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Small Builds Big
How Ecuador and Uruguay contributed to the construction of UNASUR

FLACSO Ecuador

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To those people who instilled in me the value of education,
particularly to my parents, whose positive vision of my
future accompanied me along this journey, and to my
daughter, Feline, and my son Louis

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Abbreviations

ALADI	Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (Latin American Integration Association)
ALALC	Asociación Latinoamericana de Libre Comercio (Latin American Free Trade Association)
ALBA	Alternativa Bolivariana para las Américas (Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas)
CAF	Corporación Andina de Fomento (Andean Corporation for Development)
CAN	Comunidad Andina de Naciones (Andean Community of Nations)
CARICOM	Comunidad del Caribe (Caribbean Community)
CEPAL	Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)
CONAIE	Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador)
COSECCTI	Consejo Suramericano de Educación, Cultura, Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación (South American Council for Education, Culture, Science, Technology and Innovation)

COSIPLAN — Consejo Suramericano de Infraestructura y Planeamiento (South American Council for Infrastructure and Planning)

CSD — Consejo Suramericano de Defensa (South American Council for Defence)

CSN — Comunidad Suramericana de Naciones (South American Community of Nations)

CSS — Consejo Suramericano de Salud (South American Council for Health)

EEC — European Economic Community

EU — European Union

FA — Frente Amplio (Broad Front)

FARC — Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia)

FTA — Free Trade Agreement

FTAA — Free Trade Area of the Americas

IIRSA — Iniciativa para la Integración de la Infraestructura Regional Suramericana (Initiative for Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America)

IMF — International Monetary Fund

IR — International Relations

MERCOSUR — Mercado Común del Sur (Common Market of the South)

MLN — Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Movement)

NAFTA — North American Free Trade Area

NATO — North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NSAR — New South American Regionalism

OAS — Organization of American States

OECD — Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OPIC — Overseas Private Investment Corporation

ORAS — Organismo Andino de Salud (Andean Health Organization)

OTCA — Organización del Tratado de Cooperación Amazónico (Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization)

PAIS — Patria Altiva I Soberana (Sovereign and Proud Homeland)

PLANEX — Plan Nacional de Política Exterior (National Foreign Policy Plan)

PRE — Partido Roldosista Ecuatoriano (Ecuadorian Roldosista Party)

PRIAN — Partido Renovador Institucional Acción Nacional (National Action Institutional Renovation Party)

RESP-UNASUR — Red de Escuelas de Salud Pública (Network of Schools for Public Health)

SAFTA — South American Free Trade Area

SELAC — Sistema Económico Latinoamericano y del Caribe (Latin American and Caribbean Economic System)

SENESCYT — Secretaría de Educación Superior, Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación (Ecuadorian Secretariat for Higher Education)

TIAR — Tratado Inter-Americano de Asistencia Recíproca (Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance)

UNASUR — Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (Union of South American Nations)

WTO — World Trade Organization

Presentation

The fundamental aim of FLACSO Ecuador is to contribute to the development of diverse Latin American and Andean schools of thought, offered to its readers mainly in Spanish. This publication in English, *Small Builds Big. How Ecuador and Uruguay contributed to the construction of UNASUR*, has various significant aspects that need to be highlighted. One of the first is its relevance to research in International Relations. This book addresses a global readership, offering an innovative model to analyse the behaviour of small states in consolidating an integration project, namely UNASUR, in South America. Based on their performance, these nations are categorized into region-engaging, region-constraining, and region-adapting actors.

As is widely recognized, small states on this planet outnumber the large ones by a wide margin, and since the end of the twentieth century, the number of regional international projects being undertaken around the world has continued to increase, and so has the number of small states involved in such projects, for example in Europe. The innovative model proposed in this book therefore needs to be accessible to a wider readership beyond the Latin American public.

Another important aspect of the book is that the research on which it is based has its roots within an English-speaking environment: the work was developed at the Department of Political Science and International Studies, the University of Birmingham, UK.

Moreover, the building of UNASUR by the twelve South American states, between 2008 and 2012, and the establishment of the General Sec-

retariat of UNASUR, in Quito in 2011, are events of great significance to the region, especially to Ecuador, and deserve a detailed study: UNASUR is the only regional international organization that brings together all the South American states as a single political entity. Ecuador, by hosting the General Secretariat of UNASUR, has found itself at the centre of the debate of political integration. These factors are reasons enough for considering this investigation as a seminal text for studying actors in regional politics.

Lastly, the book examines the foreign policies of Ecuador and Uruguay as those of two region-engaging small states in the context of building UNASUR and concludes that both structural and national factors have shaped the region-engaging behaviour of the two nations. The more significant among these factors are a common history, the Spanish language shared by the majority of the nations, cultural diversity, and principles of democracy.

Access to many official documents, interviews with the political elite, and the political discourse of the main actors in South American regionalism, and a careful interpretation of the contents of these three sources by adopting a constructivist approach, make this book a significant piece of research.

As a relevant contribution to the literature on small states worldwide and to the limited research on this theme in Latin America in particular, the book will prove valuable to students, researchers, and policymakers not only in Ecuador and Uruguay but also around the world.

PhD Juan Ponce Jarrín
Director de FLACSO Ecuador

Preface

The last decades have been significant for small-state studies as many new small states have been created, many of which have become members of existing or new regional organizations. Although small states form the majority of states on this planet, their role, actions, and interactions in international relations have not been studied as much as those of the other states that are considered to be great or middle powers. Similarly, small-state studies as a field within the discipline of international relations have not reached the same stage of development and consolidation as other fields within that discipline such as foreign policy and international political economy. This book aims to contribute to the growing literature on small states, and its contents are based on my doctoral thesis that was developed at, presented to, and approved by the Department of Political Science and International Studies of the University of Birmingham, UK. This investigation introduces an innovative model for studying the role of small states in regional organizations. The model categorizes small states into region-engaging, region-constraining, and region-adapting actors, depending on their particular type of engagement in regional politics. This book characterizes Ecuador and Uruguay as region-engaging small states and argues that elements of a shared and collective identity were major factors that influenced the region-engaging character of Ecuador and Uruguay in the process of creating or establishing the South American Union of Nations (UNASUR). The study employs a constructivist approach to explore why Ecuador and Uruguay have supported the creation and consolidation

of UNASUR and is based on the analysis of documents, political speeches, and semi-structured interviews of members of the political elite against the backdrop of various historical events from 2000 to 2012. Two case studies, one on Ecuador and one on Uruguay, delve into these events to focus on the elements of a shared and collective identity, Left-oriented ideology, the failure of economic integration projects, the overpowering influence of external agents, and the need for national and regional peace, as well as the prospect of playing a leading role and ushering in a new type of political cooperation within UNASUR. A significant component of the research concerns the shared factors of a South American identity; at the same time, illustrations are used to compare and to understand those aspects of identity that influence the behaviour of Ecuador and Uruguay in consolidating UNASUR.

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Acknowledgements

Introduction

Many East European small states continue to adapt their economic and political systems in order to become full members of the European Union, despite the fact that Southern small states such as Greece and Cyprus have questioned the appropriateness of continental integration following Europe's financial crisis. It is well known that such adaptations involve and affect small states disproportionately.

Any type of political or economic crisis that happens regularly in one region frequently attracts the interest of academics, who try to explain and understand such events. Similarly, politicians seek practical examples from other regions, expecting to find political alternatives either in historical explanations or in practical measures implemented by other governments to resolve analogous issues.

Although such events have proved to be a challenge to some small states within the European Union, which, since its origins, has had *economic integration* as its motor, the scene in South America has been somewhat different: six small states, namely Bolivia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Surinam, and Uruguay, joined six relatively large states, namely Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela, to form a regional coalition that prioritizes *political union* as a new type of regionalism and integration. This alliance has relied primarily on the political will of the governments, which, in the name of the twelve South American peoples, have decided to 'construct a South American identity and citizenship, and develop an integrated regional space with regard to political, economic, social, cultural,

environmental, energetic and infrastructural issues, in order to contribute to the strengthening of the unity of Latin America and the Caribbean' (UNASUR 2008, Preamble).[1] In setting up and consolidating this newly created South American international organization, some states have played a more prominent role than others. Researches have mainly focused on larger states to explain the role and the possible ambitions of regional and rising powers in international context in the twenty-first century (Barnabé 2012; Caballero 2011; Gardini 2011; Poggio 2011; Malamud 2011; Sanahuja 2010; Seabra 2010; Freitas 2007; Burges 2007).

However, very few studies have analysed the role of small states and the reasons for their participation in forming the political alliance despite the fact that the South American small states have also been involved in this regional project throughout the whole process. Therefore, this book analyses the region-engaging character of Ecuador and Uruguay in creating and consolidating UNASUR; develops an innovative model to examine the role of small states in international regional organizations; and attempts to find out why Ecuador and Uruguay supported the creation and consolidation of UNASUR.

UNASUR is the main political pillar of South America, the beginning of which can be traced to the first meeting of the South American heads of states and of governments in Brasilia in September 2000 (Sanahuja 2010). Accordingly, this study includes the analysis of historical events from the appearance and expansion of the Initiative for Integration of Regional Infrastructure of South America (IIRSA) in 2000 and the foundation of the South American Community of Nations (CSN) in 2004 as predecessors of UNASUR.

The period of formal consolidation of UNASUR extends from 2008, the year in which the constitutive treaty was signed, to 2012, when sanctions were imposed for the first time by the alliance on a member-state, namely Paraguay. This measure serves as the smallest indicator of the degree of its consolidation as an influential actor in regional politics. In this sense, the indicators of the consolidation of a regional organization taken

here comprise the recognition of its international jurisdiction, an internal formal structure, a permanent seat for its administrative representation, and the organization's ability to act as a single international entity not only with respect to its members but also beyond its regional boundaries.

While the present investigation was being planned, two small South American states, Ecuador and Uruguay, contributed substantially to consolidating UNASUR—and the study was inspired by that fact. Ecuador – both as President *pro tempore* of UNASUR from 10 August 2009 to 26 November 2010 and as the depository of legal instruments recognizing UNASUR as an international organization of states and abiding by the required norms – campaigned for, and obtained, the ratification of six member-states during its term as the President. At the same time, the ratification of the constitutive treaty by Uruguay made it possible for the organization to begin the process of consolidation in December 2010. Uruguay's decision to ratify the treaty fulfilled the required ninth instrument for legal recognition of the international status of UNASUR and also legally bound all South American states in a political union during a regional crisis that seemed to threaten the alliance's consolidation. This fundamental step showed that South America was coming together itself as a sociopolitically organized region.

The second inspiration for this study was the transformation in the behaviour of small states in the context of international cooperation: most states supported economic international cooperation as a mechanism for integration, and all were involved in the negotiations for the creation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), a project driven by the United States from the beginning of the 1990s. However, the proposal failed after most South American states, including Ecuador and Uruguay, withdrew from the negotiations, and opted for UNASUR instead.

The first perusal of documents related to the regular meetings of the South American presidents within the framework of the IIRSA, CSN, and UNASUR enabled the identification of theoretical links to the social constructivist perspective for the study of international relations, which conceives international relations as a socially constructed reality, and hence constructivism became the general theoretical guide to understanding and

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1 This and all the other quotations to follow were translated by the author from the original primary sources.

explaining these political events as clarified further in Chapter 2.

The insights gained through the data and the theory also made it possible to formulate the following specific question: Has identity influenced the decision-making process of these small states during the creation and strengthening of UNASUR?

The dominant approaches in the study of the behaviour of small states in the context of forming a regional entity suggest a causal relationship between being a small state and lack of power, if power is considered in terms of the material capability of small states. If so, supporting the process of being integrated as a region would endow small states with sources of power and elements to influence international politics (Steinmetz and Wivel 2010; Bizzozero 2010, 2008; Neumann and Gstöhl 2006; Wivel 2005; Geurts 1998; Hänggi 1998). For that reason, these studies also consider small states as individualists, free-riders, competitors, and internationally material-oriented political actors.

According to the approaches that guide the above views, Ecuador and Uruguay would have been likely to benefit from supporting the FTAA project, driven by the United States, as this would have meant more possibilities for economic and political influence internationally. For example, both Ecuador and Uruguay would have enjoyed assured access to the strongest market on the continent and perhaps to security through a partnership with the leading world power. Similarly, both the countries would have been able to trade freely with middle powers such as Mexico and Argentina or with emerging powers such as Brazil. Instead, the South American small states supported the creation of UNASUR, a regional political organization that fosters cooperation, coordination between national public policies, and the consolidation of South American citizenship and identity, pushing commercial integration into the background. This support to UNASUR suggested that theoretical perspectives that explain this process of integration on the basis of commercial cooperation and power relationships were not the most appropriate tools to understand the role of small states in the process of creating a South American regional coalition. Therefore, this study borrows constructivist ideas to explain the emerging regions in the form of security communities, as developed by Adler and

Barnett (1998), to understand the complexity of the rise of South America as a region through the creation of UNASUR and to explain the engagement of small states in this process. Such an international role played by the South American small states needs to be clarified, and constructivist views of the role theory developed by Nabers (2011) have been used as further elements to construct a conceptual framework as a guide to understanding that participation, especially that of Ecuador and Uruguay.

The Importance of Studying South American Small States in the Formation of the South American Region

International Relations, or IR, as a discipline[2] that subsumes small-state studies, is yet to produce sufficient literature: the volume of literature is not commensurate with the increasing number of small states and their political importance in international relations both regionally and globally. The reasons for this low volume vary from the belief that there is a supremacy of realist approaches and therefore researchers focus on great powers (Neumann and Gstöhl 2006) to disagreement about a 'common research agenda' for small-state studies (Steinmetz and Wivel 2010, 8). The present study seeks to enrich and develop the literature in this area by bringing in fresh insights into the role played by such nations in the integration of the South American region.

Moreover, studies of small states within the discipline of IR have been conducted employing mainly (neo) realist and (neo) liberal theoretical frameworks, which, due to their nature, tend to underestimate the role of these countries in international politics. As a result related studies and theories within IR become an undervalued field of research. Katzenstein points out that the leading authorities in the study of international relations once tended to share the view that 'since nobody cares about small

2 This investigation refers to International Relations (IR) as the discipline of study and international relations as the relations of a state with other states and international actors. Moreover, the terms small nation, small state, small country, or small power are used to mean the nation-state as the primary unit of, or actor in international relations without underestimating the importance of other actors such as the international system and transnational corporations.

states, why waste so much time writing about them?' (2003, 10). Probably, this idea has also contributed to undermining the importance of studying South American small states in the international context.

In fact, small-state studies as a sub-field of IR is neither well represented nor adopted nor developed across regions; is underrepresented within the European academic environment; and limited within the South American region. Tickner's (2009) study of IR in Latin America demonstrates that this theme does not appear at all as a sub-field of IR or as a research theme in any of the 1012 academic articles published in six prominent journals of IR from Latin America. This poor development of small-state studies in South America is probably also related to the late introduction of IR as a field of study in the region's universities, which did not take off until the beginning of the twenty-first century (Almeida et al. 2016).

In the light of the above shortcomings, this study also aims to strengthen the field of small-state studies by presenting new insights into the role of small states from the South American region. This contribution about the role of small states in the formation of a regional international organization in South America, and into the development of its political institutions, will promote further development of the field and open its theoretical debates to a wider geographical area.

South American small states have traditionally been involved in the establishment and transformation of the region. At the subregional level, Ecuador and Bolivia are founder members of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN), and Uruguay and Paraguay have been involved in the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) since its creation.

These four states have also been members of the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) throughout its history, as well as members of the Organization of American States (OAS). In addition, their membership of such global international organizations as the United Nations (UN) offers them the possibility of influencing international policies by supporting each other in debates about international matters and decision-making processes in order to put forward their projects and interests (Wivel 2005; Waltz 2001).

Ecuador's and Uruguay's commitment to CSN, founded in 2004, their support for its transformation into UNASUR, and UNASUR's subsequent consolidation make these South American states particularly suitable as case studies that can help to understand the importance of small states in emerging regions. This is especially important because although most South American small states are older political units than many European small states, it is in Europe that small-state studies are a stronger presence in the academic environment.

In South America, only two states, Guyana and Surinam, were created in the twentieth century, whereas the older small states, notably Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Uruguay, have maintained their sovereign status since their creation in the 1820s and 1830s. This is different from the situation in Europe, where the major global conflicts of the twentieth century such as the two world wars and the cold war strongly impacted the transformation of European societies as well as redrew the political map of Europe. Hence, South American small states seem to have developed a local approach to their role in international organizations and to regionalism—the old theoretical tools developed within the European academic environment could be inappropriate for the study of South American small states (Dabène 2009).

The rise of constructivist approaches has made a significant impact on most of the sub-fields of IR. These perspectives be a useful tool to analyse the international events driven by small states. For that reason, this study also expects to contribute to theoretical debates in IR by probing the wider applicability of the explanatory character of theoretical approaches informed by social constructivism in the sub-field of small-state studies.

Finally, by presenting new and important case studies of small states from this region, this study aims to facilitate the task of scholars and students with new data and information, gathered and distilled, and thereby to contribute to the construction of a more accurate notion of these nations' international political role worldwide and, more specifically, to the development of the sub-field of small-state studies in Latin America.

Structure of the Book

This book is organized into five major chapters and a brief chapter devoted to the conclusions. The first chapter analyses the secondary literature on small states to identify the roles and patterns of their behaviour as international actors in international politics in general and in the construction of regions in particular; reviews the literature on the development of small-state studies as an area of research; and indicates the approaches to studying these nations in the processes of regional integration in Europe and South America.

The second chapter clarifies the concepts that form the basis for the development of this investigation and presents an emerging conceptual framework that guides the two case studies, Ecuador and Uruguay, in the formation and consolidation of UNASUR. The chapter employs an inductive approach to construct this structure on the basis of insights obtained from the data, relating them to social constructivist principles to study international relations, rising regions as security communities, and role theory, as mentioned above. The final part of the chapter also describes the case study methodology as well as the methods employed for gathering and analysing qualitative data that form the basis for this study.

The third chapter presents the insights obtained through the empirical case study of Ecuador as an international political actor in the formation of UNASUR and focuses on six factors that significantly influenced Ecuador's support to its creation and consolidation: domestic political situation; the influence of major external agents such as the United States, Colombia, and Peru; the disenchantment of Ecuador with CAN; the influence of ideology of the governing powers; the links between national and regional identity; and the enactment of international roles within UNASUR.

The fourth chapter outlines the main insights into the region-engaging character of Uruguay obtained through the empirical case study and uses similar approaches to the study of Ecuador, taking into account the conditions specific to Uruguay. The chapter focuses on the domestic political situation; the influence of major external agents such as the United States, Brazil, and Argentina; Uruguay's discontentment with MERCOSUR and

ALADI; the influence of the ideology of the governing powers; the links between national identity and regional identity; and the enactment of international roles within UNASUR.

The fifth chapter contrasts and discusses the outcomes of the two empirical case studies, as suggested by the cross-case analysis method of Miles and Huberman (1994). The chapter illustrates the main similarities and differences between the two countries, focusing on four main themes: the national situation of these small states, the idea of a new type of cooperation, the factors of identity as the study's explanatory guide, and the importance of the enactment of international roles for small states with reference to the role of the members and the significance of playing the role of President *pro tempore*.

The concluding chapter summarizes the main insights presented throughout the book and evaluates the conceptual framework and the methodology to suggest possible further studies.

Chapter 1
Small States: Followers or Constructors of Regions?

Introduction

The role played by small states in the formation of a region is related to their motivations and the rationale for backing projects of region formation. Exploring the literature on small states and understanding the explanations given by scholars for such factors are important to researchers of IR and can help to identify possible reasons for such support.

This chapter has the following objectives.

1. To highlight theoretical developments in the study of small states as a sub-field of IR by focusing on a single question: Are they 'followers' or 'constructors' of regions? The chapter seeks to identify the theoretical approaches that, in general terms, have driven the study of small states within IR.

2. To examine the various ways, as described in the literature, in which small states engage in the construction of a region. Specifically, the chapter seeks to single out theoretical frameworks or concepts that can inform the analysis of the part played by Ecuador and Uruguay in the construction of UNASUR (although the literature mainly consists of European and North American publications related to IR).

3. To study the available literature on small states in Latin America and South America. The chapter seeks to evaluate the contribution of small-state studies related to South America to the literature on IR and to present a South American perspective of these nations as international actors in the construction of a region.

Small State Studies within International Relations

In the first years of the development of 'realist' thinking in the study of international relations, conventional analysis portrayed the small state as an insignificant element of the international system within the over-all classification of nations as world powers, middle powers, and small powers. States were then considered 'small' if they lacked real military power: it was assumed that without military power, a small state was in constant danger of disappearing and its destiny was outside its control, contingent upon the strategic interest of big powers (Morgenthau 1948; Wolfers 1945).

However, Baker (1959) demonstrated that some small states develop alternative approaches to survive as a political unit and to withstand the pressure from stronger, external forces: Baker was intrigued by the ways in which Sweden, Spain, Turkey, Switzerland, Eire, and Portugal managed to avoid being directly involved in the Second World War—and wanted to find out how. She found to her surprise that the diplomacy exercised by small states could sometimes outweigh the strength of bigger powers. Baker's work triggered important academic debates within IR such as the need for a theory that recognizes a small state as a unit of analysis and shows how a small state be defined. Within the realist school, the main topic of debate, when analytically defining and classifying small states, has been the definition of 'small': small in terms of material capabilities or in terms of power? (Steinmetz and Wivel 2010; Väyrynen 1997; Handel 1990; Väyrynen 1983; Vital 1967).

Scholars have further developed the idea of an area of studies within IR that concentrates mainly on small states in the context of international relations by employing arguments applicable specifically to these nations, suggesting that they face different issues, may have other interests, and resources from those of the larger states (Handel 1990; Väyrynen 1983; Singer 1972; Keohane 1969; Rothstein 1968; Vital 1967).

The increase in the number of approaches to studying international relations in the 1950s and 1960s, such as liberalism, economic structuralism, and transactionalism, which challenged classical realism, appears to have led the studies away from the original idea of developing a general theory that helps to explain the international actions – and inactions – of the small state. Instead, most research in the area focused on small states on the basis of the dominant theoretical perspectives of IR. Consequently, small-state studies have been fragmented into parts of a jigsaw puzzle, or an assemblage of theoretical ideas and empirical studies of various origins lacking a convincing argument to hold them all together. For instance, Vital (1971a, 1971b, 1967) explains the survival of the small state as an isolated and independent state that cannot integrate or merge voluntarily with another when challenged by a warring state and, in the absence of any external stress, is able to preserve its national unity. Citing Israel, Cambodia, and Finland as examples, Vital (1971b) argues that small states at war would fall into the prescribed category of a politically independent nation. In the last analysis, a greater power may use its superiority to force the weaker states into submission. Vital concludes that in this field of research, it is preferable to define a small state more loosely and suggests suitable criteria for the purpose.

Väyrynen (1983, 88), in a summary, indicates that, within the security concept of 'balance of power', various authors define a small state as

- either an ally of a big power or of a plurality of rival states
- or a protectorate of a big power
- or an unattractive or inconspicuous or non-aligned state of no strategic interest to any big power.

Realist theories, the dominant tool for explaining the behaviour of small states in security studies, adopted the conceptual order highlighted by Väyrynen (1983) to explain the actions of these nations during the development of small-state studies as a sub-field of IR. Furthermore, the fear of imminent war posited by the discourse on cold war probably influenced the empirical study of small states well beyond the end of the cold war and strengthened the proposition that they lack hard power and therefore their survival depends on a big world power or on a security community. This view of the role of such countries in the international

system is clearly supported by Waltz's (1979) prominent work, *Theory of International Politics*.

However, (Waltz 1979) was not the only one to propose vulnerability of small states as a theoretical explanation within systemic theories. The military and economic weakness of small states appears repeatedly in empirical studies about them in the global context. For instance, studies of the economic, political, and military vulnerability and concerns of 31 small states of the Commonwealth reported by the Commonwealth Secretariat (1997) suggest that the analysis conducted since 1985 was based on theoretical assumptions of the imminent prospect of war due to the military offensive in Grenada by the United States in 1983.

Scholars studying different fields within IR, in their theoretical explanations, use a combination of different disciplines to incorporate other factors and dimensions of the small state (Singer 1972; Keohane 1969; Rothstein 1968). For instance, Singer (1972) based his work on a combination of political science, economy, psychology, sociology, and communication theory to explain the role of small states in the international environment dominated by big powers. Singer (1972), in the first and fourth chapters of his study, focuses on the need to explain the importance of social elements such as the role of communication and language, the identity of groups, and the contribution of historical and ideological elements, among others, to better understand the role of small states in international politics and also suggests that these factors should also be considered as elements of the power of nations as they impact on the behaviour and relationships of others.

However, the fact that small states interact with various international actors such as governmental and non-governmental organizations, have human and natural resources, and have acquired new technologies, including the capability of developing nuclear weapons, has further diverted the attention of academics from the main factors that should be considered in classifying and studying these countries.

Moreover, the quantitative dimension of power – the definition and categorization of small states based on their size in relation to their hard power and material capabilities, which dominated the approaches men-

tioned above – has been criticized by authors such as De Rusett, Vandenbosch, Wilcox, Goetschel, Hey, and Rostoks throughout the development of this area of study. More particularly, these scholars have questioned the reliability of such methodology, based as it is on the quantification of power, and pointed out that qualitative factors such as level of education, political culture, social cohesion, membership of international organizations, and the uncertainty of the international system could also be included as sources of power (Rostoks 2010; Hey 2003a; Goetschel 1998b; De Rusett 1954; Wilcox 1967; Vandenbosch 1964).

A further perspective on the study of small states in international politics has been developed by economic structuralists, institutionalists, and neo-liberal thinkers. For instance, researchers such as Santos (1983), Katzenstein (1985), and Hey (1993, 1995a) analysed the small state from the perspectives of the economic structuralist or the globalist or the neo-liberalist approach and mainly considered the economic factors and the capacity of small states to act in relation to a big power (Hey 1995a , 1995b, 1993) either within a constraining economic structure (Santos 1983) or within a liberalized international market of democratic systems (Katzenstein 1985). According to these scholars, small states are small in terms of their economic capability. In addition, small states at the periphery are exposed to dominance and interference at all levels of the state by the economically stronger nations or by those at the centre. It follows that the states at the centre would support the imposition of economic, liberal, and neo-liberal measures on small states at the periphery to weaken them and avoid the transformation of economic production worldwide (Santos 1983).

On the other hand, Katzenstein (1985) suggested that the economic dominance of stronger powers had also affected the industrialized European small states. His study concentrates on the possible outcomes for Switzerland, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Denmark of their application of corporate democratic measures as a mechanism to counter the competition from external economic forces driven by developments of the global economy. His study suggests that democratic corporatism between those states has allowed them to resist the dominant contradictions of international market competition by accommodating each other's

needs and 'including all significant actors in the decision-making process' (Katzenstein 1985, 192).

From a different perspective, but still centred on the structural approach, Fernández (2012) based the study of his native Uruguay, a small state, on the theoretical premises of the neo-realist Kenneth Waltz to analyse this country's foreign policy from 2010 to 2012 within the framework of MERCOSUR. Fernández's emphasis on the behaviour of Uruguay as a small state within MERCOSUR shows the restriction imposed on small states by the system, because two bigger powers, Brazil and Argentina, dominate the system to maintain stability. This perspective allows him to agree with neo-realist explanations of the domination by big powers within a structure. The small state is supposed to have minimal abilities to influence politics and to change such a system, because, it is argued, small states lack sufficient power to do this. Thus, small states are doomed by the power of the structure, or that of the dominant powers, to a condition of dependency whereby the nation-state continues in its individualist fashion to seek strategies to ensure its survival as an independent entity (Waltz 1979).

However, this way of thinking by Fernández (2012) has its limitations. He couches his arguments in terms of the following: the international system, balance of power, Uruguay's political system, its developmental strategy, and its resources and national capabilities. In the first place, Fernández does not acknowledge the failure of the neo-realism theory to explain the end of the cold war, the disintegration of the Soviet Union into many small states, and the outbreak of war between the different ethnic groups of former Yugoslavia. Secondly, other factors such as the ideological affinity between the governments of Kirchner, Lugo, and Mujica may have influenced the behaviour of Uruguay as a whole. In addition, all were Spanish speakers, members of Left-oriented governments, and came from countries with shared history and shared culture. Hence, the ability of the peoples of small states and the quality of their self-identification (ignored by most neo-realist theories but highlighted by constructivist approaches) are important elements to be considered in studying a state in IR.

These social elements, dismissed by neo-realism, became important factors in the theory of the study of the behaviour of small states in the 1990s, which sought to understand the foreign policies of European small states. Goetschel (1998a, 17-19) developed a theoretical proposal to explain the changing role of a small state caught in the security dilemma of 'influence or autonomy'. Here, 'influence' means not only the ability to affect the direction of politics but also to resist external pressure, and 'autonomy' means the aspiration to have greater freedom from international regulations and commitments on a bilateral or multilateral basis. Goetschel (1998a) starts highlighting many inaccuracies in the application of outdated methodologies of realist theoreticians. For instance, military power and the size of the economy do not completely reflect the power of a state, because international war is not at the moment a major threat to the existence of South American and Western European small states; instead, it is the identity of small states that is currently important in making decisions related to security. This is plausible also within the South American region in the twenty-first century. As a consequence, Goetschel points out, the behaviour of small states in this new international environment should no longer be measured with the old tools, particularly with those used by realist theoreticians, because old conceptions of power are no longer applicable in the present international environment, given the changed rules and norms constraining the behaviour of most states, both small and large.

The challenge to the orthodox methodology of neo-realism in IR originated also in various theoretical perspectives within small-state studies in the period after the cold war. For instance, Elman (1995) based her framework on the theory of domestic politics and explains the foreign policies of small states as shaped by pressure from societal groups internally and the social effects of the application of such policies by the state apparatus. Here, she uses historical institutionalism to situate the foreign policies of small states within the constraints of external forces, which can also be influenced by domestic policies of the small state (Elman 1995, 180).

The rise of such theoretical developments and the influence of social constructivism on the study of international relations are likely to have

transformed small-state studies by offering new perspectives in the study of political phenomena related to small states—perspectives that had been undermined by the realist and liberalist approaches. For instance, Sheffer (1997) and Møller (1997) note the importance of constructivism in defining a small ethnic state and in understanding ethnicity in the formation of new nations within the anarchic environment of Eastern Europe that emerged as result of the collapse of Soviet Union. Sheffer (1997) claims that some small states that, throughout the twentieth century, were created on the basis of ethnicity are the most vulnerable to external threats from hegemonic global or regional powers, as these small ethnic states had failed to consolidate their territorial and economic sovereignty or their autonomy in making their national policies. A distinct ethnic identity and a maximum population of 15 million are the conditions that, according to Sheffer, define a small ethnic state. The small ethnic state framework uses three perspectives, namely global ecology, regional circumstances and activities, and internal developments.

However, the above studies refer not only to small ethnic states as internationally recognized, sovereign, and unitary nation-states, but also include ethnic groups found within a federal state within a nation state: the Chiapas in Mexico or the Kurdish people within a central national state, for example. By definition, these groups do not have the degree of autonomy necessary to exert international influence independent of the central government's agreement. An important insight from this analysis is that the threats that small ethnic states face are mainly internal, but this idea also raises a question: Why do such states based on ethnicities face such threats? In the present study, Ecuador comprises a large number of ethnic groups and is highly unstable politically—the two may be linked and therefore both need to be considered.

In studies on foreign policy behaviour of small states, Hey (2003a) avoids adhering to any particular theoretical perspective in incorporating new ideas into her definition of small states. Her theoretical introduction develops a three-level analytical framework (individual, state, and system) for a series of empirical single case studies of the foreign policy and global engagement of Paraguay, the English-speaking Caribbean states, Panama, Luxembourg, Austria, Gambia, Jordan, and Laos. Hey proposes that

a state be considered small 'if a state's people and institutions generally perceive themselves to be small, or if other states' people and institutions perceive that state as small' (Hey 2003a, 3). She identifies three main factors that restrict the actions of small states in international relations: the influence of international structures (which are stronger in less developed countries); the level of development of society (the diplomacy of less developed countries tends to be less consistent and more influenced by individual governmental leaders); and greater dependency on credit from international financial institutions (given the greater concern for security in their foreign policy). As a theoretical contribution, Hey (2003b, 194) concludes that most small states would pursue regional engagement in their foreign policy agenda and that governmental leaders would engage in foreign affairs 'relatively unfettered by domestic groups'.

These two theses inform the design of the present study, for two reasons. First, the central analytical focus is upon Ecuador and Uruguay, each as a discrete example of a small state, and the major sources of information for this study are close to the central state. Secondly, the study seeks to analyse the engagement of small states in establishing UNASUR, driven mostly by the concern for international regionalism or integration—according to Hey (2003a), one of the most relevant areas of engagement in the foreign affairs of small states.

In conclusion, this review of literature has shown that (1) generally accepted parameters for defining a small state as a unit of analysis are lacking and that factors fundamental to small-state studies are yet to be agreed upon; (2) although the majority of Latin American states and at least half from South America could be categorized as small, only a few studies discuss theoretical ideas originating in Latin or South America; and (3) only a few theoretical frameworks use social constructivism to study international relations.

With reference to (1) above, an agreed-upon set of variables to form the core theoretical elements of this area of study is urgently required. Second, the poor representation of Latin and South America may be due to the late introduction of IR in academic research in South America and limited availability of academic programmes within this region's academia, as

shown by Tickner (2009) and Almeida et al. (2016). Therefore, this area of study requires expansion and needs to position itself internationally as an operational field of IR within new regions; in this way, small-state studies can contribute further to the strengthening of IR internationally. Finally, this study also aims to better position constructivism in the study of small studies within IR by employing some of its assumptions.

The Study of Small States as International Political Agents within Regions

Some regional international organizations or systems can be considered as processes of integration the objectives of which shape the type of organization and direct the dynamics of international relations. The economic, the political, and the military environments at the time of the creation of such corporations or systems have probably influenced their institutional setting, but the institutions have been exposed to transformations. For instance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was studied by Deutsch (1957, 1968) as the path to integration and formation of security communities. Therefore, and in order to avoid confusion, this section does not limit itself to investigations that look at a particular region or regional integration within a clearly demarcated geographical area but reviews some research that can help in understanding the engagement of small states in regions and international organizations worldwide.

One character of small states within regions that has been highlighted by a majority of the surveyed studies is that they tend to be region-engaging: they tend to sign and ratify regional multilateral agreements voluntarily, organize and attend region-related meetings, and engage in a few other activities, as suggested in Chapter 2. Some researchers see the constant creation of new small states and their membership of and engagement with an internationally regulated system as international developments favourable to the survival of the small states. For example, Goetschel (1998b), Hey (2003a), and Steinmetz and Wivel (2010) suggest that joining regional or global organizations does not make these

small states any less vulnerable, although they appear to be better protected. Other scholars propose that international organizations are important sources of influence on the international political development of small states. In this sense, international organizations as well as the role of small states in such institutions have become more important (Neumann and Gstöhl 2006; Geurts 1998; Hänggi 1998). For other scholars, such as Barston (1971), Jaquet (1971), and Hirsch (1983), international organizations and integration processes have historically been the principal political arena within which small states have been able to express their national interests and to portray their identity and influence in regional and global politics. International organizations are the principal channels through which small states can exert international political influence. Hence, the likely motives for small states to engage in regional organizations are to ensure their survival, to enhance their international influence or power, and to position their national identity outside their territory.

Another view of what motivates small states to participate in international organizations was voiced before the end of the Second World War. For instance, Marriot (1943) employs a historical approach to argue that the way to preserve the small state is the federal system. Marriot considers small states as a fundamental element of the world community, historically conceived among a variety of states as members of the world community and contributors to its culture. Diplomatic and historical cultural elements of small states were considered important sources of world culture and co-makers of civilization and fundamental elements of the world community (Marriot 1943; Fisher 1914). These authors maintain that small states engage in international organizations not merely for self-interest but to contribute internationally and should therefore be considered as constructors rather than followers.

Following the Second World War and until the end of the cold war, the main concern of researchers on small states within regional international organizations appears to be the imposition of a dominant realist approach to defining power to favour the arguments of big powers for redistribution of political power within international organizations. For

instance, Hirsch (1983, 130) takes Luxembourg as his case study within the European Economic Community (EEC) to apply the theory of dependence as his framework and suggests that 'the right to invoke a national interest is increasingly denied to the small state, especially if such interests collide with those of more powerful countries'. Hence, small states tend to support and strengthen supranational organizations, because these are more likely to consider prioritizing mechanisms that represent the collective interest of the member-states, rather than the interest of the stronger state. However, international institutions as agents of integration processes are not always structured as supranational organizations and are exposed to changes in circumstances and the international political environment. For instance, the number of European commissioners in the European Union has changed constantly with the number of new member-states. Hence, new forces for negotiation may reduce the opportunities for a single small state to wield any influence in an environment of competition and egoism. However, Geurts (1998) and Kuosmanen (1998) agree that international institutions are important sources of power and influence for European small states in shaping continental policies. Both the authors apply an institutional framework to investigate the role of the European Commission (Geurts 1998) as an actor and ally of small states and the role of the Council of the European Union (EU) (Kuosmanen1998) in decision-making.

In this context, the new concerns of small states in the twenty-first century appear to be related to appropriate ways of working together within existing international institutions to influence their collective policies, which allow them to tackle shared problems. For instance, Lee (2009) suggests that the new setting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) has allowed small states to block multilateral agreements collectively if such agreements serve the interests of only the dominant states. Several questions arise from the above regarding this behaviour of small states in international politics. Can we continue analysing new social and political international phenomena with old theoretical tools? Could theorists still justify the self-oriented behaviour of small states? Or is such behaviour one of their particular characteristics? It is evident that the role of small states within international organizations has changed in the course of the

last few decades, and the academic response to these challenges has been widely discussed.

For example, Lewis (2009) maintains that the present international situation has not completely eliminated the fears of small states that they will be dominated by the bigger neighbouring powers, although this period of stability and peace for small states has fostered the interaction between small states and the larger entities. Lewis considers international systems to be clearly unstable as they constantly appear and disappear. This view suggests that an international system may not be static and that the role of small states in international organizations and in region formation can change. International systems are exposed to change in a process that could be either long or short. Therefore, Lewis (2009) suggests that the analysis of the role of small states within international systems or international processes requires theoretical tools that are adapted to the type of international system and to the international environment as it affects the small state being investigated.

This academic requirement, namely that the theoretical tools be adapted to the type of international system and to the international environment, can be understood by looking at the works of Erikson (2009), Cooper (2009), and Vlcek (2009). All the three case studies involve small states in the Caribbean within different international systems such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), WTO and OAS. Therefore, each case is presented within a geographical international environment based on a common geographical premise, namely that the geopolitical location of a state is important. Although all the three case studies refer to the problems faced by a small state within an international system, the studies differ in terms of theoretical fundamentals, which have been adapted to the nature of the state in question, the theme of the study, and the international organization involved.

A further example of such flexibility and adaptation of various theoretical approaches is seen in the study by Steinmetz and Wivel (2010), who illustrate the present challenges and opportunities that influence policymaking in small states within the framework of the EU and at the same time contribute to the theoretical development of the field. The main fo-

cus of such studies is on projecting the influence of small states on policy-making. However, these studies evade answering the following question: How would the collective policies of a given international organization affect the domestic politics of a small member-state?

The transition of the old foreign policy of small states of 'hiding' to the present foreign policy of 'binding' reveals the importance of the new role of European small states in the present international systems (Steinmetz and Wivel 2010). The 'hiding' strategy, which consists of inaction and being unobtrusive, implies that the small state is neither a follower nor a constructor: the 'binding' strategy, on the other hand, consists of collective intentional action by these nations in a given region and thus implies that they are constructors.

Moreover, the forces of bigger states that influence the behaviour of smaller ones within the institutionalized set of norms, rules, and procedures of EU policymaking may not have disappeared altogether. In this sense, un-challenged acceptance of regional policies directed by bigger states shows a tendency of small states to become 'followers'. However, these nations in the EU do not depend on their ability to remain inconspicuous, nor do they accept the impositions of bigger states submissively: on the contrary, as Steinmetz and Wivel (2010) and Wivel (2010) indicate, European small states actively attempt to include the larger ones in their collective projects and therefore can be considered as constructors of regions.

A further relevant insight into the role of small states in regions is of-fered by Baillie (1998), who studied Luxembourg. The actor-centred in-stitutionalist framework suggested by Baillie uses three hypothetical prin-ciples that have a constructivist background: (1) the historical context of the state of Luxembourg in relation to the formation of the institutions of the European Union, (2) the institutional explanations that encompass the collective norms, procedures of negotiation, and rules shaping the be-haviour of member-states and determining the outcomes of international relations, and (3) the actor-centred arguments based on various bargaining strategies. The geographical position and the variables of the international projection of a particular small state may make Baillie's (1998) framework workable in the case of Luxembourg but difficult to apply generally to all

small states. Nevertheless, these ideas need to be taken into account in studying Ecuador and Uruguay, because both these South American small states are geographically situated between larger states in a salient geopolit-ical and geostrategic position that gives direct access to the world beyond the region by means of the sea and to the interior of the region through major rivers.

A few other factors have been confirmed as motivating small states to be-come members of an established international regional organization. Šabič and Brglez (2000) and Nugent (2006) maintain that Slovenia and Cyprus wanted to join the EU for political and economic reasons: political because both wanted a say in EU policies and economic because both wanted to become part of a larger market. In the case study of Slovenia by Šabič and Brglez (2000), the authors analyse the transformation of both the national identity and the political system to join the EU as seen in the discourse of political actors. The authors problematize the formation and strengthening of the national Slovenian identity, questioning its place in the construction of a European identity. Smallness becomes an independent variable to ex-plain the identity formation of a small state. Šabič and Brglez (2000) wanted to find out, by analysing the actors and institutions of the country, whether smallness was an influential factor in the formation of the Slovenian nation-al identity as a contrafactual condition to the formation of the European identity. The authors consider that smallness as a characteristic of a country can influence the perception of the elite, the media, and the public about their national identity. However, the study failed to show convincingly that smallness can be an independent variable in the formation of a national identity. The fact that it is shaped by strong symbolic, historical, linguistic, and ethnic elements, among others, may be a reason why 'smallness' does not have much of a role in forming a national identity. But perhaps could be considered as one factor among many that shape it.

The studies of Ecuador and Uruguay are also based on similar ideas re-garding identity formation. A regional feeling of South American identity might help explain the engagement of these small states in the formation of UNASUR.

Nevertheless, one evident phenomenon in the formation of national identity highlighted by Šabič and Brglez is that the discourse of a small state as a candidate for membership of a regional organization and the state's inclination towards a regional identity trigger a debate and lead to a conflict between the feelings of national identity and those of regional identity.

Nugent (2006) highlights two fundamental characteristics that have led to a separate theory and have been presented as shared elements in the behaviour and self-perception of small states as well as of the behaviour of other states towards small ones and, in turn, as elements of how such states are perceived in international relations and therefore within regional organizations. Nugent (2006) also assures us that in the case of Cyprus, a third motivation or variable should be considered, namely security, because the problem of national security has always dominated the foreign policy of that country. However, Cyprus's reasons for opting to join the EU are also believed to stem from its lack of influence in shaping political, economic, and security-related policies given that Cyprus is a small state in quantitative terms.

In conclusion, the present study so far has helped in identifying two important types of general behaviour displayed by small states in the context of regions or regional international organizations. One can be characterized as 'region-engaging' (the constructor model) and the other as 'region-adapting' (the 'follower' model), and both need to be studied further. Secondly, most of the variables that can explain the actions and adaptations of small states are related to economic interests, security in terms of the classical assumptions, and politics in terms of political influence in shaping international regional policies.

Finally, it should be kept in mind that most of these explanatory variables are related to European case studies, possibly for two reasons: a) limitations of academic contributions in this area of studies in some regions and b) lack of access to locally produced academic resources.

The Study of Small States in Integration Processes in Latin and South America

In contrast to the considerable amount of literature on small states produced by European and North American academics, the present study was hard-pressed to identify research in this field carried out within Latin America and South America—at least as far as such work represents the perceptions within this study. The limited academic production within the main field of IR in Latin America, as suggested by Tickner (2009), and restricted access to resources of foreign research centres because of technological constraints have further hindered the generation of a more accurate picture of the present state of small-state studies in Latin and South America.

The information collected for the present investigation and some relevant empirical and descriptive work conducted across the region and in some academic centres in Ecuador and Uruguay are important guides to identifying the factors that motivate South American small states to participate in the construction of the region. Hence, although these findings about Latin American small states and their integration into the region, particularly from Uruguay and Ecuador, may not specifically underpin any theoretical explanation, they are fundamental to understanding the role of these two small states in South American politics.

If studies on South American small states are examined in the context of the formation and strengthening of international organizations and construction of regions, it is apparent that the researchers have avoided categorizing these states. The role of small states in the formation and strengthening of international organizations and construction of regions has been studied implicitly rather than explicitly. For this reason, the theoretical output covering the role of small states in international relations generally, and the contribution of small states to the formation of the region specifically, is relatively low.

Secondly, most of the Latin and South American small states appear to have traditionally supported a discourse of international regional integration. Some small states, such as Ecuador and Uruguay, have a consti-

tutional mandate to support regional international integration and some small states have been historically engaged in such projects. For instance, Salgado (1994), in his historical work regarding Ecuador's part in the integration of Latin America, points out that it was Ecuador itself that, in the 1950s, originally directed the meetings and discussions related to the creation and institutionalization of the Latin American Free Trade Association (ALALC). Similarly, Ministerio de Hacienda (1962) and Magariños (2005) succinctly describe the role of Uruguay in Latin American integration as that of one of the most relevant region-engaging states in Latin America. Therefore, these small states can be categorized as region-engaging states or as constructors of regions during the creation of this regional organization.

Thirdly, most South American small states have been geopolitically, militarily, and economically engaged in continental integration projects as well as in international continental organizations such as the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR) and the OAS right from the preliminary meetings for setting up such organizations (Vieira 2008; Carranza 2000; Carrión 1989; Villacres 1989; Connell-Smith 1966). Therefore, in terms of regional integration, South American small states have been involved at four levels: continental (TIAR, OAS, FTAA), Latin American (ALADI, Latin American and Caribbean Economic System [SELAC]), South American (South American Free Trade Area [SAFTA], UNASUR), and subregional (CAN, MERCOSUR). Carranza (2000) exemplifies two levels of integration in the twentieth century in America that involve most South American small states. He uses globalization to explain region formation: according to him, integration at a continental level, as in the case of OAS and FTAA, was being directed by a declining hegemony of the United States whereas Brazil led the idea of the SAFTA since the beginning of the 1990s.

On a subregional level, according to Salgado (1994) and Vieira (2008), Ecuador was one of the founders of a subregional international organization, the Andean Pact, now called CAN, which was originally created by Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela in 1969; Uruguay is the founder state of the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI),

created in 1962; and MERCOSUR was established by Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay in 1991.

In general terms, Latin American academia has empirically investigated regional integration in South America in great detail. Despite it being a relatively new regional integration process, UNASUR has become a fundamental theme of academic interest at the South American level. In this context, Peña (2010) and Fernández (2011) suggest that South American small states favour integration within UNASUR not only because it is the first South American regional organization to include all twelve states, but also because it offers small states suitable means to confront the challenges affecting internal democracy and stability in the twenty-first century.

Moreover, regional integration has been a constant factor in the foreign policy of most South American states, as demonstrated by Cadena and Chaves 2011) and Ayuso (2010). They take a historical approach to elucidate the political trend in South America and project it internationally to the twenty-first century. Ayuso (2010) proposes that the historical process of regional integration has paid more attention to the local ideological, political, and economic interests, culminating in the formation of UNASUR, an organization that is being constructed with principles that purport to reduce asymmetries among its member-states. Cienfuegos and Sanahuja (2010) maintain that regionalism, or integration, was promoted by most of the South American states in peculiarly Latin American fashion during the 1990s and at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

This process of development has been embodied into a theory, namely South American 'open regionalism', a liberalist framework that supports regional economic and political integration with a preferential system for certain products and countries with relatively low development within the region, but does not support the regularization of a common external agenda of the members of the common regional market.

According to the authors mentioned above, the regional and global political context of the twenty-first century has influenced the dynamics of local politics on the South American continent, a region aiming to enter a phase of post-liberal regionalism. The interests of societies have been expressed in the election of Left-oriented governments. Consequent-

ly, the transformation of Right-wing liberalist oriented region into Leftist and integrationist governments in most of the South American states has strengthened the historical pro-integrationist ideals of the region. As a response, states have developed new collective projects and integrationist strategies to project themselves internationally by focusing on shared social and political issues, a feature that distinguishes UNASUR from earlier regional integration projects (Cienfuegos and Sanahuja 2010).

Such investigations look at the whole region as a system in order to describe the political transformation of South America from a historical perspective and include a general view of the variables that have motivated the formation of UNASUR, avoiding an explanation of the behaviour of small states, but prioritizing the role of larger states. For instance, Sanahuja (2010) suggests that CSN was created, driven by Brazil, based on the following principles: coordination and agreement on foreign policies; convergence of the existing subregional economic integration entities, namely CAN and MERCOSUR by incorporating Chile, Guyana, and Surinam; and physical integration including transport, telecommunications, and energy.

In contrast to studies that aim to explain the emergence of the South American region as driven by larger states, this book will hopefully complement earlier research by using a constructivist perspective to examine the role of small states in strengthening regional consciousness in South America and in creating UNASUR. In addition, the study also attempts to clarify, by looking at how small states engage in the process of regional construction, the influence of new ideological tendencies in this territory. Buono (2006), based on the views of academics and civil groups on South American integration, suggests that academics as well as the civil society demand a transformation of the old economic-oriented integration process into a more socially conscious and democratic regional integration. Hence, Cadena and Chavez (2011) and Sanahuja (2012, 2010) propose that instead of the 'open regionalism' framework of the 1990s and the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century, the projection of integration of South America could be considered as 'post-liberal regionalism'. Briceño (2008, 2007, and 2006) proposes strategic regionalism. Riggirozzi and Tussie (2012) and Legler (2013) suggested that the

regionalism of the second decade of the twenty-first century in South America can be considered post-hegemonic regionalism whereas Vivares (2014) proposed the New South American Regionalism (NSAR). More recently, Saltalamacchia (2014) introduced multilateral regionalism and Gardini (2015) recommended modular regionalism to understand the variety and unorganized areas of cooperation between the Latin American states.

These different types of regionalism in which small states are currently involved challenge the understanding of their role in the processes of integration and also hinder the formulation of an authentic theory of regionalism and integration of Latin or of South America because of the overlapping factors considered within the study of regional cooperation between this area's nations.

A distinction can be made between supragovernmental international institutions with certain legislative and executive powers that are characteristic of integration processes and regional institutions that are defined by less legally binding international arrangements between governments and interrelationship between societies and even between international actors, present in a hypothetical or designated geographical region. Hence, regionalism could subsume integration processes.

Dabène (2009) collates various theoretical attempts to explain the different perspectives of Latin American integration processes, comparatively exploring the transition from typical economic integration to integration from below, which involves the democratization of the region. According to Dabène (2009, 24-25), the peculiarity of this region's integration processes is difficult to explain and to understand from the point of view of the normative European theoretical approaches to integration, as 'each process has its own specificities and has to be evaluated according to its own standards'. Moreover, as demonstrated by Vieira (2008), each project of international integration has its own character and has been adapted and renewed progressively to suit local circumstances and international interests of the member-states. Therefore, the application of established perspectives to the study of South American integration requires adapting them further to the context and time.

All these factors involving the role of small states in the political and economic affairs of the Latin American region cannot be understood without exploring the literature on regionalism and integration in the region. The academic works cited above also helped in understanding the international environment of small states in the twenty-first century and made it possible to find the links between two political units, namely Ecuador and Uruguay, and UNASUR as an international regional organization, which includes the geographical area of South America with the exception of some islands and overseas European territories such as French Guiana.

Providing a clear analytical overview of the politics of regional integration limited only to the small states in South America is difficult because many authors have used the term regional integration in different areas of study or as part of the actions related to foreign policy of small states in Latin and South America or of actions related to subregional integration. For instance, within the area of foreign policy, Braveboy-Wagner (2003, 157) suggests that a 'vulnerability' approach to small states could help in understanding their foreign policy and recommends to consider three levels of this variable: material and structural factors, the kind and context of their international interaction, and 'the (changeable) worldview of small state decision-makers and influencers and their perceptions of self and of their states' capabilities, and regional and global roles'. Muñoz and Tulchin (1996) describe one of the first attempts to develop an analytical framework that could be applicable to many case studies favouring the comparative approach. Nevertheless, that approach needs to be more flexible because of the different perspectives in analysing a variety of political actors and international systems.

Similarly, Mora and Hey (2003) assembled the most important aspects of foreign policies from sixteen case studies including those of Ecuador and Uruguay. Their 'three levels of analysis' framework, focusing on individuals, states, and systems, allowed the authors to capture clearly the asymmetries between states. For example, Ecuador's main political solution to strengthening the CAN was through solving its border problems with Peru (Hey 2003c), whereas Uruguay's politics of integration focused on securing a favourable position in MERCOSUR (Bizzozero 2003).

The difficulty in presenting a general overview of policies of small states in South America can be understood from the observation by Hey (1995a) that Latin American states have not produced a definitive foreign policy agenda and that their policies respond to certain ideological cycles. In this context, Hey identified two 'cyclical patterns' of behaviour shown by Latin American foreign policy: shifting from the Left to the Right or from the Right to the Left in response to the results of elections and the 'neo-liberal trend', which shows a tendency to move towards a combination of neo-liberalism in economic factors and pro-US foreign policy in political matters. On the other hand, Fernández (2011) suggests that the volatile character of regional politics lies in the institutional setting of the political system, which finds a stable national agenda of foreign policy and integration a challenge because of the interdependency of political power and decision-making within the presidency and the parliament.

With reference to such pragmatic factors within each state in Latin America, Gardini (2011, 6-7) proposes a combination of the elements of ideology and pragmatism as an approach to studying the foreign policy of Latin American states. It can be adapted to a reality that varies from region to region and from small state to small state, because it is a framework developed around five fundamental concepts as tools of analysis: ends and purposes, means available, agency, process, and structure.

Hence, small-state studies and foreign policy analysis or international political economy are often considered to be intertwined. This association shows that small-state studies are yet to find a firm footing within Latin and South American academia. For instance, Bonilla (2008) employs the concept of 'small state' to address the challenges facing Ecuadorian foreign policy on entering an unknown era after the international political reorientation of the US in the twenty-first century. His concept of small states devolves from the principle of the capabilities and resources of a state. Consequently, smallness as a defining characteristic of a state appears here as a concept developed on the basis of material factors as a fundamental variable.

The concept used in Bonilla's study is not defined further. However, within the study of Ecuador's foreign policy, Bonilla (2002) provides a wider insight into the perspectives and international projection of Ecuador

in the twenty-first century within international organizations. It is worth pointing out that the ten articles gathered in this publication tend to use a mix of theoretical approaches within the same study. Their common feature is the use of the concept 'weak states' to highlight the difficulties in Ecuador's entry into the international order. Ecuador's foreign policy within the most relevant international organizations such as the OAS, WTO, UN, and EU is considered in the studies collected in this volume. However, the theoretical principles of small-state studies are limited, as they fail to distinguish between the meanings of being a 'weak' as opposed to a 'small' state.

Integration studies and international political economy are also fields that touch on the principles of small-state studies. Investigations in these fields are mostly gathered in collections about Ecuador, but they are limited to interpreting the nature of the state by means of a subjective concept of 'small', as well as by the specific nature of their field. For example, although Jaramillo (2010) records the positions of economic political actors with reference to the transition of Ecuador's foreign policy from a bilateral approach to an integrationist approach, this study was conducted within the limits of the realm of international political economy.

In the academic environment within Uruguay, the situation of small-state studies appears to be fairly similar to that in Ecuador. Bizzozero (2000) and Abreu (2000) introduced the term *estado pequeño* (meaning 'small state') to investigate Uruguay's role in the integration process of MERCOSUR. Bizzozero (2000) categorizes small states according to their material resources and uses a geopolitical framework to analyse the political position of Uruguay in the formation of the region. This means that the geographical position of a state plays an important role in the behaviour of small states within the region as it affects the process of integration. Hence, geographical proximity appears here as an additional factor that engages small states in integration processes.

The theoretical approach to the study of small states within the process of integration is based on examples of the European Benelux states (Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg). Therefore, the theoretical development of an authentic South American approach has been somewhat

limited. A few years later, Bizzozero (2003) provided a clear summary of the historical development of the foreign policy of Uruguay in the twentieth century, although the historical perspective he applied did not refer to the field of small-state studies; that work is an example of the interdisciplinary approach to focus on a case such as Uruguay.

The case study developed by Abreu (2000) presents Uruguay as an active member-state of MERCOSUR in a similar way to that used by Bizzozero (2000). According to Abreu, the Uruguayan policy of integration was oriented towards geopolitical and economic developments and was successful in obtaining some important concessions from Brazil and Argentina, such as a constitutional guarantee of the equality of states when bargaining over shared political and economic issues.

As mentioned above, the regional politics of South America have changed rapidly in the last decade from 'open regionalism' to 'post-neo-liberal regionalism', and from a 'post-hegemonic regionalism' to an era of uncertain regionalism following the decline of the Left-oriented governments and the rise of Right-wing regimes in the region. The current developments in politics and economics of the region within each South American state and within the regional organizations such as UNASUR are likely to benefit from ongoing research.

Similarly, the role played by small states in the new projection of South American regionalism does not seem to have been sufficiently analysed. In the case of Ecuador, its role in the construction of UNASUR is analysed mainly as part of its foreign policy, rather than specifically focusing on its role within UNASUR. For instance, research conducted by Zepeda (2011) and by Zepeda and Egas (2011) shows that since the arrival of President Rafael Correa to power, Ecuador has established a foundation plan for the development of its foreign policy in which regional integration occupies a strategic position within the country's foreign affairs.

Zepeda (2011) looks at four main themes of Ecuador's foreign policy in recent years by employing a documentary study: regional integration, bilateral relations with Colombia, the existing relations within old partnerships, and the search for new partnerships. In further research, Zepeda and Egas (2011, 99) highlight seven priorities of the new Ecuadorian

government within the *Revolución Ciudadana* of President Rafael Correa: 'defence of the national sovereignty, active multilateralism, Latin American regionalism, diversification of the international market and support of the South-South cooperation, protection of the environment, protection of Ecuadorian migrants abroad, and the free mobility of people and universal citizenship'.

However, according to Sánchez L. (2011) these changes mainly reflect the intentions of a new government, rather than those of the state. He employs the concept of 'small state' from the realist perspective and characterizes Ecuador as a small state that has not been able to determine its own foreign policy agenda and instead has functioned in a reactionary manner to external factors. Nevertheless, this study suggests that Ecuador's foreign policy has changed following the peace agreement with Peru in Brasilia in 1998.

In conclusion, the study of Ecuador and Uruguay and their motivations to engage in the construction of UNASUR is likely to benefit from further investigation. In the case of Uruguay, the literature presents some insights into the probable motivations of a South American small state to support the construction of UNASUR and thus to engage in regional politics.

The analysis of Bizzozero (2010, 2008) is based on a realist perspective. He perceives the small state within a regional environment as being in transition from open to continental regionalism. He refers to the latter as the new regional organization or, in other words, UNASUR and the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA). Bizzozero (2008) analyses the position of a small state in the formation of UNASUR employing a framework of three perspectives: global, regional, and national. His study highlights the following variables as motivating the small states, and Uruguay in particular, to support the creation of UNASUR: financial and economic crises of the region, the bandwagon effect that larger states can cause (Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela in this case), and the historical region-engaging character of Uruguay. However, his study covers neither the development of UNASUR nor the role of Uruguay in the years after 2008—a lacuna the present book seeks to fill. To complement Bizzozero's

research, the chapters that follow include the analysis of ideational factors such as the ideas of a collective or regional identity and interest in a regional and national peace, among others.

The next chapters look at the engagement of Ecuador and Uruguay in the construction and strengthening of UNASUR until 2012 from the constructivist perspective. Taking into account the assumptions of constructivism, small states can be considered as social actors whose purpose is to identify issues affecting both the national and international community, look for solutions that benefit the whole community, and to implement them collectively within an amicable international environment whereby the actions of states are directed by a common interest and shared identity, as suggested by Wendt (1994b, 1999), Finnemore (1996), and Adler (2002).

From the perspective of constructivism, small states do not need to be considered as weak, vulnerable, threatened, self-centred, or in competition within the international arena as they enter into an interrelationship within a friendly environment. Small states as well as large states have the same aims and are interested in finding a common position and in resolving common issues through joint efforts.

Small as well as large states interact with each other within a 'Kantian culture of anarchy' (Wendt 1999, 297). This also means that the meaning of smallness is constructed within this harmonious interaction of international political actors. This meaning makes it possible for small states to be seen as potential region-engaging actors from the point of initial contact, and the result of collective action is the product of a communal effort. The history of the formation of UNASUR shows this fundamental principle, and looking at the Preamble of its constitutive treaty, the proposed South American integration envisages the building of a union amongst its peoples on the basis of a set of ideational factors, including cultural, social, economic, and political fields (UNASUR 2008).

Neither the primacy, as functionalists suggest, of economy and technology over politics, nor the imposition by great powers of their interests, as suggested by realists, applies to this process of integration. On the contrary, it is based on common principles: on shared cultural heritage, shared

history, and interrelationship between societies, amongst others, which can be best understood as a manner of regionalism within which small states can take leading international roles. For these reasons, a constructivist approach to IR, and particularly to the foreign policy and regionalism of small states, is the most appropriate approach in looking for answers to the major research question of this study, namely: Why have Ecuador and Uruguay supported the formation and strengthening of UNASUR?

Conclusion

This chapter points out that authors categorize small states in many different ways: small ethnic states, industrialized small states, underdeveloped small states, and micro-states, among others. The roles of small states in international relations in general, and in the formation of regions referred to in the reviewed literature in particular, tend to respond to the theoretical perspective adopted by the investigation. The corresponding approach and research questions seem to have influenced the way each study chose to characterize small states. One possibility is to present them as followers, which could also be considered as 'region-adapting' states, or as constructors, which could be considered as 'region-engaging' states.

In summary, the major factors that appear to have the greatest impact on a state's interest and engagement in the process of forming and consolidating a region seem to be the drive to maximize its relative power, economic interests, opportunities to exert political influence, geographical proximity, national interest in security, and its 'smallness'. It is no coincidence that most of the theoretical approaches applied in these studies are grounded mainly in realist and neo-liberal theoretical principles. Studies are planned and structured to identify what the researcher aims to explain or understand and undertaken with the tools that they possess.

Another observation is that studies have been conducted mainly within the main sub-fields of IR such as international security, international organization and cooperation, and international political economy. Locating a study within a specific sub-field facilitates access to other works

underpinning various perspectives and theoretical views, as suggested above. However, the lack of agreement on a common agenda within small-state studies does not allow this field to be located within wider areas of research in academic centres. The result is a paucity of materials and limited progressive knowledge in the sub-field of small-state studies compared to other sub-areas of IR.

This introductory chapter has also shown that only a few investigations have analysed Latin American small states as agents in building regions, and even fewer studies have focused on the role of identity in the behaviour of small states in building regions. However, this current state of small-state studies in this region of the world presents a promising opportunity to contribute to the field and to the discipline of IR.

Chapter 2
Region-engaging, Region-constraining, and Region-adapting Small States: An Emerging Conceptual Framework

Introduction

This chapter develops further the suggested categories of small states as 'region-engaging' or 'region-adapting' that were identified in the previous chapter and also clarifies the complementary concept of small states as 'region-constraining' as the first step to constructing a conceptual framework to analyse Ecuador and Uruguay as regional political agents in building UNASUR.

The first part of this chapter clarifies the definition of a small state and other single concepts as conceived in this study to avoid theoretical pitfalls and possible misunderstandings. The second part of the chapter develops these concepts to characterize the engagement of small states in region-building processes. The terms 'region-engaging', 'region-constraining', and 'region-adapting' are considered here as fundamental characteristics of small states as international actors playing their role as a 'member', 'leader', 'defector', or 'candidate' in the building of regions.

This set of concepts is based on the 'conventional' social constructivist ideas used for explaining international relations (Fierke 2010) and elements of role theory in international relations as developed by Nabers (2011) and Harnisch (2011) in combination with the elements of the conceptual framework developed by Adler and Barnett (1998) to analyse the emergence and development of security communities.

The third part of the chapter presents and further clarifies the emerging framework to analyse the cases of Ecuador and Uruguay in the formation of UNASUR, and the final section explains the methodology employed in the present study.

Conceptualizing Small State, Region, and Identity

The previous chapter showed that there is no single agreed meaning of the concept 'small state' and that the definitions proposed tend to be related to the theoretical perspective taken by the individual researcher. Whereas the realist perspective regards small states as international actors that respond to material and security needs, the rationalist perspective regards them as free-riders and calculating actors driven by the considerations of costs and benefits. The present study sees small states as social actors in international politics driven by such concerns as identity, values, norms, and meanings that enable the small states to relate to other international actors, help them to clarify who they are, refine their self-image, and define their role.

The representatives of the small state in the international arena, including presidents, ministers, members of the military elite, diplomats, and other special envoys of the state and of the government, are not only the carriers of a collective reality but also the holders of their subjective reality. Consequently, norms, rules, language, and context are important social factors that can influence the behaviour of small states in international politics. These are some of the fundamentals of social constructivism, and that is why the present study endorses the main constructivist assumptions that bind the various constructivist branches together, such as the view that international relations are the product of human action in a social world. Politics between nation-states are also 'a world of our making' (Onuf 2002). Political international structures have been constructed through social action. The behaviour of political actors in the construction and modification of such structures can hardly be explained using quantitative analysis and other tools of the natural sciences. Therefore a qualitative approach to the study of international events is considered here

as the most appropriate to understand the social reality of small states in international relations.

In looking at the role of Ecuador and Uruguay in constructing the South American region, this study also supports the view that small as well as large states are built from a politically organized social group that gives meaning to further elements that form the state and to the actions in international politics of their representatives. The ideas, history, culture, norms, values, and other elements that define the identity of the representatives of the small state are fundamental to their actions and to shaping the agency of the small state in international politics. What these nations portray as their agency consists of both collective ideas, which shape their international politics, and subjective ideas of the international political actors.

However, the various constructivist views that have proliferated in the historical developmental path of constructivism could lead academics to prioritize or endorse explicitly certain nuances in explaining and interpreting the actions and behaviour of small states related to international relations. These various views can direct the specific focus of an investigation of small states in IR. For instance, by taking a 'modernist linguistic' constructivist approach to study small states and disregarding the 'modernist' and the 'radical' constructivist views (Adler 2002), academics may focus on the language and rules that enable them to explain the behaviour of small states, as well as the discourse of power and its employment in the construction of social reality (Adler 2002). Fierke (2010) refers to this constructivist view as 'consistent constructivism' whereas Adler's 'modernist constructivism' (2002) is referred to here as 'conventional constructivism'.

This study adheres to the conventional or modernist constructivism, which has a 'cognitive interest in understanding and explaining social reality' (Adler 2002, 97-98). Hence, it first assumes that there is a social reality that contains the social fact that a social international reality has been constructed at a certain time and place and under certain historical circumstances. International Relations as a social science aims to understand and explain such reality. Secondly, ideas play a fundamental role not only in shaping the social reality of each small state, but also in the process of understanding and explaining such reality. For instance, it is plausible

that South America encompasses a number of states, many of which can be considered small. The reality that such small states have been historically created cannot be denied, and that they play certain roles in the processes of regionalism is evident from any theoretical perspective as suggested in the previous chapter. The historical South American as well as Latin American ideas are fundamental to the understanding of such a South American and Latin American reality as well as the role of South American small states in the context of international politics.

The task is to clarify how such small states are defined from a constructivist perspective to understand their role in the formation of UNASUR. First, a small state is considered here as a corporate political actor that maintains relationships with other states or other political actors across national borders. Despite the fact that there are more actors than the state itself that influence international relations, the South American states seem to have maintained their dominant role in the conduct of, and final decisions about, the relations between states.

This study focuses on the actions of the state as a unit of analysis, considering that these actions include the political discourse, decisions, declarations, policies, and agreements made by the main actors in international relations of the South American small state, namely governments, diplomatic bodies, and military bodies.

To define the small state as a unit of analysis, the present study departs from the assumption that the 'state', as a well-established political concept, a sovereign political entity, is not open to further debate. Hence, the controversial term within the whole concept is 'smallness' as an intrinsic characteristic of the identity of a state, and how it is understood and conceived from within by the unitary nation-state itself and from without by the international community. In this sense, 'smallness' can be based on the inter-subjective understanding of the meaning of 'small' shared within an international community and in a distinct context. This perspective is intrinsic to how Hey (2003a, 3) defines the small state: she suggests that a state should be considered small 'if a state's people and institutions generally perceive themselves to be small, or if other states' people and institutions perceive that state as small'. In the inter-subjective understanding

of smallness from the point of view of people's nation-state and its institutions, and of the people from other states and external institutions, as suggested by this study, material as well as ideational elements could be the criteria for defining a state as small.

As suggested by Väyrynen (1971) in his ranking of typology, exterior and interior dimensions on one hand, and objective and subjective measurements on the other, can help to define the characteristic of being small. Hence, it is the inter-subjective understanding of what will be taken into account for measurement that defines the character of smallness. Singer (1972) attempts to avoid this subjective perception by introducing the term 'weak' to characterize small states, a term that also considers the socio-economic, sociopolitical, and sociopsychological patterns in the state's formation and structure. Nevertheless, a certain level of subjectivity is hardly avoidable in defining a small state. Moreover, the kind of definition developed is ideologically based and context-specific.

In the light of such suggestions, this study presents a definition, based on the proposition by Hey (2003a), that also needs to be set in a cognitive context. For example, in the context of the international religious community, the Vatican City could well be considered as a state that is a world leader.

Hence, the small state is considered in this study as the social construction of a sovereign political entity based on shared understanding and collective recognition of the state as small within the national and international community. That nation exhibits an identity, possesses an agency, and presents an arena for actions of a group of representatives of the national population considered here as a cognitive community. It is within this arena that the notion of small state is shaped on the basis of an inter-subjective idea of smallness. In this way, the perception of smallness becomes a distinctive characteristic of a particular state. Here, context is a fundamental element in the understanding of smallness. For the purpose of this study, smallness of a state is considered in the context of a South American cognitive community-region. According to Adler (2005, 181) such 'community-regions are regional systems of meanings (an interdependent group of meanings among individuals or collectivities) and are not limited to a specific geographic place'. In this sense, the quality of

smallness is based on a subjective perception and is conceptualized in-ter-subjectively, the characterization of which could also be considered as an element of type identity.

Type identity is the second concept that is employed in this study and requires clarification because of its ubiquitous usage. The concept of iden-tity is based on Wendt's (1999) definition of type identity, which he de-scribes as the characteristics shared between many people within a social group in a nation-state as well as among an international community. In the case of small states, one of their shared characteristics is being 'small', and is thus an element of their type identity.

According to the above definition, the following six states can be con-sidered small within the South American sociopolitical context: Bolivia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Surinam, and Uruguay. This list would reflect the categorization made by the Economic Commission for Latin Ameri-can and the Caribbean (CEPAL), which, looking from a macroeconomic perspective, also characterizes these states as small states (CEPAL 2005). These countries have a variety of other elements of their national identity that links them with the other states of South America. For example, all were once European colonies and went through a process of political inde-pendence. In this respect, they have a shared history. The symbiosis of var-ious ethnicities in their national societies is a similar tie. Moreover, all have maintained democratically elected governments since the 1990s, and most have also been voluntarily involved in various projects of regional interna-tional integration. It could easily be said that these states have a common a set of norms and values. This claim, in conjunction with the (identitar-ian) elements of shared identification mentioned earlier, is the basis of a collective regional identity that, in turn, is the basis of the third concept employed in this study. The third concept that needs to be clarified as a requirement before an understanding of the international political action or inaction of small states can be reached is the definition of a region as the international political arena of the small states and is the context of the small-state study described here.

The environment of the small state is at present inundated with a va-riety of subregional, regional, continental, and global international orga-nizations. This has obscured the limits and meaning of region, as 'region' and 'regionalism' are concepts used in many different ways in the study of regional integration and from a variety of theoretical approaches (Riggi-rozzi 2012; Wiener and Diez 2009; Rittberger, Zangl and Staisch 2006). Leaving aside for a moment the idea that UNASUR includes a region not only in geographical terms but also in cognitive and political terms – given that the whole of South America forms the international political envi-ronment of Ecuador and Uruguay – the requirement here is to define the region. Regions can be defined and understood as intergovernmental, po-litical, commercial, or military arrangements that organize the relationship of states within a generally conceived geographical area (Hurrell 1995a).

According to Riggirozzi (2012, 425), there are levels of region forma-tion that demonstrate that a region is becoming a global actor. A region could be said to comprise a geographical space progressively transformed into a 'deeper institutionalized polity with a permanent structure of deci-sion-making and stronger acting capability as a global actor'. Adler and Barnett (1998, 28) define a pluralistic security community as 'a transna-tional region comprised of sovereign states whose people maintain de-pendable expectations of peaceful change'. They maintain that the catalyst for its emergence as a region could be normative or material interest and could be motivated by the desire to coordinate relations, and the emer-gence of the region may be caused by 'exogenous and endogenous factors' (Adler and Barnett 1998, 35).

According to the requirements for the presence of a security community as suggested by Adler and Barnett (1998), UNASUR cannot be categorized as a security community, owing to various premises that will be clarified in due course, one of these being the presence of military forces along some national borders, whereas a security community according to Adler and Barnett (1998) demands absence of troops along the interior borders of member-states.

However, UNASUR shows its unique development in the process of cooperation and demonstrates some characteristics of a security commu-nity, such as a common regional discourse of collective defence. Moreover, some states may aim to go beyond mutual commercial and defence con-

siderations towards harmonization of its members' social development and security policy. Greater cooperation and peaceful coexistence might then develop on the basis of shared culture and values. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the South American region contained by UNASUR can be considered as a pluralistic cooperative community: an internationally organized region comprising sovereign states the people of which maintain expectations of peaceful political change and human development through cooperation between the nation-states at various levels of their national and international politics.

International politics is considered here as the interaction of states, as corporate actors, through their governments or representatives, who shape and express their interests across national borders. This description can still be applied to states within the continent of South America, because the decision to participate, support, or reject collective bilateral or multilateral political actions is mainly influenced and defined by the elite and by the government in power, as mentioned above. Furthermore, when studying security communities as defined by Adler and Barnett (1998), security goes beyond the traditional military concept of it, because it also includes elements of material and social welfare, human rights, reducing poverty and social inequality, and promoting ecological development, among other characteristics of a pluralistic cooperative community.

In the South America of the twenty-first century, the meaning of security includes, in addition to its traditional meaning, 'specific priorities of every state that contribute to the consolidation of peace, integral development and social justice based on democratic principles, solidarity and respect for national sovereignty' (Serbin 2010, 18).

On the one hand, the understanding of security can be related to the interest of the nation- state in its role as protector of, and provider for, the whole nation. On the other, sovereignty can be considered as the aim of the South American states to retain their traditional international right to govern within a determined territory without external interference. However, how can a collective regional security be implemented without encouraging the mutual enforcement of internationally institutionalized norms to maintain peace at home and abroad?

It is worth noting that UNASUR emerged during a time of implementation of democratic political systems throughout South America with mainly Left-wing-oriented governments and relatively friendly relations between most of the region's national states. In this context, the manifestation of cognitive communities, such as the similar-minded political elite as suggested by Adler (2005), can play a relevant role in the formation of regions and is consistent with the view that within South America as a whole, international political decisions continue to be influenced (disproportionately) by a few individuals in each government. As a result, the shared ideologies among national leaders with reference to both domestic government and regional integration may henceforth be seen as another contribution to explain the engagement of small states in the creation of regions. The suggestion that intensive and extensive interactions between states can help to form a region has been further developed by Adler and Barnett (1998) through the concept of a pluralistic security community—which applies equally to the concept of a pluralistic cooperative community.

The original ideas of security communities can be traced back to the seminal theoretical approach to the study of their rise at that time as proposed by Deutsch (1957). Consistent with the constructivist framework of Adler and Barnett (1998), the idea of an international cooperative community is best understood in terms of constructivist principles. As a result, a qualitative analysis of the interaction of states in the process of forming a region becomes necessary, although it is important to be aware of pluralism as a factor here. This reflection leads us in the direction of the principle of transactionalism referred to by Deutsch (1957) and improved upon theoretically by Adler and Barnett (1998).

For the purpose of this study, pluralism is instead conceived in terms of the variety of areas of international cooperation, by which is meant the acknowledgment of the complex interplay of ideas, cultures, identities, and nations in the formation of a region, when the common aim is to incorporate the various policies of the nation-states and engage all small states in consolidating a union. At early stages in the formation of such a community, pluralism is contained in, and represented mainly by, the elite or a group of elites and experts that govern the different countries in the

emergent cognitive community (Adler 2005). This is so despite the presence of elements of an international collective identity among the region's national populations. Nevertheless, it is within this interaction that the elements of a shared or collective identity are identified.

The role of charismatic international politicians can also be included as an important influence on the formation of a collective identity, an identity expressed in the national political constitution (or in international treaties in the case of a regional identity) and further political regulations, such as the national foreign policy of a state (collective or regional defence policies in the case of international communities). Charismatic leaders could even motivate other community members to agree on shared issues within the region although, for some states, the regional policies of agreement may not have the same relevance. This is particularly important in politically unstable small states where foreign policy is formed as a reaction to external political developments and where new regimes would constantly redefine national interest according to the ideology of the governing party, as suggested by Gardini and Lambert (2011).

Another important concept that underpins the idea of cooperative international communities and needs clarification is the definition of an international community. The definition of a community at an international level presents various difficulties because of the difference in meaning between an international organization as an international community and as an international association. The difference is that the formation of an international community is based on an understanding of political will as an instrument for cooperation rather than as an approach that favours a power-related conceptualization of political action in international relations. Adler and Barnett (1998) distinguish between forming a group of self-interested member-states and that of non-self-interested member-states and refer to the two groups as 'an association' and 'a community', respectively. To clarify the distinction, the authors suggest that 'members of a community have shared identities, values and meaning' (Adler and Barnett 1998, 29).

Important features of a community are the direct and many-sided relations, long-term common interests, awareness of other members of the

community, a sense of solidarity, self-responsibility and obligation, and particularly the decision never to use violence to solve conflicts (Adler and Barnett 1998). It can therefore follow that an international cooperative community might emerge within a friendly culture of anarchy, characterized by Wendt (1999) as the 'Kantian' culture of anarchy. Within this Kantian culture of anarchy there is a possibility of evolving a collective interest in cooperation between like-minded states. This kind of association can be considered as international communitarian cooperation, which, in other words, is an expression of the willingness of states to identify joint interests, complementary capabilities, and shared issues to solve problems collectively on the basis of solidarity and common features, as manifested in the treaty of UNASUR. These shared features of South American nation-states across the international regional community constitute the platform of a collective or regional identity. The shared characteristics can be identified and strengthened mainly through interaction and inter-subjective understanding of the meaning of shared cultural aspects within the process of collective identity formation, as suggested by Wendt (1994a, 1999). Hence, elements of a collective or regional identity can also help to explain the engagement of small states in building regions. As suggested by Wendt (1999, 337), collective identity is the identification of elements of the Self as being shared by the Other. 'This identification, this sense of being a part of a group or "we", is a social or collective identity that gives actors an interest in the preservation of their culture'.

A South American 'we-ness' or identity can accordingly be defined as the set of shared values and beliefs, shared identification features, and institutionalized norms that enable a person, a group of people or a polity, or a state to consider itself as belonging to a South American community.

In conclusion, the international arena or environment of action of two small states, Ecuador and Uruguay, is framed in this study both by the process of creation, ratification, and strengthening of UNASUR and by the ideas of a South American identity based on common values and beliefs. The set of such shared South American values and beliefs may include the belief in individual freedom, a feeling of solidarity, religious beliefs based on the symbiosis of Christianity and Amerindian spirituality, and the values of

human rights, democracy, and social justice. The set may embrace, among other features, the symbiosis of Amerindian, Western European, and African ethnicities and cultures including the diversity of languages, architecture, music and films, a shared history, and a unitary geographical space.

The set of institutionalized shared norms could include doing away with the requirement of a visa to travel across the region, the permission to drive across it with national driving licences, a state's sovereignty and self-determination of the people, and trade of selected products across the region. These and other norms have been regulated by the South American states through treaties, agreements, and declarations.

Region-engaging, Region-constraining, and Region-adapting Small States

Small as well as relatively large South American states have played dissimilar roles in the process of forming UNASUR. Some small states such as Guyana, Surinam, and Paraguay have been more reserved in positing a South American discourse, whereas others such as Bolivia, Ecuador, and Uruguay have shown strong support for this project. Therefore, it is crucial to identify factors and actions that can fit the character of 'region-engaging', 'region-constraining', or 'region-adapting' small states. Moreover, it appears that the roles played by different small states kept changing throughout the process of creating and consolidating UNASUR. These changes make it necessary to clarify how this study characterizes the international role of small states in building a region.

International Relations and Foreign Policy Analysis offer a variety of definitions of and approaches to describing national and international roles. Studies in these two fields see the roles of states in international relations as either functional (i.e. satellite states) or constitutive (i.e. as member-states) (Breuning 2011; Harnisch 2011; Harnisch, Frank and Maull 2011; Nabers 2011; Walker 2011, 2004, 1987; Holsti 1970). Nabers (2011) identifies five theoretical approaches to the role of states in international relations, namely structural, interactionist, functional, organizational, and cognitive,

which are linked to the main perspectives of international relations. The description of the roles of small states in international relations tends also to be influenced by the theoretical perspective adopted in the studies of such states. To reduce such possible influences, this section clarifies the approach taken here to understanding and explaining the role of Ecuador and Uruguay in the formation of UNASUR. The particular role considered is that of a member of UNASUR as manifest in the engagement of the states of Ecuador and Uruguay in the process of forming the region (Table 2.1) and encompasses signing, confirming, and depositing treaties, declarations, and conventions with regional international relevance.

Small states engage in building regions when they participate in, present, and develop integration projects; promote the creation of new institutions for cooperation within the process of building a political region; and convert regional integration into national policies. In this process of forming a region as an international regional community, small states can play various roles – considered here as an identity role or a social role – and defined as a guiding cognitive representation of expected actions generally related to social behaviour within an organized social group (Nabers 2011). Inherently, such roles also strengthen the identity of political international actors, such as states. Harnisch (2011) also suggests that, in the context of IR, roles can be considered to be twofold: as constitutive to the group or functionally specific. A constitutive role implies that the same expectations are set for those agents within a specific international environment. In shaping UNASUR as a pluralistic cooperative community, the role designed and assigned to all states is that of community member. A functionally specific role, on the other hand, means that further expectations are assigned to the role and the same expectations are required in different international settings (Harnisch 2011). For example, expectations of a 'leader' state within UNASUR could be the same as within other international organizations. In the case of UNASUR, the role of President *pro tempore* gives member-states the power, among others, to coordinate common projects, policies, and meetings for one year.

In relation to a constructed or consolidated regional international community, three functional specific roles could be identified: 'leader', 'defec-

tor', and 'candidate'. The leader and defector are entwined with the constitutive role of a community member, whereas being a candidate is related to the expectations of possible members of an international community.

However, these functionally specific roles are not necessarily present in the process of the formation or emergence of a region within a 'Kantian' culture of anarchy, because the structures and their functions are themselves under construction. Thus, the different roles are not necessarily defined. According to their engagement in creating and strengthening international regions, small states can be categorized into the following types: region-engaging, region-constraining, and region-adapting. A set of conditions has also been developed to clarify these categories and can help to understand the process of changing behaviour and the shift between the differing roles of small states, because states in international relations not only play various roles but also possess various identities (Harnisch et al. 2011; Nabers 2011).

On the one hand, this categorization can help in avoiding the division of roles into functional and constitutive for determining the character of small states in forming a region. On the other hand, focusing on the identity of small states and the elements of identity they share with other states in the region as well as with extra-regional political actors can help us to understand their behaviour in building that region. For this purpose, small states could be first characterized as 'region-engaging', when they voluntarily support the region-building process by signing, ratifying, and officially depositing the majority of treaties, declarations, conventions, and other instruments that support and enhance the cooperative community or region. In this way they assume the role of community member.

It is crucial to emphasize that, just as in security communities, in cooperative communities too an increasing number of interactions between states is required for strengthening and maintaining trust and in forming institutions to coordinate state policies for material progress and peaceful change—although even here conflicts can occur, sometimes unpredictably (Adler and Barnett 1998).

Thus we can see that the role of a state is being constructed at the same time as the cooperative community is coming into being, and when this community is established, the roles of states have taken shape simultaneously. In this way, the behaviour of a small state during this process can contribute to the state's ultimate character. Moreover, small states engage actively and voluntarily in the process by presenting projects for creating institutions, developing them, and for strengthening the community. Furthermore, they call special meetings and organize events to enhance the cohesion of the region. Finally, region-engaging states are those that have made regionalism a policy of national interest. Under such circumstances, such 'region-engaging' small states may also have similar patterns of commitment to other forms of region-building processes, as in the case of Ecuador and Uruguay within Latin American regionalism, and the subregional commitment to CAN and MERCOSUR, which themselves contain other identity roles.

Breuning (2011) suggests that in addition to material imperatives that influence the role adopted by a state in international relations, the nation-state's ideational elements and international political ideas, such as democratic and liberal thought, can shape its identity and culture, which play an important part in a state's behaviour and the development of its role. Moreover, both role diversity and interaction with other groups could influence a state's identity formation and changes in its role. During this process, a role conflict within an actor may arise causing such actors to weigh their preferences and interests: rivalry between members can exist within a cooperative community, but they tend to avoid the use of violence to settle their conflicts. However, this offers no assurance: due to intra-regional or extra-regional influences, actors will necessarily define their national interests by reference to those of the community despite the fact that harmonization of national and regional interest is expected. Thus the roles and identities of small states are exposed to change.

Finnemore (1996) suggests that while national interests are being formed, states are assisted by norms and values in making relevant decisions. Hence, the role of states and its changes are influenced by the nation-state's own norms and values and could also be influenced by provincial and extra-regional values, norms, and other forms of identity with which the state interacts.

In conclusion, 'region-engaging' small states have a constitutive role to play as a 'community member' within a regional project or consolidated region, and they can opt to play the functional role of a 'leader'. The roles are not static, and the motivation to adopt a different one could be rooted in material as well as in ideological considerations.

On the contrary, and drawing an inference from the above discussion, small states within a cooperative community could also be characterized as 'region-constraining' if they oppose the region-building process by ignoring, disapproving of, and withdrawing from treaties, declarations, conventions, and other instruments that support and enhance the formation and development of regional cohesiveness. However, such opposition also requires the opposing state to be a member of the community in the first place.

Region-constraining small states can engage in activities that oppose or weaken the process of region-building, such as breaking the norms and rules that regulate the interrelationship of states within the system, or forming alliances with extra-regional forces to oppose the norms and principles cultivated within the region. Finally, 'region-constraining' states could also be those that consider regionalism as being in conflict with their national interest.

As suggested by Adler and Barnett (1998), nascent security communities are exposed to many constraints, such as those posed by single national identities and particular national interest, by the processes of learning each other's interests and conceptualization of shared issues. This process of learning from each other and defining shared issues is similar in pluralistic cooperative communities. In this context, the development of a collective identity is progressive; the identity becomes more cohesive as the cooperative community matures. Within this process, opportunities for developing 'region-constraining' characteristics are present throughout, as some states may disregard some elements of common interest simply because they fail to recognize them as such. Moreover, the 'many-sided' and 'directed relations' of the members of a community suggested by Adler and Barnett (1998) offer the members wide scope to shape and reshape their unique identity as well as to change their role within their community.

This change could also be influenced by modifications in the international, regional, or global political environment. For example, after the creation of the OAS, some small states openly opposed, refused to comply with, or ignored important norms and principles cultivated within the regional system.

Since the revolution of the 1950s, Cuba has refused to transform its political system to return to the OAS, from which the country was suspended following a change in its political system, which was influenced greatly by the international expansion of Communism.

Another example is Paraguay's behaviour towards the region in 2012 while playing the role of President *pro tempore* of UNASUR. The Paraguayan parliament impeached President Fernando Lugo and removed him from office, breaking democratic norms considered fundamental for strengthening democracy in South America. Such behaviour could be understood as 'region-constraining' given that the region found itself without a President *pro tempore* and with a weakened collective identity.

Finnemore (1996) suggests that institutionalized norms and values, as well as the wider social interaction among member-states, are factors that assist states to define and redefine their national interests but can also prompt them to change their view of region-ness and we-ness and, in turn, shift their roles while the cooperative community is emerging or is in the process of strengthening itself. Table 2.1 summarizes the indicators discussed above.

Table 2.1 Indicators of role enactment and role change in region formation

Role type and main characteristic of small state as actor	Indicators of actions and character of actors	Theoretical factors that impact the engagement of small states
Community member and region-engaging, leaning towards being a 'leader'	- Signing, confirming, and depositing treaties, declarations, and conventions - Participation in and presentation and development of integration projects (intensive transactions) - Creation of new institutions for cooperation within the process - Conversion to integration as the policy in national interest	- Normative, cultural, and value-driven - Identity or self-identification with the process, shared issues, common aims and interests
Community member and region-constraining, leaning towards being a 'defector'	- Ignoring, disapproving of, or withdrawing from treaties, declarations, and conventions - Breaking regional norms, rules, values - Forming alliances with extra-regional or intra-regional agents to oppose the development of the international community - Opposing the development of the international community if it is perceived as being inimical to national interest	- Cultural, value and heuristically driven: within the region and in relation to extra-regional factors - Role and interest conflict, and identity change
Candidate and region-adapting, leaning towards being a 'community member'	- Formally applying for membership of an international community - Adapting national policies and institutions according to the norms, rules, and values of an international community	- Cultural and value-driven - Identification of self with the identity of a community - Identity change and interest

In conclusion, small states within an international cooperative community have a constitutive role as a 'community member' but they can adopt 'region-constraining' behaviour and become a 'defector', which should not be considered as a stable stage. In addition, the motivation for change could be materially, ideationally, or heuristically driven or, according to Harnisch et al. (2011), through the possession of competing roles and identity change.

Finally, there is one further characteristic that a small state may show: the state functions mainly as a receiver of norms and values regulated and institutionalized within the main mechanisms of regionalization. Such a state has the functional role of a 'candidate', oriented towards becoming a member of a cooperative community. This role is external to the international cooperative community and its main characteristic could be defined as 'region-adapting'.

In a similar way to the proposal of Adler and Barnett (1998, 37) regarding the emergence of a security community, a pluralistic international cooperative community could be built around strong powers and this can be attractive, particularly to 'weak' states that may become members in order to 'enjoy economic, security and potentially other benefits'. However, in the international political arena, this role requires that region-adapting states formally apply to become a community member, in which case they have to adapt themselves to signed treaties, conventions, and resolutions in order to be integrated in the process of region formation or in consolidation of a regional organization.

Sometimes states might have to adapt their own system in order to sign, ratify, and be able to comply with the official requirements to become a community member. This process also requires that region-adapting states learn and internalize the principles and norms of the community in such a way that 'they do not only behave like us, but they learn to be one of us' (Adler 2005, 184), as in the case of becoming a member of NATO.

In conclusion, small states are exposed to a variety of motivational factors for role change and influential intra- and extra-regional actors that might impact their behaviour during the process of constructing a cooperative community. States could play various roles, which may make them multifunctional and adaptable to many environments (Nabers 2011), but their interaction and many subordinate roles may also induce them to change their role or even to defect.

In view of these possibilities, Adler and Barnett (1998, 44) emphasize the formation and strengthening of trust between members, defining trust as 'a social phenomenon and dependent on the assessment that another actor will behave in ways that are consistent with normative expectations'.

However, conflicts, as a social phenomenon, do not disappear within a cooperative community and may arise because of unclear understanding of common interests, issues related to sharing of material resources, and identity conflicts.

An Emerging Conceptual Framework for the Study of Small States in the Construction of UNASUR

One problem with a theoretical framework created for studying the role of small states in building regions can be that the focus is mainly on small states as single units of analysis, ignoring the region as a whole. Consequently, analytical frameworks can disregard the relationship between domestic and external factors. Another problem could appear when the international aspects of the relationship between small states and regions are neglected, although the study of these aspects can offer a researcher deeper insights into the factors that motivate or force small states to construct, or support the construction of, regions.

To minimize such issues, this study suggests that an emerging theoretical approach is required to understand why Ecuador and Uruguay have supported the creation of UNASUR and continue backing its development.

This emerging theoretical approach is developed on the basis of the major research question tackled in this study in combination with preliminary insights obtained through the initial contact with empirical data, such as the UNASUR treaty and the constitutional charter of Ecuador and Uruguay as well as semi-structured interviews conducted in person. This process of an emerging conceptual framework is based on the suggestions made by Mason (2002) on how research designs in qualitative research are planned and constructed. Miles and Huberman (1994) also suggest that quizzing qualitative data with the research question can help to identify an appropriate existing theoretical framework or to design an innovative framework for analysing such type of data.

This study adheres to the idea of an emerging theoretical framework and bases it on the concepts explained above and on the social construc-

tivist perspective to analyse international relations. Hence, this study relies upon the idea of an inter-subjectively constructed reality. Shared ideational factors drive the construction of social international structures and shape the identities and interests of international political actors.

Identity, as one 'property of intentional actors that generates motivational and behavioural disposition' as suggested by Wendt (1999, 224), provides the main explicatory basis for the characterization of small states within the construction of a pluralistic cooperative community. This perspective is consistent with the concepts of identity and pluralistic cooperative community as clarified above. Other factors, such as interest in constructing, maintaining, and strengthening national and regional peace, a collective identity, and international communitarian cooperation, are also relevant. Nevertheless, as suggested by Finnemore (1996), national interest is formed within the realm of identity. Hence, elements of the identity of national actors can be influential factors in the engagement of small states in the formation of regions.

According to the chosen approach – clarified in the preceding discussion – to categorizing small states in the formation of regions, both material and ideational factors are significant for understanding the actions or inactions of small states. These actions or inactions in international relations are social behaviours and take place in a historical context that is important to understand. Therefore, this analytical framework includes antecedent political phenomena relevant to the understanding of the process of the integration of South America (Figure 2.1). The first step of the analysis requires the identification of such relevant international political events. Interaction with the data and the direction given by constructivism, as well as the research question, have helped to select the themes and political phenomena to be analysed (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework: identity as factor of influence in the region-engaging character of small states

Antecedent Phenomena > Idea of a South American Identity > Results

- National political situation: historical events
- Regional international dynamics: bilateral and multilateral politics in South America
- Interaction with extra-regional actors: US and the FTAA project
- Mechanisms for integration through economic cooperation: ALADI, MERCOSUR, CAN

South American Identity or collective identity

Identitarian links

Identity of small states

U N A S U R

South American identity or collective identity

Identity of small states

- Ability to cooperate
- Ability to coordinate and play the role of President *pro tempore*

Interaction between States > Decision-making Process > Actions of States

According to social constructivism, international political events and the interdependence of states also facilitate the construction of identities and spark interest in a process of identification of shared identitarian elements.

However, identity as defined above can be progressively shaped through constant interaction of states and through the socialization of these shared elements of identity by one or many actors (Wendt 1999, 1994a). Hence, the interaction enables states to identify the 'me', the 'other', and the 'us' and 'them' in a process of progressive feedback, which enables them to arrive at a position of the 'us' phenomenon as shown in Figure 2.1. Moreover, understanding of the regional and identitarian elements is the basis for grasping the decision-making process. As Finnemore (1996) suggests, identity plays a decisive role in decision-making regardless of material or ideational benefits. Lastly, from the theoretical elements viewed above, it has been possible to infer that within the context of regionalism, small states that strongly recognize themselves with a regional identity or have

more identitarian national elements reflected in the regional identity are more likely to be region-engaging states.

It is for this reason that shared identitarian links of two small states, Ecuador and Uruguay, alongside the idea of a South American identity, should be investigated to find out why the two countries participated actively in the formation and consolidation of UNASUR. In this context, it is significant to ask whether the idea of UNASUR was reinforced by Ecuador and Uruguay out of identitarian motives—the answer can be found by discovering identitarian links and pointing out the arguments of political actors who supported the idea. Similarly, the constructivist view of the role and the change in behaviour suggests that once an identity and a role are defined, the results of cooperation are more likely to be consistent with the expected rules (Harnisch et al. 2011; Nabers 2011). This assumption leads to the third step, as suggested in Figure 2.1.

The next step includes the study of the actions of states as international actors to understand the result of the role they play as part of the action and interaction of states in the UNASUR framework.

The selection of political events was based on the case studies of Ecuador and Uruguay. Ecuador has already played the role of President *pro tempore*, the leader, within UNASUR, whereas Uruguay has merely been a member. However, Uruguay will also have the opportunity to play the role of President *pro tempore* in future according to the agreed-upon regulations of the UNASUR treaty.

This region-engaging action finally leads to integration as the end result of the process of interaction of states. This end result, as suggested above, can either be a pluralistic security community or continuation of the international cooperative community. The last requires further theorization. However, the objective is not to build theories about such cooperation but to gain some insights that help in understanding the region-engaging character of Ecuador and Uruguay and in explaining their support to the formation and strengthening of UNASUR. The focus on the factor of identity and ideas is for exploring the explanatory power of social constructivist perspectives in studying small states in the formation of the South American region. The assumption is that Latin American and newly

South American ideas about cooperation, collective values, norms, and other elements of a regional identity are fundamental to understanding the behaviour of Ecuador and Uruguay. The next section explains the application of the framework and empirical analysis of data.

The Process of Analysing the Region-engaging Character of Ecuador and Uruguay in UNASUR: A Cross-Case Study Methodology

The proposition that small states, specifically Ecuador and Uruguay, are considered region-engaging can be understood and explained from various points of view and is related to the way researchers look at the engagement of small states in the formation of UNASUR and the different perspectives that define a case study.

The materialist perspective to study small states as highlighted in the previous chapter would suggest that Ecuador and Uruguay are region-engaging states as they are interested in some material and security benefits. To explain such claims, approaches that assume a materialistic view would employ a positivist quantitative approach to knowledge (Kurki and Wight 2010).

The use of a variety of 'hard' data, including numerical data and statistics on the investment in the military by South American countries in the years that span the creation and strengthening of UNASUR, could form the basis of such analysis and would also highlight the geopolitical weaknesses of small countries as compared to regional or extra-regional powers, as shown by Fernández (2012). It is not claimed that the use of such an approach is wrong, but it does ignore such factors as the idea of a South American identity and the meaning of values, norms, and a collective South American history, which are fundamental to the formation of UNASUR.

On the basis of the theoretical thinking of instrumentalists as shown in the previous chapter, including neo-constitutionalists and neo-liberalists, small states would support the formation of UNASUR because joining this organization entails no major costs. Two hypothetical questions may be posed: (1) Why should small states join UNASUR when major losses are incurred in adhering to the idea of a South American identity? (2) Does constructing the UNASUR not entail major economic costs? However, the fundamental assumptions of instrumentalists such as the principle of a competitive international environment are not the fundamentals of UNASUR. Its setting up is based on the principles of equality of states and communitarian cooperation wherein states complement each other for solving common problems and furthering shared interests.

Moreover, in a similar way to the materialists, instrumentalists also construct knowledge on positivist philosophy, which has been linked to the gathering of numerical data (mainly by using statistics) to help endorse or reject certain conjectures about how small states are supposed to act in a competitive and self-interested international environment. However, important factors for understanding such social realities of small states being either 'region-engaging', 'region-constraining', or 'region-adapting', including complex factors of collective identity, historical context, and international political circumstances, are disregarded by these perspectives.

First, ideas of a collective South American identity are among those fundamental to the construction of UNASUR as mentioned above. Such ideas can be explained and understood by employing analyticism to research in international relations as suggested by Jackson (2011) and through a qualitative interpretative approach as the ideas are seen to be subjective. Some degree of subjectivity is unavoidable, particularly in the selection of purposive case studies. However, the results of a single empirical case study and its cross-case comparative analysis can help to explain the motives for the actions of single small states in forming regions.

Secondly, the historical context is important in the study of international relations. The South America of the twenty-first century is different from that of the 1960s. World politics of the twenty-first century are different from those of the 1980s and, as Hey (2003b), Goetschel (1998b), and Wivel (2010) suggest, small states no longer face the threat of being overrun by big powers, as was the case at the beginning of the twentieth century: instead, small states look for strategies to ensure a safe and peaceful international environment. Furthermore, the importance of the historical context of the

time frame of this study as well as the studied historical period is important for understanding the role of small states in the formation of regions. This perspective allows the history of a country, a region, and of the world as factors that can influence the behaviour of small states to be taken into consideration. The historical peculiarities in the creation of UNASUR and the historical collective background of the majority of South American countries would be ignored if an alternative approach to knowledge underpinning a quantitative positivist philosophy, such as statistical analysis, is taken into consideration. Moreover, the fact that UNASUR as a concept or as a meaningful idea did not exist until its foundation in 2008 can hardly be explained and understood from the perspectives that disregard the idea of a South American identity and the process of development of the idea to establish UNASUR as an international organization.

Thirdly, the historical circumstances of individual countries as well as of the region as a whole are also factors that are ignored by quantitative perspectives. Historical circumstances are the dynamics of national and international politics and the transformation of the small nation-state politically and socially. These are fundamental factors of some South American small states of the twenty-first century that have influenced their engagement in regional politics and should not be disregarded when studying their behaviour in regional as well as extra-regional politics.

Finally, case studies along with formal models and statistical studies form the dominating methodology in IR (George and Bennett 2005; Harvey and Brecher 2005). Whereas statistical studies and formal models focus on mathematical and quantitative methods driven by positivist approaches to knowledge, case studies involve qualitative analysis. However, this train of thought can also take either a positivist or an interpretative approach. Hence, case studies can also have a variety of types. Most of the positivist approaches to case selection are related to Miller's ideas on the selection of case studies to reduce bias (Gerring 2008, 2007), but some academics classify case studies by their nature and aims (George and Bennett 2005; Levy 2005; Maoz 2005).

Positivist-driven methodological case studies underpin the idea of objectivity in the process of acquiring knowledge and aim to explain factors of causality (Gerring 2008, 2007; King, Keohane, and Verba, 1994). These assumptions were not applied here for the following reasons. First, the selection of a small number of cases implies a purposive method and, in turn, subjectivity. Deliberate selection – as against random selection – can introduce a subjective factor or bias. Secondly, the construction of knowledge from subjectively selected cases suggests certain personal intervention in the ways of obtaining data and their analytical interpretation of the evidence. Thirdly, a constructed reality to which this study adheres unavoidably contains some subjectivity that is impossible to explain objectively. Such social reality can be interpreted and understood but unlikely to be objectively explained. Finally, the expressions of ideas, desires, and subjective views that form the data for this book contain elements that enable us to understand the behaviour of political actors and therefore remain intrinsic to the case studies.

Hence, the two case studies are closely related to what Levy (2005) calls 'interpretative or discipline configurative' as they focus on specific aspects of single small states, and the process of analysis is based on the constructivist view that the idea of collective South American identity plays an influential role in its regional politics.

Ecuador and Uruguay were deliberately chosen for case studies. This choice introduces a degree of subjectivity not only in the selection of small-N cases but also in the selection of comparative factors within each case, as clarified below.

The proposed constructivist (emerging) research design was constructed to make it possible to study the region-engaging, region-constraining, and region-adapting character of small states as single case studies or as a qualitative cross-case study. The suggested indicators of actions of international actors and the theoretical assumptions affecting the engagement of small states would facilitate such a study. Hence, the selection is related to the aims of the study and to the understanding of a case. Here, a 'case', as suggested by George and Bennett (2005, 17), is 'an instance of a class of events', which could involve a variety of phenomena taking place over time. For Miles and Huberman (1994), the phenomenon of interest to a researcher in a case study may be a person, a process, an event, a group, an organization, or a state, among others. In this study, the main phenom-

enon of interest is the small state as an agent in international relations in general, and the region-engaging character of Ecuador and Uruguay in the process of formation and consolidation of UNASUR in particular.

Moreover, this book aims to be empirical, offers some insights into why Ecuador and Uruguay have supported the formation and strengthening of UNASUR, and highlights identitarian or identity-like elements that have probably influenced the behaviour of Ecuador and Uruguay in forming and consolidating UNASUR, as highlighted in the previous chapter. The term empirical is understood here to mean the process of interpreting both first-hand and indirectly produced data, or primary and secondary data, in order to discuss them vis-à-vis other studies and the theoretical principles underpinning this work. The cross-case comparison can help to explain such behaviour through qualitative content analysis, as suggested by Schreier (2012).

Thus the scope of this study embraces a variety of elements of the field of small-state studies in combination with regionalism, considered here as a form of international cooperation on various levels within a geographically imagined South American area, as suggested above. This regionalism constitutes the main international political environment of the states investigated here, and the process of forming and consolidating UNASUR is considered here as the pillar of the South American region.

The two states were chosen based on a combination of factors including the major role they played in forming and strengthening UNASUR as inferred from a preliminary analysis of primary data (historic documents) and secondary literature. At the same time, such purposive selection facilitates their deeper study within the context of the whole region to better understand the factors of national identity and elements of collective regional identity that have possibly influenced the region-engaging character of these small states.

The purposeful selection also facilitated the analysis of possible factors that can explain a progressive political event based on the understanding of changes over time. Thirdly, the case choice adapted itself to an interpretivist epistemological approach without having to deviate from the principles of a constructivist ontology that underpins this study and was also compatible with the ontological and epistemological principles of social 'conventional'

constructivism that aim to take the middle ground between the radical positivists and the radical reflectivists (Adler 1997; Fierke 2010).

The selection of these cases also offered a fundamental advantage for studies attempting to examine factors of shared identity that probably influenced the behaviour of Ecuador and Uruguay in forming and strengthening UNASUR, because both the small states share such historical and cultural factors. It was thus possible to analyse the two cases comparatively on the basis of the following criteria. Because both have been involved in regional international projects on a subregional, Latin American, and continental level, it was assumed that they had also supported the formation and consolidation of UNASUR and can therefore be considered region-engaging small states for comparison.

Both Ecuador and Uruguay now have a democratic political system, which supplanted the earlier military dictatorship. Both are relatively old small states: since they became independent in the 1830s, they are among the oldest republics in the world. Both share a language, a history, and some of their norms, values, and beliefs with their fellow members of UNASUR. In other words, both have elements of a collective regional identity that can be compared in this study.

However, whereas Uruguay's political institutions have traditionally been among the most respected and professional on the South American continent, Ecuador's political institutions have been relatively weak and less professional. For instance, Uruguay has historically been a state with high political stability: since its return to democracy, the state has faced no major political or institutional disturbances; Ecuador, on the other hand, has suffered throughout from political instability: between 1997 and 2007, it was presided over by seven different governments. Although these circumstances have all helped Ecuador to shape a national identity, it can be an obstacle for the development of a collective South American identity. Have such differences in history affected the politics, both domestic and international, and particularly the region-engaging character of these two small states? A comparison of these factors can help to understand in greater depth the power of national as well as collective ideas and identiarian elements supporting the formation of UNASUR.

Ecuador is also culturally diverse: a society built predominantly by a large group of mestizos, which has, in addition, fourteen ethnic groups considered within Ecuador as nationalities that trace their roots to pre-Hispanic ethnicities. In contrast, Uruguay is relatively homogeneous and does not possess such social groups as pre-Hispanic ethnic nationalities. Here too, the comparative study of such a difference can reveal whether such factors have influenced the international politics of the two nation-states in different ways. Ecuador has a long-standing history of border conflicts, which has led to a culture of insecurity, whereas Uruguay has enjoyed good neighbourly relations for the last 140 years—these contrasts may reflect differences in conducting international politics, particularly in relation to the formation of UNASUR. Finally, Ecuador played the role of President *pro tempore* of that organization, whereas Uruguay is yet to have that opportunity. It may be fair to assume that the possibility of a small state such as Ecuador or Uruguay being President *pro tempore*, and thereby contributing a great deal to the region's consolidation, spurred both the countries to support the formation of UNASUR. The contrasting analysis of Ecuador's role as President *pro tempore* and that of Uruguay as a member-state can provide greater insights into the role of power within an international organization and the importance of identifying with a group to achieve collective aims.

Various other factors may also influence the behaviour of these two small states within the framework of UNASUR. Those pointed out here are merely linked to the purposive selection and the main aims of this study; other important factors are analysed later, as explained below.

Sources of Data, Analysis, and its Interpretative Dimension

The use of the theoretical principles that inform the study's conceptual framework and, indeed, the central research question itself (Why have Ecuador and Uruguay supported UNASUR's formation and consolidation?) stem from the initial contact with documents, conversations with the first few interviewees, and interaction with other researchers working on small states, all of which provided useful guidelines for selecting sources of, collecting and analysing the data.

The most important techniques for obtaining data include collecting official documents such as archival documents, conducting semi-structured interviews of the political elite and experts, and compiling political speeches as political discourse.

The documents collected for this study include multilateral treaties such as the 2008 UNASUR treaty, national constitutional charters such as Ecuador's constitution of 2008 and Uruguay's constitution from 1967 with their respective reforms, and statements and literature about programmes of national parties in power such as the Uruguayan Broad Front Party's 2005-2009 Governmental Plan. Documentary data were also collected from archival documents from 2000 to 2012, some of which offered information related to the introduction of IIRSA, and the creation of CSN. Some documents also describe the creation of UNASUR and its development until the sanctions imposed on Paraguay in 2012. After initial scrutiny, these sources were reduced to 184 documents, which were arranged chronologically using NVivo (ver. 10 for Windows), coded according to the emergent themes or cases mentioned above, and analysed using the preliminary within-case method and qualitative content analysis techniques. This information was then complemented by 800 chronologically arranged official press releases from foreign offices and national media regarding political participation and the actions (and inaction) of Ecuador within regional international processes. Other important sources of data include the minutes of plenary sessions of Ecuador's National Assembly within which the debates for the ratification of the UNASUR treaty were conducted. Documentary sources for Uruguay comprise a set of 159 chronologically arranged archival documents, official press releases, and governmental publications regarding the involvement of Uruguay in the processes of integration.

Political speeches by members of the political elite and national leaders include statements calling for international cooperation in the area of security and for maintaining and strengthening national and regional peace and documented in their speeches addressed to the nation and to other states of the region. These public speeches of high governmental authorities on their foreign policies within UNASUR were recorded and gathered over ten months of fieldwork in Ecuador and Uruguay between September

2011 and June 2012, and include public speeches made by President Rafael Correa of Ecuador and President Jose Mujica of Uruguay before 2013. This source of information also contains a set of nineteen political speeches of Ecuador's governmental officials regarding South American politics (of which seven were personally recorded while participating in academic events in Quito in June 2012), transcripts of twelve presidential and ministerial speeches during 2000-2012, a set of nineteen political speeches of Uruguay's governmental officials (of which seven were recorded, as above, in Montevideo in April 2012), and transcripts of twelve speeches and debates obtained from the Uruguayan Parliament and presidency. Other important sources of political discourse are the minutes of the plenary sessions of the Chamber of Representatives and the Chamber of Senators of the Uruguayan Parliament where the debates were conducted and the decision made to ratify the UNASUR treaty.

The above sources were complemented with semi-structured personal interviews, five with high-profile members of the Ecuadorian political elite and six with Uruguayan political figures from past and present governments, conducted from February to June 2012 and in June 2013. Finally, the study has also relied on information gathered through field trips in both countries.

On the basis of the cross-case analysis as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) and the techniques of qualitative content analysis (Schreier 2012), the documents, the transcripts, and the interviews were first examined within each set (Uruguay or Ecuador). The meanings, narratives, and statements in the documents were identified and coded using NVivo as the only tool for organizing and processing raw data. The cross-case analysis relies on the interpretation of the levels of action or interaction of states, or of the factors influencing the behaviour of small states. These levels were categorized as high (H), medium (M), or low (L) based on the degree and significance of engagement evident from the data as assessed using criteria for a region-engaging small state described earlier.

The use of three sources of data, namely documents, interviews, and speeches, as recommended by Bryman (2012) to avoid pitfalls and potential preconceived notions of what constitutes the proof of various propo-

sitions, helped in identifying six main themes related to the engagement of Ecuador and Uruguay in the formation of the South American region: 1) visions of national and regional peace, 2) similar political ideology of their political elite and national leaders, 3) expectations they placed on a new form of international cooperation, 4) their identification of links between the national identity and the regional identity, 5) influence of external forces, and 6) dissatisfaction with existing mechanisms of international economic cooperation as a means of integration.

These three sources of data made it possible to compare the inferences from the two data sets and observations from the six themes emerging from the data analysis. To conclude, the insights gained from the two case studies (Ecuador and Uruguay), either as separate case studies or as a single combined case study, were subsequently analysed by contrasting the two cases, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994).

Conclusion

This chapter is aimed at clarifying some concepts underpinning the study, defining a theoretical framework, and outlining the methodology. A 'small state' is defined as a social construct: a sovereign political entity the smallness of which is based on the shared understanding and collective recognition of states characterized as 'small' within the national and international community. A small state thus defined exhibits an identity, possesses an agency, and participates in an arena for government action beyond its national borders.

A region as considered here is a cooperative community that develops from the interaction of states and from their decision to work together on the basis of shared identitarian elements, which allow the states to identify with one another, to define joint interests and shared issues, and to resolve collectively any problems that spring from such interests and issues.

Small states as international political actors in the formation of regions can be classified as 'region-engaging', 'region-constraining', or 'region-adapting'. This categorization constitutes the first step towards de-

fining a constructivist framework for the study of Ecuador and Uruguay in UNASUR.

The conceptual emerging framework is based on elements of social constructivism. The social constructivism of Wendt (1999) and the theoretical framework of Adler and Barnett (1998) for analysing emerging security communities, characterized here as pluralistic cooperative communities, are combined with elements of role theory developed by Nabers (2011) and Harnisch et al. (2011). Moreover, this framework is underpinned by fundamental constructivist assumptions such as the influence of identity on a state's behaviour and the definition of its interests, as suggested by Finnemore (1996) and Wendt (1999).

The chapter highlights a way to understand identity and identity change as concepts, which, in turn, help to understand and explain the behaviour of small states as pluralistic cooperative communities in the formation of regions. The chapter also gives an account of the cross-case study methodology as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), which can fit the type of interpretative case study as proposed by Levy (2005), because purposive selection and the aims of these case studies are entwined with the constructivist theoretical principles of collective identity formation and interest.

Finally, this chapter briefly describes the process of data analysis using interpretative techniques of qualitative content analysis (Schreier 2012). The qualitative data gathered and analysed comprise semi-structured interviews with members of the political elite, official documents including archival documents from Ecuador and Uruguay, and political speeches.

To answer the research question, these data sources were selected based on the information they offered concerning six major themes: interest in maintaining national and regional peace, similar political ideologies of the political elite and national leaders, interest in international communitarian cooperation, elements of identification of a collective or regional identity, influence of external forces, and increasing dissatisfaction with existing regional organizations.

Chapter 3
Small States in the Construction of the South American Union of Nations (UNASUR): A Case Study of Ecuador

Introduction

In July 2009, Ecuador ratified the UNASUR treaty that had been signed by all South American heads of state and of governments in May 2008. Consequently, Ecuador became the second South American state, after Bolivia, to support the consolidation of this new project of regional integration. This decisive position of Ecuador demonstrated an evident endorsement of the construction of the South American region to create an authentic South American identity, as is stated in the UNASUR treaty. This region-engaging behaviour of Ecuador is in contrast with its position regarding the FTAA project driven by the United States of America: Ecuador, like many other South American states, had been negotiating with the United States for creating this continental free-trade area, but withdrew from the negotiations shortly before signing the foundational treaty of UNASUR.

On the basis of the research question for this study (namely, Why has Ecuador supported the creation and consolidation of UNASUR?) and the set of concepts clarified in the previous chapter, this investigation analysed a set of archival documents, interviews, and political speeches and found increasing interaction of Ecuador with most South American states over the last decades, particularly during the time of creation and consolidation of UNASUR. The political dynamics of Ecuador with the

rest of the region have probably influenced Ecuador's behaviour in international relations, its preferences in regional politics, and its role in regional integration.

This chapter seeks to offer an interpretative insight into Ecuador's actions in creating and consolidating UNASUR and is organized into three sections, as follows: the first describes the historical context of Ecuador's domestic politics before the creation of UNASUR; the second further clarifies the underpinning motivations for Ecuador's support to creating UNASUR; and the third examines Ecuador's role in consolidating UNASUR, exemplified through the process that created the South American Council for Defence (CSD) and the process that ratified the constitutive treaty of UNASUR.

The Sick State and Disappointment with the Economic Mechanisms of Integration: Historical Background

The analysis of the minutes of the plenary sessions of Ecuador's National Assembly shows that the representatives of the Ecuadorian people neither hesitated to approve the UNASUR treaty nor questioned the significance of this new South American integration project. The assembly discussed the project between March and May 2009 and ratified it following a short debate in a plenary session of the house on 14 May 2009.

Objections to the ratification were minimal: of the 59 members of the assembly, 51 voted in favour, 2 voted against, and 6 remained absent. This overwhelming majority legally enabled President Rafael Correa to sign and publish the declaration ratifying the foundational treaty of UNASUR on 15 July 2009.

One of Ecuador's motivations for so doing is based on the compatibility of the UNASUR treaty with Ecuador's new constitution of 2008. Articles 423, 417, and particularly Article 416 of Title VIII (Sections 9-11), clearly enjoin Ecuador to:

- recognize international law as a norm for the conduct of the states and demand the democratization of international organizations with fair participation of the member-states within them (§10);
- foster the construction of multipolar global order with active participation of the regional economic and political organizations and the strengthening of horizontal relationships for the construction of a solidary, diverse, multicultural, and just world (§11);
- primarily promote the political, cultural, and economic integration of the Andean region, South America, and Latin America (Asamblea Nacional del Ecuador 2008, art. 416, §9, 10, 11).

Moreover, the President of the Commission for Foreign Affairs of the National Assembly, in the Housing Act 040, 2009, justified this decision by arguing that UNASUR offers hope for a new political direction for South America with a shared history and values, a decision that set up the foundation of the 'Great Fatherland' envisaged by the *Libertador,* Simón Bolivar. The commission also averred that its decision to support the consolidation of UNASUR by ratifying its treaty also contains hope for 'another future, one which will enable us to live as humanity deserves, which is much more than just a response to the crisis of global capitalism, and one which is much more than a cultural and political response to the North American imperialism' (Asamblea Nacional del Ecuador 2009, 111).

> the Union of South American Nations is justified by the imperative vocation to unify and create integrated spaces between our states, our cultures and languages, to unify our peoples with a universal destiny, as South America is much more than one culture, nationality and state. It is a real entity in itself …which when consolidated will have tasks to fulfil (Asamblea Nacional del Ecuador 2009, 113).

This analysis identifies three historical aspects prior to the signing and ratification of the UNASUR treaty that help to show why Ecuador found it imperative to support the consolidation of this project of regional integration: the national political situation, external relations in general and its

relationship with the United States, Colombia, and Peru in particular, and the country's disappointment with economic integration.

The first aspect is elucidated by looking at Ecuador's cultural configuration on the one hand and at the political developments in Ecuador in the decades prior to signing of the treaty on the other. As mentioned earlier, Ecuador's cultural configuration comprises, besides the mestizos[1] and the white population, fourteen ethnic groups recognized as nationalities in Ecuador's constitution of 2008. This diversity of population – about 16 million in 2016 – presents a challenge to any attempt to speak of a cohesive Ecuadorian nation. Hence, the Ecuadorian identity is an 'unfinished' and 'fragmented' (Zepeda and Verdesoto 2011, 21) jigsaw, which gathers values, norms, and traditions from a mixture of Andean, European, and African cultures. This diversity of ethnicities, cultures, and civilizations has, as a result, historically affected the consolidation of Ecuador's collective identity. In fact, exclusion of rural population, indigenous nationalities,[2] and other ethnic minorities has been a customary aspect of administration in Ecuador. Moreover, Ecuadorian politics and economy have been dominated by a small elite group, who disregarded welfare of the masses to protect and advance their personal interests (Barreiro 2002). This dominant elite, described as mainly ' "white" from European Spanish origin' (Silva 2004, 34), once exercised influence equal to that of the elected government on the principles of Ecuador's international relations.

However, since the end of the 1980s, throughout the country, more Ecuadorians from ethnic minorities and from the discriminated-against rural areas have also enjoyed access to higher education and have begun to demand greater social and political participation as well as more social services. This is a phenomenon that Ecuador shares with other Andean states such as Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela. These social groups have demanded greater political participation in national as well as inter-

1 *Mestizo* is a term that according to the Dictionary of the Spanish Academy of Language is used to describe descendants of a mixed race, namely, offspring of white and Amerindian parents.

2 Ecuador's constitution of 2008 considers the state of Ecuador as a 'plurinational' state, a reference to the various ancestral ethnic and cultural groups that have historically inhabited Ecuadorian territory. This study uses the conventional notion of nation, state, or country to refer to the nation-state of Ecuador as a political entity that includes all ancestral groupings.

national affairs of the state (Ramírez 2011). These demands led to a period of social unrest that threatened to paralyse the entire country, as roads were blocked and entire cities occupied by the indigenous movements and civil groups. In response, the diversity of cultures, ethnicities, and identities was formally recognized by the state through its national constitution of 1998, which declared Ecuador as a multicultural and multi-ethnic state. However, the social unrest did not cease as the economic neo-liberal policies implemented in the country collided with the demand for a more distributive justice by the ethnic groups, a justice founded on a community-based economy that some Ecuadorian indigenous communities have traditionally maintained until now (De la Torre 2006).

This view of national economy radically differed from the individualist, capitalist-based economy of the state, but has indisputably influenced the transformation of national policies as well as the emergence of a new Ecuadorian identity in recent decades.

Taking into account Ecuador's political situation and its historical transformation, Ecuador was constitutionally founded as a member-state of the Federative Nation of the Republic of Colombia with an independent government in September 1830. From 1830 to 2012, Ecuador became one of the states with the highest number of constitutional and governmental changes: it had 105 governments, an average of 20 months for each, including many dictatorships. The last military dictatorship lasted from 1972 to 1979. Ecuador's national constitution has changed twenty times, three times since returning to democracy (in 1979, 1998, and 2008), and Ecuadorian nationalities have been recognized in political affairs of the state only since 1996, when the Plurinational Unity Movement, the Pachakutik Party, was created.

In the decade prior to the signing of the UNASUR treaty in 2008, Ecuador experienced the most politically unstable period among all the South American states. The country saw seven governments: Abdalá Bucaram Ortiz, August 1996 – February 1997; Fabian Alarcón Rivera, February 1997 – August 1998; Jamil Mahuad, August 1998 – January 2000; Gustavo Noboa, January 2000 – January 2003; Lucio Gutiérrez Borbúa, January 2003 – April 2005; Alfredo Palacio, April 2005 – January 2007;

and Rafael Correa Delgado, January 2007 – May 2017. For good reasons, this period prior to 2008 can be characterized as the decade of the Ecuadorian sick state.

Political instability driven by various ethnic groups and by the socially excluded was exacerbated by nationalist and military groups, who opposed the peace treaty with Peru, an idea initiated during the presidency of Sixto Durán Ballén (1992-1996) following the last Ecuador-Peru conflict in 1995: the Treaty of Itamaraty was eventually signed in 1998. The situation deteriorated during the presidency of Abdalá Bucaram after he lost the support of the National Congress, which removed him from power in 1997 and illegally nominated as his successor the president of the National Congress, Fabian Alarcón, for the rest of the presidential term. Similar changes were repeated over the next ten years.

The global financial crisis complicated the political situation further, as Ecuador's economy started shrinking. The newly elected government led by Jamil Mahuad in conjunction with the political and economic elite exacerbated the socio-economic situation by implementing inappropriate economic policies, resulting in a banking and monetary crisis: several banks were closed; citizen savings were retained for more than a year; and the currency was devalued by 245% and replaced with the US dollar (Correa 2011). Consequently, a civilian-military alliance, led by Antonio Vargas, leader of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), and Colonel Lucio Gutiérrez overthrew President Jamil Mahuad on 21 January 2000, placing Vice President Gustavo Noboa in power for the rest of the governmental term.

These events catapulted Colonel Gutiérrez, of the newly created Patriotic Society Party, to power. This party, in alliance with Ecuador's indigenous Left-wing party, Pachakutik, won the national elections in 2002. In 2003, Gutiérrez assumed the presidency within a political environment of high mistrust and instability. Moreover, Gutiérrez's national allies, the indigenous political organizations and other Left-oriented social movements, campaigned for the cancellation of the US-driven FTAA negotiations: instead, they demanded priority for national socio-economic and Latin American-oriented integration policies (Buono 2006). These con-

trasting political views led to a disturbed political environment as Gutiérrez's government continued with the negotiations related to the FTAA; the political alliance, only a few months into power, was ruptured. Consequently, social uprisings intensified across the country, becoming a daily routine in the capital city of Quito.

This discontentment manifested itself violently when President Gutiérrez, in an alliance with legislators of the *Partido Roldosista Ecuatoriano* (PRE) and the *Partido Renovador Institucional Acción Nacional* (PRIAN), dismissed the Supreme Court of Justice, violating fundamental democratic principles and the National Charter, which guaranteed the independence of the judiciary. Consequently, a combination of social movements and withdrawal of military protection for the president forced President Gutiérrez to flee the presidential residence and seek asylum in the Brazilian embassy on 19 April 2005; sometime later, he was flown to Brazil in a rescue manoeuvre approved by the Ecuadorian military forces while its members looked the other way (Lucas 2005; De la Torre 2006).

Following the overthrow of Gutiérrez, Vice President Alfredo Palacio became the President on 20 April 2005, whereupon he proclaimed the re-foundation of the state and accepted the obligation to negotiate the free-trade agreement with the United States on an equal and sovereign basis. However, the negotiations froze a few months later. Although the threatening political unrest had not fully subsided by the end of the president's term in 2007, economic recovery enabled him to claim that his government had recovered national independence and sovereignty, re-established democratic institutions, and reconstructed the nation-state in consensus with the rural communities and ethnicities.

A final factor considered here is the new Ecuadorian politics when the political movement *Revolución Ciudadana* or *Movimiento País* emerged in 2005. The *Revolución Ciudadana* can be characterized as a new tendency of Left-wing oriented politics in Ecuador that emerged on the basis of the ideal of transforming the institutions of state. This can also be considered as the resulting civil reaction to a decade of high political instability, as highlighted above. The idea of re-establishing the Ecuadorian state with a socialist-oriented agenda began taking shape with the creation, in 2005, of

the *Movimiento Patria Altiva I Soberana* (Pais), otherwise known as *Alianza País* and *Revolución Ciudadana*, and the election of a new government led by President Rafael Correa.

Rafael Correa had earlier served the state as a finance minister in the Palacio government in 2005, from which he resigned following a difference of opinion with financial advisors from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He emerged victorious in the general elections of 2006, becoming the seventh president to lead Ecuador in ten years. In January 2007, he assumed power as the social unrest appeared to subside.

In contrast to earlier Ecuadorian presidents, who came from economically privileged families, Rafael Correa grew up in a lower-middle class family in the coastal city of Guayaquil. His Catholic beliefs and involvement in various social projects in the Ecuadorian Andean regions had helped him gain a clear understanding of the various perspectives of life of the many Ecuadorian ethnic groups as well as the opposing views on the role of the state amongst the Ecuadorian people. Moreover, his education in Ecuador itself as well as his sponsored postgraduate studies in Belgium and the United States have helped him to gain a deeper and more realistic understanding of international political and economic dynamics and their influence on the affairs of Ecuador. His experience as a lecturer in Political Economy in Quito, his direct contact with indigenous communities as a volunteer, and his basic understanding of the Quichua language (the main means of communication between different indigenous groups) allow him to portray himself as a politician who gathers under his leadership the diversity of the country and defies the threats from sectarian, regionalized, or elite groups in Ecuador.

President Correa's identification with the diversity of the whole nation as well as with Western democracies has been strengthened by his political discourse, which disapproves the traditional political and economic elite, accusing them of speaking in Spanish but dreaming in English. The combination of these factors with a pro-South-American discourse has helped Correa and the *Alianza País* to present themselves as possible saviours of a country that had been on the brink of political tragedy between 1997 and 2007. *Alianza País* was then in need of major popular support, and the

party won that support by its decision not to put forward candidates for election to the National Congress as a symbolic rejection of the political practices of the past.

Thus the legitimacy of Correa's governmental policies was based on the support of the electorate for his socially oriented projects for Ecuador. His political movement governed despite not having a single representative in the National Congress in 2007. Many of the members of his cabinet were recruited from universities, with no major political experience. This distanced his government from old political practices and was seen as a signal of renewal.

The proposed reconstruction of Ecuador's political institutions still represented one of the major challenges for Correa's leadership and his political organization *Movimiento País*, since such an endeavour required the approval of the National Congress, the legislative house still dominated by some of the old political parties. It was the National Congress's prerogative to approve a referendum to elect a National Constitutional Assembly to formulate the new national constitution. However, public polls showed continually increasing acceptance of Correa's political leadership: he has reached the highest level of approval – approximately 82% – obtained by a leader in recent decades (Vázquez and Saltos 2011). Eventually, following many civil demonstrations in front of the National Congress building, Congress was forced to approve *Alianza País*'s plan of electing a National Constitutional Assembly to formulate a new constitution for the country. The elected National Constitutional Assembly started its deliberations on legislation for a new constitution in Montecristi, Manabí, on 30 November 2007. The new constitution was then approved by a national referendum on 28 September 2008.

This political transformation ended a decade that can be characterized as the decade of the sick Ecuadorian state. At the same time, it was a political transformation that set up new norms for Ecuador's political action in the process of regional integration. This political instability and the consequent transformation of Ecuadorian norms are deeply embedded within the second aspect to be considered in this section, namely Ecuador's external relations.

This investigation has identified one process that ends with the coming to power of *Alianza País* and another that starts with the beginning of the reform of the Ecuadorian state, the latter unfolding even as the UNASUR treaty was being negotiated. As a result, this process reappears constantly, embedded in further historical events analysed here and throughout the study.

In relation to the period before Rafael Correa came to power, this study maintains that Ecuador's external relations were dominated mainly by its relationship with the United States and with the neighbouring states of Colombia and Peru. However, there is little evidence of Ecuador's foreign political agenda during this period. Ecuador's external policies were mainly improvised and determined by its responses to the actions of other states. Francisco Carrión, one of the senior diplomats and Ecuador's foreign minister during the last years of Palacio's government, said that 'there was neither a state policy nor a governmental political strategy' during this period (Francisco Carrión in discussion with the author, February 2012). Nevertheless, analysis of documents from Ecuador's Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2000 to 2008 shows an attempt to design a national agenda for foreign policy, the National Foreign Policy Plan (PLANEX) 2020, in 2006. This effort was intended to redirect Ecuador's international relations. Its relations with the United States, Colombia, and Peru were still considered to be the priority, and Ecuador maintained closer relationships with these three states in two main areas, namely national security in military terms and international trade including economic cooperation.

Following the Second World War, the relationship between Ecuador and the United States in the field of security can be described as discreet given the latter's role as a guarantor for the signing by Ecuador and Peru of the Rio de Janeiro Protocol from 1942 (the protocol was signed following the border conflict in 1941 between Ecuador and Peru). However, Ecuador as well as other Andean states such as Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia, assumed a dependent and compliant relationship with the United States from the beginning of the 1990s (Barreiro 2002). In the case of Ecuador, this tendency was further radicalized when Ecuador's air force base of Manta was conceded to the United States in 1999, and Plan Colombia was

implemented by the neighbouring country of Colombia with support of the United States in 2000.

Traditionally, Ecuador has always aimed to maintain cordial relationships with Colombia in the area of security, and Ecuador's northern border, shared with Colombia, was not conceived as a major security problem for Ecuadorians until the end of the twentieth century, despite the evident Colombian national crisis caused by the presence of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and other armed groups on the other side of Ecuador. However, these armed groups became an obvious issue for Ecuador's security when the Colombian government launched Plan Colombia in 2000 (Saavedra 2007; López 2004), which was aimed at eradicating coca plantations in the Colombian Amazonian region by using military force. This region had largely been under the administrative control of the FARC. Hence, the implementation of Plan Colombia caused the displacement of Colombian refugees from the zone of combat to Ecuador. Moreover, use of the military base at Manta by the United States and US support for Plan Colombia transformed Ecuador's neutrality in the Colombian conflict into indirect support for Plan Colombia. These issues began to jeopardize Ecuador's security in the North Amazonian region. At the same time, allowing the United States the use of the air force base at Manta for ten years, beginning 1999, exacerbated the discontent of civilian groups with the government led by President Jamil Mahuad, as this compromise was made by breaking the constitutional laws of Ecuador. Ecuador's constitution of 1998 in its Article 161, subsection 2, ruled that treaties or agreements establishing a military alliance required the approval of the National Congress. However, the analysis of documents of the audit made by the Commission for Foreign Affairs of the National Assembly in 2009 shows that this agreement, signed by Ecuador with the United States under the government of Jamil Mahuad, was without the approval of the National Congress. Finally, the relationship with Peru in the field of security began improving as the historical border conflict was solved through the peace agreement signed in Itamaraty, Brasilia, in 1998.

Three military conflicts had been conducted by Ecuador against Peru in the twentieth century: two of them were fought in the final decades of

the last century as a consequence of undefined borders. One of these arose in 1981 and a new border conflict in 1995 threatened to stifle the attempts to establish an amicable relationship between the two countries. However, the resulting peace agreement ended a long period of international instability in the region and facilitated the coordination of development projects both bilateral and multilateral.

Regarding the area of economic cooperation and international trade with the United States, Ecuador (in common with most South American states) has been exposed to the strong economic influence of the United States since the beginning of the last century. This is, quite simply, related to the lack of diversification in Ecuador's international trade. Ecuador's products have been sold mainly to the US market. In this way, trade became a means of political manoeuvring in the Ecuador-United States relationship. Ecuadorian trade concentrated so intensively on the US market that some of the Ecuadorian elite accepted '99.5%' dependence on the United States in the 1980s and 1990s. In this bilateral relationship, its position as a small state converted Ecuador into a country dependent on and compliant with the United States (Hey 1995a; 1993, 553). Moreover, the Ecuadorian elite were blinded by their personal interests and could not envisage a state united by a common good (Barreiro 2002). They implemented neo-liberal measures that ignored the welfare of the majority of Ecuadorians. For example, the elite implemented policies in accordance with the Washington Consensus, which clearly did not favour the majority of Ecuadorians. The Ecuador-United States relationship was further influenced through the FTAA project, which aimed to expand the newly created North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) to the whole of American continent. Members of the Ecuadorian elite from the field of international trade and politics supported this US project until the closing years of the presidency of Alfredo Palacio. In contrast, civil groups and the indigenous population opposed the FTAA, questioned the government's priority for settling foreign debts at the expense of social services, and rejected pro-US foreign policies.

However, negotiations for the FTAA intensified at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Meetings were conducted in Quito, under the leader-

ship of Ecuador, of the various Sectorial Committees. Ecuador, as part of the group of small economies and as a member of the Andean Community of Nations, held regular meetings on bilateral or multilateral basis to find common South American positions and negotiate with the United States. Despite such support, the FTAA project ran into various obstacles related to the vulnerability of small states and the opposition of civil and political groups. The coming to power of the indigenous party, Pachakutik, to form the government in 2003 can be associated with the collapse of negotiations over the FTAA in Ecuador, as Pachakutik and other Left-oriented social movements demanded that the negotiations be cancelled. However, President Lucio Gutierrez's open statement of a special friendship with, and commitment to, the United States and his complying with the demands of the IMF impacted the stability of his government and lost more popular support. These events ended with his removal from power in April 2005. Nevertheless, as the failure of the FTAA became apparent, it was transformed into the free-trade agreement (FTA) on bilateral basis. Ecuador undertook such negotiations under the government of Lucio Gutiérrez, but the US and Ecuadorian FTA project was frozen during the government of his successor, President Alfredo Palacio.

The failure of the FTAA can be related to the third part of this section, namely the disenchantment of Ecuador with economic cooperation. The disappointment increased not only within the civil society, but also within academic circles and among new political organizations. Moreover, their scepticism extended to existing mechanisms of economic cooperation in the region, despite their functionality. On the other hand, Ecuador's membership of various regional mechanisms for economic cooperation such as ALADI, CAN, and the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELAC) shows an evident tendency to support regional integration.

The Andean Community of Nations is one of the most relevant mechanisms of economic cooperation and integration for Ecuador in terms of economic, cultural, and historical relationships with its immediate neighbours, namely Colombia and Peru. For that reason, this study has focused on Ecuador's disappointment with CAN. The case of CAN portrays one of the most salient examples of Ecuador's disenchantment with economic

integration. Although CAN is one of the oldest instruments of economic integration of the Andean states, it has not been able to offer its member-states sufficient strength to make them feel a crucial part of the community. This organization was created in 1969 as the Andean Pact and included Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela, but the departure of Chile in 1976 and of Venezuela in 2006 are evident examples of a weak identity. This disenchantment with integration has been viewed by some researchers as a failed economic integration process (Dabène 2009; Vieira 2008). Notwithstanding such setbacks, CAN is still considered an important source of the new idea of integration of the whole of South America. In the eyes of the members of Ecuadorian political and academic circles interviewed for this study, CAN may not have achieved its projected objectives and met the expectations of its members, but it is still considered a fundamental resource for the integration of South America in the twenty-first century.

These views overlap with the establishment of UNASUR within which CAN, MERCOSUR, Chile, Surinam, and Guyana are considered as the basis for the framework of UNASUR and are expected to converge into an economically integrated South American region (UNASUR 2008).

Further weaknesses could be identified, such as a poor sense of mutual commitment as an Andean community. Although the institutions of CAN such as the Andean Corporation Fund (CAF) and community links such as the Andean passport represent indisputable elements of an Andean communitarian identity, the fragile CAN was further weakened by the introduction of neo-liberal measures into South American economies, and the overwhelming economic influence of the United States in recent decades. The effect was to distance the member-states of CAN even further from one another. On the other hand, Ecuador's strong economic ties to the United States developed a close bond amongst certain economic elite with the United States and influenced Ecuador's behaviour to the detriment of its commitments with CAN. For instance, the US-oriented policies introduced by President Febres Cordero of Ecuador violated Decision 24, the Statute on the Common Treatment of Foreign Capital and Technology of the Andean Pact, to favour an agreement with the Overseas

Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), an agency dependent on the US government (Hey 1993). Hence, Ecuador's tenuous economic interaction with the South American states due to the military dictatorship led by Guillermo Rodriguez Lara (1972-1979) was weakened further. The role of Ecuador as a member and founder of CAN changed to that of a defector. Moreover, the unsolved border conflicts between the Andean states put further strain on the development of an integrated Andean area with an authentic identity. The border conflicts of Ecuador with its neighbouring partner states clearly affected commercial exchange. For instance, the economic and commercial interaction between Ecuador and Peru decreased from about $170 million in 1990 to about $109 million in 1995, the year of the border conflict (Jaramillo 2010). And although the reconstruction of the Andean Pact as the Andean Community of Nations in 1997 aimed to include diverse social and political areas in a process of economic and market-related integration, the old political practices of the members permeated CAN's functioning. For instance, Venezuela's defection from CAN in 2006 was considered a radical protest by President Chavez against the decision of Colombia and Peru to individually negotiate a free-trade agreement with the United States, arguing that CAN mainly favoured goals related to the liberalization of the market (Vieira 2008). Furthermore, CAN could not find real measures to help in solving the conflicts between Ecuador and Peru in 1981 and 1995, despite initiatives to persuade the Andean states to construct a zone of peace, such as the Declaration of Peace and Reciprocal Trust agreed in the Galápagos in 1989.

Finally, open regionalism, which involved the deregulation and liberalization of the regional market in the 1990s without taking into account the collective aims of CAN, did not bring positive results for Ecuador. Instead, documents both from CEPAL (2005) and from the Andean Corporation for Development (CAN 2005) – presented to the High Commission of Delegates for the treatment of asymmetries, benefits, and challenges of the South American integration – show that, particularly in Ecuador, the existing level of economic integration contributed to increased unemployment, lowered life expectancy, and a widening social gap between the rich and the poor. Ecuador was considered one of the most vulnerable small

states in South America in the integration process based on a competitive economic framework.

This disappointment is corroborated by the political speeches analysed in this study. These speeches express an evident support for a new kind of integration that reflects the reality of the South American states, a view shared by most of the interviewees, who describe CAN as obsolete, an organism that is not working, a house divided, but see UNASUR as timely and as a sign of hope for a new kind of South American integration.

Overlapping Factors between the Ecuadorian Nation-state and the Idea of UNASUR: The Prospect of a New Kind of Cooperation

Some other factors recognized in this study as influential in Ecuador's engagement in the construction of UNASUR are the harmony between Ecuador's political ideology and the UNASUR project after the arrival of *Alianza País* and Rafael Correa to power and the argument for Ecuador's support to this alliance based on the overlapping elements of Ecuador's identity with the collective or regional identity portrayed in UNASUR.

In relation to the first factor, this study did not find any clear evidence of an ideological correlation between Ecuadorian governments and other South American governments regarding the idea of a South American Union until the end of 2006. During the last year of the presidency of Alfredo Palacio, from 2005 to 2007, many South American countries already had Left-wing-oriented governments. The socialist president, Hugo Chávez, had been in power for six years in Venezuela; Brazil was governed by a Left-wing president, Luiz Ignácio Lula da Silva; Argentina had had another Left-wing-oriented president, Néstor Kirchner, in power for one year; and Uruguay elected a Left-wing government led by President Tabaré Vazquez in 2004. This new wave of Left-oriented governments tended to define the kind of integration to be constructed in South America, in which a sociopolitically oriented integration was prioritized over a more market- and commercially-directed integration. And this tendency was

being strengthened in response to the national electorate's preferences in most South American countries. Whereas Chávez in Venezuela, Lula in Brazil, Kirchner in Argentina, and Vazquez in Uruguay were able to play a more active role in the construction of the South American region as well as in the development of a positive relationship with their national civil groups and political activists, the Ecuadorian presidents were not able to share a consensus with the nation's social groups. Additionally, as shown above, Ecuador was not in a position to influence either regional or continental politics until the beginning of 2007.

The arrival of the political movement *Alianza País/Revolución Ciudadana* and President Rafael Correa to power in 2007 shows, in the first place, a change in Ecuador's approach to the relationship with the United States. Secondly, there was now a predisposition towards greater South American integration as a new projection of Ecuador's integration politics. Indeed, this position was decided before the arrival of *Alianza País/Revolución Ciudadana* to power. The Ideological Manifesto or Action Programme of this political movement from 2005, and updated in 2010, states that *Alianza País*

> defends the sovereign presence of Ecuador in Latin America and the world with neither foreign tutelage nor servitude to powers and foreign projects that are alien to the reality and well-being of our people … and strives for the integration, solidarity and cooperation with the people of Latin America and its compromise with the creation of South-South alliances (Alianza País 2010, 11).

> the UNASUR generates further areas of integration that promote Latin American and Caribbean interest. Hence, it requires being strengthened and equipped with institutions and provided with the building for its headquarters in the centre of the world (Alianza País 2010, 48-49).

The political campaign of *Alianza País* promised the revision of contracts between Ecuador and international oil corporations, the evaluation of foreign national debts, and a mandatory request to the United States to withdraw its military forces from the air base at Manta when the agreement ended in 2009, among other items.

Once in power, President Rafael Correa announced a reduction in repayment of the national debts to foreign creditors from about 40% of the national budget, a priority under previous governments, to below 5%. Most of the debtors were investment corporations with US participation. Moreover, the Integral Auditing Commission for Public Credit of Ecuador (2008) declared that some of Ecuador's international debts were irregular and fraudulent. The expulsion of the representatives of the IMF from Ecuador further sharpened these measures, which were based on the argument that the IMF's representatives had tried to impose their ideas on the affairs of Ecuador during Correa's first engagement in Ecuadorian politics as a finance minister in 2005. These measures are also connected to the Ecuadorian discourse on the new kind of South American identity within UNASUR. Endorsement for this position became a fundamental support for the new government of *Alianza Pa*ís' platform, and UNASUR became the focus of its integration politics. President Rafael Correa's statement about the construction of the premises of the General Secretariat of UNASUR in Quito on 11 March 2011 shows this plainly when he points out that

> we have left behind that region which once used to be insulted, humiliated and dishonoured by everybody, starting with arrogant foreign diplomats and ending with international bureaucrats who came to check on us, to oversee our data, to tell us what to do and what not to do. These days, if a commission of the IMF offers to come with such intentions, they will have to return as soon as they disembark, as no country will tolerate it anymore (Correa 2011).

Moreover, Rafael Correa's approach to South American politics was implemented by incorporating promises made in the political campaign into the National Developmental Plan 2007-2010. This document stated that the contract with the United States regarding the military base of Manta would not be renewed. Instead, Ecuador would 'establish an understanding with Brazil for the utilization of its Amazonian security system to tackle illegal activities in Ecuadorian territory' (Ministerio de Relaciones

Exteriores, Comercio e Integración 2007, 25). As a result, US military forces withdrew from Ecuador in 2009.

These new Ecuadorian policies are also related to Ecuador's intention to harmonize new national policies with the contents of the UNASUR treaty, which were being formulated at that point. These ideas were conveyed in the Ideological Manifesto of *Alianza País* from 2005 and 2010, which stated that

> *Alianza País s*upports the socialism of *Buen Vivir* [the good life]. It identifies itself with the common welfare and happiness of every individual, which is neither achieved by accumulating large quantities of wealth nor by excessive consumption, but by maximizing the personal and collective talents and capabilities (Alianza Pais 2010, 6).

> one strategic objective of *Alianza País* is Latin American integration and cooperation, and solidarity with the struggle of oppressed social groups around the world (Alianza Pais 2010, 9).

The Ecuadorian National Plan for Development 2007-2010 also integrates these views in its strategic guidelines for Ecuador's foreign policy, in which the formation of UNASUR is highlighted as a priority. Here, Ecuador's contribution to the definitive version of the constitutive treaty of UNASUR was also considered a particular strategy. Ecuador's aspirations are explicitly manifest in its support for a new model of integration, as long as this is based on complementary and cooperative principles and not on a competition-oriented integration process.

Many of these ideas are also highlighted in the report of the Reflective Committee regarding the challenges and opportunities offered by South American integration. Consequently, Ecuador' objectives and regional objectives began to merge, because of the fact that the distribution of wealth within the population, the narrowing of the social gap between the rich and the poor, and the reduction of quantitative and qualitative asymmetries within the nation-state and within the South American states as a whole are also principles incorporated into the UNASUR treaty. More-

over, Rafael Correa's views on South American integration and those of the leaders of other South American states with Left-wing oriented governments began to converge into the regional tendency of a socialist-oriented UNASUR overlapping with the national policies introduced by the new government. At this point, President Hugo Chávez had been in power for seven years in Venezuela; Brazil had been governed by Luiz Ignácio Lula da Silva for three years; and Argentina had also been under President Néstor Kirchner for three years. At the same time, socialist-oriented governments were also leading other countries, including the government of Tabaré Vazquez in Uruguay, that of Evo Morales in Bolivia, and that of Michelle Bachelet in Chile. Finally, this convergence of views on national and regional integration with those of the new Ecuadorian government enabled Ecuador to obtain the consensual nomination of Quito as the permanent seat of UNASUR's administration during the presidential meeting in Margarita, Venezuela, in April 2007.

Equally region-engaging was Correa's proposal of an Ecuadorian representative as the first Secretary of UNASUR. This proposal was echoed by the South American states during this meeting. Ecuador as UNASUR's first secretary and Quito as the seat of the Secretariat were confirmed by the South American states in 2008. However, Ecuador's ex-president, Rodrigo Borja, declined the offer of this leading regional role, and UNASUR's immediate inception as an institution was postponed.

The other relevant factor mentioned throughout this study is the link between Ecuadorian identity and the collective identity of the region. This analysis has isolated various identitarian elements of Ecuador that overlap with those of the region portrayed in UNASUR. Both Ecuadorian political actors and the documents studied refer to these elements as motivational factors for Ecuador's support of UNASUR's consolidation. These identitarian elements are classified here into three categories: institutionalized shared norms, shared identification features, and shared values and beliefs.

The construction of an authentic South American identity and its consolidation has been progressively introduced and expanded since the Communiqué of Brasilia and further documents that give an account of the first meeting of South American heads of state on 31 August and 1 September 2000.

The Cusco Declaration of 2004 on the creation of CSN expands and strengthens this idea and includes a long list of characteristics shared by the South American states, arguing that these have motivated the development of

a South American integrated area in politics, economy, environment and infrastructure that strengthen the distinctive South American identity in order that … it contributes to strengthen Latin America and the Caribbean in order to achieve a weighty presence and representation in international fora (IIRSA 2004).

Four years later, the foundational treaty of UNASUR 2008 expanded this list and instituted a set of norms, identification features, and values as shown in Figure 3.1. Most relevant is the expressed idea, incorporated in

Figure 3.1 Institutionalized Ecuadorian and UNASUR norms that legitimize political action
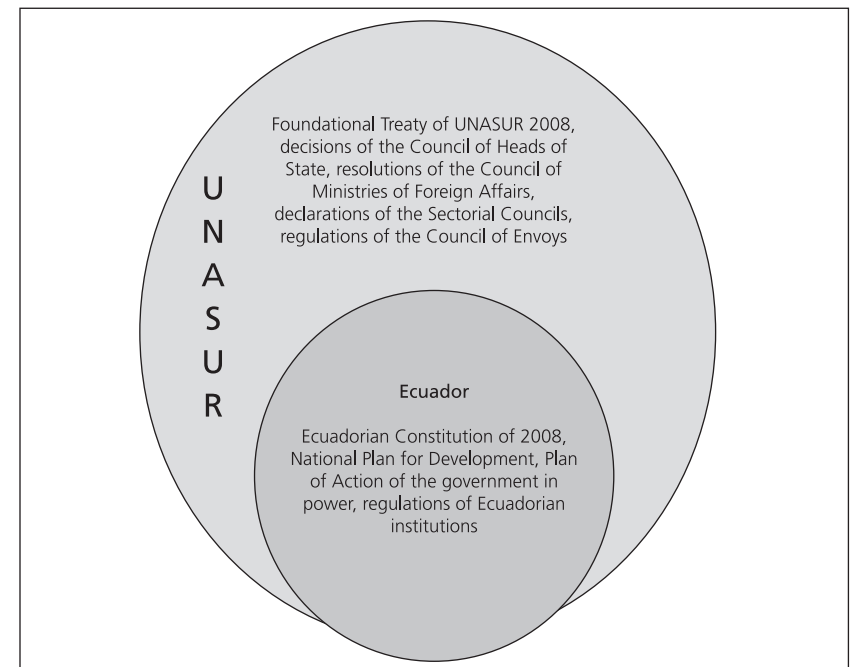
the treaty, of a 'consolidation of the South American identity by progressively recognizing the rights of national citizens of member-states residing in any of the other member-states, with the objective of achieving a South American citizenship' (UNASUR 2008).

The kind of documents listed in Figure 3.1 contain the national and regional norms that have been instituted and form the basis for Ecuador's support to the formation and strengthening of UNASUR.

Nationally, the four main documents mentioned in Figure 3.1 are the basis for justifying Ecuador's engagement in the formation of UNASUR. In particular, Ecuador's constitution of 2008, the National Plan for Development 2007-2010, and the Plan of Action of *Alianza País*, the political movement in power since 2007, contain a consistent expression of elements of identity as one of the justifications for Ecuador's support to UNASUR.

Regionally, of the five types of documents listed in Figure 3.1, the UNASUR treaty is the main regulatory document, which, following its signing and ratification by Ecuador, constitutes a binding international instrument. Moreover, the norms derived from this treaty are also mandatory (see below), and most find justification in the idea of a South American identity and the consolidation of South America as an integrated political region.

In contrast to this clear regional impulse to consolidate a South American identity, which was mainly driven within a collective of regional political elite, Ecuador's national political discourse shows minimal evidence of belonging to and contributing to the construction of a South American collective identity—until the arrival of *Alianza País* and Rafael Correa to power. For instance, Gustavo Noboa's speech in Brasilia 2000 did not highlight the identitarian features that Ecuador shared with other countries of the region. Instead he suggested that the process of hemispheric integration, in the form of the FTAA, poses a serious challenge owing to the economic impact that FTAA will have on Latin American countries. In this context, it was thought that the region, once the building of the FTAA was concluded, would ensure high economic growth for Ecuador (IIRSA 2000a). Similarly, Lucio Gutiérrez did not appeal to other countries on the

basis of national identitarian elements and shared South American values in his speech, in a video conference, to the preliminary meeting to create CSN in Cusco, Peru, on 7 December 2004. Instead, he emphasizes that 'it is important to construct a proposal and strategy to confront the impact of the free-trade agreement, the FTAA and the deepening of the free-trade zone between CAN and MERCOSUR' (Gutiérrez 2004). In contrast, Ecuador's reference to a shared identity with other states of South America began capturing the political discourse nationally and internationally with the arrival of the *Alianza País* and Rafael Correa to power in 2007.

President Correa and other members of the Ecuadorian government consistently use the symbolic discourse associated with a South American identity, which has gained prominence particularly through the speeches of President Correa at international events, such as the meeting for the creation of *Banco del Sur*, the South American Bank, in Buenos Aires in December 2007, where he began by recalling the major historical integrationist figures of South America as follows: 'for us, the fatherland is America, said Bolívar, and such a statement, that appeared utopian or misguided due to the resignation and submission of the governments of the continent to the absolute powers, is becoming reality' (Correa 2007).

Ecuador's new regional political discourse is underpinned by the institutionalization and strengthening of new identitarian elements, which shape how the nation perceives itself. This process includes shared norms introduced and reinforced by Ecuador's new constitution, introduced in 2008.

The new constitution, in title VIII, Articles 417, 423, and 425, specifies the procedures to support Latin American integration. Article 423, in seven subsections, specifically states the obligation of Ecuador with regard to regional integration, including collective strategies in the management of natural resources and strengthening the harmonization of national legislation systems. The new Ecuadorian norms are also consistent with the regional norms: Article 12 of the Treaty of UNASUR states that 'the normative pieces originated in the organs of UNASUR are obligatory for all member-states as long as these have been incorporated into the juridical system of every state in accordance with their internal procedures' (UNASUR 2008, 20).

By means of the above provisions, together with the consensus clause required at all levels of the decision-making process and the allowance made for any member-state to present projects of common interest, which may be developed and implemented within the objectives of UNASUR, as stated in Articles 12 and 13, Ecuador was offered an unusual opportunity to become the leader of the South American region and to be on par with larger neighbouring states such as Brazil and Argentina. Thus, it can be seen that the policies that Ecuador agreed to within the framework of UNASUR are full of potential with regard to Ecuador's new politics and bind the country to the regional project. These policies include norms created by decisions and declarations of the councils of heads of state and governments, the resolutions of the Council of Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the declarations of the sectorial councils, and the regulations of the Council of Envoys.

Figure 3.2 Identitarian features shared between Ecuador and other states in the region
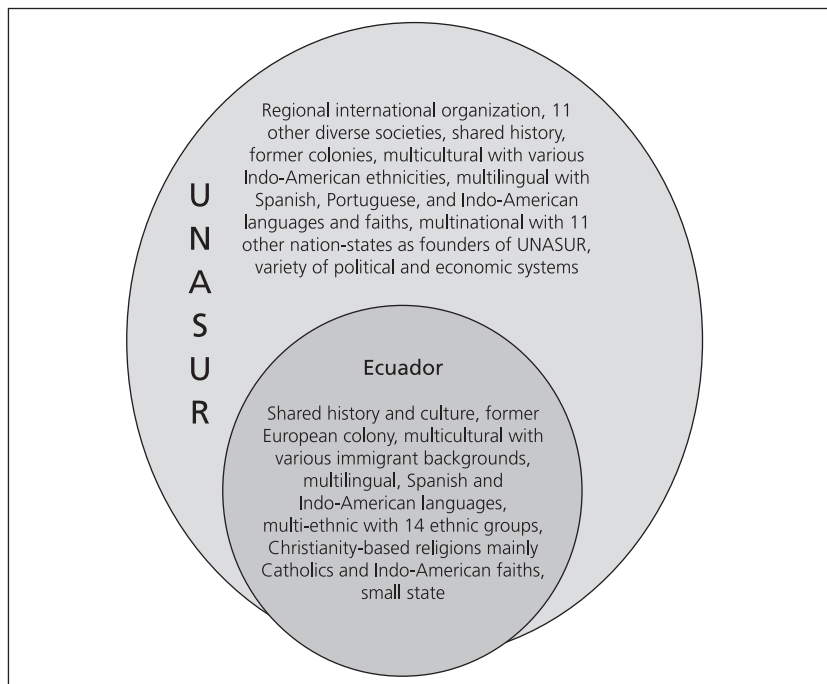
The other category in which Ecuador is connected to the South American region is through shared identification features. As shown in Figure 3.2, the main elements of collective identification on which the construction of the South American region has been based include various features of Ecuador's identity. These elements, among others, would be Ecuador's multi-ethnic (including Indo-American ethnicities) and multilingual (including Spanish and Indo-American languages) character and its multicultural nature as a nation, combining the influences of European and African immigrants, the legacy of its status as a former European colony, and its shared history with other states.

These regional features incorporated in the UNASUR treaty are enshrined in subsection 4 of Article 423 of Ecuador's constitution, which states that Ecuador aims

> to protect and promote [the following]: cultural diversity, multicultural practice, the conservation of cultural heritage and the common Latin American and Caribbean historical memory, as well as the creation of a communication network and a common market for cultural industries (Asamblea Nacional del Ecuador 2008, art. 423).

Figure 3.2 shows the features Ecuador shares with other South American states and the idea of a South American identity introduced through the signing and ratification of the UNASUR treaty. In fact, the UNASUR treaty uses the shared history of South American states and aspects of their status as former colonies – and therefore their cultural and linguistic diversity – as the basis of the collective regional identity. Similarly, the constitutional ratification of Ecuador as a state with a diversity of cultures, languages, nationalities, ethnic minority groups, communities, and collectives has been regulated by Articles 56 and 57 of Ecuador's new constitution. These norms specifically spell out the rights of different ethnicities and groups in Ecuador, incorporating them fully into the newly re-established Ecuadorian identity, which reflects the transformation of Ecuador and shows its links with the aspects that underpin the construction of the South American identity within the UNASUR project.

Ecuador also created the National Council for Equality to ensure that the above principles of multi-nationality and interculturality are implemented and further consolidated nationally and regionally (Asamblea Nacional del Ecuador 2008, art 57). Moreover, a separate diplomatic service was set up in 2012 to present and reinforce internationally Ecuador's image as a multicultural state. More than half of this 70-strong service were recruited from the fourteen ancestral and ethnic minority groups that are part of Ecuador (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Comercio e Integración 2012). Ecuador is thus represented abroad by a multicultural diplomatic team, some members of which work within UNASUR.

This transformation of Ecuador's identity can also be reflected in and guaranteed through the agreement made by the South American states: the UNASUR treaty guarantees to support the diversity, inclusion, and development of the various existing ethnicities and corresponding nationalities of the region, as highlighted above. In this context, UNASUR tends to be viewed by Ecuador as a strategic lever to consolidate Latin American integration and to maintain and strengthen the main elements of Ecuadorian identity as well as those of a collective South American regional identity. That identity has been shaped by the shared history of solidarity among the multi-ethnic, multilingual, and multicultural nations that have fought for emancipation and South American unity, enabling South America to emerge as a region (UNASUR 2008). The social orientation to foster inclusion and representation as part of the Ecuadorian projection was incorporated into the new constitution of 2008, which, in its Article 1, states that Ecuador is a democratic, sovereign, independent, unitary, multicultural, multi-national[3] state of social justice.

Finally, a third set of identitarian elements is distinguished, which consists of the shared values and beliefs. The motivation of Ecuador for supporting the creation and consolidation of UNASUR is based on that set.

As shown in Figure 3.3, many Ecuadorian values are reflected in the set of values underpinning the whole regional identity. The idea of a region of

peace is a correlate of the Ecuadorian national idea of a territory of peace; the regional striving for self-determination by the people and the policy of non-intervention are consistent with Ecuador's sovereignty. Many such ideas are bonded with those of fellow South American states through the UNASUR treaty, which forms the South American region's set of values, which underpin internal political decisions that govern Ecuador's foreign policy. For instance, Ecuador's strategic plan for foreign policy, *Agenda Estratégica de Política Exterior* 2011-2013, specifies the nature of the country's engagement abroad following the coming to power of *Alianza País* and Rafael Correa and the institutionalization of new thinking in Ecuador's national charter.

Moreover, there is a new view of social development in Ecuador linked to the idea of regional integration. This view is conceptualized from a human development perspective that goes beyond the typical macroeconom-

Figure 3.3 Shared values and beliefs between Ecuador and the region

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3 The new constitution of 2008 states that Ecuador is a multi-national state. This statement recognizes the various ethnic and social groups, each with a different ancestral-cultural background, as distinct nationalities that comprise the state of Ecuador.
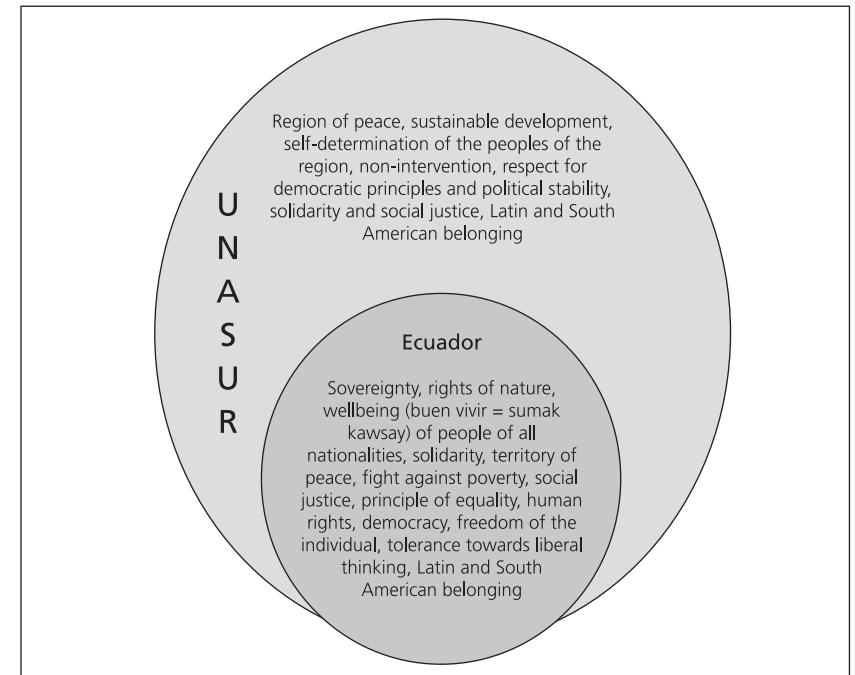
ic concept of the development of the state as a pre-condition for the development of society—a concept that was prevalent in most Third World countries in the twentieth century.

This new view of socio-economic development in Ecuador underlines the social and ethical values linked to Ecuador's belief in integration, and the strategic agenda for foreign policy mentioned above clarifies this, pointing out that Latin American integration processes should take diversity into account and abandon the single dominant idea of recent decades to pursue macroeconomic improvement to the exclusion of everything else. The processes of integration should prioritize social justice and equity, preservation of the environment for future generations, technological improvement for the organization of economic structures, gradual eradication of external dependency, reduction of asymmetries within the region, and an international role that helps to narrow the gap between poor and rich nations (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Comercio e Integración 2011, 105).

This vision is also related to further values in foreign affairs such as the protection and development of human rights, international solidarity and equality, non-intervention in internal affairs, national sovereignty, and the self-determination by the people. The last two have traditionally been supported by the Latin American states throughout the twentieth century within the context of the United Nations as values of national sovereignty (Waltz 2001).

In relation to these latter values, the authority in Ecuador that is empowered to take decisions related to international affairs is also bound by the preamble of the new constitution, a provision particularly relevant to the region-engaging character of Ecuador in the formation of UNASUR: the preamble states that the Ecuadorian people decided to construct a new form of coexistence, respectful of diversity and in harmony with nature, to attain the good life (*sumak kawsay*) … a democratic country committed to Latin American integration (dreams of Bolívar and Alfaro) and to peace and solidarity with all nations on the earth (Asamblea Nacional del Ecuador 2008, Preámbulo). The *sumak kawsay*, or good life, refers to certain standards of well-being implicit in living in harmony with nature in

a democratic country (Secretaría General de Planificación y Desarrollo 2009). This clearly includes the symbiosis of the diverse elements of Andean and Western-oriented thought that forms the new Ecuadorian identity.

On the other hand, the inclusion of the dreams of Alfaro, one of the liberal Ecuadorian presidents who made considerable efforts to unify the country at the beginning of the twentieth century, symbolizes the new nationalism projected by President Correa in relation to the idea of a Latin American integration associated with Simón Bolívar, the protagonist of emancipatory revolutions in South America.

As shown in Figure 3.3, values such as social justice, solidarity, social equity, strengthening of democratic institutions, peace, and protection of nature were also introduced as fundamental values of the South American region that underpin its identity. The incorporation of this set of shared values into the UNASUR treaty has been supported by Ecuador in consensus with its fellow member states to 'consolidate a South American identity through the progressive recognition of rights of national citizens from any other member-state of UNASUR in order to attain South American citizenship' as mentioned in Article 3 of the UNASUR treaty (UNASUR 2008, art. 3).

The rationale presented in the minutes of the Ecuadorian National Assembly to ratify the UNASUR treaty on 14 May 2009 (document no. 40) also refers to the above values and seeks to further the Ecuadorian values inserted into the UNASUR treaty to construct and consolidate a South American identity. Pilar Núñez, a member of the Assembly and vice president of the Commission for Foreign Affairs, expresses the idea as follows:

what a coincidence, I must admit, that the elements that definitely guided the construction of a libertarian constitution in Ecuador find expression in those values that substantiate the ideal of the Latin Americans, and of the twelve mutually engaging peoples of our countries that signed the treaty (Asamblea Nacional del Ecuador 2009, 115-116).

In conclusion, the political development within Ecuador for the reconstruction of the state found a parallel in regional political development

that was constructing the South American region. The tendency to harmonize the norms, identitarian elements, values, and beliefs motivates Ecuador to support the formation and consolidation of UNASUR.

The Prospect of Communitarian Cooperation and the Creation of First Councils within UNASUR

This analysis explains why Ecuador distanced itself from the South American project in the decade prior to 2007. This changed in the following years when the idea of South American integration itself changed into one of sociopolitically oriented integration. The analysis also provides an insight into the notion of a free market for South America as an important basis for the whole idea of UNASUR. In the end, UNASUR prioritized the political, social, and security fields as the primary areas of cooperation and subsumed economic cooperation as a complementary and long-term objective.

Ecuador hosted more presidential meetings between 2007 and 2012 than in the seven preceding years. From 2000 to 2004, the heads of state and governments of South America met three times mainly to discuss physical integration and pooling of energy sources whereas from 2008 to 2010, they met nine times and the discussion included many new areas such as political dialogue, security and defence, health, and education, which were coordinated by the corresponding councils and technical teams.

Two events within these areas of cooperation further elucidate the reasons for Ecuador's intensive engagement in consolidating of UNASUR: Ecuador's role as President *pro tempore* and the creation of the South American Defence Council.

Regarding Ecuador's role as President *pro tempore*, it is useful to remember that the constitutional bodies of UNASUR are the Council of the Heads of State and Government, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Presidency *pro tempore*, the Council of Envoys, and the General Secretariat. In addition, the Energy Council of South America was created, and it was agreed to create the Defence Council of South America

by December 2008. These initial bodies needed further functional regulations in order to be operative despite the fact that constitutive rules of the foundational treaty regulated the membership and foundational roles as well as specific functions. According to these rules, the Presidency *pro tempore* must be led by every member-state and must be passed on annually to a new member, the sequence being determined by alphabetical order. Moreover, Ecuador was nominated the depository of the instruments for official international recognition of UNASUR. That position, in conjunction with the role of President *pro tempore*, transformed Ecuador into an active participant in the process of consolidating UNASUR after the signing of the treaty.

Ecuador assumed the role of President *pro tempore* of UNASUR on 10 August 2009 and maintained it until November 2010. Ecuador was the second state, after Chile, to lead the regional integration process during a period of great significance to the country, the region, and the whole world. The main economies of the globe were experiencing one of the worst financial crises in the last fifty years, and tensions ran high over the possible effects of the crisis on South America, as these states were just recovering from the economic crisis of the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first.

The United States announced the installation of military bases in Colombia following Ecuador's refusal to extend permission for its forces to remain in Manta, and the entire political system in Ecuador was in transition following the approval of the new constitution in September 2008.

Following Ecuador taking over as President *pro tempore*, further coordination was required as the Council for Health was created, and the consolidation of the Council for Defence also demanded attention. Furthermore, four new councils were created during Ecuador's presidency: (1) the Council for Development, (2) the Council for Education, Culture, Science, Technology and Innovation (COSECCTI), (3) the Council for the Global Problem of Drugs, and (4) the Council for Infrastructure and Planning (COSIPLAN), which subsumed the IIRSA. By the end of 2012, UNASUR had twelve councils. Ecuador continued to coordinate COSECCTI until the end of 2011.

Hence, more meetings and workshops within these new councils were held and corresponding technical groups were created during this period to set up functional frameworks. This activity strengthened Ecuador's perception of belonging to a collective identity, Ecuador's autonomy in decision-making, and Ecuador's ability to engage freely in the region that the country considered itself to be part of.

A statement from Ecuador's foreign minister, Ricardo Patiño, demonstrates this perspective of the sense of 'we-ness' and of belonging to a region—a sense that develops when small states are included in regional affairs and participate in collective projects. In his speech on integration on 17 May 2012, Patiño suggests that the Ecuadorians are now the designers of their own destiny:

> we are now the agents of progress… we are the architects of this new political and economic moment that is no longer suppressed by any doctrine or by any international entity that defines what constitutes the global economy. Now, we are defining our own international and national path … But integration is not just a set of declarations and good intentions. In the twenty-first century, integration is characterized by the cessation of old paradigms … Today, integration has as its priority the strengthening of internal institutions in order that external institutions are also strengthened (Patiño 2012).

This affirmation is also related to the choice of Ecuador to host the General Secretariat of UNASUR, the centre for coordinating the different regional policies of the member-states. This choice and the country's role as the depository of the instruments for the ratification of the UNASUR treaty have encouraged Ecuador to engage in regional political affairs.

As a depository of the instruments of ratification of the UNASUR, Ecuador was in a position to maintain constant diplomatic interaction and dialogue with all its fellow member-states. Similarly, Ecuador, as the host of the permanent General Secretariat, was eager to coordinate the negotiations for the choice of the first Secretary of UNASUR in order to consolidate UNASUR's institutions. This new international role of Ecuador has been strengthened further as, in April 2009, people showed their

support for the government of Rafael Correa and its political project by voting for the incumbent government fifth time running. This assumption is corroborated by the interviewees who, in 2012, considered the region-engaging character of Ecuador in UNASUR as a strategic move on the part of Ecuador.

In January 2010, Ricardo Patiño was appointed the foreign minister and during his time in office, he was able to gather support from the remaining member-states (those who were yet to sign the treaty then) for timely ratification of the UNASUR treaty. This role was strategically combined with that of President *pro tempore* of the Sectoral Councils and of the foreign ministers of UNASUR, which further legitimized the treaty in the eyes of the South American states.

Following the ratification of the treaty by Ecuador in July 2009, ratification by other South American states also became a national aim because of Ecuador's new constitutional mandate, which makes integration a fundamental objective of the state of Ecuador. Accordingly, Ecuador's political actions in the region were driven by this mandate. At an academic event about Ecuador's participation in UNASUR and the construction of a South American citizenship in June 2012, two high-ranking Secretaries of the Government of Ecuador, Lorena Escudero and Carlos Larrea, affirmed that 'Ecuador has much to propose regarding this, the construction of a South American citizenship, due to its strong constitution which supports multilateralism and prioritizes Latin American integration and peoples' diplomacy for achieving human development' (Escudero 2012). 'The constitution of 2008 inspires social qualities and an integrationist spirit, and recovers basic functions of the state in terms of national sovereignty and national interest' (Larrea 2012).

Hence, Ecuador has engaged in this project out of national as well as regional obligations, as Article 12 of the UNASUR treaty states that all norms are binding on the member-states, and Article 26 states that the ratification instruments should be deposited with Ecuador, and the Treaty should come into force 30 days after the reception of the ninth ratification.

Ecuador's newly appointed foreign minister, Ricardo Patiño, made the achievement of UNASUR's ratification a national objective and cam-

paigned across the region. This led to the treaty being ratified by six other states, namely Argentina, Chile, Guyana, Peru, Surinam, and Venezuela. By the end of the term of Ecuador as President *pro tempore* only Brazil, Colombia, Paraguay, and Uruguay were yet to ratify the treaty.

Only a few months later, on 11 March 2011, the treaty came into force following its ratification by Uruguay. Finally, the signing of the treaty by Brazil and Colombia by the end of 2011 consolidated the region, and the UNASUR treaty has been enforceable across the whole of South America since 2012.

The role of President *pro tempore* was also intertwined with Ecuador's contribution to the consolidation of the CSD, another institution to be referred to in this section. The formation of the CSD can be traced back to two major issues highlighted during the first meeting of South American presidents in Brasilia in 2000, namely the collective protection of the region's natural resources and international organized crime. Two more issues were added later when political instability and the presence of the US forces in South America threatened the security of the region. These issues are grouped here into two major concerns that have influenced Ecuador's support to consolidation of the CSD, namely the security of Ecuador itself and agreements with its neighbours to ensure a region of peace. The country's security includes the idea of strengthening the new state, which, according to the new constitution, aims to be a territory of peace. This means that the state aims to guarantee democratic political stability and internal peace free of violent social unrest. At the same time, the state promotes peaceful relationships internationally. The aim of internal peace is a clear reaction to the long years of political instability and undermining of the role of the state in Ecuadorian society, as outlined above. As to the agreement with its neighbours, it has been maintained since the signing of the Peace Treaty of Brasilia in 1998.

The latter event became one of the bases for strengthening the idea of South America as a zone of peace. This can be seen in the Brazilian communiqué of 2000, which states that

Peace and an environment of friendship and cooperation between the twelve South American states are characteristics that favourably distinguish the region in the international context. The permanent solution of territorial disputes, following the example of the 1998 treaty between Ecuador and Peru, constitutes a recent demonstration of the prevailing spirit in South America that will create a region of peace and cooperation from this part of the world (IIRSA 2000b).

With the creation of CSN in 2004, this idea was introduced within a political context as one of the bases for the creation of the South American region. Only two years later, this idea further developed into the creation of an entity that allows South American military systems to cooperate, as the police forces of these countries had previously been doing. The Conference of the Military Chief Commanders of the extended MERCOSUR (including Bolivia and Chile) in 2005, in Chile, took this initiative and an agreement was signed in Santiago in June 2008 while the Brazilian initiative to create the South American Defence Council was officially promoted in order to include all South American states. The appointment of Nelson Jobim as Brazilian defence minister enabled Brazil to promote this project across the region between March and May 2008. The project was presented on 23 May 2008 to the heads of state of South America during their official meeting for the signing of the foundational treaty of UNASUR. As the Brazilian minister Jobim clarified, this initiative required joint planning and agreement by all twelve South American states. The initiative did not aim to be a military alliance similar to NATO but was envisaged as a forum to discuss defence policies to arrive at a common South American position in multilateral international forums such as the Inter-American Board of Defence.

Of the twelve South American states, Colombia was hesitant initially but, following the official reception of the project by UNASUR on 23 May 2008, agreed to participate in the negotiations to define the goals and institutional contents of the CSD. In contrast, the initiative was seen by Ecuadorian officials as a clear signal that all twelve South American states were determined to consolidate their union to create an authen-

tic regional identity reflecting their national interests and strengthening national and regional sovereignty (Ponce 2012, 2010a, 2010b; Rivera 2009).

In March 2008, diplomatic relations between Ecuador and Colombia broke down after the bombing by Colombia of Angostura, in north-eastern of Ecuador. Ecuador was reassured when it became clear, from Brazil's promotion of its idea at the time, that the CSD initiative was in accordance with Ecuador's own aim for a peaceful region. However the announcement in 2009 that US forces must withdraw from Manta presented a risk given that the United States had been Ecuador's major trading partner. Again, the announcement of reforms to the Ecuadorian Ministry of Defence caused turmoil. The reforms were seen as a conspiracy against the government's policy of modernizing the system by introducing civilian administration for roles traditionally filled by military officers. The death of Guadalupe Larriva, the first-ever civilian Minister of Defence, in a helicopter crash on 24 January 2007, only nine days into service, emphasized the difficulty of this undertaking.

Brazil's defence minister, Nelson Jobim, visited Quito on 20 April 2008 to promote the CSD initiative and found official support from President Correa and the Defence Minister Ponce. This project was accepted by a meeting of the heads of state in Brasilia on 23 May 2008. A working group composed of military and civil representatives drawn from of all twelve states was set up. After four negotiation meetings, a final set of principles was agreed upon in Santiago by December 2008. These principles were officially endorsed by the heads of state in the declaration that created the CSD on 16 December 2008. This declaration states three general and eleven specific objectives of the CSD. The three general objectives are 1) to consolidate South America as a zone of peace, both as a basis for the stability of democracy and the integral development of its people, and as a contribution to world peace; 2) to construct a South American identity in the area of defence, taking subregional and national characteristics into consideration, in order to strengthen the union of Latin America and the Caribbean; and 3) to arrive at a consensus to strengthen regional cooperation in the area of defence.

To achieve these objectives, a commission for the setting up of the CSD drew up an action plan for 2009-2010 between January and March 2009. This plan focused on the formation of a South American identity with regard to defence; another central common goal, around which further areas of interest were discussed, was the promotion of regional peace and development.

The conclusions from the plan relevant to Ecuador were the promotion of peace and peaceful solutions to controversies, identification of measures to build mutual trust through dialogue, the construction of a common South American position to present to the international world order, identification of measures to reduce asymmetries, and strengthening cooperation in security to consolidate the South American identity in defence (CSD 2009).

Ecuador's involvement in South American politics intensified when Ecuador became the President *pro tempore* of UNASUR in August 2009. According to the UNASUR regulations, the Presidency of the CSD also had to be transferred to Ecuador, and Ecuador had a duty to follow the Action Plan for 2009-2010 that had been agreed upon in Santiago in March 2009. The guidelines on policy and on the involvement of member-states of the CSD demanded the coordination of CSD's activities in the following four areas: defence policy, military cooperation including humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping operations, defence industry and technology, and education and training.

Ecuador concentrated on modernizing the defence ministries to bring them under greater civilian control because in many South American countries, including Ecuador, defence ministries were yet influenced or controlled by military officers. This leftover from dictatorships became an issue for civilians and politicians. The democratization and civil direction of defence ministries has also been a particular challenge for Ecuador, since the democratic system was relatively weak, and the military continued playing an influential role in national politics as 'guarantors of the juridical system' of the state (Pérez 2010, 133). The transformation of the Ecuadorian Ministry of Defence propelled by the Ecuadorian constitution of 2008 is therefore also linked to the transformation of defence systems at a regional level.

Other areas pursued by Ecuador include the re-establishment of political dialogue with Colombia and assurances given by Colombia on a policy of non-violence. This followed the suspected misuse of Ecuador's airbase at Manta by the US air force to support Colombian forces in the 2008 bombings of Ecuadorian territory. In turn, that triggered a wave of mistrust in the behaviour of US forces and of Colombia, due to the fact that Colombia had offered to host seven US American military bases since 2009. Both events caused a negative reaction from most of the South American states and a diplomatic breakdown between Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela, which had the effect of identifying a common threat to the majority of South American states. As a result, Ecuador called an extraordinary meeting on 28 August 2009, at which the heads of state and government of UNASUR's member-states confirmed the position of Ecuador in the Declaration of Bariloche highlighting that 'the presence of foreign military forces, with their means and resources tied to their own interests, must not threaten the sovereignty and integrity of any South American nation, and consequently the peace and security of the region' (UNASUR 2009a).

These events furthered the construction of new mechanisms for the establishment of trust and transparency between South American states under the coordination of Ecuador as the President *pro tempore* of UNASUR and of the CSD. The meetings of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of Defence of the CSD on 15 September and on 27 November, 2009, in Quito, yielded an agreement to work together to achieve three common objectives for building mutual trust: transparency in the defence policy of member-states, reassurance to all member-states that national military bases will not be used by extra-regional forces to intimidate or threaten any South American state, and the bolstering of South America as a zone of peace as proposed by Ecuador (UNASUR 2009b).

These first steps also included negotiations for an action plan to strengthen mutual trust. The action plan negotiated and agreed upon between January and May 2010 was created through four meetings held in different cities in Ecuador. Specific procedures for working on transparency and exchange of information were defined. The areas covered the

defence system and military budget, intra- and extra-regional activities, measures in the field of security, specification of guarantees, and the procedure for implementation and verification of these mechanisms. This process was reinforced with a further meeting of the working group and representatives of the CSD member-states on 15 July 2010, at which a new agenda for 2010/11 was agreed upon. The agenda aimed to continue the same themes and areas of work until they were ratified and invoked the UNASUR treaty to encourage greater cooperation.

All these efforts by Ecuador to construct international regional peace were obscured by an attempted *coup d'état* on 30 September 2010 by Ecuadorian police and some members of the military. This exposed the weaknesses of Ecuadorian institutions and highlighted the challenges to the consolidation of UNASUR. Thus the nation itself and the zone of peace found themselves under threat, as Ecuador was still the President *pro tempore* of UNASUR and the CSD. However, there was an immediate reaction by Ecuadorian civil society in support of the government. In addition, UNASUR met the same day in Buenos Aires and gave a clear message of zero tolerance to the disruption of democracy in Ecuador and in the region. The Declaration of Buenos Aires on 1 October 2010 and the continuation of CSD meetings on 23 and 25 November 2010 ratified the way to consolidating the region as a community. An agreement on the mechanisms for developing mutual trust in the region provided evidence of the willingness of member-states to strengthen the process, which was confirmed in the meetings on 26 November 2010. As a result, a mechanism for upholding democracy and political stability was introduced, making sanctions a consequence of any attempt at internal disruptions.

To conclude, the following years showed a decrease in national and international tension. Ecuador's relationship with Colombia and Venezuela stabilized as a result of timely mediation by the Secretary of UNASUR, the ex-president Néstor Kirchner (now deceased).

The policies of transparency and mutual trust were further developed within the CSD, which clearly shows an improvement in the development both of South American identity and of regional international trust. The initiative to create a South American School of Defence in Ecuador with

the remit of training and screening both civil and military personnel from South American states is one such instrument for consolidating trust and peace and the region. This Ecuadorian idea, voiced in November 2012 at the 6th official meeting of UNASUR and at the 4th meeting of the CSD in Lima, Peru, is a current example of Ecuador's region-engaging politics. In another direction, Ecuador's diplomatic relationship with the United States deteriorated in April 2011. President Correa declared the US Ambassador to Ecuador, Heather Hodges, *persona non grata* after electronic messages released by WikiLeaks suggested possible interference in Ecuador's political affairs. The tensions caused by this event were revived one year later when the founder of WikiLeaks, Julian Assange, was granted asylum by Ecuador and was consequently allowed to stay in the Ecuador's embassy in London.

Conclusion

This chapter aims to clarify the motives for Ecuador's support to the formation and consolidation of UNASUR. These six main motivating factors are highlighted here once again.

- The expectations embodied in the change from a politically unstable state to a state that functions in accordance with the democratic principles of the region
- The way in which disenchantment with the economic mechanisms for regional integration has gone hand in hand with the perspectives offered by the UNASUR of a more socially oriented regional integration and of communitarian cooperation
- The overpowering military presence of the United States and Ecuador's economic dependence on the United States that triggered a negative reaction from Ecuadorians (This reaction was associated both with the insecurity created by diplomatic impasses with Colombia and at the same time with Ecuador's determined efforts to construct a territory and a region of peace in accordance with its new national constitution.)

- The role of President *pro tempore* that enabled Ecuador to promote its political priorities related to the discussion and formulation of solutions for regional issues
- The strong identitarian ties between South American states that have merged into one regional collective identity in the UNASUR
- The coming to power of the political movement *Alianza País* and Rafael Correa, which brought a new order into national and integrational politics, showing how Ecuador's ideas of regional integration overlapped with the ideas of most South American governments during the years of UNASUR's consolidation

All these can be considered as factors that influenced Ecuador's region-engaging approach to the formation of UNASUR and of a South American region. Although this objective has already faced several challenges, such as the breakdown of diplomatic relations between Colombia and Ecuador, the presence of US forces in South America, and the constant political instability in its member-states, this study has shown that small states can be region-engaging states and that identity can play a fundamental role in their international political actions and decision-making processes.

Chapter 4
Small States in the Construction of the South American Union of Nations (UNASUR): A Case Study Uruguay

Introduction

On 15 December 2010, the Government of Uruguay published a document, Ley N- 18.708, ratifying the constitutional treaty of UNASUR that had been signed by the South American heads of state in 2008 and approved by Uruguay's parliament following debates in the Chamber of Representatives on 4 November and 25 November and in the Senate on 30 November 2010. With this, the minimum requirement, namely ratification by at least nine parliaments or assemblies, was satisfied, and UNASUR became a legally recognized international organization. Shortly before signing the UNASUR treaty, Uruguay also withdrew its support, after thirteen years of negotiations, to the US-backed project of building the FTAA.

There are many reasons why Uruguay upheld the creation and consolidation of UNASUR. The support can be traced back to a change in Uruguayan electorate's preference for a government that sought a new type of regional integration and cooperation in South America built on political dialogue between states that share, among other factors, a collective identity and ideological affinity. This chapter presents this and other insights obtained by analysing the nature of Uruguay's region-engaging activity in the creation and consolidation of UNASUR. The idea of a region-engaging small state and those of a national and regional collective identity, cooper-

ation, integration, and regionalism, continue to inform the constructivist conceptual framework within which this case study was conducted.

Analysis of archival documents, political speeches, six interviews with members of the political elite, and some secondary literature made it possible to identify, in the first part of this case study, the historical factors elucidated in the first section. The second section presents the main identitarian ties of Uruguay with the region as arguments for Uruguay's support to the creation of UNASUR, and the last one examines Uruguay's involvement in the process of creation of the CSD and the South American Council for Health (CSS) within UNASUR as examples of Uruguay's role as a member of this alliance and of a new way of regional communitarian cooperation in South American integration in this century.

Uruguay in Transformation and its Dissatisfaction with the Mechanisms of Economic Integration: Historical Background

Uruguay, one of the smallest states in numerical terms within the South American region, emerged as an independent political entity in 1830 following its struggle for independence from Spain—a result of agreements between those who fought for the creation of Uruguay as an independent political entity, the empire of Brazil, and the newly created Republic of Argentina.

Brazil and Argentina also aimed to avoid further disagreements about their respective claims on Uruguay's territory by creating an independent state. Uruguay, one of the oldest South American small states, is thus historically bound to its neighbours and has maintained friendly ties with them, being one of the states with the fewest international armed conflicts in South America. Moreover, Uruguay's geographical position between Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires, two of the largest economic and population centres on the American South Atlantic coast, combined with the influence of European emigration to alternative commercial ports established in Uruguayan waters, has converted Uruguay into a society of immigrants with a relatively cohesive identity, maintaining

close ties with its neighbours and with its European ancestors. Moreover, its relative wealth, its respect for state institutions, and its support to liberal thinking were also the characteristics that contributed to Uruguay's image as the 'Switzerland of the Americas' until the 1960s (Roniger and Sznajder 2003).

Uruguay has been highly stable politically and maintained its two-party political culture until the end of the twentieth century: the Colorado party and the Blanco (National) party were created shortly after the nation came into being and governed it in turn until the beginning of the twenty-first century. Uruguay is also one of the smaller South American states that has historically maintained its original national political charter, although with some modifications, one of which was enacted in 2004 following a long-standing civil demand since the return to democracy in 1985. Modifications in the main tenets of the state are also related to a transformation of Uruguay's political culture, which began to change following the expansion of socialist and communist thought throughout Latin America in the previous decades. This transformation of the sociopolitical culture also affected Uruguayan society in the late 1960s, particularly its national pride and identity, as the clash of divergent political groups ruptured the democratic system. The civil-military *coup d'état* in June 1973 installed a military dictatorship, and the years that followed became some of the bloodiest in South America and split Uruguayan society into offenders and victims.

This period of Uruguay's sociopolitical transformation can be considered as a political development it shared with most South American states, which functioned under military dictatorships by means of undisclosed cooperation with it. Studies suggest that the secret military collaboration and actions across borders to combat and even annihilate communists, socialists, and Left-oriented political activists as well as those critical of the dictatorial regimes were highly coordinated and planned across the region (Paredes 2004; McSherry 2002; Slack 1996; McSherry 1999). For instance, Operation Condor, which involved Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, with Ecuador and Peru joining in later, led to thousands including women and children being killed (McSherry 2002, 1999; Slack 1996). In this way, sociopolitical issues in Uruguay became

increasingly similar to those in other South American states. Following the return to democracy in 1985, Uruguayans, in common with other South American societies, were confronted by the challenge of democratization. Not the least of their difficulties were the peaceful reincorporation of the military into a democratic system and reconciliation with the Left-oriented political activists and other affected citizens. This was more challenging within a small population of about 3.5 million, with greater possibilities of personal and direct contact between the affected parties than in countries with larger populations. However, in contrast to other South American small states and despite the negative effects of dictatorship on its sociopolitical structure, Uruguay's political stability can be considered relatively high. The country has maintained a political culture of respect for national and international institutions and international law and has made the professionalization of its state administration a priority.

During six full presidential terms since 1985, Uruguay has had five presidents, and all completed their appointment of five years: Julio M. Sanguinetti, 1985-1990 and 1995-2000; Luis Alberto Lacalle, 1990-1995; Jorge Batlle Ibáñez, 2000-2005; Tabaré Vázquez, 2005-2010, and José Mujica, 2010-2015. During these last two presidencies, the political landscape was transformed into a predominant party system. During the presidency of Jorge Batlle, the Leftist party *Frente Amplio* (FA, or the Broad Front), which was created in the beginning of the 1970s and strengthened by the return to democracy, overthrew the two traditional parties, the *Colorado* and the *Nacional*, which had been losing support since the 1990s. Moreover, a regional financial crisis, decrease in exports, and a brief stagnation in the process of integration within the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) and the subsequent social unrest, presented a challenge for the *Colorado* government of Jorge Batlle when its co-legislator, the National party, withdrew political support. Consequently, the two-party politics of Uruguay came to an end in 2004, when the socialist Tabaré Vázquez and his party, the Broad Front, were elected to power. This historic domestic political change also affected Uruguay's views about South American integration: the new government supported more active involvement in the region, confirming the country's region-engaging character.

Uruguay has become a region-engaging small state: its involvement in the creation and maintenance of ALADI and its membership in MERCOSUR from the year of its foundation are just two examples of the region-engaging character of Uruguay. Such traditional commercial ties have been linked to the shared history with its neighbours and family links between Uruguayans and people of the neighbouring countries.

As the host country for the general secretariats of both ALADI and MERCOSUR, Uruguay has traditionally played a region-engaging role in South America, and its involvement in the creation of mechanisms for economic integration has been recognized since the foundation of CEPAL in February 1948 and later through the appointment of Montevideo as the host city for the General Secretariat of the Latin American Free Trade Association (ALALC), created in 1962 and transformed into ALADI in 1980, which includes ten South American states. Only Guyana and Surinam were never included; instead, farther Latin American states such as Mexico have been members since the organization was set up. Uruguay has been consistent in participating in the process of construction of the South American region. From its beginnings as IIRSA in 2000, Uruguayan presidents and representatives of Uruguay's diplomatic service have integrated these negotiations within this project and have set up special groups for coordination and cooperation.

Despite the withdrawal of popular support to President Batlle at the end of 2004, Uruguay continued its involvement in the creation of CSN in December 2004 and, since 2005, in the transformation of CSN into UNASUR in 2008 and in its institutional consolidation in 2011.

The final parliamentary debates on the issue in November 2010, which led to Uruguay signing the UNASUR treaty, also confirm the traditional region-engaging character of this nation. The acts of parliament contain the arguments put forth by the country's foreign minister, Luis Almagro, before the Commission for International Affairs of the Chamber of Representatives on 4 November 2010. The minister said,

> We understand that Uruguay has to be an active agent in the South American integration process. …This area of integration that UNASUR aims

to construct includes certain areas which are still being discussed in meetings regarding cultural, social, and economic matters and related to social, education, energy, infrastructure and environmental policies. According to the treaty, the idea is to generate an environment for dialogue and the exchange of information with the aim of attaining social inclusion and civil participation, and strengthening democracy and reducing asymmetry (Cámara de Representantes de Uruguay 2010b, 3).

This argument is based on various common principles that connect the political position of Uruguay to the aims of UNASUR, as expressed in Article 3 of the foundational treaty, 2008. In particular, in its plan for the years following 2004, the Left-oriented political party (the Broad Front) highlights the re-entry of Uruguay into regional integration processes. This view of Uruguay's regional role was corroborated by political figures from both the present and the past Uruguayan governments in the interviews conducted as part of the present study.

However, interviewees from the political opposition view this process of integration with scepticism and question whether the integration is appropriate for a small economy. The opposition had a very different view of UNASUR. Senators Sergio Abreu and Ope Pasquet, in personal interviews in May 2012, suggested that UNASUR was part of a plan by Brazil to consolidate its hegemony in South America (Abreu in discussion with the author, May 2012; Pasquet in discussion with the author, May 2012). The scepticism of some traditional politicians is consistent with the argument against UNASUR expressed by *Diputado* Vázquez from the *Colorado* party, which had voted against the ratification of the treaty in November 2010. This parliamentary debate demonstrates dissatisfaction with the earlier processes of integration and the political opposition's doubts about UNASUR by suggesting that 'this is the ninth or tenth attempt at integration. All, including MERCOSUR, have slowly languished' (Cámara de Representantes de Uruguay 2010a, 122).

Nevertheless, the UNASUR treaty was approved by Uruguay's parliament during these debates. Uruguay's commitment to the South American project illustrates two aspects of the country's politics, national and region-al, and both blend with the socialist ideology of recent governments. The national policy is manifest in the Leftist government's efforts to consolidate its position as the new political leadership in Uruguay and at the same time contributing to the new era of South American regional politics. The regional policy embraces the common South American understanding that to overcome both new and old challenges collectively, a new mechanism to achieve regional integration is required, quite different from the earlier attempts, which mainly supported regional economic integration. Accordingly, international cooperation for addressing common sociopolitical issues and diplomatic impasses, among others, was envisaged and proposed within UNASUR.

As to regional politics, two issues need to be addressed, both of which predate Uruguay's signing of the UNASUR treaty, namely the influence of the United States and Brazil on the whole South American region in general and on Uruguay in particular and the country's region-engaging character within the Latin American context and its discontentment with the economic mechanisms of integration. Both the issues have contributed to strengthening the relationships among South American states in the decades before UNASUR.

In comparing secondary literature with documents from Uruguay's Foreign Office from 2000 to 2004, it became clear that the relationship among South American states had deepened since the beginning of the 1990s. South American small states, particularly Uruguay and Paraguay, were being torn between the influence of Brazil and the United States; however, as the new century dawned, the tide began to turn in favour of the region with the decisive appeal from Brazil to create SAFTA—an idea that won against the 'Enterprise Initiative for the Americas' proposed by the United States. The US project was introduced by President George W. Bush Sr. in June 1990 and was followed by the creation of NAFTA in 1992 with the expressed intention to extend it to the whole continent (Vieira 2008; Phillips 2005; Carranza 2000; Hurrell 1995b), whereas the idea of SAFTA was introduced to South American presidents by Brazil in 2000 as the Initiative for Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America. On the one hand, the United States had persevered in establishing

its hegemony in the continent, a policy based on the 'Monroe Doctrine' of the 1820s and on its endorsement of the idea of 'Pan-Americanism' at the dawn of the twentieth century. The idea was reinforced in the 1940s technically, economically, and logistically and the creation of new similar institutions was supported: the Inter-American Defence Board was created in 1942; the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance was signed in 1947; and the Pan-American Union was turned into the OAS in 1948. These moves consolidated US supremacy on the continent, and Uruguay as well as most other Latin American states came under its direct influence.

However, US influence tended to decline in the region following the failure of the project 'Alliance for Progress', an aid programme for Latin America that provided financial support as a developmental aid for poor states in order to fight the expansion of Communism in the region in the 1960s (Taffet 2007). Direct and indirect US military interventions in South American small states as well as US support to some draconian military dictatorships during the 1970s and 1980s further damaged the image of the United States in the region (Poggio 2012). In Uruguay, open US support for dictatorship during 1973-1985 widened the political divide, the impact of which was felt on democratic institutions and on society as a whole. The ultimate result was the reconstruction of Uruguay's identity, as discussed in the next section.

In contrast to the US vision for South America, Brazil has historically been a discrete political actor in the region until the late 1970s, when the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (OTCA) was created. The limited role played by Brazil in creating a cohesive region in South America was then replaced by a calculated Brazilian geopolitical plan for its role in the region and in world politics in the twenty-first century. The plan empowered Brazil to open itself to the region from that time and was further strengthened when Brazil and Argentina were joined by Uruguay and Paraguay in taking the first step towards building a peaceful region through the creation of MERCOSUR in 1991, which was followed by the idea put forward by Brazil to expand the market as SAFTA to cover the whole South American region (Carranza 2000). By creating MERCOSUR and OTCA, Brazil succeeded in bringing all the small South American states

under its influence by the beginning of the 1990s and had the advantage of not being mistrusted by Latin American states to the same extent as the United States. Brazil also shares its borders, political values, history, and further identitarian features with most of the small states, which enabled them to demand more action from Brazil on certain shared issues such as coordination to control the destruction of the Amazon basin. This increasing involvement of small South American states with Brazil and Argentina was further strengthened in responding to the US proposal, in 1994, of expanding NAFTA to the whole hemisphere as FTAA. The attempt to open the borders of all South American states to the market not only demonstrated the US position of trying to re-establish itself as the leader of an emerging continental economic regime (Phillips 2005; Hurrell 1995b) but also brought all South American states around the negotiation table for a long time.

Uruguayan Foreign Office documents from 2000 to 2004 clearly show Uruguay's support to the FTAA project at the beginning of the century during the government of President Jorge Batlle. The negotiations were conducted within the various thematic commissions of the FTAA project, and Uruguay and other small states obtained special assistance owing to the considerable asymmetries in the economies across the continent. Uruguay and other South American states interacted constantly to find common interests in negotiating with the United States. The interactions were either bilateral or multilateral, conducted within the framework of subregional organizations such as MERCOSUR, or as members of special groups of states with small economies. The extent of the negotiations increased following the Summit of the American States in Quebec in April 2001, as the national markets were expected to open by the end of 2005. As a result, various small states began to express their position openly and to voice their concerns about the possible effects of the FTAA on their national markets and on their own societies.

The proceedings of the fifteenth meeting of the Negotiation Commission for Commerce of the FTAA in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, in ctober 2003, show that Uruguay had started questioning the real benefits of the FTAA. At the meeting, Uruguay demanded clear anti-dump-

ing policies to eliminate subsidies on exportable products, particularly on agricultural goods, a worry it shared with most South American states, particularly with Brazil, it being one of the main producers of agricultural commodities in South America.

Uruguay also demanded of the FTAA that it 'neither restrain nor impose', a demand that, for a small state with a weak economy, was attainable only by joining forces with the closest fellow states. Despite prompt support from some South American states for entering into free-trade agreements with the United States on a bilateral basis (such as Chile in 2003), these negotiations with other states of South America came to a standstill following the meetings in October 2004. Venezuela in particular officially voiced its reservations about continuing the negotiations due to various diplomatic impasses with the United States. The idea of expanding this initiative to the whole continent met with a variety of barriers and was opposed by organized anti-American civil groups, environmentalists, new Left-oriented governments, and academics. Such politically engaged groups interpreted this initiative as another US strategy to dominate the continent by introducing a hemispheric economic regime with neo-liberal rules. For many critical political writers, such measures were aimed at debilitating the role of the nation-states and furthering private transnational business (Buono 2006; Múnera 2006; Ruiz 2006). In Uruguay, such economic and political measures taken by the government of the traditional parties were directly opposed by Uruguay's socialist Broad Front party. President Batlle's support for the FTAA endured until the end of his term. One of his arguments in support of the US project was that during the 2000-2003 Uruguayan crisis, the United States had been the 'only country that gave us a hand' (President Batlle in discussion with the author, May 2012). The Left-oriented politicians and writers point to President Batlle's personal friendship with the US president, George W. Bush Jr. This mutual personal interest favoured US interests despite the collision between FTAA's aims and the expectations of the great majority of Uruguayan society. Furthermore, academics and critical political activists suggest that free trade between asymmetrical economies was impoverishing the weaker economies. The population was dissatisfied with the inability of traditional

Uruguayan political forces, the *Colorado* and *Nacional* parties, to resolve the social problems created by the neo-liberal policies supported by the United States (Múnera 2006; Rodríguez 2005; Díaz 2003).

A report from CEPAL (2005) on the challenges of South American integration highlights a causal relationship between the neo-liberal policies introduced in the Latin American region and the rise of unemployment, increasing poverty, adverse effects on health, and a considerably widening gap between the rich and the poor from 1998 to 2003. Uruguay was also affected by that causal relationship (CEPAL 2005).

Consequently, support for the FTAA declined in Uruguay, as it did in most states of the region in 2005, since many South American states, including Uruguay, elected Leftist governments directly opposed to the establishment of the FTAA. However, such socio-economic developments triggered a wave of dissatisfaction with the existing mechanisms of regional integration, as these also showed limited capability to solve political, social, and economic crises in their member-states. While Uruguay's support for the FTAA started declining by the end of President Batlle's term (2000-2005), Brazil's idea of SAFTA gained prominence through the introduction of IIRSA as the first step towards building a South American region introduced in September 2000 as a prelude to creating a free-trade zone in the region. Although South American states fell into a deep financial and foreign debt crisis at the end of the 1990s, Uruguay did not withdraw its support for this project. UNASUR documents show that Uruguay was involved in numerous negotiations and presidential meetings from the initiation of IIRSA in 2000 until 2012, when UNASUR imposed sanctions on Paraguay.

Within the context of the conflict of interest between these influential continental forces, for Uruguay and most South American small states the pendulum finally began to swing following the fifth Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in November 2005. It was clear that many South American states were not prepared to enter into further negotiations. The FTAA project was condemned to failure following thirteen years of negotiations, more than fifteen meetings of the Negotiation Committee for Commerce, eight ministerial meetings, and five summits

of the leaders of the states of the Americas. Nevertheless, these FTAA negotiations drove the South American states to interact and to communicate with each other for identifying common economic issues and foster collective interests. The failure of the FTAA project signalled both the decline of the United States' overpowering influence in the region and the rise of Brazil's influence in South America. At the same time, Uruguay's scepticism about the effectiveness and appropriateness of an economically and commercially integrated South American region appears to have been increasing.

This last argument is related to the second issue (see p. 3) that predated the consolidation of UNASUR through the support of Uruguay during the first year of the government of President José Mujica. This issue involves the increasing dissatisfaction of Uruguay with the suitability of the existing mechanisms of regional integration, the ALADI and the MERCOSUR, and their impact on Uruguay's socio-economic development. International economic cooperation within ALADI illustrated major weaknesses concerning regional integration in Latin America that captured the political discourse of Uruguay's political elite. These weaknesses are related to two factors, namely the apathy shown by regional economic mechanisms of integration towards questions of democracy and human rights and the scant loyalty of their members to commonly agreed regulations.

For a start, most of the *coup d'états*, military dictatorships, and the ensuing torture of thousands of South American civilians who mainly belonged to Left-oriented political organizations continued despite ALALC/ALADI (Paredes 2004; McSherry 2002; Slack 1996; McSherry 1999). Secondly, ALALC/ALADI did little to counter the atrocities of the military dictatorships. Instead, ALALC was transformed into ALADI even as thousands of South American civilians were being tortured by these dictatorships (McSherry 2002, 1999). Thirdly, democracy was not a prerequisite to the functioning of ALALC/ALADI. Hence, the new Left-oriented governments of South American states, particularly Uruguay, could hardly trust ALALC/ALADI again as a regional instrument to build and maintain national and regional democracy and peace. The argument that the failure

of regional integration was due to the weak commitment of its members to the rules of ALADI and other instruments of Latin American economic integration (Dabène 2009; Vieira 2008) is corroborated by the analysis of the debates for the ratification of UNASUR in 2010.

The breach of Article 44 of the ALADI treaty regarding commercial agreements with third parties and the extension of these policies to small states favoured by the clause dealing with benefits for less developed economies were matters of great concern to Uruguay's policymakers over the old mechanism of economic integration. This clause was violated by Mexico in 1994 when the NAFTA came into force, followed by Chile in 2003 when it established a free-trade agreement with the United States. In addition to this, ALADI did not have the power to gather its member-states to form a common front to resolve the debt and financial crisis of the 1990s and beginning of the 2000s. For these reasons, the Uruguayan government built by the Broad Front has been keen since 2005 on changing the old type of regional integration.

This desire to change the type of regional integration can also be interpreted as a reaction to the stagnation of economic regional integration and to its low success rate in resolving disputes between member-states of MERCOSUR since the turn of the century. Moreover, the focus of small states on exports to one or two major markets affected friendly relationships between South American states in various ways and also reinforced the dependency of small states (Correa 2010; Hey 1995a, 1995b). For instance, Uruguay became economically dependent on its trade with Brazil and Argentina within the newly created MERCOSUR. As a result, the Brazilian financial crisis strongly impacted Uruguay's economy at the beginning of this century, causing a variety of commercial disputes with both Argentina and Brazil. The disputes with Argentina were further exacerbated as the government led by President Batlle in 2002 approved the construction of pulp mills on the bank of the Uruguay River along the country's border with Argentina. The environmental impacts of these plants were the cause of a protracted dispute with Argentina because of the likely pollution. As to Brazil, MERCOSUR Decree 3646 setting a tax of 150% on exports of tobacco to Uruguay triggered a controversy with

Brazil, which further affected the uneasy relationship in 2003 caused by the Brazilian financial crisis and the cut in Uruguay's imports.

Despite these setbacks, Uruguay continued to support Brazil's proposal for SAFTA following its introduction as IIRSA. The support is evident in the documents related to IIRSA about President Batlle's participation in the first meeting of the heads of the South American states in Brasilia in 2000. In 2003, during Uruguay's *pro tempore* Presidency of MERCOSUR, Guillermo Valles, Uruguayan ambassador to MERCOSUR, supported the idea of establishing a free market in the South American region. The first clear attempt was made when representatives from CAN and MERCOSUR worked on an agreement to establish a South American free market, conducting a series of negotiations in Montevideo from August to December 2003. The outcome was the foundational document of CSN in 2004 as a long-term aim.

However, when the Leftist party led by Tabaré Vázquez formed the government in 2005, little progress was made despite the creation of a joint high commission with Argentina, within the framework of MERCOSUR, to resolve the controversies. Instead, a variety of new disputes appeared and brought the bilateral dialogue to a standstill by the end of 2009. Documents related to the debates about the ratification of UNASUR suggest that at the beginning of 2010, Uruguay had at least eighteen unresolved bilateral issues with Argentina, including the dispute about the paper mills, which is pending before the International Court of Justice at The Hague since 2006.

The Left-oriented governments of the region began to search for a new kind of forum for cooperation, and out of this search grew the idea of transforming CSN into UNASUR. Signing of the UNASUR treaty in May 2008 and Uruguay's coming on board in November 2010 as the ninth signatory enabled UNASUR to consolidate itself and to be registered with the United Nations as a regional international organization with binding powers on 11 March 2011.

To summarize, this historical background points to three relevant trends in political developments within Uruguay and in the region: Uruguay has traditionally been a region-engaging small state; Uruguay con-

tinues to interact with other South American states given the many continental, regional, and subregional integration projects; and the proposed mechanisms of economic integration have proved inadequate for resolving the economic and social crises of Uruguay and the region and the disputes between states of the region. This combination of factors compelled this country to search for a new forum to promote cooperation with other states and to conceive a form of political cooperation defined here as communitarian cooperation.

Overlapping Factors Between Uruguay's Identity and the Idea of a South American Identity

This section focuses on two significant factors that influenced Uruguay's decision to support the consolidation of UNASUR: coming to power of a Leftist or socialist party (the Broad Front) and the positioning of elements of a collective identity as a pillar for the new form of cooperation to further South American integration.

The Broad Front has been leading the country since 2005, when it assumed office for the first time since the formation of the party in 1971. This change – the result of a change in the preference of Uruguay's electorate – ended 174 years of two-party politics (the *Colorado* and the *Nacional*) during which the power had been alternating between the two. The history of the formation of the Broad Front and its political platform show that the party comprises a variety of political groups that range from the radical communist to right-of-the-centre dissidents from the traditional conservative *Colorado* party. Hence, the Broad Front represents a diversity of political views that could, in time, challenge its structures and long-term objectives. The government by the Broad Front since 2005 has pursued two aims: to consolidate itself as the third leading party in the country and to maintain a positive international image of a traditionally stable and region-engaging small state. Nationally, the Broad Front started by investing more in public health and education, creating more jobs, guaranteeing employment stability to those public servants that had been working

under unstable work contracts earlier, and raising salaries. Some of these experiences were shared and extended regionally, as will be clarified in the following section on the creation of the CSS.

Regionally, the Broad Front party attempted to promote Uruguay as an active political agent in the region, enhancing its traditional role as a region-engaging small state but also looking for a new kind of integration that sees cooperation as mutual action between partner states and includes the socio-economic development of the majority of the people. The challenge was how to position and expand such ideas in the context of international politics.

The creation of CSN in 2004 introduced a political framework to support activities conducted within IIRSA. From 2005 onwards, the original idea, put forward by Brazil, of establishing a free market zone in South America was transformed into a broader concept of South American integration. This was the new regional political environment in which the Broad Front had to position its principles related to regional integration. Such modifications in the attitude towards integration have been common among South American states. Some studies see the changes as a result of changed political preferences across the region since the turn of the century (Fernández 2011; Sanahuja 2010); however, Gardini and Lambert (2011) prefer to characterize the changes as a cyclical phenomenon in the course of which no consistency in foreign policy can be guaranteed. Evidently, most South American conservative parties that had strong ties with the main economic sectors were the dominant organizations in the 1980s and 1990s, but lost their electorate's support in the twenty-first century. The newly created parties or modern Left-oriented parties were governing South America by 2010 and came to power with an agenda that aimed to change the neo-liberal practices introduced by their predecessors into more socially oriented policies. The election of the socialist Tabaré Vázquez to the presidency of Uruguay in 2004 is one such transformation in the preferences of the South American electorate.

In short, Uruguay's involvement in shaping the communitarian cooperation and founding UNASUR was the outcome of five crucial years. These years saw a shift in ideas from economic cooperation based on building the

SAFTA to communitarian cooperation based on the socially oriented UNASUR. The first relevant step was establishing the Special Commission of High Representatives of the South American States, which was taken on 5 December 2005 in Montevideo. The other strategic impetus to UNASUR's consolidation was Uruguay's ratification of the UNASUR treaty on 15 December 2010. As mentioned above, Uruguay was represented throughout the creation of UNASUR by high-ranking state representatives, including the head of state, despite changes in domestic politics. Declarations by Reinaldo Gargano in 2005, who was the foreign minister in the government of Tabaré Vázquez, show that Uruguay's economic, social, and political engagements in the region were intended to support integration as a further step towards the unification of the whole of Latin America. Although these declarations did not clarify the kind of cooperation that Uruguay was aiming at, the reports and minutes of parliamentary debates of the Special Commissions from CSN in 2005 to 2007 show that the country's involvement was not constant but ranged from being the host country for the initial meetings to leading them, together with Venezuela. These discussions covered the treatment of asymmetries in the region, identification of challenges to and benefits from South American integration, and drawing up of the UNASUR treaty. During these exchanges, Uruguay's concern for a more socially oriented integration for South America, as declared by the Broad Front, was shared by most South American states. The documents of the High Commission and the reports of ALADI, CAN, MERCOSUR, and Inter-American Development Bank concerning the challenges and benefits of integration advised the heads of South American states to prioritize structural and social problems across the region.

These suggestions were related to a new kind of cooperation for improving South America's living standards. The principles put forward included solidarity and equality as the basis to ensure every state's participation. The existing consensus clause, implemented since 2000 in IIRSA projects, was reinforced as a guarantee of equality between South American states. These principles can be considered as fundamental to the development of a new form of collaboration known here as communitarian cooperation. The achievements of small states in their construction of UNASUR can be

related to the direct involvement of Uruguay since 2005 in the formation of a new regional organization for international cooperation.

President Tabaré Vázquez's attendance at the presidential meeting in Cochabamba, Bolivia, in 2006 should not be regarded simply as a symbolic expression of support by the president for this project: it also symbolized support for a common understanding of the reasons for incorporating social elements in the treaty and for measures to reduce poverty and economic asymmetries within both national and regional contexts. The ideal of regional integration reflects the political position of the Broad Front expressed already in the party guidelines from 1990 and reinforced through the governmental guidelines from 2003 and 2008. This regional agreement is broadly consistent with the Left-oriented Broad Front's policy of pursuing new forms of integration. However, this new international organization triggered other concerns that Uruguay shared with other South American small states including, in particular, the financial capability of small states to maintain permanent posts for government departments involved in the new integration structures as well in the old ones.

Most members of the political elite interviewed for this study confirmed these concerns. Their arguments were related particularly to the small budget of a small state and the duplication of official roles in different international organizations and institutions. The duplication of roles, as suggested by *Diputado* Martínez Huelmo, may 'thwart cooperation and will cost more to the state' (Martínez Huelmo in discussion with the author, May 2012). Moreover, regional organizations such as ALADI and MERCOSUR have been not only centres of expertise but also expressions of identity: they are important forums where the majority of South American states have been able to interact and to identify their shortcomings as well as their potential. This view was acknowledged by members of the political elite such as the Uruguayan President Tabaré Vázquez and the Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez, who, in an open letter, suggested that such experiences be incorporated into the new integration project. Such thoughts also found a place in the final document prepared by the Strategic Commission formed to reflect on the new form of integration

for South America. In this document it was pointed out that Uruguay supports these initiatives and that

> the construction of a new type of integration should not only be based on commercial relations, especially when everybody knows that the region tolerates diverse international regimes such as MERCOSUR, CAN, Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and Chile. South American countries should also seek a wider coordination of their economies and their production. This would take the form of focusing on commercial union and on new ways of cooperating socially, politically and culturally. The ultimate aim would be to construct a balanced integration and an agenda of social integration (IIRSA 2006).

In the meetings of governmental delegates and high-level representatives in 2007 and 2008, many of these ideas were also discussed and incorporated in the final document of the treaty of UNASUR.

On the one hand, the treaty included many vague concepts that seek consensus and approval by all parties (Sanahuja 2010); on the other, it reflects the complexity of a diverse continent, asymmetrical in the areas of economics, politics, and social relations. Notwithstanding these obstacles, the signing of the UNASUR treaty in Brasilia in May 2008 by all South American states demonstrates that all of them were willing to initiate a new kind of cooperation as the means to achieve South American integration. This consensus between Uruguay and other states of the region reflects continuity in Uruguay's stable regional politics during the presidency of Tabaré Vázquez, and it can also be interpreted as the mechanism used by the Broad Front to position itself as a cautious organization in an unknown area of international relations to retain its electorate's support and to consolidate itself as the new leading party in Uruguay. At the same time, this tactical move of the Broad Front kept open the possibility of supporting the establishment of a new political era in South America, which was dominated by Left-oriented organizations by 2010. Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay, Venezuela, and, since 2008, Paraguay were by then led by Left-oriented governments. Consequently, a more politically and socially oriented form of South American integration

won greater support. This rather cautious move in regional politics during the first presidential mandate of the Broad Front was carefully matched by the newly elected government for the party's second term of leadership. The newly elected president, José Mujica Cardona, a former member of the Marxist guerrilla group the *Tupamaro*, began the party's second term in March 2010, following a long trajectory of political activism, which had forced him to serve 14 years in prison during the dictatorships of the 1970s and 1980s. His government decided to modify the country's foreign policy, which until then had followed the traditional Uruguayan approach of rigidity and bureaucratic diplomacy. Instead, President Mujica introduced a policy that prioritized dialogue and convergence of interests with neighbouring states, initially applied to Argentina and then steadily implemented across the region. With President Mujica, it became clear that Uruguay expected to support UNASUR as a new path to integration that would promote communitarian cooperation.

UNASUR offers the possibility of political dialogue and convergence of interests on the basis of a shared history, shared identity, and similar sociopolitical challenges, whereby every member-state can contribute its capabilities and experiences to complement those of the others. Luis Almagro, Uruguay's foreign minister under the government of Mujica, explained this to the Commission for Foreign Affairs of the Chamber of Senators and Representatives during the sessions on UNASUR in May and November 2010, and confirmed this in a personal interview in April 2012, emphasizing that 'every one of us [countries] has something to contribute to the integration … and we need to decide in which area we can contribute most … health for example' (Luis Almagro, in discussion with the author, April 2012a). However, the involvement of every state had to be reflected in parliamentary ratification of the treaty by its members, and the process coincided with the national elections in Uruguay.

President Vázquez sought the parliament's approval of the treaty in November 2008, and the Chamber of Senators approved it in April 2009 despite the reservations in Uruguay about Argentina's intentions in nominating its former president, Néstor Kirchner, as the General Secretary of UNASUR given the fact that Uruguay and Argentina had failed to resolve

their commercial disputes and to overcome their diplomatic impasses while he was the president. Uruguay's doubts about the neutrality and appropriateness of UNASUR and the prospect of an unfriendly General Secretary led to a political position that can be summed up as 'no election means no rejection', *no voto no veto,* designed to overcome domestic political pressure and opposition. In Uruguay's political circles this meant that the country could support the consolidation of UNASUR while being neutral in the matter of Kirchner's nomination. The ratification of the UNASUR treaty in November 2010 was not achieved solely as the result of a new foreign policy of President José Mujica—it was also in the interests of Uruguay's national strategy to show that its concerns and views about South American integration were legitimate in the regional political context.

Popular acceptance of President Mujica's ideas reinforced the pattern of regional politics started by President Vázquez, but Mujica changed the foreign office from a proud conservative nationalist office, still highly influential during the mandate of his predecessor, to a foreign office more open to political dialogue.

President Mujica was elected on 29 November 2009, assumed office on 1 March 2010, and within a couple of months reopened the dialogue with Argentina. This resumption of talks reassured Argentinian aspirations to nominate Néstor Kirchner as the first UNASUR General Secretary and helped in overcoming the diplomatic impasses between the two countries; the rapprochement benefited not only them – trade across the border was resumed – but also the entire region. Kirchner became the General Secretary of UNASUR on 4 May 2010, and his nomination served to strengthen the organization.

President Mujica said, during the presidential meeting of UNASUR in May 2010, that Uruguay decided to 'go along with the consensus in order that South America should have a chance to insert itself as a unit on the international scene' (Mujica 2010). This statement emphasizes the region-engaging role of Uruguay in building of South America as a region and also demonstrates that the new approach to cooperation proved useful in resolving international conflicts, strengthening the feeling of 'we-ness' and thus contributed to the consolidation of a South American identity.

This new approach to regional cooperation affected a large section of Uruguay's political elite to such an extent that even some members of the opposition began to take a positive view of UNASUR. For instance, Senator Da Rosa of the opposing *Nacional* party, speaking in the Chamber of Senators on 30 November 2010, stated that they would support the confirmation of the treaty because

This process … aims for integration of the South American countries and establishes certain objectives … Among these objectives, we find the promotion of political dialogue …, support for social policies, the coordination of areas of education regarding the commonalities of the states, protection of democracy, promotion of social inclusion … the intention to reduce asymmetries between the member states, all these areas we consider important areas for Uruguay (Cámara de Senadores de Uruguay 2010, 52).

Finally, the ratification by Uruguay as the ninth signatory, which made UNASUR a recognized international entity, enabled the Leftist Broad Front to portray itself to its electorate as an established party of the country. At the same time, the signing projected Uruguay as a crucial political actor in the region, conscious of its historical tradition as a region-engaging state. Another important factor contributing to the building of UNASUR was the reliance on the shared elements of national identities as sources of a collective regional identity. This analysis has revealed the identitarian factors linking Uruguay's concepts of its identity to the wider concepts of a South American identity first proposed and then expanded by UNASUR. These factors can be categorized as shared norms, shared identification features, and shared values and beliefs (Figure 4.1). All of them underpin the collective identity (Wendt 1999, 1994a). Hence, all Uruguayan norms, values, and beliefs shared with other South American states and explicitly recognized within the UNASUR are sources of the wider South American identity. Uruguayan norms, identitarian features, values, and historical events are related to the norms, values, and beliefs underpinning the creation of UNASUR. These factors linking Uruguay to other South American states constitute the joining elements between Uruguay and the umbrella framework of the South American region symbolized by UNASUR.

Figure 4.1 Institutional regulations of Uruguay and UNASUR that legitimize political action
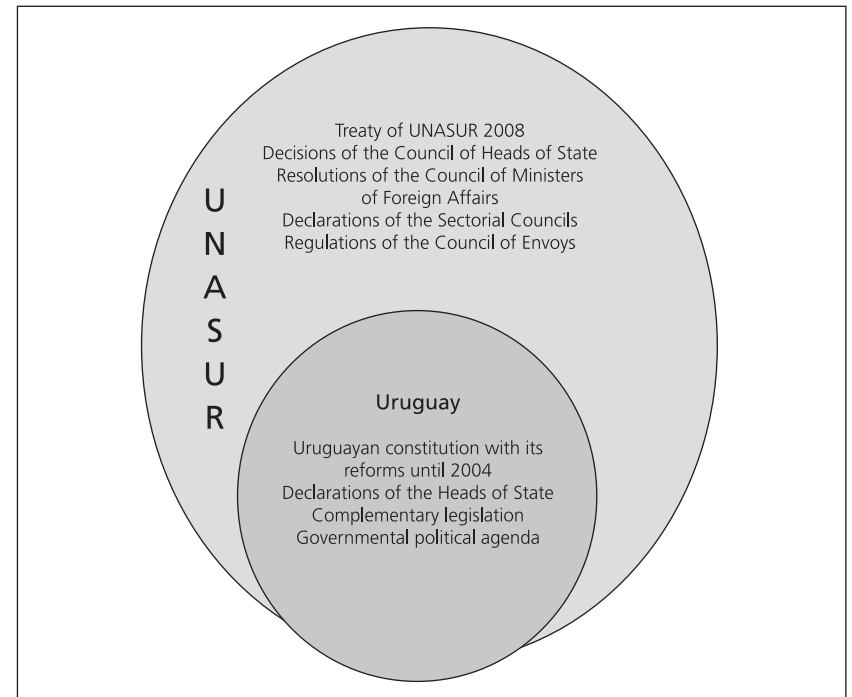
Various formally institutionalized and informal Uruguayan norms enable the state to support regional integration, as shown in Figure 4.1. One of these main norms is embedded in Uruguay's political constitution, a subsection of Article 6 of which states that 'the Republic will assume the social and economic integration of the Latin American states, particularly within the area of common defence of its products and natural resources. Equally, it will foster the efficient complementation of its public services' (Uruguay's constitution of 1967 including changes in 2004, Article 6). This argument was highlighted by the supporters in Uruguay of the consolidation of UNASUR and could not be refuted by those who opposed them, since the constitution itself reflects the region-engaging character of this nation.

Uruguay's presidential declarations are also legally binding. Presidential Declaration No. 18708 (of 15 December 2010) enjoins Uruguay to respect the regulations of UNASUR, since in ratifying the treaty the president expresses the will of the whole Uruguayan people. Another source of Uruguay's regional political action is the party's position, stated in several documents of the Broad Front, on regional integration of the government in power during UNASUR's period of construction. These documents include the foundation documents from 1971 to 1984, the Action Plan of 1990, and the Governmental Guidelines for 2005-2009 and 2010-2015 that declare explicit support for Latin American integration. As shown in Figure 4.1, Uruguay's protocols are enshrined in the regional regulation covered by UNASUR's own protocols, which are binding on Uruguay so long as they have been arrived at by consensus.

Article 12 of UNASUR's constitutive treaty spells out the expectations from national and regional protocols and therefore obliges Uruguay to abide by these regional regulations. This is explicitly stated: 'Regulations that originated in UNASUR's institutions are binding on all member-states as long as these had been incorporated into the juridical system of every state in accordance with their internal procedures' (UNASUR 2008). In other words, the constitutive treaty, the decisions and declarations of the heads of the South American states, and the regulations and resolutions of the councils of UNASUR form abiding norms for Uruguay as well as for the other signatory states of the South American region.

On the one hand, the linkage between these institutional national and regional norms enables Uruguay to position itself legally in the role of a leader of the integration process when it obtains the Presidency *pro tempore* of UNASUR. This position will enable Uruguay to exert greater influence in the consolidation of the alliance and was one of the main arguments in the debates from April to November 2010 on the ratification of the UNASUR treaty by Uruguay. On the other hand, the national and regional connection through these norms limits Uruguay because it must abide by them and behave accordingly. Uruguay is thus trapped in the dilemma common to all small states, namely having to choose between influence and autonomy, as Goetschel (1998b) characterizes small states in integration processes.

It is true to say that the historical development of the Broad Front represents a change in Uruguay's political culture and identity. Two historical factors have impacted the identity of Uruguay and the whole region, shaping Uruguay's identity even more to make it fit better into the whole region. The first was the creation of the Latin American Free Trade Association (ALALC) in 1962, in which Uruguay's position was based on the integrationist virtues of the free market, one of its benefits being its ability to unify the region to confront the overpowering outside economic influence collectively (Ministerio de Hacienda 1962). The second factor was the transformation of Uruguay's political culture and the shared identification features that have historically linked Uruguay to the Ibero-American states, as shown in Figure 4.2. These elements of a shared collective identity were directly highlighted by the reopening of the dialogue with Argentina.

Figure 4.2 Identitarian features shared between Uruguay and other states in the region
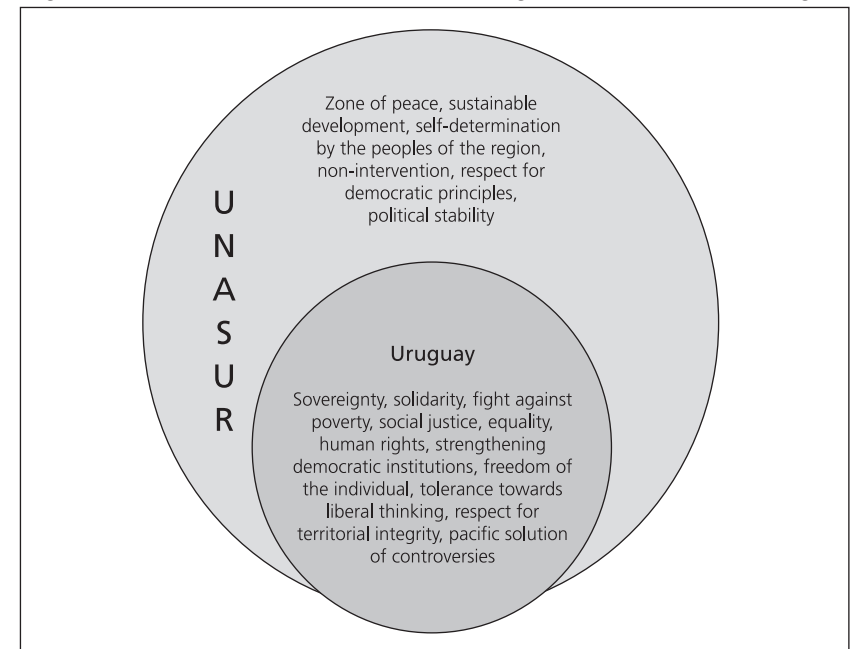
Here, Uruguay's political elite say 'Yes we are brothers with Argentina, yet we have many conflicts.' However, conflicts are part of cooperation, and conflicts (in the sense of diplomatic or commercial impasses) are bound to arise in the process of cooperation (Groom 1990). As shown in Figure 4.2, some identification features of Uruguay are embedded in the identitarian elements of the South American identity and serve as principles on which dialogues can be reopened, conflicts resolved, and the region strengthened.

The list of identification features of both Uruguayan and South American identities given here is not exhaustive but limited to only those captured during the analysis. Most relevant to the study are those identification features that bond Uruguay to South America and South America to Uruguay, documented above as linkages between national and regional identities. Besides the historical transformation Uruguay shares with most South American countries, a few other identification features connect Uruguay to the region. They are derived from a long and joint historical development of the region and include the Spanish language, having been former European colonies, being part of Latin America, possessing a variety of ethnic backgrounds, having been a society formed by a blending of immigrants and local ethnicities, and, more recently, the membership of UNASUR.

Being the basis of political discourse, these identifying features are particularly important. They reverberate in the public speeches of politicians, in academic congresses, and in discussions among students. It is within such meetings that the idea of a South American identity has begun to be propagated, arguing for a need for a new kind of cooperation and a new form of integration within the UNASUR. Finally, these arguments are also rooted in the values Uruguay shares with other South American states (Figure 4.3), values that are entwined with the historical development of the whole continent.

Figure 4.3 Values and beliefs shared by Uruguay with the region
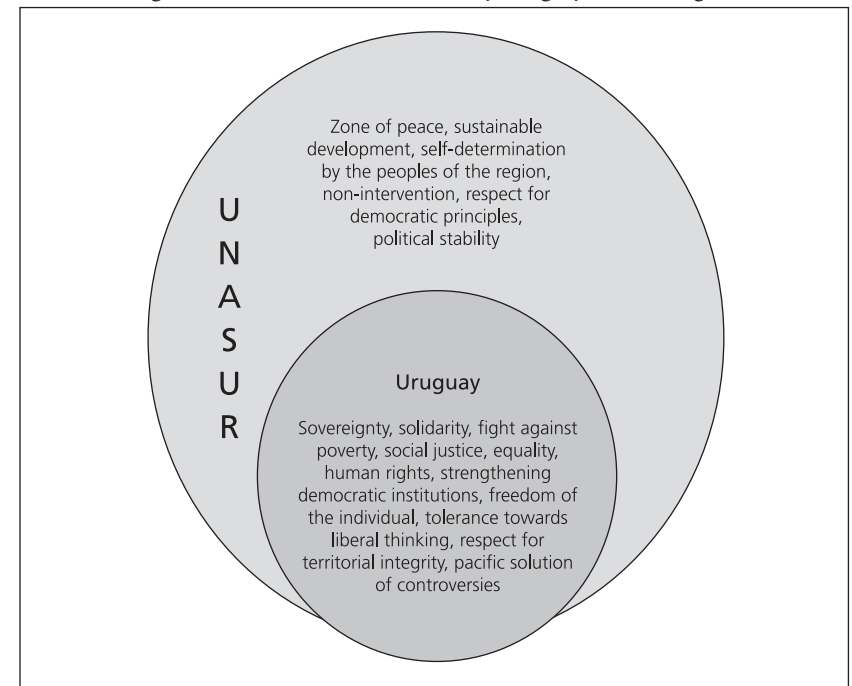
As shown in Figure 4.3, these Uruguayan values can be found ingrained in the UNASUR treaty, in arguments supporting the outcomes of meetings of the heads of state and governments, and in parliamentary debates on the membership of UNASUR. On the one hand, these political values and principles (such as protection of democracy, non-intervention, and respect for sovereignty, human rights, and equality of states) have been upheld by Uruguayan governments past and present and are embedded in UNASUR. On the other hand, the transformation of both Uruguayan society and of the people of the South American region has been driven by the collective efforts to re-establish, strengthen, and maintain shared social values (such as solidarity, respect for differing political thinking, tolerance of diversity, and freedom of speech). These values of freedom, peace in the zone, and respect for diversity are

particularly relevant to the twenty-first century Uruguay and indeed the whole of South America since the reintegration of the Leftist party Broad Front (with its various branches composed also of the Leftist group stemming from the former guerrilla group National Liberation Movement, MLN-*Tupamaro*) have gradually affected Uruguay's political culture. Demands for a review of cases of torture and human rights violations under the dictatorship have led to a question that calls for some soul searching: What kind of people are we? The result has been a challenge to the values and principles that used to underpin Uruguay's identity in the previous century. The impact of the Leftist political leadership on such social Uruguayan issues and the response of the government to the increasing demand for justice are also factors that affect the identity of the state. The creation, during the presidency of Jorge Batlle, of a commission to investigate cases of torture and forced disappearance is an example of social issues that can change the national identity of a country.

However, the demands for a collective and coordinated investigation across countries such as Argentina, Chile, and Paraguay show that the collective negative history of a region needs to be dealt with collectively, as members of a unified whole. This process of civil reconciliation of the members of Uruguayan society and the switch to a Left-oriented government are characteristics shared with most South American states in the twenty-first century and have brought Uruguay closer to the region. Most of such Uruguayan common political principles and identitarian elements (shared norms, culture, and values) are deeply embedded in the fundamentals underpinning the creation of UNASUR, as shown in Figure 4.3.

The Prospect of Communitarian Cooperation and the Creation of First Councils within UNASUR

In common with other small member-states of UNASUR, Uruguay can find enough space to engage, despite being weak in material terms, in proposing, developing, and executing regional projects. The large scope for cooperation offered by the UNASUR framework makes this possible, as the

UNASUR treaty is so broad that any sector of the state and civil society can be selected for this purpose. The integration mechanisms that have enabled South American states to cooperate for decades have created a friendly environment, which allows political actors to interact and identify centres of cooperation within an 'ambience of cordiality and comradeship' as suggested by the Uruguayan *Diputado* Martínez Huelmo and corroborated by Ecuador's foreign minister in personal interviews in May 2012 and June 2013, respectively. Here, the elements of a shared identity such as shared history, culture, language, and values also facilitate communication and interaction.

Archival records also confirm Uruguay's consistent participation: Uruguay contributed to the process within the IIRSA, as a member of CSN, and as founder of UNASUR, as mentioned in the historical background of this study. These engagements show the country's willingness to strengthen the South American region through communitarian cooperation. However, it is beyond the scope of this study to look at all the cases of Uruguay's communitarian cooperation within the context of UNASUR. Instead, a closer look at two particular cases can help to elucidate how Uruguay has employed communitarian cooperation to link its national policies with those of other states across the South American region: the first case looks at Uruguay's involvement in the creation and regulation of the South American Council for Health and the second case draws on the formation of the South American Council for Defence.

With reference to the first case, this study identifies the ever-growing Uruguayan endeavour to define policies that allow nation-states to cooperate across their borders. Here, Uruguayan experiences acquired within MERCOSUR, particularly in conjunction with Brazil, have become the basis for their engagement in the whole region. Uruguay's involvement in this particular area is rooted in two features of this small state, namely its historical region-engaging character and the political ideology of its Leftist government, which envisages a social policy that can extend to the whole region.

The governmental plan of the Broad Front for 2005-2009 indicates two relevant aims of the Uruguayan government: public investment in national health services as a formula to re-formulate the social policies of the nation and support for regional integration, particularly Latin American

integration, so long as it benefits the majority. This means that both the state and the region should promote universal access to social security and health services, for instance.

Under the conservative government of President Jorge Batlle, Uruguay and Brazil had already initiated joint health projects in shared populated border areas in 2002 for monitoring the outbreak of epidemics and for immunization, and a few environmental and other programmes were also coordinated by the Binational Commission for Health. This way, Uruguay gained some experience in this area within MERCOSUR, and the experience was strengthened by the coming to power of the government led by Tabaré Vázquez and the socialist-oriented policy for the country and the region. Once in power, the new government passed Decree No. 17930 of 19 December 2005, which approved the creation of 5170 jobs to provide the population with a better health service and to reassure the administrative and professional workforce that constituted such service. From 2004 to 2007, state investment in public health increased by 56% compared to that made by the previous government, and according to the approved political agenda of the 5th Congress of the Broad Front in 2008, the government aimed to continue with the transformation of the public health service to make it more accessible to the whole population. This Uruguayan experience formed a solid basis to expand the initiative across the region, as President Vázquez mentioned in his speech to his colleagues from the region at the Montevideo meeting from 26 to 28 June 2006, which had been convened to promote policies for racial equality in Latin America, and the promotion of free access to public health service was one of the fundamental objectives. This perspective was supported by the special commissions for negotiation of South American integration and the analysis of its future, in which Uruguay played a leading role, as mentioned above. This viewpoint highlighted the connections between poverty, poor health, and underdevelopment in the region and suggested the creation of a South American network of public health. That project aimed to promote cooperation in vaccination programmes, collective production or acquisition of basic vaccines and other medicines, and coordination of other shared developmental projects. Regional integration thus became a

mechanism for collective action to find new forms of cooperation to help the member-states overcome similar challenges.

Health policy was one of the first areas of cooperation incorporated in UNASUR's plans. Three months after the UNASUR treaty had been signed, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs proposed, at their August 2008 meeting in Chile, the creation of a Council for Social Policy. It was envisioned that the council would cover education, social development, health, and culture. However, instead of an institution with such a wide range of responsibilities, the states decided to create sectorial councils, each of which would coordinate the policies in its specific domain as directed by the sectorial ministers of every member-state. Soon afterwards, the South American Council for Health was created by the heads of states of UNASUR during their meeting in Costa de Suaípe, Brazil, on 16 December 2008.

Regulation J of Article 3 of the 2008 UNASUR treaty was invoked as the founding argument for the creation of the South American Council for Health. The regulation states that UNASUR should promote 'universal access to social security and health services' as one of its specific objectives which, in a way, foreshadowed the creation of the CSS. The council sought to assemble the experiences already gained in the field of health within the existing regional organizations such as MERCOSUR, OTCA, and the Andean Health Organization (ORAS) and to coordinate their activities under the umbrella of UNASUR.

The first meetings of the CSS in Santiago, Chile, in 2009 were centred on the definition of its role and forming collective technical work groups such as the Group for Epidemiological Mapping. One outcome of the meetings was the common Declaration of the CSS of 8 August 2009 in Quito to fortify the process of consolidating the UNASUR. Uruguay's stand, namely that public health takes precedence over commercial and economic private interests, prevailed in these meetings. The declaration from Quito illustrates the decision of the South American states to cooperate within their environment, which can be considered as communitarian cooperation, because it is based not on a competitive market-oriented approach but on solidarity and complementary efforts to develop common social policies for the region.

The election of José Mujica to the presidency in 2009 demonstrated popular support to the Broad Front for a fresh term and served to validate the positions and the ideological vision of the socialist government's stance on regional and national politics. At the national level, the newly elected government brought a challenging legislation up for discussion for regulating the consumption of cannabis out of concern for public health. The legislation had the potential to affect regulations related to drugs across the region and was feasible given that many new institutions for cooperation, shared development, and the implementation of common projects, as well as for examination and harmonization of national policies, had been created within UNASUR since 2010. Cooperation in these sectors was easier because most South American states had governments with similar ideological tendencies.

Most of these projects have also been articulated by one central institution, created about 16 months after the initiation of the CSS, the Coordinating Committee of which presented its Five-Year Plan 2010-2015 on 28 April 2010. Among the most relevant strategic guidelines proposed in the plan were the harmonization and recognition of standards, medical procedures, and protocols. On the one hand, this plan presents the vision of consolidating South America as an integrated area that provides health services to all (UNASUR 2010), and the first step towards this objective was to set out policies that enabled the standardization of common specialized terminology and protocols for better communication within the region. On the other hand, the project shows the willingness of all South American states to embark on and complete a regional project in the area of social development and health that links national interests to the common regional interest. The five-year plan is based upon the premise that solidarity, human rights, equality, and citizen participation are basic principles of the CSS. A project to create a Network of Schools for Public Health (RESP-UNASUR) was also presented to the Council of Presidents on 30 November 2010 and was approved (Resolution 6/2011 of the CSS of 14 April 2011 in Montevideo). Most of these goals are enshrined in the principles governing the policies of recent Uruguayan governments and can therefore be seen as part of this country's idea of regional integration.

Uruguay also supported the establishment of the South American Institute for Government in Health. This project, initiated in 2010 in Cuenca, Ecuador, aims to promote the exchange of experience and knowledge and to devise new policies for governments in the field of health. This new path of cooperation shows a harmonization of policies of the member nations and of the region in a way that differs from previous approaches to regional integration—in the new approach, the small state is a constant actor in regional politics.

In conclusion, the preparedness of Uruguay and all other South American states to support regional cooperation in the area of health demonstrated three points: a new mode of cooperation that would benefit the community as a whole, manifestation of the region-engaging character of Uruguay in the support it gave to these projects, and the linking of Uruguay's consent to political views of the Left-oriented government, which are identical to the aims of the CSS.

This study has also illuminated the way in which, during the creation of the CSD, a regional environment of mistrust between the South American states was transformed into one of confidence and trust as a preliminary to establishing regional peace as suggested in the UNASUR treaty. Uruguay as a member of UNASUR has participated actively in this process. Two aspects of fostering such a relationship can be identified in this context, namely the re-establishment and consolidation of confidence between states across the region to establish South America as a region of peace and the way in which the trust of the people in the democratic institutions of the nation-state was consolidated.

Some patterns of behaviour in Uruguay can be distinguished showing a latent and consistent support for the establishment of a South American zone of peace throughout the last decade. Despite the various diplomatic impasses between states of the region, there has been a constant appeal by the heads of government to the rest of the nation-states to build a region of peace. This idea has been declared unanimously as an aim of the South American integration process since the introduction of the IIRSA in 2000. Uruguay has shown how a small state can bring about and maintain peace and friendship with its neighbour states over centuries. Its last interna-

tional conflict dates back to the Great War in the 1860s and 1870s when Uruguay, as part of the Triple Alliance jointly with Brazil and Argentina, fought against Paraguay.

Following this conflict, Uruguay has managed to establish a policy of respect for sovereignty, non-intervention, self-determination by the people, and international law. That respect has been the cornerstone of the country's foreign policy, which has enabled Uruguay to avoid any behaviour that could make it a party to the historical rivalry between its big brothers, namely Argentina and Brazil. Although cooperation within ALADI and MERCOSUR was restricted mainly to the commercial sector, a new era of friendship and cooperation between the big and the small states of the Southern Cone (the southern end of South America) started in the 1980s and was strengthened when all member-states of MERCOSUR, along with Chile and Bolivia, gathered in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, in December 2004 to sign an agreement to cooperate in the field of security (Gutiérrez 2008). Uruguay has also managed to maintain a friendly relationship with its neighbouring partner states and to avoid major confrontations with extra-regional international agents. This issue, which is sensitive for the security of Uruguay as a small state, has been handled by Uruguay in a consistent way by condemning any extra-regional threat to the region. This behaviour of Uruguayans is congruent with Argentina's aim to gain support and include all neighbours in condemning the hostile acts of the United Kingdom regarding the Falkland Islands. The collective voice expressed in the common declarations on security of the South American states since the introduction of IIRSA shows Uruguay's support for the formation and strengthening of the region as well as the 'we-feeling' of a consolidated region. Moreover, Uruguay's support for Argentina's demands not only has a strategic implication given Uruguay's geostrategic position, but also stems from the shared history and culture of the two countries and their common interest in maintaining international trust.

This idea of including all states in a common space of regional cooperation was strengthened by the need to tackle the remaining issues from the days of the social divide, excessive nationalism, and dictatorships. The

approval in Chile in June 2008 of the Brazilian initiative concerning the agreement to cooperate in the field of security laid a solid foundation for the construction of an institution that includes all South American states. As a member of MERCOSUR, Uruguay took part in forming the basis of this new regional dialogue. Furthermore, although Brazil's initial ambition was to restrict this project to commercial arrangements in the field of military industry and small joint military exercises (Saint-Pierré 2008), the CSD took a somewhat political approach, which found support from Uruguay in the joint declaration of the heads of state and government of South America in December 2008. The declaration led to the creation and consolidation of the CSD in the following years.

The general objectives of the CSD reflect the vision supported by Uruguay throughout the process of the creation of UNASUR. The statute of creation of the CSD reflects most of Uruguay's traditional endeavours regarding Latin American integration. In creating the CSD, the South American states decided voluntarily to

> a) consolidate South America as a zone of peace, based on the democratic stability and integral development of our people, as a contribution to world peace, b) construct a South American identity in the area of defence that takes into account subregional and national differences, and contributes to the strengthening of the Latin American and Caribbean unity, and c) generate consensus for the strengthening of regional cooperation in the field of defence (IIRSA 2008).

Uruguay's shared history and borders with both its bigger neighbours, Brazil and Argentina, has not only obliged it to develop the ability to coexist in an environment of relative peace, but also to cooperate as part of the South American contingent of forces for maintaining international peace. A clear example of this is Uruguay's contribution to the UN peacekeeping force in the form of sending a national contingent to the zones of conflict that called for deployment of the UN force. In October 2008, Uruguay maintained a contingent of 2533 troops in sixteen peace operations within the framework of the UN (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Uruguay 2008, No. 75/08). A great number of them formed the South Ameri-

can contingent to the UN Mission to maintain stability in Haiti in 2008, which later became the contingent of UNASUR for the reconstruction of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, following the earthquake in January 2010.

This experience and its traditional approach to international norms gave Uruguay a place as a serious partner in the field of security. Moreover, its official declaration of respect for international law and for peaceful resolution of the conflict between Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela following the conflict in March 2008 reflects Uruguay's vision of a mechanism to build and maintain trust as the basis of regional peace. This position is linked to the traditional characteristics of Uruguay, which has historically supported the defence of international regulations and the maintenance of peace nationally and regionally. The establishment of the CSD has been considered a mechanism for not only establishing international peace within regional political circles but also modernizing the military and the defence ministries. This policy is reflected in the views of Uruguay's defence minister, Dr José Bayardi, who participated in, and signed the declaration for, the creation of the CSD and at the same time initiated a process of transformation of his ministry and the role of the military in Uruguay, starting in 2006.

This drive to transform the role of the military as well as the structure of the defence ministries is related to the final factor regarding peace. This factor stems from the search for a method that helps states to maintain democracy, political stability, and national peace. Like most South American states between the 1960s and the 1990s, Uruguay, as mentioned above, suffered a dictatorship that had no respect for democratic institutions or human rights. The need for a mechanism to support democratic principles and political stability became clearer as the threat to democracy continued to be an issue in South America: Venezuela's attempted *coup d'état* in 2002, the various *coups d'état* in Ecuador until 2005, and the attempts to overthrow the Bolivian president, Morales, in 2008 formed the backdrop as it were to the negotiation related to the CSD.

In this way, establishing regional peace was directly linked to attaining national peace. At the same time, the CSD became an instrument in transforming national military institutions to resolve the remaining border issues between the members of UNASUR as well as in constructing a collective response to extra-regional threats.

The existence of US military bases in Ecuador until 2009, and in the following years in Colombia, were political events condemned by Uruguayan leadership. Uruguay also voiced similar views about the presence of British military forces in the South Atlantic, specifically on the Falkland Islands. President Vázquez emphasized the importance of cooperation in the area of security for the South American neighbouring states as well as for the whole region with the following statement:

> I believe that in order to arrive at the land of peace, that land of democratic health, of sovereignty which fights against a variety of pathologies, no doubt we have to struggle fiercely to eliminate the pathologies that we are suffering from … In order to establish a region of peace, Uruguay also supports the resolution of controversies through peaceful means, by analysis, discussion and respect … Therefore, Uruguay has openly rejected from the beginning, and still rejects, the installation of a foreign British military base on the Argentinian *Islas Malvinas* (Falkland Islands) (Vázquez 2009).

The pathologies referred to by President Vázquez can be related to the role of the military in Uruguayan society. Although Uruguay has traditionally showed a clear tendency to support and respect international norms and democratic national institutions, the history of dictatorships and political instability experienced by Uruguay and indeed by all South America can still be seen as a distinct threat to democracy and political stability in the twenty-first century. In particular, political stability and democratic institutions of small states were seriously threatened in small South American states: Bolivia in December 2008, Ecuador in September 2010, and Paraguay in July 2012. The experience of an ideologically driven campaign by the military, in conjunction with conservative Right-wing groups, against socialist- and communist-oriented political activists during the dictatorships has remained a challenge to national and regional peace as most of the South American states are now led by Left-oriented governments.

The reforms made to the ministries of defence in 2010, which placed them under the leadership of civilians, took place not only in Uruguay but across the region. This development points to the gradual reconciliation between different social groups in Uruguayan society. However, the new waves of political destabilization and disrespect for democratic institutions particularly in small states represent a new challenge for Uruguay, because it is a small state governed by a Leftist government.

The declaration of Uruguay's foreign minister, Almagro, in the Chamber of Senators in July 2012 offered some basis for these concerns, particularly when he defended his position to impose sanctions on Paraguay within MERCOSUR and UNASUR in response to the irregular removal from office of the Paraguayan president, Fernando Lugo, by the parliament. Almagro referred to the event as a new way of destabilization in South American countries, stemming from a different ideology. He went on to suggest that 'in relation to the *coups d'état* in the region, the ideological implication that I found serious is that it seems that only Left-oriented governments are affected by these ruptures of the institutions' (Almagro 2012b).

Notwithstanding this setback, the recent signing of a statute for mutual cooperation in the common protection of democratic values and political stability in the region and its ratification by most member-states of UNASUR including Uruguay demonstrates that the process of constructing a region of peace is well under way. Moreover, the solidification of trust through the creation of institutions and common projects within the CSD has allowed small states to come closer to the bigger partner states.

Finally, although the data have not revealed any major input from Uruguay in this area of cooperation, its participation in the negotiations and in the sectorial meetings of the ministries of defence and in special working groups and joint projects show its willingness to support the construction of South America as a region of peace and definitely re-establish its traditional character as a nation of peace.

Conclusion

On the basis of the findings of the present study, it can be concluded that Uruguay is a traditional region-engaging small state and its support for the creation of UNASUR has, in the first place, been based on its traditional character. Secondly, the identitarian elements that link Uruguay to the region are also important in its motivation. This motivation is related to a third factor, namely the Left-oriented ideology of the government in power in the two previous terms of the government.

The study also shows the recent affinity of Uruguayan governments to the aims spelt out in the treaty of UNASUR and their idea for a new mode of cooperation. This notion is related to the aspirations of the majority of South American governments and to the need to transform both national and regional political structures that dominated the past centuries. This national objective is linked to the definite intention to signal a breakaway from the overpowering US endeavours to maintain its influence in South America.

This chapter provides evidence of the stages before, during, and after the signing of the UNASUR treaty during which Uruguay participated in and contributed to the consolidation of UNASUR. This process of transformation demands a theoretical explanation, which is not offered in this chapter. The findings presented here pave the way for a more vibrant and theoretical discussion in the next chapter.

Chapter 5
Are Ecuador and Uruguay Region-engaging Small States in UNASUR?

Introduction

The empirical within-case analysis or process-tracing applied to the study of Ecuador and Uruguay in the previous chapters led to some salient insights into the most relevant reasons for the support given by these two small states to the construction and consolidation of UNASUR. This chapter examines these outcomes further to locate the similarities and differences between Ecuador and Uruguay and also aims to refine the conclusions related to the motivations of small states to construct the South American region.

The chapter is divided into four parts or sections, which reflect the main arguments of Ecuador and Uruguay, as small states, for their support to the construction of UNASUR. The first part refers to the national political situations in Ecuador and Uruguay and their external relations prior to their signing the UNASUR treaty. The second draws on the disenchantment of the small states with economically driven integration and their support to a political alternative for cooperation on the basis of the Left-wing ideology of the governments in power during the process of signing and ratifying the UNASUR treaty. The third section focuses on the identity factors within the two states and considers those factors in relation to the idea of a South American identity, its consolidation, and its influence on the behaviour of Ecuador and Uruguay. The fourth section highlights the importance of the role of states within the framework of UNASUR.

Chapter 5

Are Ecuador and Uruguay Region-engaging Small States in UNASUR?

The motivations of small states to support this integration process, are illuminated by considering the importance of the role of the President *pro tempore* and the significance of being a member, using as an example the membership of the South American Defence Council.

National Political Situation of Small States and Interaction Between States

The study of the parts played by Ecuador and Uruguay in the creation of UNASUR can be linked to various factors contained in the historical process of the formation of a region, and the role played in it by these small states, in a manner that can support a social constructivist approach to the study of small states. One factor concerns the structural transformation of a system that has been driven by the agents – the states – through their governments and diplomats. The development of IIRSA and CSN as mechanisms for spreading the idea of a South American identity into UNASUR shows the process of building the 'we-feeling'. The interaction and interdependence of both Ecuador and Uruguay with other South American states and extra-regional forces such as the United States enhanced the process of negotiation progressively right up to the signing of the UNASUR treaty, which, in turn, further shaped the idea of a collective South American identity. Wendt (1999; 343) describes this process of interaction and of the growing interdependence between states as one of the 'master variables' in the formation of a collective identity. In the two small states studied here, the dynamics of interaction and the intent conveyed by the actions of Ecuador and Uruguay are related to their internal political situation.

Table 5.1 summarizes the most relevant factors related to the national politics in both cases (listed in the middle column) and makes it easier to see the similarities and differences between the two at a glance. The most likely influences of such phenomena on the supportive behaviour of Ecuador and Uruguay during the consolidation of UNASUR are also easily seen. The right-hand column in Table 5.1 names the main regional and extra-regional actors in the context of a bilateral relationship and helps to interpret the possible influences of international actors on the behaviour of Ecuador and Uruguay in the process of region construction.

Both extra-national and domestic factors and agents influence the behaviour of Ecuador and Uruguay. Indeed, understanding internal political events of these small states is essential for understanding their behaviour in the international context. Here, the two states are compared in terms of their ability to construct and put in place a foreign policy, factors affecting national security, democracy, and the ability to deal with social unrest. As shown in Table 5.1, a strong consolidated democracy such as that of Uruguay is more likely to be highly stable politically and to respect democratic institutions despite the possibility of greater demands for social inclusion at any particular time. Governmental policies during the term of President Jorge Batlle are highlighted as a crisis point for the challenge of social unrest in Uruguay.

As in the case of Ecuador until 2007, greater demands for social inclusion resulted in violent civil unrest. Hence, changes in the dynamics of the state are also driven by the electorate, which chooses new political

Table 5.1 Factors influencing the decision-making of small states in the process of creation and strengthening of UNASUR

Case study	National politics	Regional and extra-regional interdependence
Ecuador	• Demands for social inclusion and unrest (H) • Political stability (L) • Respect for democratic institutions (L) • Ability to construct a foreign policy and long-term planning (L) • Issues related to national security (H)	• United States (H) • Colombia (M) • Peru (L)
Uruguay	• Demands for social inclusion and unrest (M) • Political stability (H) • Respect for democratic institutions (H) • Ability to construct a foreign policy and long-term planning (M) • Issues related to national security (L)	• United States (L) • Brazil (H) • Argentina (M)

Note The degree of influence is indicated as follows: H, high; M, moderate; L, low

representatives to match its new political preferences. These preferences can also influence foreign policy and the behaviour of the state, as shown in the case of Ecuador. This will be further clarified in the following sections.

In the case of Uruguay, the demands for social inclusion have been interpreted as exerting a moderate influence on changing the international politics of the region. The changes in the style of national policy were driven by the changed preferences of the electorate, resulting in a historic transition from the traditional two-party politics to a Left-oriented government and a three-party system in 2005. Consequently, the defining and planning of Uruguay's foreign policy has also influenced the country's actions in regional politics under the recent Left-wing governments, as already noted by Rodríguez (2005) and Fernández (2011). However, Uruguay's record of being highly stable politically and the professionalism of its public administration enabled the country to maintain the basics of a firm and traditional foreign policy until the coming to power of President Mujica. With his arrival, Uruguay's stance softened and political dialogue with Argentina was reopened.

A different pattern is seen in Ecuador. Social unrest in Ecuador has been high and, as a consequence, the demand for greater social inclusion, social justice, and political recognition for the excluded ethnic groups has also been strong. The high level of unrest also resulted in low political stability, which is related to a low level of respect for democratic institutions. The lack of political stability, constant changes in the government, and low professionalism in public administration resulted in reactive foreign policies until the beginning of 2007. Planning for a consistent political position and foreign policy was inadequate until the end of the government led by President Palacio, as noted both by Jaramillo (2008) and Bonilla (2008). For this reason, the social demands for change seem to have also influenced Ecuador's political relations with other states in the region.

The domestic political dynamics of Ecuador also provide evidence that a small state is vulnerable not only to external influences but also to its own formal and informal structure, particularly its lack of political stability and

continuity to the extent that they affect long-term planning and design of foreign policy. In the case of Ecuador, the suggestion that the vulnerability of a small state is lower when it is a member of a community of states (Steinmetz and Wivel 2010; Hey 2003b; Goetschel 1998b) can also be applied to its own internal political dynamics, UNASUR being viewed by Ecuador as an appropriate international environment within which political instability can be reduced.

The mediation and resolution of violent social unrest, which had political implications for the unity of Bolivia in 2008, the prompt reaction to and denouncement of the attempted *coup d'état* in Ecuador in 2010, and the sanctions imposed on Paraguay in 2012 for displacing its democratically elected leaders are some examples of the benefits of being a member of a regional international community. These political events can also be linked to the issues affecting the national security of small states: that link is explicated below with reference to Ecuador and Uruguay. The study of the historical background of Ecuador and Uruguay also helps in understanding the transformation of 'subjective interdependence' or individual identity into 'objective interdependence' or construction of the 'we-feeling' (Wendt 1999, 343-345).

Subjective interdependence as a result of an asymmetrical relationship, such as that between Ecuador and the United States, does not necessarily lead to the formation of a collective identity. Notwithstanding this, it can be said that the elements underpinning the formation of an objective interdependence or we-feeling remain dormant: although social relationships may enable social actors to identify common affinities and the elements of a common identity they share, such identification by itself does not lead to the formation of a collective identity. In the case of Ecuador and United States, this asymmetrical relationship led to a split between them. As suggested by Bonilla (2008), the asymmetry in the economy and international security made Ecuador dependent on the United States and compelled Ecuador to cooperate with the United States, instead of such cooperation being voluntary.

The relationship between small states should also be taken into account within the framework of UNASUR. In a competitive system, small states may collaborate to further their interests, as suggested by Katzenstein

(1985) and Thorhallsson (2000), whereas in a non-competitive system such as UNASUR, which seeks to encourage communitarian cooperation, small states do not need to form strategic alliances. UNASUR has been instrumental in increasing the interaction not only between Ecuador and Uruguay but also that among the majority of other South American states. This increase was brought about through the participation of the states in the negotiations for the FTAA project, within their own subregional international organizations, and within IIRSA and CSN. However, Table 5.1 is confined only to the relationship of Ecuador with the United States, Peru, and Colombia and that of Uruguay with the United States, Brazil, and Argentina, because these relationships reflect the main interaction of these states before the creation of UNASUR.

Nevertheless, objective interdependence between these two small states and the rest of the South American states has increased since 2000. The participation of these small states within the framework of IIRSA and CSN has been consistent and had enabled formal recognition of the clause of consensus as proposed by the states from the beginning of the meetings of the South American heads of state in Brasilia 2000. In terms of regional integration, Ecuador's relationship with Colombia had been of moderate importance and that with Peru had been even less meaningful before, but began to be more significant following the peace agreement with Peru in 1998 although these three states had failed to find a common ground for negotiations with the United States over the FTAA project either as members of CAN or as close neighbours who shared cultural ties. This shows individualistic identities continuing to cooperate as egoistic units, or within an environment of 'subjective interdependence', until the idea of a collective identity is internalized by the actors, as explained by Wendt (1999), and also confirms the absence of a security community in the Andean region until the beginning of the twenty-first century.

In contrast to its relations with Peru and Colombia, Uruguay did maintain a close economic relationship with its neighbours, Brazil and Argentina, although it meant dependency on Brazil, whereas Uruguay's relationship with the United States was minimal at best, despite the personal relationship between President Batlle and President George W. Bush.

Thus, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, countries cooperated in an individualistic and self-centred manner—within the common framework of economic cooperation but without nurturing a nascent collective identity.

Uruguay and Argentina in particular began to change during the time when the idea of a South American identity was being widely accepted among the population and gradually gaining strength, a trend corroborated by the coming to power of President José Mujica, which led to resumption of communitarian cooperation between the two countries. Uruguay's support to a strong South American identity was reinforced when Uruguay decided to support the candidature of Argentina's former president, Kirchner, as UNASUR's General Secretary and to sign the UNASUR treaty. Finally, the actions of Ecuador and Uruguay and their interaction with other South American states as well as with extra-regional actors led to the UNASUR treaty in 2008, a proof of the wide social dissemination and acceptance of the new regional identity presented by Brazil in 2000, initially supported by Venezuela, Uruguay, and Argentina, and then by Ecuador during the years of transformation of CSN into UNASUR and during its consolidation. That all the twelve member-states signed the treaty can also be considered as a signal of the new-found trust among them, a fundamental prerequisite to the building of a security community, as explained by Adler and Barnett (1998) and as an early indication of learning and the internalizing of a collective identity, as noted by Wendt (1999).

Political Cooperation as a Result of the Failure of Economic Integration

The original idea of SAFTA, proposed by Brazil, was neither kept in abeyance nor totally rejected—as that of FTAA was, by most of the Latin American small states following the Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata, in 2005. The introduction of IIRSA was based on SAFTA, and CSN was the basis for the construction of UNASUR. This concept of economic cooperation driven by a regional free market has remained embedded in

the notion of a South American integrated economic space and is reflected in the present intention of merging CAN and MERCOSUR and in the experiences of Chile, Guyana, and Surinam during the processes of integration. However, UNASUR has given priority to political cooperation in the form of communitarian cooperation, and integration is considered one of the main pillars of the discourse related to a South American identity, along with solidarity, social justice, fight against poverty, protection of democracy, and support to the political stability of every member-state. Thus economic cooperation, the initial engine of integration, has been relegated to the position of a long-term objective. Political cooperation as a priority is the difference between the old kind of regionalism and the new kind of South American regionalism rooted in the new idea of integration driven by the framework of UNASUR. In this process, the support given by small states to focusing on the type of cooperation was originally associated with the dissatisfaction of Ecuador and Uruguay with the economic mechanism of cooperation and integration, as explained in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Economic integration and ideology as factors influencing the decisions related to creation and strengthening of UNASUR

Case study	Level of satisfaction with economic mechanisms of integration	Impact of national attributes
Ecuador	• CAN (L) • FTAA project (L)	• National leader (L <2007; H >2007) • Governing party (L <2007; H >2007) • Regional tendency (L <2007; M >2007)
Uruguay	• MERCOSUR (L) • FTAA project (L)	• National leader (M <2010; H >2010) • Governing party (L <2005; H >2005) • Regional tendency (M)

Note The degree of influence is categorized as H, high; M, moderate; and L, low; < indicates before the year in question and > indicates after the year in question.

Table 5.2 shows the split between the impact of the ideology of national leadership and the governing political party on the decisions related to supporting the consolidation of UNASUR by Ecuador and Uruguay as assessed through the two case studies. As can be seen, low levels of satisfaction with the earlier mechanisms of integration combined with the impact of the ideology of the governing party correspond to the insights already gained regarding competition between asymmetric economies in South America. It seems that Left-oriented leaders in power are more reluctant to support a mechanism of economic integration that supports free regional markets as the engine of integration. The idea of a South American free market is therefore most unlikely to win the support of Left-wing governments of the South American small states. However, they all agreed to accord priority to political cooperation in the form of communitarian cooperation within the UNASUR framework. Therefore, the profile and influence of ideology in the case of Ecuador's leaders regarding the construction of UNASUR were low before 2007 and high after 2007. The low level of satisfaction with economic mechanisms of integration can also be linked to various other factors including political instability and the influence of extra-regional forces (because external forces, whether material or ideological, may not be interested in establishing a political entity to promote communitarian cooperation). Such factors have a greater impact on small states that are politically unstable, as seen in Ecuador's relationship with the United States.

The case of Uruguay also shows a split into types of leadership of the governing parties corresponding to the level of a state's influence upon its contribution to the construction of UNASUR. The arrival of President Tabaré Vázquez reinforced the idea of a South American union and the election of President José Mujica seems to have increased the level of support to the consolidation of UNASUR. These observations, particularly in the case of Uruguay, can be also linked to three other factors.

First, the low influence of the governing party before 2005 was related to the decline of the traditional political entities in Uruguay as well as the poor results of integration during the last term of the *Colorado* party. Secondly, the influence of a public service that has traditionally maintained a degree of continuity in foreign policy could not be lowered or replaced

immediately: such influence seems to have lasted for some years into the first term of the Broad Front. Thirdly, the impact of economic cooperation within CAN and MERCOSUR on social development of its member-states was very low.

As the middle column in Table 5.2 shows, Ecuador and Uruguay were far from satisfied with the economic mechanism of integration, which meant that the prospects of continuing such process were far from bright. The disenchantment of Ecuador with CAN also lowered the prospects of economic integration.

Ecuador's view of CAN as an inefficient and obsolete organization is mainly due to the organization's failure (1) to build a collective identity that would have helped in resolving such conflicts such as the border disputes between Ecuador and Peru and (2) to secure commitments to economic agreements and to ensure adequate cooperation from members, as noted by Vieira (2008).

A few other factors appear just as important in explaining the inefficiency of CAN. These include the weakness of democratic institutions and low political stability, which disrupts cooperation across borders. The case of Ecuador from 1980 to 2007 is an example.

In contrast to this scenario in South America, small states in Western Europe rely on the strength of their democratic institutions to ensure cooperation as corporate actors in some economic sectors to counter the challenges of the world market, as suggested by Katzenstein (1985) and tested by Thorhallsson (2000). European small states have also developed smart-state strategies (Grøn and Rogaczewka, 2013) to pursue their interests within a framework of competition, which, given their economic and technological development, can be viewed as a healthy competition.

However, the economic framework of competition cannot be applied to the South American context given the asymmetries between countries: large states such as Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia are technologically and economically superior to small states such as Bolivia, Ecuador, and Paraguay and have a competitive edge. Because of this difference, an economic framework for integration such as that employed in Europe, which Latin America attempted to replicate in the twentieth century, can lead to

subjective interdependence instead of objective interdependence, within which losses and gains are considered as 'ours' instead of his or hers or theirs, as noted by Wendt (1999). For instance, the FTAA project was rejected by both Ecuador and Uruguay given the disparity in the size of the economy and the differing political ideology of the parties involved. These two examples demonstrate a failure of the economic mechanisms of cooperation as means of integration. On the one hand, this continental project involved countries with far more powerful economies such as the United States, Brazil, and Mexico, which, because they were comparable in some sectors of their economies, may have ensured a fair competition; on the other hand, countries with underdeveloped economies, such as Bolivia, Ecuador, and Paraguay, to which assistance was given during the negotiation process, were more vulnerable to such asymmetrical relationships, and a free-trade market as means of integration could have damaged their weak economies even more. The very fact that assistance was given to small states such as Ecuador and Bolivia in the negotiation process of the FTAA shows that such asymmetrical relationships were not sustainable and led to a dependent relationship and to what Wendt (1999, 344-345) calls subjective interdependence. Hence, it can be seen that cooperation of such type may not lead to integration. Instead of this type of cooperation rooted in economics, it seems that, in the process of construction of UNASUR, it was the other type that prevailed, which was based on trust and the recognition of common goals such as fighting poverty or building physical infrastructure to bring the societies of the continent closer and which led to objective interdependence and generated a feeling of we-ness.

This Ecuadorian experience within CAN and that of other small states such as Uruguay within other economic mechanisms of integration such as ALADI and MERCOSUR raised questions about the appropriateness of commercial cooperation accompanied by a low level of political intervention. These events also constitute other reasons for the failure of the FTAA and for the support given to UNASUR. The transformation of SAFTA into UNASUR on the basis of communitarian cooperation can be conceived as a response to the failure of earlier projects of integration and as an alternative offered by the Left-oriented governments with the aim of find-

ing options appropriate to the South American situation, contemporary international circumstances, and demands of South American societies. These conclusions are supported when the actions of Ecuador and Uruguay during the process of creating UNASUR are compared. As Figure 5.1 shows, both were dissatisfied with free trade as a mechanism of integration although Uruguay, as a traditional region-engaging state, made great efforts to keep ALADI afloat and to comply with the regulations of MERCOSUR. Until 2010, Uruguay was sceptical of the ability of MERCOSUR to resolve the many disputes the country had with Argentina, despite the fact that Uruguay has traditionally been an international trader. Most of

Figure 5.1 Identity as a factor influencing decision-making during the creation and consolidation of UNASUR
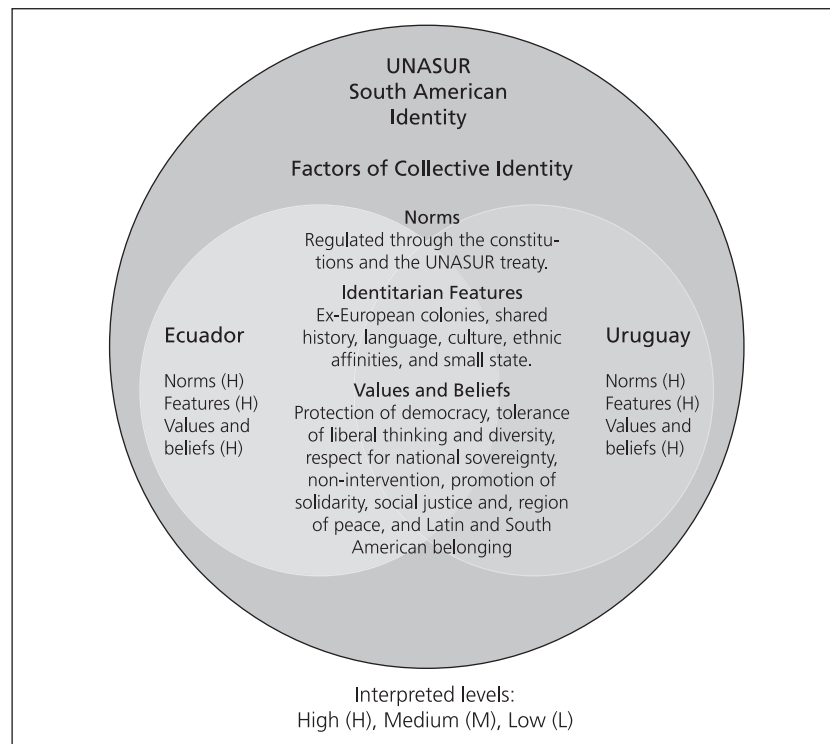
its trade was conducted with states outside the region until the beginning of the Latin American economic integration process in the 1960s, and its international trade has traditionally been influenced by policies of other states (Díaz 2003). However, Uruguay's characteristics as a small state and its membership of the MERCOSUR since the 1990s strained its capacity to overcome the relative economic and institutional disadvantages compared to that of its main regional trade partners, Brazil and Argentina. The result was subjective interdependence and a setback to the formation of a strong collective identity in the South American cone. For these reasons, Uruguay was keen on establishing a new international regional institution that will compensate for this relative disadvantage and therefore decided to support the consolidation of UNASUR as a mechanism for resolving discords between member-states through political dialogue.

This study has also sought to understand the particular circumstances of individual cases. One such instance is the ratification of Ecuador's membership of UNASUR. Ecuador did not question the issues of bureaucracy and public administration in the newly created international organization, namely UNASUR, as Uruguay did. Uruguay's concerns were not necessarily the type of cooperation within UNASUR: its concerns were, and still are, related to the danger of repeating the old mechanisms of integration, the fear that they could jeopardize the aims of UNASUR, and the financial strain – considerable for a small state – resulting from having to increase the number of civil servants.

The small size of its domestic political administration was evidently an issue for Uruguay. This case shows one typical characteristic of many small states within a highly institutionalized international environment: their small size can be a handicap in international relations.

These apprehensions of Uruguay are shared by other small states in regional and world politics, as evidenced by a study of nineteen small states within the European Union (Panke 2010). The South American small states also suffer from the handicap as mentioned above in relation to the negotiations on the FTAA project as well as in relation to the support given by Brazil to Surinam when this small country held the position of President *pro tempore* of UNASUR.

This study tries to explain that both Ecuador and Uruguay view UNA-SUR as a new regional instrument the foreign policy of which could be significant, especially in an international environment where multinational corporations and economically stronger extra-regional agents continue to constrain the abilities of small states to satisfy the demands of their population when discharging their duties. Although some view the consensual clause of the UNASUR as a weakness of this kind of integration (Bizzozero 2008, 2010), UNASUR's position as a new international player and as a regional representative of South American identity and interests could help small states to pursue some of their national interests across and beyond the region. For small states, this suggested weakness of UNASUR is not a weakness but strength, a source of motivation for their engagement in it, since the veto or consensus clause equips small states with similar tools to approve or disapprove regional policies and practical common projects. What is more, working within the UNASUR framework on drawing up environmental policies may have prompted Uruguay to view UNASUR as an alternative platform for resolving its economic and diplomatic disputes with Argentina. This view may also explain Uruguay's positive stance during the debates on, and for the ratification of, the UNASUR treaty as shown in the previous chapter.

 The rise of Left-wing governments is another relevant factor influencing the support given by Uruguay and Ecuador to the construction of UNASUR as a politically driven international regional organization and, at the same time, their rejection of the FTAA. As Figure 5.1 shows, both case studies point to the tendency to support the idea of a South American identity when Left-oriented governments come to power.

This process is related to the change in the ideologies preferred by the electorate and the consequent changes in the government in both case studies. Before 2007, the leadership and the governing party in Ecuador had only a low impact on the motivation to support the creation of UNA-SUR. That motivation became stronger after the coming to power of the socialist-oriented government of President Rafael Correa and his political movement, *Alianza Pais*, and remained so until recently. The situation in Uruguay was somewhat different: Uruguay's stand on UNASUR was more

consistent and it had a more moderate impact on the support to the idea of South American integration from 2005 to 2010. This difference may have been due to a more stable and professional public administration and civil service in Uruguay. The situation changed when José Mujica, who belongs to the same socialist political alliance as his predecessor, the Broad Front, but has traditionally held strong Left-oriented political views, became the president: he supported South American integration more strongly from the beginning of 2010, and Uruguay's support for the consolidation of the region has increased since that time.

Foreign policy, particularly the vision of regional integration of these small states through economic and free trade, lost its force during the process of consolidation of UNASUR. Instead, collective political action in the form of communitarian cooperation to resolve common sociopolitical issues became the engine of UNASUR. A 'cognitive community' made up of members of the political elite belonging to the governments and political discourse concerning a common fate are noticeable in most fields of the construction process.

Although the Left-wing party that has been in power in Uruguay since 2005 did not necessarily modify the country's traditional foreign policy until President Mujica assumed office, the party reinforced the idea of Latin American integration on the basis of a more politically driven process as a requirement to retain the support of the electorate. This action is related, in the first place, to the breakdown of negotiations with the United States concerning the FTAA on a multilateral, and later on a bilateral, basis. The response of Uruguay's leadership after 2005 shows the intention of the party to comply with the proposal aired during the election campaign to display itself as a trustworthy new political party. Secondly, direct intervention of President Vázquez in the negotiations and the hosting of the Special Commission demonstrate both the consistency of a political campaign and the turning of ideas into policies. Thirdly, the presence of delegates, representatives, and special envoys of Uruguay in different negotiation groups and commissions not only facilitated adequate representation of Uruguay's ideas and reinforced the ideological change from 2005 but also linked Uruguay to other national governments, which were also

largely formed by Left-oriented parties. Together, they constituted a cognitive community as defined by Adler (2005). In this context, Uruguay was the casting vote for the institutionalization of the UNASUR as at least nine of the twelve members were required to sign if the treaty was to be legally valid and recognized internationally. This role positioned Uruguay as a crucial political actor in the region.

This political move of the new Uruguayan government led by President Mujica won the support of even a few members of the opposing National Party and enabled Uruguay to carry out its regional role in the new integration process. Ratification of the treaty by Uruguay allowed UNASUR to project itself as the leading instrument of South American integration.

These actions of the national leaders of Uruguay and the ideology represented by the governing parties were consistent with the socialist-oriented tendency of the region during the period of ratification of UNASUR, demonstrating both high level of discussions and the influence exerted by Uruguayan parliament in regional politics. In contrast, the role of Ecuador's parliament in decision-making in international politics has traditionally been weaker, the major influence being that of the president and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which safeguarded the country's traditional policy in international relations. Moreover, the constant violation of the country's constitution by both the executive and the legislature reduced the legitimacy of the national parliament's demand to participate in the design of foreign policy, until the introduction of the new constitution of 2008 and the changes in the composition of the political elite. As a consequence, there was a period before 2007 when the president and the legislature exerted only a low level of influence on regional politics; the situation changed in 2007, and the influence of both became much stronger with the coming to power of the present political party. This government and the corresponding political movement, *Alianza Pais,* adhere to a Left-oriented ideology. They also joined the socialist wave and the wave of regional integration in South America from a political rather than an economic perspective, and the new political elite became part of the integrationist cognitive community. On the one hand, the factors that influenced the response of Ecuador and Uruguay differ slightly in the degree

of continuity and stability of political ideology and in its implementation in their national and regional policies; on the other hand, the ideologies of Left-oriented regional politics of the political elite of the two countries began to merge from 2007, and both of them prioritized sociopolitical policies over economic or commerce-related integration.

In the case of Ecuador, its agenda for foreign affairs under the government of *Alianza País*, as already highlighted by Zepeda (2011), was defined by the following considerations: reassertion of national sovereignty that involves the reassertion of the country's affiliation to South America, promotion of active multilateralism, diversification of exports and support to South-South cooperation, promotion of environment-friendly projects, provision for protection of Ecuadorians living abroad by defending their rights, free mobility of the people and universal citizenship, and support to Latin American integration. From this point, a new era of Ecuadorian international relations began with the arrival of *Alianza País* and Rafael Correa. Both are inclined to consider UNASUR to be an appropriate regional integration forum for achieving Ecuador's objectives regionally and internationally.

Before concluding the reflections on this analysis, the influence of the Left-wing wave in South America on the creation of UNASUR (Sanahuja 2010) should be noted in the case of Ecuador, mainly during the final stages leading to the creation of UNASUR. In contrast, Uruguay was more active even before signing the UNASUR treaty in 2008: Uruguay supported Venezuela's Left-oriented view and changed the focus of UNASUR to make it a sociopolitically oriented institution. The actions of these small states can also be characterized as reactions to tacit issues affecting the nation-states during that period of regional financial crisis. From this point of view, their support to the consolidation of UNASUR also reflects a pragmatic move to coordinate policies for tackling regional issues that could not be resolved without collective action under the previous diverging ideological perspectives. The affinity of the Left governments of Ecuador and Uruguay to most of the socialist governments of the region appears to have facilitated common action, as in the case of signing common political statements.

Elements of Identity as Explanatory Factors for Ecuador's and Uruguay's Participation in the Creation and Consolidation of UNASUR

The idea of South American integration in infrastructure and communication, as stated in the protocols of the first meetings of the heads of state, is based on the idea of constructing a South American identity, to be reinforced through international expansion. The move itself is supported by consistent incorporation of new elements into a set of norms, identitarian features, values, and beliefs. This set links the identities of South American states with one another and enables them to be viewed as constituent parts of a single collective regional identity. That a collective identity needs reinforcement suggests that South America was not a homogeneous region at the beginning of the twenty-first century although historically such elements of an identity as norms, identitarian features, values, and beliefs have been shared by most South American states. The fact that twelve South American heads of state and governments met in Brasilia in 2000 for the first time in history shows the beginning of trust-building as a basic principle for the fusion of shared identities into a collective regional one. Moreover, the period of regional division and enmity between neighbouring states ended only two years before the meeting of Brasilia when, in 1998, Ecuador and Peru signed the Itamaraty Peace Treaty. These international political events demonstrate the lack of trust between South American states right up to the end of the twentieth century although they share various elements of a collective identity.

Yet it is these shared characteristics that, according to Wendt (1999), drive like-minded states to find elements of identity that can help to construct a collective identity. This statement corresponds with the political situation in South America in 2000 when all states had democratically elected governments, which enabled them to identify a variety of identitarian features that became part of the political argument for their interest in creating and consolidating a region. The signing of the UNASUR treaty and its ratification by all member-states have helped to expand the idea

of a South American identity, which has been promoted by the member-states at various political, cultural, and academic events.

Civil and academic events such as the first Students' Congress for Integration, which took place in Uruguay in April 2012, and the South American Cinema Festival supported by UNASUR, confirmed the instituted idea of such South American identity and strengthened the construction of 'we-ness' as a basis for the collective South American identity.

The construction of the we-ness, or objective interdependence, appears as a process whereby small states have used their identitarian features, norms, values, and beliefs to assess the appropriateness of international actions. In the cases studied here, Figure 5.1 summarizes the main identity factors underpinning the idea of a South American region and a new kind of cooperation. The two small states, Ecuador and Uruguay, have national constitutional norms binding them to the process of integration. At the same time, the main regional regulations that were given an institutional form in the UNASUR treaty became another set of requirements. These acts of laying down codes are fundamental characteristics of region-engaging states as suggested in Chapter 2.

Figure 5.1 also shows a set of identitarian features, values, and beliefs that are summarized within an intersection point that connects Ecuador and Uruguay to UNASUR as a whole. Relevant features of the identity are the shared history of being former European colonies, a shared cultural background, and common Ibero-roman languages, namely Spanish and Portuguese for most of the South American states. Important values that are institutionalized as well as conceived as principles of the South American regional unity include respect for sovereignty and the principle of non-intervention, tolerance of liberal thinking and democratic principles, solidarity and social justice, and the sense of belonging to the Latin and South American idea of unity. These factors have been the pillars of the formation of trust and objective interdependence in recent years within the framework of UNASUR.

As Figure 5.1 illustrates, the cases studied here show various elements of Ecuadorian and Uruguayan identities linked to the identitarian elements of the region conveyed in the UNASUR treaty. This embodiment of the

elements of all twelve national identities within UNASUR has helped to consolidate the South American international community.

This international community shows the three conditions highlighted by Adler and Barnett (1998, 31), namely shared identity, values, and meanings; many-sided and direct relations; and some long-term objectives. The first condition is embodied in the set of norms, identitarian features, values, and beliefs as demonstrated in the previous chapters and shown in Figure 5.1. All these factors greatly influenced the extent of support given by Ecuador and Uruguay for the construction and consolidation of UNASUR. The second condition, as suggested by Adler and Barnett (1998, 31-32) was fulfilled, in the case of UNASUR, through the various meetings of presidents, ministers, councils, working groups, and academic and social projects developed through civil societies of the member-states, including Uruguay and Ecuador. The third condition is represented in the aims proposed by UNASUR and approved by the states, such as the consolidation of South America as a zone of peace.

These shared elements of identity have greatly influenced the actions of both Ecuador and Uruguay, as discussed in the previous chapters and in Figure 5.1. Both Ecuador and Uruguay have constitutional norms that legitimize the actions of their governments in supporting the process of creating and consolidating UNASUR. This support for South American integration is consistent with the ratification of the UNASUR treaty by the two small states despite their different approaches to the decision-making process.

However, each state has its own particular features. These two states also show their own identitarian characteristics, related to their particular actions in international relations. Whereas Uruguay demonstrates bargaining strategies and a well-debated process for the ratification of UNASUR, to the extent that small states can be characterized as smart small states (Grøn and Rogaczewka 2013), Ecuador appears to have been driven by ideational elements such as a shared identity, shared ideology, and spontaneous initiatives. Some other elements of such shared identity have influenced the behaviour of Ecuador and are the features of collective identity formally embodied in the UNASUR treaty. These elements are a shared

historical background, shared culture and languages, and the symbiosis of shared ethnic and immigrant background as a result of having been former European colonies.

Regarding the links of small states to the whole region, Ecuador portrays itself as a microcosm of South America on a reduced scale, because it contains within a small area one of the most diverse communities in the world. The nation-state of Ecuador comprises diverse provinces, nationalities, ethnicities, cultures, and languages. The idea that Ecuador is the prototype of South American diversity has been constantly promoted by Ecuadorian authorities in recent years. This nation reflects the idea of a holistic South American region in the sense that the South American region also contains a diversity of nation-states, each with its distinct cultural and linguistic identity, political system, and local social, political, and economic issues, but a shared a historical background and a shared ideal. These links, shown in Figure 5.1, between South American nation-states explain why Uruguay and Ecuador supported the construction and consolidation of the South American region. All the three categories of the identitarian elements greatly influenced decision-making in both the small states, as mentioned above. In the case of Ecuador, the process of political change in the state coincided with the institutionalization of UNASUR and the creation of various councils and other institutions, which facilitated the incorporation of related norms at the domestic and at the regional level. As a result, Ecuador has developed an agenda for its foreign policy to include the revival of regional integration as an international political strategy of the country.

As shown in the other case study, Uruguay aimed at maintaining its traditional region-engaging character by drawing on identitarian features that it has historically shared with Argentina and Brazil, as well as with the other Latin American states. The common language, culture, and history, among others, are highlighted by the arguments for the support given to UNASUR. In particular, these three elements are links that connect Uruguay to Ecuador and underpin the communitarian view of political cooperation in the region.

The set of South American values and beliefs also connects both states with the whole region, as shown in Figure 5.1. Both Ecuador and Uru-

guay have been greatly influenced by shared values such as the protection of liberal democratic institutions, respect for human rights, social justice, and solidarity. As suggested by Wendt (1999), this self-consciousness and the intersubjective understanding of the existence of a culture and values shared between political actors within an international political environment are the basis for the formation of a collective identity, as seen in the case of Uruguay and Ecuador during their involvement in consolidating UNASUR. Although the identification and self-assurance provided by the elements of a collective or regional identity usually evolve over a long time, the historical background of Ecuador and Uruguay in their connection to most South American states is an example of such a phenomenon.

To find out whether a given political action is in the interest of a given nation requires, as suggested by Finnemore (1996), a process of weighing up and comparing identities. In this case, the process extends from 2000, when Brazil introduced the idea of IIRSA, to 2011, when major challenges to UNASUR's consolidation were finally overcome and the UNASUR treaty came into force.

Finally, the discussion must turn to the identification of extra-regional identities or agents that can also influence the actions of small states and the way in which the states involved in various regional projects enact their roles (Harnisch et al. 2011; Nabers 2011). Only a few cases of the influence of such identities are highlighted here. One case is that of the constant and consistent portrayal of Great Britain as the 'other' in declarations complaining of its imperialistic behaviour in the South Atlantic and the geopolitical issues raised by its claim over the Falkland Islands. These declarations made in the name of UNASUR bear the stamp of approval of all South American states and illustrate how a depiction of the 'other' counterposed to the 'us' can act as a signal to influence the behaviour of states and the role played by them (Harnisch et al. 2011). Another case is based on the idea that the United States with its military and economic might in South America could also influence the culture of not only small nations in the area but also of other states. Both the rejection of the FTAA project and the protest by both Ecuador and Uruguay against the installation of US military bases in Colombia can be understood as a reinforcement of the idea of the 'other' as an identity that does not belong to the region.

However, an identity conflict may also arise within the member-states when they play various roles as members of various regional integration processes, as suggested by Harnisch et al. (2011), Breuning (2011), and Nabers (2011). In the case of members of UNASUR, this possible identity conflict was resolved during the process of construction of UNASUR by drawing on past experience as a means of self-awareness of the existence of a South American region. The inclusion of CAN and MERCOSUR within UNASUR as important sources of the South American identity reduces the possibility of such identity conflict. At the same time, the long-term project of merging CAN and MERCOSUR can enable small states to maintain their individual identities as well. For example, Ecuador's membership of CAN and Uruguay's membership of MERCOSUR are sources of experience that can be put to good use in the framework of UNASUR. This suggests that small states may be able to adapt to or adopt a regional building project driven by identitarian factors. A constant interaction of states shows one other condition required for the formation of a community, namely many-sided and direct relations between states (Adler and Barnett 1998). This interaction enables states to identify common issues, develop projects collectively, and resolve shared issues. Indeed, the shared identity promoted within UNASUR helped in resolving controversies, as already shown in the case of Argentina and Uruguay and in that of Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela.

In contrast to small states within the European Union, which generally require greater efforts during negotiations of collective interest given the differences in language and communication protocols, these South American small states share a culture and language with most other members of UNASUR, which facilitates communication in planning and conducting joint projects.

In the case of Uruguay, the experiences and culture shared with Argentina and Brazil facilitated the harmonization of the norms of Uruguay's national health system with those of the systems of other members of UNASUR. In the case of Ecuador, the use of Spanish in the majority of

meetings and negotiations facilitated the participation of Ecuador as well as its relatively successful performance as President *pro tempore.*

To summarize, the examples of the way in which the principles of equality are practised and the roles are played show that South American states have pursued mechanisms that enable them to go through a process of trust-building by adopting political dialogue as the means for resolving disputes between states. From the Wendtean explanatory perspective, these phenomena can be characterized as the fourth master variable that explains the construction of a collective identity, namely self-restraint (Wendt 1999, 357), which is elaborated in the next section.

Role Enactment, Influence, and Cooperation of Ecuador and Uruguay within UNASUR

The study of Ecuador and Uruguay has shown that beyond the theoretical explanations, the analysis of each state's domestic situation also throws some light on the actions of small states in international relations. The fact that each member-state of UNASUR is entitled to the role of President *pro tempore* for one year and thus responsible for coordinating the council's meetings, setting the agenda, and representing the region in international forums enables even small states to play a prominent role in the region and beyond.

Yet each state differs in its approach and in its ability to fulfil the role and meet its demands. Moreover, as mentioned above, each state has developed a particular identity, which is linked to regional as well as to extra-regional identities—and these links may influence the actions, the role enactment, and the kind of policies and projects the state considers to be its priorities (Harnisch et al. 2011).

In the cases of Ecuador and Uruguay, links to the regional identity are strong, as described in the previous section. However, the behaviour and consequently the role cannot be predicted because the tendency to support or reject a given kind of integration appears to be related to the kind of government that happens to be in power, just as the foreign policy of any

Latin American state is subject to fluctuation and for the same reason, as suggested by Gardini and Lambert (2011). The support given to the construction and consolidation of UNASUR by Ecuador and Uruguay, for example, is influenced not only by the ideology of the president and the party in power but also by affinities with regional political tendencies, as shown in Figure 5.1. The traditional region-engaging character of Uruguay and its historically stable domestic and foreign policy limit the scope for change, whereas Ecuador's historical background can frustrate any prediction owing to its unsettled politics and weak institutions. However, Ecuador's close identitarian ties with the region have had considerable influence on its actions: these strongly supported the process of South American regional integration even at the cost of its long-standing relationship with the United States.

The framework for cooperation within UNASUR offers many opportunities to small states, including that of being President *pro tempore* for a year. Many scholars of small-state studies consider that for a small state, being a member of a regional international organization adds value (Wivel 2010; Hey 2003a; 2003b; Goetschel 1998b). Although mere membership does not guarantee that all small states will be able to coordinate, cooperate, influence, and play the role of a member and that of President *pro tempore* as expected by other member-states, the principle of complementarity and communitarian cooperation enables fellow states to support each other in fulfilling this role. Such cooperation embodies and promotes the principle of communitarianism within UNASUR which helps to rule out egoistic competition between the member-states due to their natural existing asymmetries. Instead, in a communitarian environment, their asymmetries encourage them to complement each other to define their common interest, agree on policies for all, and resolve collective issues. This kind of cooperation shows that exercising self-restraint is a condition for constructing a collective identity. These principles also enable weaker small states to coordinate common policies and projects without the fear that they will be overwhelmed by the responsibility of coordinating the projects and policies of UNASUR and with the assurance that they can count on the support from fellow member-states in tackling issues af-

fecting the international community. The historical context within which UNASUR was created has also facilitated the construction of a unique regional international organization that equips small states with the same constitutional roles as the larger ones.

Historical factors at play here are that this is a democratic region governed by democratically elected governments despite the differences in their approach to governance and that all the small states have participated actively in designing the type of integration they seek. The construction of the South American region also obtained wider support from Ecuador than did the FTAA project since 2006. As might be expected, the new Ecuadorian political elite also formed a new affinity with the South American project, and the stronger support given to the new Ecuadorian political elite from civil society enhanced Ecuador's performance as a signatory, as a member, and as President *pro tempore* of UNASUR. The region-engaging character of Ecuador was also reinforced by the principle of equal rights in taking decisions related to the policies and projects within UNASUR. Articles 7, 12, 13, and 14 of the UNASUR treaty further guaranteed Ecuador the opportunity to lead the South American region from 2009 to 2010. The challenge for small states in this context lies in their ability to coordinate and cooperate and to identify and propose policies and projects of common interest so that the trust placed in each member-state can mature and contribute to building a secure and cohesive community.

The attempted *coup d'état* in Ecuador in September 2010 and the institutional crisis in Paraguay in June 2012 showed that the challenge faced by small states in UNASUR is not the imbalance in power between the fellow members but the weakness of their democratic institutions, which can also endanger the political stability of the whole region, given that half the member-states of UNASUR are small.

In its nine years of existence, UNASUR has had nine presidents *pro tempore.* Five small states have led the region, namely Ecuador (2009/10), Guyana (2010/11), Paraguay (2011/12), Surinam (2013/14), and Uruguay (2014/16). However, in the case of Ecuador and Paraguay, not only the democracy of the state but also the international institutions of the whole region were threatened. It can be seen that the implications of the

Table 5.3 Coordination, cooperation, and role enactment within UNASUR

Country	Role as President *pro tempore*	Role as member of UNASUR
Ecuador	High	High
Uruguay	Medium	Medium

post of President *pro tempore* are that it enables a small state to play the role of the leader of the region within UNASUR, and this role also offers small states the possibility of placing their issues on the agenda of projects and discussions.

Table 5.3 shows the two possible region-engaging roles for a small state: as President *pro tempore* and as a member. By the time the present study was completed, Ecuador had already completed its term as President *pro tempore* of UNASUR and also contributed a great deal as a member to the construction of the region. This shows that the role of President *pro tempore* enables small states to play a more prominent role in the construction and consolidation of the region. Ecuador demonstrated greater involvement in the issues of the region during its period as the president of UNASUR despite such internal challenges as the attempted *coup d'état* in 2010 and diplomatic impasses with Colombia and the United States. Moreover, the role of President *pro tempore* enabled Ecuador to coordinate and lead South American assistance to Haiti in the name of UNASUR following the earthquake that destroyed the main physical structure of Port-au-Prince in January 2010. The role of President *pro tempore* played by Ecuador has also shown that UNASUR as a community supports small states when they have to confront domestic and external challenges. The immediate reaction to and condemnation of the attempted *coup d'état* in Ecuador show that UNASUR as a regional actor was able to counter such events. The reaction of UNASUR during and after the attempted *coup d'état* on 30 September 2010 brought Ecuador back to complete its term as President *pro tempore* of UNASUR and also strengthened the democratic institutions in Ecuador.

Comparing the roles of Ecuador and Uruguay, it can be seen that Uruguay shows a moderate level of engagement in the areas of cooperation

within UNASUR following its signing of the constitutive treaty. However, this disparity can be related to the fact that Uruguay was yet to play the role of President *pro tempore*, and that its role was restricted to that of a member-state. Nevertheless, Uruguay's support to the consolidation of UNASUR in the form of ratifying the treaty is based on the actions of traditional region-engaging small states and can also be related to the discourse of collective identity expanded throughout the process of constructing UNASUR. These arguments support the general proposition that membership of international regional organizations can be particularly beneficial to small states.

However, as noted by Goetschel (1998b), membership can also restrict the autonomy of small states, forcing them to develop strategies to put forward issues most relevant to them as being of high priority also to the region as a whole. Ecuador's campaign for the ratification of the UNASUR treaty enabled it to obtain more support and reciprocity during its diplomatic impasse with Colombia. It would seem from this that small states need to focus on strategic areas of common national and regional interest to gain direct support and to expand their influence within the region as well as beyond it. Furthermore, as shown in the case of Ecuador, reforming the structure of the nation-state can also enable a small state to harmonize its national norms with regional norms and interests to expand its areas of influence. Such a strategy has been combined with setting up the headquarters of international organizations in the smaller states. The installation of the permanent General Secretariat in Quito represents a significant strategy for the state as well as for the region: it raised the symbolic value of the newly created union in a country that was dominated by an extra-regional force until 2009, when the US army withdrew; it led to Ecuador being regarded as an international actor by its own people and also by the international community; and it not only raised Ecuador's geopolitical value but was also instrumental in urban regeneration of the area around the headquarters. Locating the General Secretariat in Quito also facilitates direct contact and involvement of the Ecuadorian people with one of the main institutions that represents the whole South American region, enabling them to be direct constructors of the regional identity.

President Correa's speech delivered on the occasion to mark the beginning of the construction of UNASUR in 2011 refers to this as a signal that 'reflects the emblematic longing for union and integration of our countries' (Correa 2011). In this context, some of UNASUR's particular objectives, such as consolidating the region as a zone of peace and supporting the consolidation of democratic institutions, have been perceived by political actors in Ecuador as factors that are also of special interest to Ecuador due to its recent history of insecurity and instability.

In contrast, Uruguay's performance has been less satisfactory than that of Ecuador. This observation strengthens the proposition that the nature of the international system's structure can strengthen or weaken the region-engaging character of a small state. Uruguay, as one of the states that played the role of President *pro tempore* at the beginning of a decline of the UNASUR, did not have the same possibilities as Ecuador in this process. Hence, its actions while being a member-state and a President *pro tempore* of UNASUR did not reach a high impact on the further consolidation of the region. Nevertheless, the region-engaging character of Uruguay and its role as a member of UNASUR is evident from its participation and input into the projects, regulations, norms, and declarations it has agreed to develop to fulfil UNASUR's objectives. According to Article 13 of the Constitutive Treaty of UNASUR 2008, all the union's regulations, the creation of new institutions, and the implementation of communitarian projects require discussion, coordination, and, under the consensus clause, agreement of all parties. It is within this process of presenting, discussing, and coordinating initiatives that the common collective interest is defined. During the process of creation and consolidation of UNASUR, Uruguay's actions were driven neither by the force of an international system in which Uruguay, as a small state, found itself at a disadvantage (as was the case in its membership of MERCOSUR) (Fernández 2012) nor by any opportunistic considerations, as some would suggest. The fact that the foundation of UNASUR was revised and adapted within the Commission of High Representatives of all South American states, in which Uruguay was a major actor, shows the region-engaging role of Uruguay as an active member of UNASUR.

In the context of regions as a lever for the positioning of small states' international politics, UNASUR presents further opportunities that can be utilized by the so-called 'smart small states', which would create strategies to persuade their fellow middle-power member-states to adhere to their initiative (Grøn and Rogaczewka 2013). This strategy is available to all member-states of UNASUR.

In the case of Uruguay, discussions about alternatives to resolve its commercial conflicts with Argentina amicably were the opportunities seized by Uruguay, as UNASUR had already shown its potential for adroit resolution of such disputes as the diplomatic impasse between Ecuador and Colombia in 2008 and the internal destabilization of the democratic system in Bolivia, also in 2008. Ecuador, for example, could not plan and implement a foreign policy before 2007 because of its political instability, the lack of continuity in its governments, and inadequate professionalism of its civil servants. As a result, it can be argued that if small states are to be smart internationally, they need to be smart at home first maintaining greater political and economic stability, and supporting continuity and professionalism of their civil services. A further important insight from this study is that a regional international organization created on the basis of equality and communitarian cooperation can enable small states to contribute more to the strengthening of the international community.

The role played by Ecuador and Uruguay in the creation of the CSD supports this argument. Ecuador, during its Presidency *pro tempore*, played a leading role in the consolidation of CSD and in expanding international awareness of the idea of South America as a zone of peace. In this particular case, the idea of a South American identity in defence was used as one of their collective aims of the member-states. Although the principles of self-determination and sovereignty may appear to constrain the notion of a close-knit international community, Ecuador and Uruguay were flexible in maintaining such traditional values and adapted themselves to the new idea of balancing autonomy and influence. Ecuador's role as host of the General Secretariat of UNASUR probably offered the country the opportunity to wield more influence, and Uruguay, playing its role as a member-state, has maintained its traditional region-engaging character as an

honest agent in order to maintain its international profile, a profile that as President *pro tempore* in 2014/16 was further strengthened.

During this whole process, the transformation of Ecuador's stance from being pro United States to being pro South American in the last seven years seems to have demonstrated that identity can be a main factor influencing the decision-making process of small states. This claim can be supported by the arguments presented by Uruguay about its own decision to ratify the UNASUR treaty. This idea of a South American identity is manifest in all the councils created within UNASUR. In the cases studied here, the establishment of CSD is a major mechanism, which can help convert South America into a zone of peace on the basis of the idea of a regional identity. At the same time, this process seems to have transformed the region from a zone of small wars (Sánchez A. 2011) to one aspiring to be a zone of peace. (Ecuador has witnessed *coup d'états*, military conflicts, and constant civil unrest.) The will to change a culture of insecurity can also be considered to have influenced Ecuador during the construction of a more cohesive South American region through UNASUR because this alliance promotes a zone of peace, respect for democratic institutions, and political stability. Ecuador used to lack these very elements (as shown in Chapter 3). Further examples of this permanent insecurity are its border conflicts with Peru and the threat posed by the possibilities of the Colombian conflict with the FARC spilling over into Ecuador's territory.

However, the new friendly relationship between Ecuador and Peru following the peace treaty of 1998 shows the fourth and most important master variable in the construction of collective identity, namely self-restraint, which, in this case, means giving up violence as the means to settle conflicts (Wendt 1999). The same idea was promoted and formally accepted within the CSD, which aims to promote a zone of peace and South American identity in defence. In this way, the perspective of constructing a 'we-feeling' has been promoted in various forms by Ecuador and strengthened through its engagement in the creation of the CSD.

In contrast to Ecuador, Uruguay was not as vulnerable in terms of security, despite its small size and a sensitive geopolitical position, in the period before the signing of the UNASUR treaty. Uruguay's strength lies

in its relatively stable relationships with its neighbours and its being free – as Ecuador was not – of any direct influence from extra-regional forces. Uruguay's membership of MERCOSUR, which was already considered an emerging security community before the beginning of the twenty-first century (Hurrell 1998), also made this country less vulnerable to extra-regional influences.

Finally, the outcomes of the study of Ecuador and Uruguay also help to demonstrate why UNASUR cannot be considered a security community in the terms suggested by Adler and Barnett (1998). Ecuador deploys about 11,000 troops along its border with Colombia to patrol the border constantly given the presence of the Colombian militia. The militia are engaged into combat by the Colombian military, and the conflict spills over the border into Ecuador. The ensuing insecurity also affects the neighbouring states, and violence has increased since the beginning of the century, the relations between Ecuador and Colombia reaching their nadir in March 2008, while Brazil was promoting the creation of the South American Defence Council, as mentioned in the previous chapter.

This use of violence by Colombian forces in Ecuador's territory in March 2008 is one of many events that show that the South American region does not fulfil the basic conditions to be considered a security community, because one of the requirements is the absence of military forces along the borders and another is the abandonment of violence as the means of settling conflicts (Adler and Barnett 1998).

All the same, there are at least three fundamental indications that the South American region can develop into a security community. First, the settlement of the historical border conflicts between Ecuador and Peru has developed into a successful project of peaceful transition from enmity to friendship not only at the level of the states' interrelationship but also at the level of civil society. Joint civil projects along the Ecuador-Peru border related to infrastructure, health, and education can be considered a success, following the signing of the peace treaty of Itamaraty in 1998. Secondly, the creation of UNASUR has enabled all South American states to initiate cooperative projects at various levels including the state and civil society levels. The creation of twelve councils and various other institutions in the period up to 2012 also shows an intensive and rapid development into a homogeneous international community. Thirdly, the creation of the CSD has enabled all South American states to hold dialogues and build trust, to make their military assets and investments transparent, and to develop security-related projects involving the defence forces of all states, thereby demonstrating a willingness to develop the region as a zone of peace.

Considering all the above aspects, this investigation concludes that UNASUR is not a security community at present but an international community based on the principle of communitarian cooperation; however, it has the potential to develop into a security community in the future.

Conclusion

This chapter began by highlighting the argument that Ecuador and Uruguay can be characterized as region-engaging small states. The support they gave to the construction and consolidation of UNASUR was not the only way in which they fulfilled the requirements of a region-engaging small state: both also contributed to shaping the organizational structure of UNASUR.

In this context, Uruguay can also be considered as a smart small state—a state that develops strategies to shape common policies and expand its own influence internationally. This characteristic is related to the premise that politically stable small states are more able than the less stable small states to influence international relations and to project themselves regionally as well as globally. Uruguay has shown this characteristic by strategically supporting Venezuela in an effort to change the original market-related integration, as envisaged by the Brazilian initiative, to a sociopolitically oriented regional integration based on communitarian cooperation. Secondly, smart small states not only identify opportunities offered by the structure of the organization of which they are members but also develop strategies that benefit the whole community. Uruguay's timely approval of the UNASUR treaty enabled it not only to play the role of a crucial actor (region-engaging actor) in the consolidation of UNASUR but also

to secure for the entire region a legally recognized international regional organization that represents all twelve South American states.

Ecuador too qualifies to be a region-engaging smart small state, because it not only offered to host the General Secretariat of UNASUR but also campaigned for ratification of the UNASUR treaty in order to consolidate the region. These cases confirm the general proposition that regional international organizations can be sources of international influence for small states.

The study also shows that the administrative structure of such international organizations also influences the behaviour of its small member-states. An inclusive regional organization encourages small states to contribute to the consolidation of the region.

Two other important factors were influential in prompting Ecuador and Uruguay to support the process of consolidation of UNASUR, namely ideology and identity. The Left orientation of its national and regional policies reinforced the region-engaging character of Uruguay, because many of these policies were included in the main objectives of UNASUR. Ecuador joined this wave in 2007 when President Correa came to power, and its position was strengthened following a change in the country's constitution. This national political adjustment enabled Ecuador's new national assembly to ratify the treaty of UNASUR. As to identity, its various elements were embedded in the whole idea of UNASUR. The formation of a South American identity is not only a historical concept employed in political debates in Ecuador and Uruguay but also reflects the culture, languages, values, and beliefs these South American small states historically share with most other South American states.

Conclusions

Introduction

This study was launched to answer two questions, the second stemming from the answer to the first. The first question was this: Why did Ecuador and Uruguay support the creation and consolidation of UNASUR? The second question was this: Did identity influence these small states in creating and strengthening UNASUR?

The first section of this chapter summarizes the result of the study and presents some answers to these questions obtained from this investigation. The second section evaluates the theoretical guide employed in this study as well as the methodology. The final section makes some suggestions for further investigations in the area of small state studies.

Reasons for Ecuadorian and Uruguayan Engagement in UNASUR: More than Shared Elements of a Collective Identity?

The study supports the contention that Ecuador and Uruguay, as international political actors in the particular case and time frame of creating and consolidating UNASUR from 2000 to 2012, can be considered as region-engaging small states.

Both Ecuador and Uruguay meet the criteria of small states as region-engaging agents as suggested in Figure 2.1 (Chapter 2). These small

states can be considered region-engaging because they have voluntarily co-operated with other South American states by signing and ratifying the UNASUR treaty and have assumed an international role as general members. Ecuador as well as Uruguay had also played the role of President *pro tempore.* Both states can be said to have voluntarily participated in and organized collective projects within the framework of UNASUR to construct and strengthen this regional international organization and a South American identity, despite the fact that what constitutes a voluntary action by a state can be the object of subjective interpretation.

The use and the international expansion of the idea of a collective regional identity within the UNASUR framework has enabled Ecuador to link its regional politics to its domestic politics to overcome increasing security threats to its national security, threats it expected to minimize by acting in conjunction with similar-minded states. These issues include threats to political stability and democracy at the domestic level and those to national sovereignty from extra-regional agents at the international level.

Here, the idea of a collective identity, and the idea of a new international forum that employs political dialogue for the resolution of conflicts, both driven by the UNASUR project, seem to have impacted the governments. It could be said, therefore, that Ecuador changed its preference from a pro-US policy to a South-American-oriented integration policy. In this respect the study shows that the elements of self-identity of Ecuador and the identity of the South American region, conceived as identitarian factors, have played a fundamental role. However, other reasons such as disenchantment with the old economic mechanisms of cooperation, the new perspectives offered by role of President *pro tempore* of UNASUR, and the new type of political communitarian cooperation have also influenced the change in political approach of Ecuador to the creation and consolidation of UNASUR.

The region-engaging character of Uruguay is based also on traditional principles of international cooperation and construction of norms, and on the institutionalization of international organizations, which are the lever for political engagement among nations. The shared elements of identity are not the only major influential factor in Uruguay's decision to support the consolidation of UNASUR: the traditional professionalism of the state

administration also seems to have persuaded Uruguay to take strategic decisions based on a clear bargaining strategy. Nevertheless, the links between identitarian elements in both case studies and the elements portraying the South American collective identity can be considered as strong factors that connect each country to the other and both countries to the whole region. Hence, identity has played a fundamental role in the support offered by the two countries to the formation of UNASUR.

Another common factor between the cases is the similar ideologies of the Left-wing governments of the two small states and their prioritization of social policies and of common projects related to security and infrastructure over economic or commercially related integration. The realization of the threat of worsening their socio-economic situation through using minimally regulated international free trade as a vehicle for regional integration influenced both states in favour of the creation and consolidation of UNASUR. This is connected to the dissatisfaction of both the small states with the economic mechanism of cooperation and integration in CAN, ALADI, and MERCOSUR. Economic cooperation between small states and economically stronger states on the basis of free trade and market competition can be either a risky and short-lived phase that could lead to negative outcomes or an egoistic, self-centred action by some agents that aims for long-term benefits in which the South American small states, given their comparatively underdeveloped and poor economies, find themselves at a disadvantage.

This study also elucidates the differences between these two small states. Political stability and the protection of democratic institutions are some of the factors of comparison. Ecuador, being more vulnerable to political instability, sees UNASUR as a lever for positioning its national objectives regionally and beyond and at the same time for ushering in peace, whereas Uruguay sees UNASUR as a way of avoiding isolation and of obtaining the right to act in regional politics. Extra-regional forces have influenced both small states. Here, Ecuador proved more vulnerable to external factors because of its old ties to the United States and because of a variety of border conflicts with its neighbours. The role of the leader of the region as President *pro tempore* of UNASUR offers small states the possibility to reduce such disparities.

In summary, the role of President *pro tempore* is a further important factor that influenced the behaviour of Ecuador and Uruguay during the consolidation of UNASUR. There are various reasons for this. First, such a role enables small states to lead the region and also allows them to request support from large or medium-sized states or, conversely, to offer support to them; in both cases, the principle of complementarity is reinforced. Secondly, the principle of equality through the consensus clause generates trust between large and small states. Third, these structural characteristics set UNASUR apart from other methods of integration in the region and make this alliance unique in that it supports equal participation of small states in the design and decision-making of regional politics.

In this study, Ecuador demonstrated greater involvement in the political construction of the region than Uruguay, as Ecuador's security, given the presence of US military bases in the region and the diplomatic rupture with Colombia, became major concerns during Ecuador's term as President *pro tempore* of UNASUR and during the consolidation of the institutionalization of the CSD. For these reasons, Ecuador's role as President *pro tempore* was more prominent in the process of consolidating the South American region, whereas Uruguay didn't play such an important role due to the decline of the Left-wing governments in the region and lacking of agreement about the future of UNASUR. This suggests that the principles of equality by rotating the roles and functions within a regional international organization enables small states to contribute more to the development of the entire region as well as to expand their influence regionally and beyond.

Finally, the introduction of the consensus clause in the decision-making process provides evidence that the principle of equality and respect for national sovereignty has been accepted by all member-states. Such acceptance builds trust between member-states and empowers small states, because they have the potential to oppose policies and projects that could affect their national interest. Hence, a modification of the decision-making process that weakens the consensus clause would diminish the ability of small states to direct the destiny of UNASUR.

Reflections on the Theoretical Approach and Methodology

The study set out not to test a theory but to employ theoretical elements as a guide to understanding the actions – or inactions – of the subjects of the two case studies and their motivations in the process of region construction.

The combination of three constructivist theoretical views, namely Wendt's (1999) social constructivism, Adler and Barnett's (1998) security communities, and elements of the role theory in international relations as spelt out by Harnisch et al. (2011) and Nabers (2011), facilitated the interpretation of empirical data together with theoretical explanations at a general, intermediate, and specific level.

Furthermore, the combination of such elements enabled this study to maintain a coherent path of investigation, always a challenge when employing interpretative case study methodologies. The use of identity as the central focus of the investigation, with the flexibility to look for other relevant factors that may have influenced the behaviour of the agents, also allowed the development of a coherent set of ideas that facilitated the understanding of the region-engaging role of Ecuador and Uruguay.

Employing a qualitative approach also made it possible to follow an investigative historical path and interpret the data in close relation to theory and to contrast the political events across the process into a unified narrative, which is particularly difficult when using competing methodologies in the study of international politics. Thus the theory-related investigation not only guided the construction of the framework for this study but also made it possible to draw conclusions based on theoretical precepts.

The emerging constructivist framework facilitated the understanding of the historical political events that predated the creation of UNASUR. Secondly, focusing on the links between national and regional identities helped in understanding the influence of agents on the structure and that of the structure on the agents, and also helped overcome the agent-structure dilemma in studying international relations. Thirdly, the enactment of international roles, that of a member and that of the leader, by Ecuador and Uruguay in UNASUR could be viewed from a theoretical perspective

intertwined with the main factor of explanation, namely identity. This view was helped by the combination of theoretical explanations contained in Adler and Barnett's (1998) security communities and those contained in the role theory (Harnisch et al. 2011; Nabers 2011).

The effects of identity on the role change are considered only indirectly in this study, because the focus of the study was not on role change—unlike that of the studies by Harnisch et al. (2011) and Nabers (2011). However, the direction of their thoughts was important to understand both material and ideational influences of larger and stronger states on smaller and weaker ones.

As to the case study methodology, there are other relevant aspects of the role played by Ecuador and Uruguay in UNASUR that are related to the application of the case study methodology. For instance, the categorization of small states during the process of integration as region-engaging, region-constraining, and region-adapting enabled this study to place Ecuador and Uruguay into the category of region-engaging South American small states.

The review of literature was the major source for such a classification of small states on the basis of their behaviour in a regional international organization or integration project despite the fact that international organizations as well as the states have their distinct histories, identities, issues, aims, and motivations. The classification of small states is relevant to the extent that it facilitated the selection of states for the case studies based on established methodologies and also enabled the two states to be compared (Gerring 2008; 2007; Bennett and Elman 2007; George and Bennett 2005), although the research did not necessarily follow the positivist approach. Both the qualitative positivist and the interpretative approaches to knowledge offer alternative and complementary tools; for example, the positivist approach offers methodologies for case selection and the interpretative approach offers historical description. However, this study mainly used the elements of the interpretative approach, which enabled clearer inferences to be drawn from the single case studies as well as from the comparison of the two cases. The complexity of a historical process in explaining events appears less challenging when

theoretical explanations are used as a guide, and an in-depth study of each case supported by interpretative case studies facilitated delving into particulars of the historical process.

Final remarks

The field of small-state studies is experiencing a comeback as researchers have begun to consider that size matters in international relations and that 'it is now time for a true dialogic relationship between big and small' (Smith, Pace, and Lee 2005: iii). Small-state studies have a long way to go yet to catch up with the other main fields of IR, but this very lagging behind is what makes the prospect of small-state studies attractive at present, and offers a relatively underexploited field, a greener pasture as it were.

For instance, what is required is a comprehensive study that collates and reproduces the history and development of small-state studies and complements the work of Ingebritsen and his co-workers (Ingebritsen et al., 2006; Ingebritsen 2006a, 2006b) in the European context, and the work of Bonilla (2008, 2002) and Bizzozero (2010, 2008, 2003, 2000) in the South American region. Indeed, there is a need for cumulative academic work that also develops a cohesive and consistent academic agenda. Enough material already exists for a more detailed investigative work, because most of the nation-states around the globe could be characterized as small states, and each decade spawns even more of them.

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This book introduces an innovative model for studying the role of small states in building international organizations. The model categorizes these states into region-engaging, region-constraining, and region-adapting actors, depending on their particular type of involvement in regional politics. Ecuador and Uruguay are studied in depth and categorized as region-engaging small states in the context of building UNASUR, the South American Union of Nations. The book argues that these two nations show elements of a shared and collective identity that influence their region-engaging character.

The author considers various factors such as governments driven by left-oriented ideology, the failure of economic integration projects, the overpowering influence of external agents, and the need for national and regional peace. These circumstances as well as the prospect of small states playing a leading role and ushering in a new type of political cooperation within UNASUR prompted Ecuador and Uruguay to support the building and consolidation of this alliance.

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Raúl Salgado Espinoza

Small Builds Big
How Ecuador and Uruguay contributed to the construction of UNASUR

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