year chosen by the author as an endpoint for the reason that during said year, the US involvement no longer focus on drug eradication and its affiliation with Colombian illegal armed groups, rather to focus on supporting the Colombian government with the peace negotiation it intended to hold with the group.

1.2.3 Research Question

The author acknowledges the United States' engagement in the complexity of narcotic problems in Colombia as the main subject for this research. Therefore, the acknowledgement of this research will raise the question on: **“How has the United States conduct its operation in Colombia?”**

1.3 The Aim and Purpose of the Research

1.3.1 The Aim of the Research

This research is an attempt to explain the phenomena that was the United States countermeasure engagement in Colombia. The attempt of the author will specifically focus on the implementation of said measures in responding towards Colombian nexus of narcotic and illegal armed groups that have a regional security implication.

1.3.2 The Purpose of the Research

This research was made to serve as an addition of reference or to have provided another viewpoint for scholars within the field of International Relations study who wishes to partake in academic research of security studies.

1.4 Literature Review

The author will refer to various literatures discussing a similar issue as this research that helps in providing the author with the validity of facts and arguments. The first is a literature titled “U.S. Security Policies and U.S. – Colombia Relations” written by Jaime Zuluaga Nieto. In his article, Nieto intends to analyze the US security policies in Latin America that had undergone significant changes in motives over the years, particularly towards Colombia. In his view, it was obviously perceived that the US has always attempted to maintain

its role as a hegemonic power within the international field of relations. His analysis is based upon the belief that national security became the main emphasis that justifies the US course of action to have used its economic, political, cultural, and military domination in its foreign affairs.⁹

This pattern of behavior was proven since the end of Cold War. The end of the socialist ideology threat marked the need for a reconfiguration in its security agendas and foreign policy that hence highlighted drug trafficking as the newly perceived threat to national security. The event of a terrorist attack on September 11, 2001 also unforgettably provoked adaptations in the US security policy that resulted in terrorism as the then greatest threat to national security. The global war on terror campaign became the new form of US interventionism constituted in their foreign policy to partake in preventive wars in the noble conquest of supporting fellow democratic regimes.¹⁰

What Nieto was able to analyze within his writing is that the US interventionism undermined democratic institutions as well as the respect for human rights.¹¹ Despite the well aligned goals of both Colombia and the US in terms of regional security, both countries were too focus on the militarization of Plan Colombia. Both countries failed to recognize the importance to promote policies that respects human dignity, human rights, fundamental rights of persons, economic and social development.

⁹ Nieto, J. Z. (2007). U.S. Security Policies and United States–Colombia Relations. *Latin American Perspectives*, 34(1), p. 112–119.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 115.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 117.

Within his writing, Nieto compared the data between the decrease of homicide rates that includes violence such as murder, kidnappings and guerilla attacks in Colombia and compares them with how the US policy lacks the initiative for economic and social development alike which happens to be within the same legal framework under Plan Colombia and Andean Regional Initiative. This data comparison leads to Nieto's conclusion that the US security policy does not hide the notion that security is more important than liberty. Colombia with its case of drug trafficking and insurgent group was the product of the newly developed threats towards security and has become a testing ground for the re-hegemonic role the US through its policy in securing its political and military control over their region.

In a certain manner, this research holds difference with Nieto's article. His writing tends to focus on how the US security policy negatively influences the Colombian government in taking reactive measures in addressing the issues at hand. However, Nieto's work could still serve this research with providing another method in perceiving the US and Colombian countermeasure against illegal armed groups.

However, Gabriel Marcella in his writing titled "The United States and Colombia: The Journey from Ambiguity to Strategic Clarity" attempts to respond towards the negative perceptions on literatures that questions the security aspect of US engagement in Colombia. Marcella's argument is based on the statement of Samuel P. Huntington that stated "*Authority has to exist before it can be limited.*", where this was a justification for US' so called militarization of Colombian drug

conflict. This implies that with the temporary incapability of Colombian government, their authority was to be initially recognized first. The best way to strengthen democracy and rapidly eliminate drug scourge was to assist the Colombian military and its police forces to establish territorial control in order to enhance in counter-terrorist, counterinsurgency and counternarcotic operations.¹² This was the case for the reason that such assistance would help Colombian law enforcement and military force to do its function within its nation.

Subsequently, the re-establishment of control with the contribution provided by the US would also imply the achievement of a greater human right protection. The assistance to Colombian military and national police force would establish an effective and legitimate public security at many local areas. Moreover, an effective effort for countermeasures in addressing illegal drug cultivation and its connection with armed groups might lead to an enhanced coordination between Colombian state institutions in order to address the social and economic needs of its people such as education, justice, health and sanitations, communications and economic development.¹³ The writing of Marcella is of great relevance to this research as the author intends to further elaborate on how the process of assisting Colombian government in terms of security is to end with the demobilization of illegal armed groups and progress for drug eradication efforts without the group's control over areas of cultivation.

¹² Gabriel Marcella, "*The United States and Colombia: The Journey from Ambiguity to Strategic Clarity.*" Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College (2003), p. 45-47.

¹³ Ibid, p. 48.

The third literature is of Ivelaw L. Griffith titled “From Cold War Geopolitics to post-Cold War Geonarcotics.” The writing of Griffith is also of relevance to the authors intended research in attempting to analyze the implementation of US countermeasure to address both the issue of illegal drugs and its connection with illegal armed groups in Colombia. This relevancy is due to the fact that his writing justifies the multidimensionality of contemporary narcotic problem as there has been transformation within the structure of international politics and the nature of threats and challenges to nations and states.¹⁴ With the intensified scope of narcotic problems, potential threats has been perceived to have an effect towards sovereignty, political stability, economic equilibrium and social fabric of societies. Griffith writing would surely contribute towards constructing the author’s argument in explaining the relations between Colombian coca cultivation and illegal armed groups that is addressed by the US countermeasure policy.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

Within this research, the author will provide a comprehensive and detailed analysis on the topic by using Counterinsurgency Theory as its theoretical framework in order to give further understanding on the implementation of US engagement in Colombia. Writings on counterinsurgency may vary in theoretical and practice interpretations. However, one accepted component of the theory is

¹⁴ Griffith, *From Cold War Geopolitics to Post-Cold War Geonarcotics*, p. 12-15.

that the problem that counterinsurgency responds to is insurgency. Insurgency itself by definition is perceived to be an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict.¹⁵ This definition is accepted by the British military doctrine, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the US military. Though its definition is mutually accepted, there exist a slightly difference in the definition of counterinsurgency between the three. The British and NATO doctrine defined counterinsurgency as those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological and civic actions taken to defeat insurgency. Meanwhile on another hand, the definition accepted by the US believes that these mentioned actions above should righteously done by a government.¹⁶

It would be a mistake to assume that counterinsurgency holds similarity to that of a conventional warfare. Military aim of the total defeat of an enemy maybe the objective within a conventional warfare, but counterinsurgency is more of a competition to win the ‘hearts and minds’ of the local population.¹⁷ This is the case as insurgency, as has been mentioned earlier, intends to overthrow a constituted government in either completely or partially control the resources and population of a state through the use of force. The rise of insurgent was the by-product of state weakness or failure, constructing instability and inequalities that gave these groups a cause to seek alternative government capable of controlling a

¹⁵ Williams, Paul D, “Security Studies an Introduction.” Routledge Taylor & Francis Group; New York (2008), p. 392.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 397.

given area of a country.¹⁸ Doing so would then require the group to gain popular support that delegitimizes the constituted government, giving an access to insurgent group to achieve this goal.

In delegitimizing insurgent group, counterinsurgent holds no constant set of operational technique. This has come to be due to the shifting nature of counterinsurgency as Kilcullen described in his writing on the theory.¹⁹ The phenomena of insurrection may differ in one country or another, in different time period as well. This was evident if one was to look at the motives of traditional insurgencies during 1944 and 1980 that aims to overthrow colonial authority, contemporary insurgents which does not all seeks to establish their own state, religiously motivated insurgents which does not have a political aim such as the case of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.²⁰ Thus, counterinsurgency is contingent on that of insurgency, it evolves in response to changes in nature of the insurgents that applies all elements of national power against them.

As a form of warfare that competes in population support, counterinsurgency holds the primacy of non-military means than placing an immense dependence on military forces. Within this aspect of the theory, David Galula suggested an ideal ratio for counterinsurgency campaign of 80% political and 20% military.²¹ With the centrality of 'hearts and minds', military force would only result in counter-productivity of gaining local support, where the reason for the support on

¹⁸Galula, David (2006). "Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice." Praeger Security International, p. 1-4.

¹⁹ Kilcullen, "Counter-insurgency Redux." *Survival*; 48(4), 2004: p. 111-130.

²⁰ *ibid*, p. 113-116.

²¹ Williams, "Security Studies: An Introduction," p. 398.

insurgents by the population was due to the incapability of government to tackle the issues of social inequalities. Hence, within the context of counterinsurgency, military aspect of the warfare is to create space for political progress that attempts to fill the void in which the government lacked the legitimacy of: fulfilling the demands of the population. Thus, the primacy of non-military operational concept of counterinsurgency proceeds in combating operations, provision of essential services to the population, training and equipping of host nation security forces and strengthening the economy and government of host nation.²² All these operational concepts is to be done under unified political direction between host and assisting nation on command and control as well as funding and resource mechanism.

The process of delegitimizing insurgent group by a government would not be complete if it were to left remnant that leaves even a small portion of possibility for another uprising to occur. This is another crucial component of counterinsurgency effort, that it addresses the social injustice that would therefore tackle the cause and support for insurgent group to demand upon. With the issue of injustice addressed, a government is to provide a process for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of insurgent groups. Alternative employment and economic opportunities became one of the means to drain the

²² Davidson, Janine. "Principles of Modern American Counterinsurgency: Evolution and Debate." The Brookings Institution, p. 4.

support of uncommitted supporter for the movement which would further delegitimize the group.²³

The theory of counterinsurgency as has been written by David Galula to some extent immensely emphasized on the centrality of ‘Hearts and Minds’. Meaning that in a way, Galula’s concept of the theory speaks on the importance of gaining popular support of the population by both the insurgents as well as the counterinsurgent. On the other hand, also of great relevance to the research is the interpretation of Counterinsurgency Warfare written by David Kilcullen. On the contrary to Galula’s work, Kilcullen described a more practical interpretation of Counterinsurgency. In a contested political space and what seems to be a competition for population support between the insurgents and the government, Kilcullen formulated a strategy known as “Three Pillars of Counterinsurgency”. Such strategy is an inter-agency framework that highlights the importance on unity of efforts, where these different agencies will be provided with said framework that enables them to see on what aspect they may be able to contribute accordingly to their function and ability within the campaign.²⁴

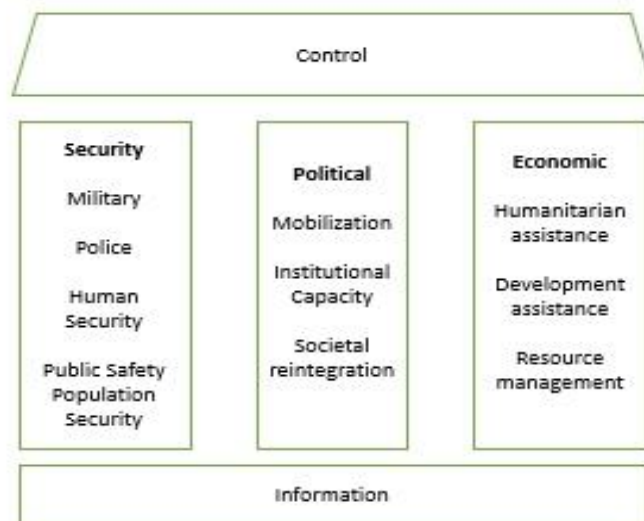
The three pillars mentioned by Kilcullen will be best understood with the illustration compiled by the author below. The campaign of counterinsurgency should rest firmly if it were to lay on a strong foundation of information.²⁵ This is the case due to insurgents do not only rely on the population for support of the

²³ Williams, “Security Studies: An Introduction,” p. 403.

²⁴ Kilcullen, David J. “Three Pillars of Counterinsurgency.” Remarks delivered at the U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Conference, Washington D.C., 28 September 2006. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237538249_Three_Pillars_of_Counterinsurgency, accessed on January 07th, 2019.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 5.

cause in which they fight for, but also to provide them with protection from authorities hence making them hard to track and gather information on. Besides its importance on locating as well as identifying insurgent's structure and operation, it is also a crucial foundation to establish an even distribution of information in order to determine an appropriate use of force in the operation, due to multi-agencies involved in the counterinsurgency campaign. With a strong foundation, the three said pillars function to support an objective for a sustained control and stability.



Theoretical Flowchart, compiled by the researcher

As of the pillars involved, the first worth mentioning is one of security. This pillar comprises of security provided by both the military and the national police. The military security focuses on securing the population from any form of aggression and intimidation posed by the illegal armed groups. On the other hand, the security provided by the national police would provide those of community

policing, police intelligence and special branch activities.²⁶ Besides the two, the pillar of security within a counterinsurgency campaign should also incorporate human security which includes a framework for human rights, civil institutions and individual protections, public safety and population security.

The second is the political pillar. This pillar focus on the primacy of legitimacy that aims at mobilizing support. If a government lacks the said legitimacy then it is the focus of this pillar to improve such dimension by enhancing institutional capacity throughout the agencies of both the government and non-government civil institutions.²⁷ With a reliable capacity of the government institutions in exercising its legitimacy over its country, the political dimension of counterinsurgency campaign is of importance as it is the principal arena for diplomatic and civic governance assistance efforts.

The last pillar of the three is that of an economic dimension of the campaign. The economic pillar focuses on a near-term for immediate humanitarian relief and a long-term assistance for developments that ranges from agricultural, industrial and commercial activities.²⁸ Economic assistance would be beneficial for the population in a fragile state for a reliable resource management capability. With the three pillars at hand to be included within the framework of counterinsurgency campaign, it should be noted that the three dimensions is to be parallel and balanced in order to gain an efficient result to establish stability and control.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid, p. 6.

1.6 Methodology of Research

1.6.1 Research Method

This research will be done using a qualitative research method, as the method itself is deemed as an adequate way by the author for presenting a detailed and complex explanation of an issue. Additionally, qualitative research method is an adequate mean for the author as the process within consists of identifying the problem of an issue through the formulation of a research question, where appropriate theories will be used as a baseline for data collection as well as interpretations that is beneficial for answering and shaping the main argument of this research.²⁹

1.6.2 Data Gathering Technique

For conducting a qualitative research, the author will make use of literature studies as the research's data gathering process. Second sources of literatures will present a wide range of data in conducting the author's research that includes but will not be limited to books, journals, dissertations, official reports and electronic sources for related articles and governmental websites.

²⁹ John W. Creswell, "*Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*," Sage Publications (2007), p. 43.

1.7 Research Structure

This research will specifically be organized by the author into four chapters that goes as follow:

Chapter I: the first chapter will introduce the background of research, the identification on issues of the topic's discussion, scope of research, research question, aim and purpose of research, literature reviews, theoretical framework and the methodology of the research.

Chapter II: the second chapter will be divided into two subsections. The first subsection will elaborate on the United States in addressing the illegal drug issues, the flow of illegal drugs into the US, policy on illegal drugs and security policy in Latin America. The second subsection of the chapter will provide explanation on Colombia's government condition and FARC's affiliation with illegal drug trafficking in the country.

Chapter III: the third chapter is where the United States countermeasure engagement will be theoretically analysed in regards to illegal drugs and illegal armed groups. The chapter will be divided into two subsections. The first would analyse the US recognition for counterinsurgency measures through Plan Colombia along with the limitations it was imposed with and its latter expanded authority. The second subsection would analyse how US engagement was implemented through filling Colombian institutional capability gap to combat illegal armed groups.

Chapter IV: lastly, the fourth chapter would be the final section of the research that will provide the conclusion made by the author in regards to the research.