

# The Human Development Reports published between 2000 and 2005 and the construction of a public agenda on military expenditures

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The Human Development Reports (HDRs) are documents that systematize a large number of diagnoses, prescriptions and proposals directed mainly to governments, states and general political leaders (including those of the organized civil society). The *object* of this research is the prescriptions, contained in the HDRs, of actions and procedures to expand the financing sources of policies that lead to human development. Among the many suggestions are those aimed at the containment of military expenditures and the increase of the chances of forming funds in poor countries in order to finance human development policies. Because it is a documentary research, the HDRs are the main *material* of this analysis targeted to verify, through their narratives and arguments, how authors build different ways to convince various sectors, groups and social segments of the need to find financing sources of policies that could lead to human development.

**Keywords:** human development; military expenditure; poverty.

## Os Relatórios do Desenvolvimento Humano publicados entre 2000 e 2005 e a construção de uma agenda pública sobre as despesas militares

Os Relatórios do Desenvolvimento Humano (RDHs) são documentos que sistematizam um grande número de diagnósticos, prescrições e propostas direcionadas, principalmente, aos governantes, Estados e lideranças políticas de modo geral (incluindo-se aquelas da sociedade civil organizada). O *objeto* desta pesquisa são as prescrições, contidas nos RDHs, de ações e procedimentos para expandir as fontes de financiamento de políticas que levem ao desenvolvimento humano. Entre as muitas sugestões estão aquelas direcionadas aos processos de contenção dos gastos militares e de ampliação das chances, nos países pobres, de formação de fundos para serem aplicados em políticas de desenvolvimento humano. Por se tratar de uma pesquisa documental, os RDHs são os *materiais* principais desta análise voltada para verificar, por meio de suas narrativas e argumentos, como seus formuladores constroem caminhos diversos para convencer diversos setores, grupos e segmentos sociais acerca da necessidade de encontrar fontes de financiamento das políticas que poderiam levar ao desenvolvimento humano.

**Palavras-chave:** desenvolvimento humano; despesas militares; pobreza.

## Los informes del desarrollo humano publicados entre 2000 y 2005 y la construcción de una agenda pública sobre los gastos militares

Los Informes de Desarrollo Humano (IDH) son documentos que sistematizan un gran número de diagnósticos, prescripciones y propuestas dirigidas principalmente a los gobiernos, a los estados y al liderazgo político en general (incluyéndose los líderes de la sociedad civil organizada). El *objeto* de esta investigación, son las prescripciones contenidas en los Informes, de acciones y procedimientos para expandir las fuentes de financiación que conducen al desarrollo humano. Entre las muchas sugerencias están las dirigidas a la contención de los gastos militares y la ampliación de las posibilidades de los países pobres para obtener fondos, que serían invertidos en políticas de desarrollo humano. Debido a que es una investigación documental, los informes sobre desarrollo humano son los principales *materiales* de este análisis, con el objetivo de comprobar, a través de sus relatos y argumentos, como sus formuladores construyen diversos medios de convencer a diversos sectores, grupos y sectores sociales sobre la necesidad de encontrar fuentes de financiación de políticas que podrían conducir al desarrollo humano. Se nota que entre las fuentes (ya que hay otras) de financiación estarían las que podrían resultar de la reducción de los recursos asignados a los gastos militares, que son muy altos en muchos países que no invierten lo suficiente en las áreas que podrían mejorar la vida de las poblaciones más pobres.

**Palabras clave:** desarrollo humano; el gasto militar; la pobreza.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Whoever seeks to understand the political proposals contained in the narratives and arguments presented in the Human Development Reports (HDRs), commissioned and disseminated annually by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) since 1990, is surprised by a recurring concern, namely, the emphasis given to the sources of funding for actions, policies and programs that would lead to improvements (in terms of income, access to education, health, sanitation) in the lives of those living in extreme poverty.

Reporting teams build a tangle of diagnoses and prognoses through information and data that they collect, systematize, and disseminate every year. Since the first HDRs (UNDP/HDR, 1991, 1992, 1994, 1995, 1996) it has been noted that there are many disturbing and difficult issues to address, such as advice on how societies structure themselves on power imbalances, concentration of income and patrimony, and latent and manifest authoritarianism. However, there is still concern in the HDRs about generating sources of funding for policies that would lead to human development.

In this respect, there are many difficulties, since the prescriptions of social policies and programs, in the most diverse areas, face scarcity, and sometimes poor distribution and use of public resources. For this reason, the diagnoses and prescriptions that form an agenda of actions and procedures, dialogue with the challenges posed to the public administration regarding the search for actions and practices that result in a greater substantive rationality (Ramos, 2008) in the decisions taken by a multiplicity of complex configurations (Ramos, 2008) (among them national states and international organizations) at multiple levels (Elias, 1999). It is noted that in the HDRs this substantive<sup>1</sup> rationality could be achieved if there were, increasingly, a social calculation of the results of the containment of military expenditures combined with the expansion of public investment in human development policies.

According to Fukuda-Parr<sup>2</sup> (2002), who had been director of the HDRs, the notion of human development within the HDRs is inspired by the writings of Amartya Sen (1981, 1999, 2001, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2011), which serve as a framework for the diagnoses and prescriptions in the reports. Sen says: “the rewards of human development [...] go far beyond the direct improvement of quality of life and also include its influence on people’s productive abilities and thus on economic growth on a broadly shared basis” (Sen, 2010:191).

Thus, endemic corruption, the distortion of spending in favor of some segments and to the detriment of others, the application of large sums of funds in bellicose activities and charges to pay expenses linked to the external debt, constitute, according to the formulators of the HDRs, in obstacles to policies that could lead to a set of improvements in income, access to education, health and adequate housing, with basic sanitation and drinking water.

<sup>1</sup> Mannheim (1962:62) defined substantive rationality as “an act of thought that reveals intelligent perceptions of the interrelations of events in a given situation”.

<sup>2</sup> “Sen’s theory of development as expansion of capabilities is a starting point for HDA (Human Development Approach). [...] Thus considered, development means removing obstacles [...], such as illiteracy, lack of health, impossibility of access to resources, or lack of civil and political liberties” (Fukuda-Parr, 2002:3).

Among the various sources of financing advised, there is one that appears, sometimes more, sometimes less incisively, but very frequently, during the 25 years of preparation and dissemination of the reports: the one that would come from a restraint of the military expenditures, formed by “all expenses of the Ministry of Defense and other departments in the recruitment and training of military personnel, as well as in the construction and purchase of military materials and equipment.<sup>3</sup> Military aid is included in the donor country expenditures” (UNDP/HDR, 2001:254).

It should be noted that social improvements depend on the formation of funds for policies that favor, according to the approach embraced by producers and disseminators of the reports, the poorest segments that have their lives affected by multidimensional deprivation. These funds cannot be formed, according to the arguments in the documents, only with resources saved with military expenditures; corruption and other misuse of public money should be combated. Such procedures are not enough, however; these resources have to be directed to those policies that would result in improvement in the life of the poorest segments.

Due to the insistent way in which the reporting teams bring the necessary containment of military expenditures into those countries affected by the imbalance between investments in warlike actions and investments in policies and programs aimed at human development, this study aims to understand how the formulators of the HDRs communicate to governments, States and political leaders, in general (including civil society organizations), the need to reduce expenditures on belligerent and armaments activities. Thus, the objective of this research are the prescriptions, contained in the HDRs, of actions and procedures to contain military expenditures and, in poor countries, increase the chances of formation of funds to be applied in human development policies.

The sociological problems that arise are: What arguments do the global formulators of the HDRs, published between 2000 and 2005, point out, to attest that human development will fail if the world remains more concerned about war than with extreme poverty? What are the political mishaps that are contained in the documents when they try to bring up the problem of financing military and social expenditures? How do such issues involve not only poor countries, but also others? Finally, what intentions, values, expectations, perspectives and ideologies of HDRs formulators communicate by linking the advances of investments in social areas to the moderation of military expenditures?

As this is a documentary research, one will seek to understand both the political meaning of the propositions contained in the reports and the historical context that has framed such prescriptions and proposals. Narratives and arguments, which the reporting teams use to communicate their expectations, perspectives and agendas, are a revealing set of political clashes and disputes around diverse intentions, values, ideologies, and interests that pervade an international body such as UNDP. It should be noted that the documents are being read taking into account a given social and political context that makes it possible to unveil both their warnings concerning the reduction of military expenditures and their precautions and cautions when bringing up such a thorny prescription.

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<sup>3</sup> Among several other studies on military expenditures, see: (Carilho, 2007; Baltazar, 2000; Sweezy and Baran, 1966; Sweezy, 1975; Szmanski, 1979; Azzellini, 2012; Deger, 1995; Braddon, 1995; Ram, 1995; Hartley and Sandler, 1995, 2007; Dikici, 2015).

Because this study has as a source of research the documents entitled HDRs, it is required that the analysis is based on what is said, that is, the object of the argumentation. In this way, this research is looking for the relation between the text and the social, economic and political context in which it is being produced. It is interesting to examine the meaning of what is put in the text, but this is always marked by the need to understand what is said, the language from a figurative logic. [Rezende, 2014:5]

## 2. PUBLIC AND MILITARY EXPENDITURES ON THE HDRS

In the period of the Cold War, which stretched from approximately 1945 to 1990, there were many discussions about distorted priorities regarding military expenditures. C. Wright Mills, in *The power elite* (1981:253), showed that military organization consumed a significant part of the public budget in the United States. Overall, the amount was around 30% of the government budget, but could reach 50%.<sup>4</sup> “In fact, two out of three dollars of the budget announced in 1955 were for military security” (Mills 1981:254).

However, as discussed in Sweezy and Baran (1966) and Sweezy (1973), Mills is also concerned with the organicity that existed, after the Second World War, between the monopolist capitalist expansion, the armaments companies and the huge concentration of power in the hands of the warlords (as he called the most influential military men in American politics and economics of the 1950s) who came to exert great influence on research, science, and armaments companies, according to the military forces and governments, intended to expand the conditions guaranteeing national security.<sup>5</sup> The militarization of American science and industry began to consume exorbitant sums from the public budget.<sup>6</sup>

From a historical perspective, although of medium duration, it is noted that the expansion of military expenditures in the second half of the twentieth century was related to a process of increasing militarization of science, industry and the economy as a whole. And this process did not only occur in the United States, but also in other armament powers like England, France, Germany, Japan, Russia and China. However, it is evident that the prescriptions of the HDRs in the 1990s on the reduction of military expenditures seem more likely to address the problems associated with such expenditures for the countries of the Southern Hemisphere. From this it is observed that the report production teams insist that, since the 1990s, it was easier to put this discussion on the public agenda, thanks to the end of the cold war arms race, and partly because military regimes had ended in hundreds of countries.

There is undoubtedly a correlation between the Cold War and the expansion of military dictatorships in the world. Therefore, there is a strong link between the expansion of military

<sup>4</sup> “Between 1789 and 1917, the United States government spent about \$ 29.5 billion; but in the last fiscal year of 1952, only the military forces had 40 billion” (Mills, 1981:253).

<sup>5</sup> The book *Repensar os Estados Unidos: por uma sociologia do superpoder* exposes the power games in which the United States is involved, both internally and externally (Lins and Wacquant, 2003).

<sup>6</sup> Rémy Herrera (2006) states that the militarization operationalized by the USA did not cease after the cold war. This can be seen not only by military expenditures in the US budget, but also by the growing number of bases of this country scattered throughout the world and “by the growing presence of multinational corporations within the military-industrial complex” (Herrera 2006:1).

expenditures in both the Northern Hemisphere and the Southern Hemisphere. But this is not discussed in the papers because it would imply dealing with issues that are not being addressed in the HDRs. The expansion of war industries, military aid and cooperation policies, and the arrogance of the Armed Forces during the period in which they controlled the states were due to the way in which the clashes and disputes between the capitalist bloc countries and the socialist bloc took place. It should be noted that during the exceptional regimes established in the second half of the 20th century in countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia, the military forces made use, as they wished, of a significant part of the public budget to invest in areas considered as of national security.

While there are references to the ways in which the countries of the Northern Hemisphere favor, with their donations, those countries that are strategic to their interests, from the military point of view, the bulk of the advice given to the national States in the HDRs prior to 2005 aims to reach far more countries<sup>7</sup> of the Southern Hemisphere than those of the North.<sup>8</sup> And because of the way proposals and suggestions are routed, the HDRs do not focus on how political, economic and military interests articulate, specifically and singularly, in every part of the world and within each region<sup>9</sup> and each country.<sup>10</sup>

Although they do not discuss these articulations in depth, the formulators of the 2002 HDR seek to point out the changes that have occurred in relation to both the role of the military forces in political life and their expenditures, which in some countries have been scaled down. In some cases, as the report's formulators used to say, if it did not reshape, at least it would be argued about such expenses. They cite South Africa as a successful case for the restructuring of the Armed Forces and the reduction of the military budget which, in the late 1990s, fell by half in relation to the late 1970s when it was in force the regime of *apartheid* totally underpinned in a "highly militarized society"<sup>11</sup> (UNDP/HDR, 2002:89).

In some countries and regions, after 1994, there would have been a substantial reduction in resources devoted to the maintenance of war activities, personnel costs and defense spending; However, after decades of militarization, "the armed forces still have considerable political, economic and ideological power" (UNDP/HDR, 2002:89). The optimism that was observed in the HDRs of the early 2000s regarding the containment of military expenditures has not been confirmed.

This can be seen in the *Sipri yearbook: armaments, disarmament and international security* (2015), produced by Sipri (International Institute for Peace Studies — Sweden), which has important data on military expenditures in the world today. Chapter 9, *Military expenditure*,

<sup>7</sup> The 2005 HDR, as will be shown further up, makes for rich countries various prescriptions for actions and procedures on military expenditures. It is suggested that they allocate resources for international aid to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

<sup>8</sup> The HDR (2002:88) lists countries (Nigeria, Turkey, Indonesia, Chile) that have difficulties in reducing their military expenditures, due to the preponderant role of the Armed Forces in political life.

<sup>9</sup> Sociological analyzes of such specificities may draw on materials of various natures, such as those produced by military areas (Dikici, 2015), international and governmental bodies (Zela, 2009) and by various academic fields (Economics, History, Sociology, Political Science, Geopolitics and others). See: Hartley and Sandler (1995, 2007); Alves do Carmo and collaborators (2013); Carr (2001).

<sup>10</sup> W. Mills (1981) demonstrated, as early as the 1950s, how such interests were articulated within the American nation.

<sup>11</sup> In South Africa under the apartheid regime (1948-1994), "defense expenditures [amounted to] 19 percent of total government expenditures in the fiscal year of 1978" (UNDP/HDR, 2002:89).

states that military expenditures have declined very little in recent years. In fact, such spending was 0.4% lower than in 2013. In conflict regions (such as the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe), military expenditures have increased. In regions of endemic and epidemic violence (in the case of Latin America and the Caribbean) such expenditures did not increase, but did not decrease either (Sipri, 2015).

The Sipri institute informs that the report *The United Nations Report on Military Expenditures* attempts to gather data from the various UN member states on such expenditures, but few countries respond to the demands on such data. About 25% of States present such information when requested (Sipri, 2015). It is not by chance that the teams that produce the HDRs are very often based on data from the Sipri Institute. Look at the data from table 1.

**TABLE 1**      **MILITARY EXPENDITURES IN THE WORLD - 2014**

Region	Expenses b.	Changes %
África	(50)	5.9
North Africa	20.1	7.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	(30.1)	4.8
Americas	705	-5.7
Central America and the Caribbean	10.4	9.1
North America	627	-6.4
South America	67.3	-1.3
Asia and Oceania	439	5.0
South and Central Asia	65.9	2.0
East Asia	309	6.2
Oceania	28.0	6.9
Southeast Asia	35.9	-0.4
Europe	386	0.6
Eastern Europe	93.9	8.4
Western and Central Europe	292	-1.9
Middle East	(196)	5.2
<b>World Total</b>	<b>1776</b>	<b>-0.4</b>

**Source:** Table extracted in full from Sipri (2015:14-15). Available at: <[www.sipri.org/yerbook/2015/09](http://www.sipri.org/yerbook/2015/09)>. Accessed on: 13 July 2016.

The above data dismantle the optimistic outlook that exalts significant decreases in military expenditures over the course of the twenty-first century. The decreases are inconstant and grow again

with the increase of conflicts, disputes, organized crime, forced displacements of population groups by wars, climatic crises and economic crises, among other reasons.<sup>12</sup> The bellicosity caused by the increase in migratory processes and the expansion of the number of refugees may lead in the next years to a considerable increase in military expenditures. According to the constant arguments in the HDRs, any increase in bellicosity would undoubtedly be a hindrance and even a setback and an obstacle to human development.

The constant optimism in the HDRs stems from events in the 1990s, such as “the signing of the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords” (UNDP/HDR, 2002:95), which attempted to overcome bellicosity and violence in the region of Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia. Then, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, there was an expectation that there would be favorable conditions for simultaneously reducing military expenditures and investing in human development. As will be seen later, the 2005 HDR production team already seemed suspicious of such simultaneity.

The formulators of the reports are referring, in one way or another, to procedures and actions related to the use of resources, called “*guns-and-butter trade-offs*”.

The *trade-off* concept in defense is traditionally known as the dilemma “butter vs. cannons,” or “plows versus swords.” According to this view, the nation must allocate its resources in a way that produces “civil” or “military” goods, according to its necessity, and at the same time, to ensure that the production of both goods is carried out with the highest possible use of the available resources, otherwise there would be an unforgivable waste of national potential. Thus, plows and swords must be produced in quantities that meet the needs of generating wealth (plows) and protecting the generated wealth (swords). The notion of the *trade-off* operates a sensible change in the very concept of cost. This is because, considering the issue from the point of view of resource scarcity, every quantity of plows (or butter) to be produced will mean a reduction in the production capacity of swords (or guns). In this case, the cost involved in decision making is no longer assessed in purely financial terms to incorporate the idea that the cost of producing something corresponds to the option of not producing something else that is also necessary. The cost of a fighter plane, or of a new naval unit, is no longer measured in millions of dollars, to be measured, also, in terms of what is no longer offered to the nation, for example, elementary education or basic health. [Almeida, 2013:431]

Despite mentioning a multiplicity of expenses that make up military expenditures, the HDR formulation teams do not seem to be focused on distinguishing between different types of military expenditures due to specific investments in technology, defense and industrial areas. There are no econometric studies on investment and military expenditures in the documents analyzed. There is also no discussion on military expenditures and its “positive or negative effects on economic growth”

<sup>12</sup> Although there is no exhaustive discussion in the HDRs about the economic, social, and political reasons for the difficulties of diminishing military expenditures in today’s world, its formulators tend to point out in general terms that bellicosity results from a range of conflicts arising from diverse reasons ranging from broader socioeconomic, environmental and resource management crises (not only natural) to the authoritarian projects of power held by individuals and groups.

(Dagnino, 2008:121).<sup>13</sup> Report developers are more likely to emphasize the need not only to reduce military expenditures but also to redirect such saved resources to the benefit of those spheres that enhance human development.

By the very prescriptive nature of these documents, it should not be assumed that although they are dealing with issues that have been discussed in the Human and Social Sciences - about the possibility of occurring, in the current conjuncture, the expansion and / or containment of military expenditures, the formulators of the HDRs will deal in depth with the reasons, causes and motives for the difficulties of retracting such expenditures, as several scholars have done (Hartley and Sandler, 1995; Hartley and Sandler, 2007; Carr, 2001; Elias, 1991; Waever, Buzan and Wilde, 1998; Aguilar, 2010). The report producers often cite rapidly what has been problematized in the sociological literature, for example how high expenditures in the military sectors might be linked to the power that these segments have within a civil-military relationship (Borrero, 1990; Amorim Neto, 2015; Zaverucha and Rezende, 2009).

The producers of these UNDP documents also mention, albeit briefly, how the idea of security against forces and external groups can feed, objectively and subjectively, justification for such expenditures (Elias, 1991). Such a debate has been recurring among scientists (Aguilar, 2013; Waever, 1995; Coqui, 2000) who deal with this subject, but it is not possible in this article to analyze such discussions and put them into direct dialogue, if this would be appropriate, with the diagnoses and prognoses present in the reports.

The reasons for the demands for resources for military areas are numerous. They have been problematized by intellectuals (Nievas, 2006; Elias, 1991; Ballesteros, 2014), politicians, international organizations, associations in favor of disarmament, among others. It is not possible to expose all the strikes that result from such disputes. Every investment in this theme would have to deal with the specificities of the socio-historical contexts that produce such demands. By attempting to address the issue of military expenditures globally, the HDRs do not deal with such singularities or their developments within each country and/or continent. This has been done by some scholars (Deger and Sen, 1995; Ram, 1995; Braddon, 1995) who deal with such issues.<sup>14</sup>

Understanding that human development financing requires a restructuring that makes military expenditures smaller, those who produce and support the HDRs are touching on something that does not exclusively concern money and material resources. They refer to the power of military forces in the world and the possibility of them intervening in power games that are established between civilians and the military forces. Each country has its specificities in the mode of political composition between these forces and in the way of operationalizing them<sup>15</sup>, which represents a difficulty for the general suggestions put forward by the reports.

These suggestions seek to situate themselves within the scope of the power relations that emerge from the attempt to establish, in the public agenda, the reduction of military expenditures.<sup>16</sup> The 2002

<sup>13</sup> Renato Dagnino (2008) and Dagnino and Campos Filho (2006) discuss the revitalization of the defense industry in Brazil. It is considered that this debate is not in the scope of the HDRs, since its formulators do not locate their discussions in the scope of the Economy of Defense.

<sup>14</sup> Saadet Deger and Somnath Sen (1995) in the text "Military expenditure and developing countries", published in Hartley and Sandler (1995), discuss military expenditures in the so-called "developing" economies.

<sup>15</sup> On this, in the case of Brazil, see: Zaverucha (1994, 2000).

<sup>16</sup> "The influence of the international environment, where internal political processes are subject to international protocols, is a reality with which the defense structures of the various countries must inevitably face" (Fernandes, 2006:16-17).



HDR formulating team, whose central theme is democracy and its importance for human development, stresses that military forces are very powerful in various parts of the world, hence the difficulty of implementing measures to reduce their spending. However, the role of documents of this nature is purposeful and aimed at indicating possible paths in the midst of a sea of difficulties and blockages. “The Armed Forces continue to be an extremely powerful public institution”<sup>17</sup> (UNDP/HDR, 2002:88).

The demands of reducing military expenditures can also be detected at a time when countries are emerging from civil wars and internal conflicts that are impoverished and totally ruined and therefore require international financial assistance for reconstruction processes; this leads countries that can provide loans to make military expenditure reduction requirements. André Guzzi (2016:116) argues that this was the case in Mozambique, a country that had emerged, in the beginning of the 1990s, from an internal armed conflict lasting a decade and a half, from which creditors demanded that it reduced “expenses with the state bureaucracy, among them those of military expenditures”.<sup>18</sup>

And, in what way do the reporting groups deal with this question, namely that in some countries, more than in others, the need for a reduction in military expenditures is more easily justified? They seem to be looking for ways to indicate that all, and not just a few countries should commit to reducing military expenditures. However, in one way or another, the reports make it clear that the nations most affected by extreme poverty are those that should pursue this reduction more effectively, which can often lead to a dubious message: some countries must economize in military expenses, others not so much. Would the most militarized nations of the world with higher human development rates, also be obliged, or not, to comply with international protocols for reducing military expenditures? This is little faced by the HDRs.

It is a challenge, even for bodies such as UNDP, to have access to military expenditures in various parts of the world.<sup>19</sup> Analyzing the situation in Brazil, Marcos V. Bustolin (2009) shows that expenses of this nature are not very transparent. It can be deduced from the many difficulties of getting involved in this area and proposing scales of spending and expenses. In an attempt to make the topic more accessible to internal and external debate, the 1996 Report warned that at the end of the twenty-first century, things were different, because “in making decisions about the collection and allocation of resources, governments are subject to pressures, both internal and international” (UNDP/HDR, 1996:82).

While it is difficult to go into the political recesses where it is decided the amounts that are directed to the Armed Forces of each country, the 2001 HDR formulators insist that at the threshold of the twenty-first century there is a favorable political environment to put this issue on the public agenda, since more than a hundred “developing countries and in transition ended military or single-party regimes, opening up to political choices. And the formal commitment to international human rights standards (UNDP/HDR, 2000) has grown dramatically since 1990” (UNDP/HDR, 2001:10).

<sup>17</sup> The team that produced the report cites Nigeria, Turkey and Indonesia as examples of countries where military forces are extremely powerful.

<sup>18</sup> The diagnoses and prescriptions of the HDRs on diminishing military expenditures are not easily decipherable, since their proponents are dealing with complex institutions at multiple levels (Elias, 1999). The book organized by Suzeley Kalil Mathias and Daniel Zirker (2016) highlights some aspects of such complexity. See also: Soares and Mathias (2002).

<sup>19</sup> With regard to military expenditures in the world, the HDRs mainly refer to data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Sipri). See: Sipri (2015:14-15).

At the end of hundreds of military dictatorships, there was an indication that a more conducive environment was created for the distortions of public spending priorities to be put on the agenda. In the course of dictatorial processes it was, of course, almost impossible to demand greater transparency of resources for military expenditures. As argued by Raymundo Faoro (1981, 1989), in his discussion of the Brazilian case, the military regime ruled, not only, but also, in favor of its interests. Therefore, questioning deviations from budget priorities was absolutely impossible.<sup>20</sup> It could be said then that it was much more difficult still to ask for any clarification on the amount of resources allocated for military expenditures.

Producers and supporters of the HDRs point out that during dictatorial periods and in the course of escalating internal conflicts — such as those in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Liberia, Uganda, Guatemala, among others — it often occurs economic crises, unemployment, increasing misery, lack of food, dismantling of health services and education, as well as other problems. This situation is generally aggravated by the directing of public resources to the military area. “Most countries also faced increasing budget deficits and increased spiraling debt, as significant increases in military expenditures were met with substantial declines in government revenue”<sup>21</sup> (UNDP/HDR, 2003:77).

In a dictatorial and authoritarian situation and in the condition of internal wars, the budget priorities end up being directed to areas that do not contemplate the social expenses. In the first reports of the 2000s (especially in 2002), the report’s authors seemed to believe that a more favorable time had emerged for the allocation of contributions more suited to the needs of health, education, sanitation and adequate housing. And, why would the threshold of the 21st century be favorable to the generation of new agendas and guidelines related to the correction of budgetary waste with wars, conflicts and repressions? Because many countries had ceased to have dictatorial regimes and many others had emerged from situations of internal conflict. For this reason, this would be the favorable political moment to try to promote actions and adopt procedures favorable to the allocation of more resources to the areas that would lead to human development.

However, in the 2005 HDR it was already evident that, from the point of view of the practices and procedures of governments and world leaders, there had been no substantial progress in reducing military expenditures. “For every \$ 1 spent on aid, rich countries allot another \$ 10 to military budgets. Only the increase in military expenditures since 2000, if it had been spent on aid, would have been sufficient to achieve the old UN goal of spending 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) on aid” (UNDP/HDR, 2005:8). Its formulators further remark: “Not seeing human security beyond military security is reflected in underinvestment in the treatment of some of the greatest threats to human life. Current spending on HIV/Aids, a disease that costs 3 million lives a year, represents the value of three days of military expenditures” (UNDP/HDR, 2005:8).

The formulators of the 2005 report presented data indicating that military expenditures continued to rise at the threshold of the twenty-first century. However, the plans and intentions to increase

<sup>20</sup> Vit3lio Marcos Brustolin (2009) shows that, although the transparency of military expenditures was very difficult, important changes took place — in relation to what would have been during the military dictatorship — after the 1988 Constitutional Charter.

<sup>21</sup> Data on this in the 2003 HDR cover the period from 1960 to 1995.

public expenditures in the fight against poverty and inequality seemed not to avenge, not to bear the fruits planned. Examination of the budgetary priorities of various parts of the world indicated the continuation of many distortions. And one of the biggest problems was the persistence of the anti-action understanding and procedures that contemplate new budgetary priorities. And what would it be? It would be that the only security that matters is the military one. In this way, human security, understood as something “beyond the narrow perceptions of national security, defined in terms of military threats and the protection of strategic foreign policy objectives, towards a vision of security rooted in people’s lives” (UNDP/HDR, 2006:11), is postponed. This would undoubtedly be perceived in the practices and procedures of countless countries.

A security rooted in people’s lives should have as a bearing on the decline of child and maternal mortality, the fight against malnutrition and the commitment to access to schooling and health in general. However, the 2005 HDR developers said that all this may seem unattainable, unworkable. And the most serious is that the unfeasibility of goals such as these, which are part of the Millennium Declaration (2000), signed by the countries that make up the United Nations system, hide tremendous military expenditures. There are no resources to combat child mortality, but there are war expenditures for wars and various clashes. This is not to say that the producers of this report disregard the budgetary constraints of many countries and entire regions. There are limitations, but there are also distortions (UNDP/HDR, 2005:33).

As in the other HDRs, there is a strong argument in 2005 for the expansion of funds and resources through international cooperation policies that should be applied in the social areas. For this reason, it is noted that the levels of aid must be compared, first, with military expenditures. Such “comparisons [...] are instructive” (UNDP/HDR, 2005:94), because they serve to generate awareness that it is not enough to say that there are not enough resources and that nothing can be done. They are instructive to draw the attention of government officials, political leaders, and civil society organizations to the fact that the issue is not only the scarcity of resources but, above all, the lack of budget priorities and transparency.

By saying that comparisons such as these are instructive, it is evident that there is an understanding on the part of the formulators of such documents that it is unlikely that the various countries will make adjustments in their priorities in the short and medium term, in order to favor human development policies. However, it is emphasized that these distortions in priorities should be on the international public agenda. This would be a first step, which should be pursued in the formulation of other priority agendas that favor human development. This would apply not only to the countries of the Southern Hemisphere but also to those of the Northern Hemisphere. “For every dollar invested in development aid, another 10 are spent on military budgets. In any assessment of threats to human life, there is an extraordinary disproportion between military budgets and human needs” (UNDP/HDR, 2005:94).

There are some changes in the 2005 HDR related to the charges made to the countries of the Northern Hemisphere. Its formulators seek to correlate exorbitant military expenditures with the meager expenditures for international aid to combat epidemic diseases, malnutrition and other effects of extreme poverty, but also for investments in areas that target at combating a disease, such as Aids. It should be noted that in 2005 HIV/Aids appeared as a threat to human security; it was discussed whether or not the investment of the rich countries in this area was sufficient. The formulators of the

2005 report were based on the finding that such a financial contribution to this area was insufficient. Military expenditures appeared to be out of step with investments in social areas that would make it possible to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The narratives on military expenditures outlined in the reports are full of political meanings. The effort to combat the threats of, for example, international terrorism (UNDP/HDR, 2005:95) is notorious for not disqualifying military or non-military actions. They try to emphasize that there are problems in this area that should not be disregarded. However, 2005 HRD teams ask: “how to know if military progress is the most effective response”? (UNDP/ HDR, 2005:95).

They suggest that the only way to allocate more resources to development (UNDP/HDR, 2005:95) is to seek negotiated paths to disarmament, including those related to nuclear weapons. They also insist on the need to build a political capital for negotiated disarmament. They are assuming that there are advances in international political relations favorable to a set of actions and procedures that can provide responses that are not only bellicose and threatening to human security and development.

In the light of the writings of Norbert Elias (1994, 1994a, 1998, 2001), it can be said that the producing teams of this report are assuming that, at the threshold of the twenty-first century, progress can be made in relations between States, that make permanent the search for more horizontalized forms of dialogues and negotiations. Elias (1998:209) states that the condition for this to occur “has not yet been reached in the present phase of the social process.” Imbalances of power completely prevent States from being organized into standards free from threats, violence and bellicose action.

In many instances — especially in those where they insist on the need to establish new balance of powers among the various States in order to reduce military expenditures, in order to increase resources that expand policies aimed at human development — the formulators and those who advocate the RDHs presuppose that there are political leaders, who lead the States with greater economic, military and political resources, capable of acting to curb their own potential for violence. However, what exists today is the constant demonstration by militarized States of the capacity to use physical force as a condition to intimidate, threaten and coerce (Elias, 1998).

It seems that the formulators of the 2005 HDR want to draw attention, precisely, to the possibility of generating other interconnections between States. Such connections should not be based either on a hierarchical order based on the capacity to expand military expenditures or on its “potential for violence” (Elias, 1998), but rather on the willingness of the various States to embrace the construction of a social process of changes in favor of the construction of human development, the only one capable of guaranteeing, in fact, human security throughout the planet.

### 3. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The high expenses on military expenditures impose losses, argue the formulators of the HDRs, on various aspects of social life. These losses are not only those related to the low investment in sanitation, health and education, but also those aimed at sustaining the bellicosity and the proliferation of conflicts that end up destroying the lives of the poorest in all senses, since these, besides not having their social and human rights minimally guaranteed, are still prevented from obtaining their livelihood, since wars destroy any possibility of planting, harvesting, herding and selling their products.

It has been demonstrated in the course of this article that the formulators of the reports, in prescribing policies of containment of military expenditures, communicate intentions, values, expectations, perspectives and ideologies that relate the advances of investments in the areas of human development to the curtailment of military expenditures. It is evident how difficult it has been in today's world to persuade political leaders in both rich and poor countries to moderate their appetites for maintaining a high political, economic and territorial control power through military forces that attest to possessing potential for violence against countries and/or internal groups.

The reporting teams construct a set of narratives that indicate that it is possible, on an ideal level, for the rich countries as well as the poor ones to restrain military expenditures on their public agenda, but, even if they have this purpose, they are entangled in a web of economic, social and political impossibilities that defy any and every proposal of human development based on the continuous and lasting reduction of militarization and its economic and social costs.

There is no doubt that the diagnoses and prognoses brought to the public by the formulators and the supporters of the reports give rise to questions about the pragmatic and/or merely discursive character of these propositions. Due to so many difficulties, it is observed that the expansion of public policies, which are conducive to human development and linked to the containment of military expenditures, is only a very remote possibility, so the arguments put forward in the HDRs can be considered as a narrative construction that brings up contradictions, ambiguities and ambivalences, which have to be read in the light of the current socio-historical context.

Diagnoses can be seen as coming much more from a given intention of stating patterns of changes in military expenditures than from unraveling the conditions that prevent substantive changes. In this case, the HDRs would be committed to legitimizing their bets, much more by indicating a possible association of the expansion of human development with the decrease of military expenditures than by empirical verification of the possibility of this actually occurring in view of the set of social and political relations in force today.

Guilherme Radomsky (2015:537), in *Biopolítica e desenvolvimento*, discussing how some segments have dealt with the issue of development, demonstrates that current narratives and arguments are more appropriate to legitimize agendas and diagnoses than to produce actions and results that lead to the real benefits to target people of development policies.

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