ABSTRACT

When the fast changing world is looked within a span of the last two decades, the changes convey as if the political and economic values of social organisation including importantly ‘development’ and ‘security’, have been irrevocably altered. So much so, even words like development and security, or for that matter ‘democracy’ and ‘peace’ – already characterised by enough conceptual ambiguity – carry very altered and nuanced meanings since the end of the Cold War. The world of the Circum-Caribbean states too has changed within and outside the greater region. It is argued that the region lost its world of strategic importance with the end of the Cold War. 9/11, another event of strategic importance, took place in the neighbourhood of the region. How the post-1990 and post-9/11 political and economic imperatives have worked upon the Circum-Caribbean which is studded with ‘small’ and ‘micro’ states?

This doctoral monograph is a study of the Circum-Caribbean post-Cold War geo-political and geo-economic imperatives through security and development options. It is instructive to note the simultaneity between the end of the Cold War and the renewed academic and policy interests in the region; are these indicative of an emerging world where every state seizes attention irrespective of its size? The work identifies across the chapters that the contours of security and development cannot be kept separated in understanding the post-1990 Circum-Caribbean dynamics. Therefore, it hypothesises that a fragmented approach to security and development has been an obstacle in effective security management and realising developmental goals in the region. Looking at the contemporary political and economic forces, it extends the hypothesis that the traditional security threats and development challenges in the region have intensified whereas the non-traditional ones have accelerated. The
dilemmatic nature of economic globalisation and post-9/11 US homeland security measures are prime contributors to this hypothesis.

The study employs a research design between three variables in consideration

\[ a \rightarrow c \rightarrow b \]

where ‘a’ is the independent variable which includes the physical size of the Circum-Caribbean states, end of the Cold War, post-9/11 US homeland security measures, and economic globalisation. ‘b’ is the dependent variable. It includes post-1990 and post-9/11 security and development problematique available with the states in the region. The study attempts to examine the impacts of ‘a’ upon ‘b’.

In the process, ‘c’ intervenes with a critical approach to the options between security and development. It examines the extent to which the various means adopted by the states in the region have been conducive to manage the ‘vulnerabilities’ and nurture ‘resilience’ in response to the changing political and economic scenario.

The said task begins with looking at the major schools of security and development thinking with the aim of arriving at a conceptual understanding of security and development in small and micro states. The various security and development traditions continue to struggle towards better precision into their respective conceptual domains. The project of precision is getting more complex as globalisation is causing strain in understanding the processes/practices of security and development. Globalisation is a mega process involving myriads of heterogeneous economic, political, cultural, and technological processes. New concerns are being generated while earlier ones are being modified. Thus, the conventional concepts and theories are not able to keep pace with the unconventional issues. The conceptual binaries adopted by the previous theoretical traditions are becoming obsolete as those binaries are communicating with additional factors/actors in a given process. This is causing crisis in traditional mode of security and development thinking; calling for new ways of understanding in a changing world. The issue is how to reach there! Perhaps, assimilating security and development in the line of integrating sub-disciplines of international relations may yield better results in conceptualising security and development. Thus, it argues for a security and
development model which is integrative, de- and re-specialised, and built more into the discipline of International Relations than of Security Studies.

With the cases of HIV/AIDS, democracy-disparity, and Cuba’s socialism and development dilemma, the work further builds up the argument that the contours of security and development intersect in the Circum-Caribbean and, moreover, these two develop a nexus that is both virtuous and vicious. The case studies included in the monograph help scrutinise the security-development interlocking. Economic globalisation, technological revolution, and structural engineering of the international political economy have forcefully pushed the interfacing and interlocking forward into other dimensions such as epidemics, narco trafficking, and offshore banking in the entire Circum-Caribbean region.

The twin processes of interfacing and interlocking have undergone various evolutionary stages. But there are legitimate concerns for caution about the nature and character of these processes. The domains of security and development remain frustratingly separated in the institutional bodies and organisational structures designed to ‘provide’ development and ‘ensure’ security, as well as in the enactment of security and development in particular and localised sites. There are various travel and tourism related bodies and structures in the Circum-Caribbean, for instance, designed to steer the industry but, at the same time, there are severe deficits in the policies to eliminate the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Moreover, the state governments hesitate to adopt certain measures that might be effective to curb down the menace but will lower the tourist receipts. Likewise, since democracy has become the global norm of ‘legitimate governance’, no country in the Caribbean Basin (like anywhere in the world) seem to proclaim that several of today’s pressing problems are by-products of the twin architectural works of political and economic liberalisations (as both make two sides of a single coin). A democratic state which is built upon the optimism of security and stability, while mixing up with global ‘structural’ business, divulge the institutional and organisational disconnectedness in terms of security and development. Cuba, on the other side, is said to be following a unique socialist trajectory but the post-Cold War reforms in this country in turn are reinforcing the proverbial vulnerabilities that any other Circum-Caribbean country exhibit. It is not easy to behold the danger zones of the grey areas especially in the small and micro
states created by intermingling of security and development. The same is simply unfathomable when it comes to drug industry and offshore banking in the region.

Correspondingly, security and development can be seen as the tools of scholars and policy analysts to describe and analyse macro processes in international affairs and to generate knowledge. On the other, they are used by actors applying these concepts to prescribe processes and determine outcomes. The political contents inherent in the concepts of security and development with ever expanding usages and multiple meanings are already known. The ever increasing difficulty with precision and concretisation of the concepts in the ‘Titanic Lilliputs’ too is clear. Then the concerted comprehension of the nexus between the two – as concepts and processes – is not less than attempting to demystify two grand mysteries of the global political economy. Yet currently, the scholars and analysts have achieved limited success in this regard and the discourse on the nexus has acquired ‘discursive’ illustration to generate scholarly debates. Conversely, the actors in the concerned region remain orthodox and ‘structurally adjusted’ in their political economic approach in directing and achieving what they think rightful by justifying the nexus in a certain colour. This leads to securitisation of development and developmentalisation of security and ultimately favours security issues over developmental ones. This is further linked with Third World (underdevelopment) characteristics and First World (insecurity) implications warranted by domestic-international interface. Moreover, both the scholarly and actors’ take on the nexus focuses narrowly on the ‘post-conflict’ societies. This bears considerable repercussions for the small and micro states in the Circum-Caribbean as i) it visualises contemporary security and developmental issues simply as problems of managerial inability; ii) failure of state-building; and iii) conceals associated historical/colonial fallacies. Such a narrow focus further diminishes the efficacy of the programmes and policies designed to address the nexus when a neighbouring giant like US constantly creates and recreates its thorny Circum-Caribbean strategy.

US has been closely associated with the Circum-Caribbean dynamics at least since the ‘Spanish-Cuban-American War’ of 1898. The work subsequently studies the Circum-Caribbean-US relations and observes that the post-1990s US perceptions and policies have thickened the security-development nexus in the region. Bill Clinton’s
attempt to ‘Caribbeanise’ US and Jorge Bush Jr’s policy to curve a ‘third border’ in
the Circum-Caribbean are not isolated events as they seem to appear. Since the war of
1898, there is a history of continuity of American perceptions and policies towards the
region. Even the changes at times are more about policy adaptations and innovations
than about changing Circum-Caribbean-US relations. The post-Cold War
‘pragmatism’ and post-9/11 ‘smart power’ strategy are aimed at ‘securing’ the
‘hemispheric homeland’.

The issue of security has been in the forefront with US. Post-9/11 heightened
security perception is the latest in the basket. Such epoch-making events are
interpreted as giving US chances to renew and reassert its grand strategy of
domination in the region. One important point, however, is often missed out in the
Circum-Caribbean context. The issue of security in the forefront has been used by US
to advance its economic interests in the region; the two are thus inextricably linked.
The current economic crisis further helps appreciate linkages of US security and
economic interests in the region. The same interests and related US policies towards
the Circum-Caribbean are causing thickening of the vicious dimension of the security-
development nexus in the region.

The Circum-Caribbean states have suffered huge loss of immigration
remittances due to post-9/11 US homeland security measures. The ongoing economic
crisis is beating them hard. Given the context, US ‘aid’ in the form of Central
American Regional Security Initiative (Carsi) and Caribbean Basin Security
Initiative (CBSI) make the American agenda of securitisation readily ‘acceptable’ to
these states with adverse consequence of thickening of security-development nexus in
the region. The US security initiatives have closely linked the issues of drugs,
immigration, and terrorism; giving the outward perception of a comprehensive
strategy for the Circum-Caribbean betterment. But such policies are far from reality.
Drug is more a social problem for these states than that of US perception of security.
US immigration measures are increasing economic hardships in the region. Again, the
perception of ‘vulnerabilities’ in these small states informs US diplomacy of ‘narco-
terrorism’ rather than any perceived act of terrorism in the region. Instead of
providing any solution, recent US policies have contributed to securitisation of the
Circum-Caribbean development issues. The amorphous security projects, as a
consequence, have to be financed by the Circum-Caribbean states by cutting development funds as the economic sphere is securitised.

Is an economic strategy of ‘resilience’ a way out once the economic sphere is securitised? The monograph advances the examination of the security-development problematique while looking at the strategy of resilience that the leaderships in the region are attempting to articulate since they felt in the early 1990s that the preferential trade arrangements are soon going to disappear. Instead of building a ‘Caribbean Paradox’, it argues, if this strategy is not handled skilfully (whose indices are already in deficit in the region), it can further deepen security and development dilemmas in the region.

The Circum-Caribbean countries are increasingly losing the aid and economic concessions that they enjoyed in American and European markets. The contemporary political and economic realities are compelling these states to become ‘equal trading partners’. Not only the geo-politics of the region has changed, new economic forces have emerged globally. Economic competitiveness is high on demand; the Circum-Caribbean has to face it within the context of its vulnerabilities. It is not easy to shed the vulnerabilities, yet they have to strive for competitiveness and external scale of economy. It is the matter of viability for these Lilliputs.

The strategy of resilience is a new tool the states are articulating within the post-1990 global dynamics. It is yet to be properly shaped in the context of the Circum-Caribbean economies. Areas like culture industry and offshore banking are attractive, but the issue is that from where to get the necessary infrastructure and superstructure to realise the potentials of these areas. However, the idea of resilience is a market oriented one and requires caution to play with. If not taken in a broader light, the idea of resilience can complicate the existing security and development problems while adding new ones in the list. All the sovereign entities in the region are not alike, though they often experiment with sub-regional and regional projects, for instance, to confront with the common challenges.

In the midst of competing national sovereignty and economic interests, sub-regional and regional projects of integration have strongly figured as part of solution to the pressing problems in the Circum-Caribbean. The experiments with the United
Provinces/ Federal Republic of Central America (1823/1824) and the West Indies Federation (1958) still shower the seeds of the Circum-Caribbean regionalism. Security paradigm and economic imperative of the Circum-Caribbean states, at the same time, seem to follow different patterns. The former is causing to collaborate, whereas the latter more to compete, while both are interlocked as the economic sphere is securitised.

There is significant Circum-Caribbean convergence of the security and developmental issues. The geographic, ethno-historic, and political economic identities broadly attest to the convergence of the problems. The issues diverge as well. The states share dissimilar physical properties. Some are small but others are micro. The relative size of states within the region has remarkable bearings. Most are independent states but the presence of dependent territories and foreign out-posts add to the issues. At times the vulnerabilities make application of the term state obsolete. Meantime, the context of sovereignty with its vagueness and reality colours the region with new shades. The bearing of sovereignty is remarkable in the Circum-Caribbean regionalism. Again, the Circum-Caribbean is an amalgamation of islands and metropolitan states. These can further be categorised as single-island, double-island and multi-island states. Some of them are situated close to the US, others are distantly located. Similarly, the ethnic demographics cement regional ties at a macro level; considerable differences persist at a lower level. Ethnic violence, mistrust between the East Indians and the African descendants, colour differences within and between ethnic groups and other problems are often echoed and recorded with political economic consequences. These often frustrate and retard regional co-operative mechanisms. Moreover, there seem to be a proclaimed academic and political bias in favour of the ‘Black’ identity in the region. It marginalises the non-Black identities and also signals an obstruction in the regional political process.

These two opposing nature of the issues, diverging ones in particular, add dynamism to the regional complexity in the Circum-Caribbean. This very complexity engenders possibility for more than one way of achieving the mechanism of regional collaboration in the Caribbean Basin.

The mechanism of regional integration at local and larger levels has followed different paths in the Circum-Caribbean. This is not surprising because the regional
identities are multilinear. There are diverging interests among the states. The Circum-
Caribbean complexity of interests owes much to the global changes. Regional interests are heterogeneous and these clearly surface in the context of post-1990 development imperative and post-9/11 security paradigm. Regional security collaboration is less dilemmatic but the security issues are often amorphous. Economic sphere is more competitive than co-operative as the individual economic calculations are market based. But the security and development issues, at the same time, are interlocked because the economic sphere is securitised; thus calling for region-wide strategy to break the security-development nexus as choice between the two can no longer be differentiated. It is astonishing, on the contrary, to see that the regional forums have kept the domains of security and development isolated and have ignored the widening nexus between the two. Recognition of the same, perhaps, would have caused further maturity in the Circum-Caribbean collaborations.

Soon after the Cold War the Circum-Caribbean states realised that they had lost the strategic importance as the bipolar ideological antagonism had ceased to exist. They suddenly felt the pinch of economic burden as aid and other economic benefits had dwindled. The choice between security and development was not decisive at that time. Therefore, the wisdom of free trade competition and private investment stormed the debates in the parliaments and universities in the region. Of course, the background of failure of import substitution strategy in the 1960s was equally responsible for the emerging development wisdom. In the middle of the 1990s the countries soon realised that they had to go slow. The option for economic openness in the economy was sustained with some critical reasoning. The Circum-Caribbean society was witnessing an increasing gap between the rich and poor. The wise development choice of the 1990s could not solve the problems of poverty, for instance, rather it was vitiated. Today the issue of poverty, as discussed in the problematique of democracy and socio-economic disparity, has moved far from its stated direction. The abolition of poverty, after 9/11, has been turned into the pronounced goal of achieving the security indices rather realising developmental targets. Poverty is bound to further complicate the choice as the Circum-Caribbean moves ahead towards service economy. The move is likely to cause greater downsizing of the role of state and shrinking of welfare programmes; further
exacerbating the security-development problematique and the delicate choice between the two.

Though the choice between security and development is delicate, it again depends upon the national, sub-regional, and regional actors that what between the two is to be mixed up and at what degree. If the delicate problematique is adequately planned, call it the skill of diplomacy or the quality of leadership, it can meaningfully strengthen the Circum-Caribbean identities and unity; and enable the region to be compensated against the lost earlier strategic advantages.