

Cities at Amapá's International Border: Challenges in the Face of the International Integration and the Public Policies of Defense and Security¹

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Abstract: *This article aims at analyzing the context of Northern Amazon's international border (state of Amapá) in the face of the processes of South-American integration and implementation of policies of security and defense. The article explores the hypothesis that Amapá's international border suffers from the direct impact of the process of integration between the state and both the internal and external markets, yet the border is a fundamental social space of security and defense. However, the borderline municipalities represent the weak bond in the chain of political-administrative relations determining the contents of public policies. The local agents, lacking articulation, can hardly have their basic needs met, and are excluded from the main decision-making processes affecting the city. This article ultimately results from bibliographical research, data collection, and document analysis. It is organized into two stages of discussion. At the first stage, it deploys the political-economic aspects characterizing the state of Amapá, so that, at the second stage, it reflects on the cities at Amapá's international border.*

Keywords: *International Border; South-American Integration; Policies of Defense and Security; Amazon; Amapá.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The reflections presented in this article took part in the round-table debates on 'Political border and transborderlining in the Plateau of the Guianas' at the Seventh National Meeting of the ABED – ENABED. The objective was to discuss the context of the international border of Northern Amazon (state of Amapá) in the face of the processes of South-American integration and implementing of policies of security and defense.

The analysis of the state policies in the historical constitution of the Amazon is hardly an academic novelty. However, they would acquire new meaning, bestowed by the process of economic integration of South America. This process has been determined by both the post-war international context and the need of redefining Brazil's participation in the globalized market, which in turn has placed the cities at the Amazon's border in a new scenario. They were once understood as containing lines and limits of sovereign states, but now they take up the strategic role of both political integration and the integration of economic infrastructures.

This change of focus is closely tied with the strategies drawn by the federal government in the economic and political repositioning of Brazil in the regional and global context. From the point of view of international politics, a change has been processed on the regional reference. The concept of 'South-Americanness' ("*sul-americanidade*") replaces the concept of Latin America. The proposal of uniting the twelve South-American states has redefined the geopolitical weight of the region in the American continent in the face of the large economic blocks and in opposition to the US project of creating the AFTA (Americas' Free-Trade Area). In the perspective of Lafer, "to Brazil, South American is not an option, but rather, in the terms of Ortega y Gasset, the circumstance of our diplomatic self." (Lafer 2001: 56)

The efforts of integration of South America have acquired a more conspicuous shape after the creation of Mercosur (1990s) IIRSA (2000) (Initiative for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure of South America), which has been a decision of territorial politics of macro-restructuring character, and, more recently, Unasur (2011) (Union of South-American Nations). Such efforts are based on the premises of open regionalism of UNECLAC and the new regionalism of IDB (Inter-American Development Bank).

¹Translation into English by João Azevedo Abreu (St John's College, University of Cambridge).

As for internal economic politics, the Brazilian government has adopted as a guideline to the Pluriannual Plans the competitive insertion of the country by means of South-American integration and productive modernization with the reduction of the Brazil cost by means of eliminating those strangling points of the productive and trade chain, which raise the cost and affect the competitiveness of the national products. Since Fernando Henrique Cardoso's first term as a president, the Pluriannual Plans have been characterized by an important feature as opposed to the previous government's territorial policies: they established intervention lines intended to integrate the country to South America, thus opening markets from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean by means of the National Axes of Inegration and Development (ENIDs). Regardless of a few cases of divergence concerning focus, the strategies were incorporated and applied further during Lula's government, thus presenting themselves in the Pluriannual Plan of 2004/2007 as well as the first two Growth Acceleration Programs, remaining as a central guideline during the Dilma Rousseff administration.

The politics of security and defense have also been reshaped in the face of the new scenario. The geopolitical attitude towards the areas of international border will now bring the political dimension into the debate of national security and defense, thus expanding the latter beyond the strictly military sense. In addition, the process of approximation to the South-Smerican countries required the establishment of new mechanisms of security and defense which would take into account the integration process. The South-American Defense Council represents an answer to such requirement, as it is supposed to support the security-related interchange among countries making up the Union of South-American Nations. This interchange covers from the proposal of elaboration of joint-defense policies to the integration of industrial bases of war material in that region.

In the wake of the discussions above, the Amazon emerges as a strategic space for effecting the integration of economic infrastructures and becomes the stage of imporant actions of national defense in its broadened sense. This happens, in the first place, because the Amazon region is the ultimate means of physical communication between Brazil and six² other South-American states and French Guiana, a fact that in turn makes its international borders a key element in the process of integration. In the second place, the Amazon region is looked at, once more, as a resource frontier offering great potential for both the economic exploitation and the attraction of the great capital and international networks, especially for mineral exploitation, recently petroleum. Finally, when the porosity in its borders is taken into account, that facilitates the illegal routes of traffic and international crime, in addition to the low population density of the area as well as the flimsy structure of its economy and public goods and services, the Amazon becomes priority in the politics of defense, which is established in the PDN (in Brazilian Portuguese, National Plan of Defense) of 2005.

This new political picture involving the Amazon suggests a set of policies regarding territory and defense, aiming at both fighting illegal activities and supporting the development of the region. The objective is to meet the region's needs of defense by means of a new paradigm of security and defense. Namely, the idea is that the preservation of the Brazilian sovereignty will only be guaranteed by the combination of military-strategic entrepreneurship with the implementation of a set of public policies that would promote, at once, economic growth, social development, environmental preservation, and defense.

As part of the governmental planning for the Amazon region, its defense-and-security policies are based on two main strategies: the increase in military presence, and the promotion of the local economic development. The increase from 3,300 soldiers in 1998 to 30,000 in 2009 was very meaningful, although it represents 10% only of the national troops (NASCIMENTO: 2010). The project named Integrated System for the Monitoring of Borders (Sistema Integrado de Monitoramento de Fronteiras) (Sisfron), still being designed, is expected to reach 35,000 soldiers in the region before 2019 as well as the creation of 28 Special Border Platoons, as opposed to the current 20 platoons in the whole Amazon region. Beyond two other programs (Calha Norte Program (PCN, in Brazilian Portuguese) and Protection System in the Amazon (SIPAM, *idem*)) already present in the Amazon context, Sisfron will provide for ground force, that is, the army of high-technology equipment, training, and travel, thus integrating the border units which used to be isolated. Such strategies are meant to meet the need for revitalization of the borders, given that, as they have become a key

² On its Amazonian space, Brazil borders Bolívia, Peru Colômbia, Venezuela, Guiana, Suriname, and the French Overseas Department.

element in the process of integration, they are an important link in the chain of illicit routes and crime maps spread over the Amazon. They are areas also sensitive to the international military presence.

Another aspect of the increase in Brazilian military forces in the Amazon has as its backdrop the internal context of the border areas in the fight against illicit activity. The new PDN represented an important step forward in fighting crime in the region around the international border, as it has acknowledged that public security should be treated, in certain cases, as an issue of national security and defense. The rise of what is conventionally called 'new threats' in the post-Cold War era has set the tone of the new agenda. The set of problems of national defense and security has never been approached so closely as it is in National Strategy for Public Safety at the Borders (in Brazilian Portuguese, ENAFRON). The military started to give more importance to the drug traffic, even though the latter used to fall under the responsibility of the Federal Police. The Drug traffic elicited the Defense Ministry's interest in obtaining allies in the National Congress in order to change the rules of the game as well as to bring the Armed Forces into the fight against illicit activities at the borders, which, in principle, would be easier for the armed forces, given that they were already physically present at the borders by means of the PEFs (Pelotões de Fronteiras (Border Platoons, in Brazilian Portuguese)) (NASCIMENTO, GUIMARAES, FERREIRA, MIRANDA: 2013).

The Complementary Statute number 136, of August 25, 2010, entitled the Army, The Navy, and the Air Force with police power to fight illicit activities at the borders. This leads to a noticeable broadening in the concept held not only by the Defense Ministry but also by the Justice Ministry about public security, which was thought in a regionalized way until recently. Thus, the governmental public policies denote an attempt to establish a joint execution on the part of different ministries in the fight against transnational crime. ENAFRON proposes the enhancement of security in the border municipalities aiming at preventing crime in those areas from North to South in the country. The impact resulting from such actions will be able to be measured in the short term.

The above set of institutional actions for the Amazon has an impact on the border issues by revealing that there is a new context of management of the border territory as well as a new normative production offering solutions for the informal problems legitimizing the illegal networks in activity in that circuit. Thus, it is not the case that the integration of the Amazon has progressed in spite of the geopolitical matters. On the contrary, they are part and parcel of the proposal of development and control of the Amazon.

Within this broad picture, the cities at the Amazon's international border appear as important spaces for the application of the public policies of South-American security and integration. They are involved by the movements of socio-political forces conducive to the elaboration and implementation of those public policies. This article aims at analyzing the context of Northern Amazon's international border. The article explores the hypothesis that Amapá's international border is under the direct impact from the process of integration between the state and both the internal and external markets, in addition to being a fundamental social space for defense and security. However, the bordering municipalities represent the weak link in the chain of political-administrative relations determining the contents of public policies. The local actors lack articulation, thus can hardly have their basic needs met and are excluded from the main decision-making processes impacting the city.

This work has been accomplished through bibliographic research, data collection, and document analysis. It is organized into two stages of discussion. At the first stage, it deploys the political-economic aspects characterizing the state of Amapá, so that, at the second stage, it reflects on the cities at Amapá's international border.

2. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF AMAPÁ

The state of Amapá originated from the split-up of the state of Pará in 1943, when it was created as 'Federal Territory of Amapá' (TFA, in Brazilian Portuguese). Its organization was based on the premise of national defense, which included the need for occupying bordering areas with low demographic density and formerly-disputed international limits. The newly created territory was divided into three cities: Mazagão, Macapá e Amapá. A number of city-restructuring measures was brought about along the organization of the territory government and, later, as it became a state in 1988. Among them, the capital was moved from the city of Amapá to Macapá in 1944, with the intention of endowing it with greater physical structure and make easier the contact with Belem, the capital of Pará, as well as the territory's dismemberment into new political-administrative units.

The new cities would appear as a result from geopolitical concerns about the municipality of Oiapoque, as well as from the action by large private companies which unchained the creation of Santana, Laranjal do Jari, Pedra Branca do Amapari, Serra do Navio, Porto Grande, and Vitória do Jari. The municipalization cases were further encouraged by not only the gold exploration, which in turn led to the formation of Calçoene, the building of the Coaracy Nunes hydroelectric station, influencing in the creation of Ferreira Gomes, but also by local political movements leading to the municipalizations of Tartarugalzinho, Cutias, Itaubal, and Pracuúba (PORTO, 2003), making up 16 cities in total, out of which eight are on the border strip.

Located to the northeast of Northern Amazon, Amapá's cities of Oiapoque and Laranjal do Jari are on the international border with the French Overseas Region (French Guiana) and Suriname, respectively. It is a triple border, although there is no highway connection with Suriname.

The geographic and political composition of the state have bestowed it a unique condition of space, which is at once strategic and peripheric. (PORTO, SILVA: 2010) Its strategic configuration results from a number of factors: its bordering the territory of France, which is a member of the economic European community, thus broadening the interactions between Brazil and France; its geographic link to the plateau of the Guianas; the preservation of the native forest; and the huge sociobiodiversity it owns. Another important aspect is its position on the seashore, which allows access through the Amazon River for large-draft ships to the city of Santana, which can be reached by a paved highway from the capital in 30 minutes. All these elements, constituting its strategic potential, have acquired greater relevance in the face of both the public state policies of physical integration of the Amazon border, as present in the Plurianual Plans since the Fernando Henrique Cardoso government, and the Initiative for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure of South America (IIRSA, in Portuguese). The both of them intend to integrate South America's domestic markets by means of large infrastructural works, such as the pavement of the BR 156 highway, linking Macapá to Oiapoque; the Oiapoque/BR – Saint George/FR binational bridge; the three hydroelectric stations holding a power connection with Tucuruí; and the modernization of the local port and airport.

Its peripheric condition results from its being distant from the great political and economic national centers, as well as from its geographic insulation given the absence of access by highway. Such condition becomes more serious due to the structural fragility of its economy, which has low diversity and is based on extravitism and the production of commodities, as well as being strongly characterized by the of the public power in the creation of jobs. Such characteristics hold despite the constant presence of the international capital; the big capital-intensive companies in the exploitation of natural resources, especially minerium, since the earlier organization of the former territory; and the attempt of dinamization of commerce by means of the creation of the free-trade area of Macapá e Santana (ALCMS, in Portuguese). This condition becomes more extreme given the shortage of qualified human resources, especially in technology, and by the lack of qualification providers locally. In addition, there are the political difficulties in representing and articulating the local interests at the national level, as well as the continuing clientelist practices in the administration of both the state and municipalities, thus compromising the longer-term plans and the collective organization.

The state of Amapá also displays characteristics specifically linked to its status of former territory and current Amazonian state. The main characteristic regards the control of its land. There are six institutions in charge of the use and occupation of the land: INCRA, the state, FUNAI, IBAMA, the Army, and the Navy (PORTO 2010). According to the State Secretary for the Environmental Issues (Secretaria de Estado do Meio Ambiente³), the public land control is split between FUNAI, 11.498 km² (6,30%); IBAMA, 56.453 km² (30,96%) and INCRA, 73.764 km² (40,45%). As little as 40.605 km² (22,27%) only are under the control of Instituto de Meio Ambiente e Ordenamento Territorial do Amapá out of a total of 143.453,7 km². That is, the greater part of public land is under federal administration, which considerably limits the state's ability to promote its legal order. In addition, nowadays 72% of the territory are either under the protection of indigenous land demarcation (62%) or because it falls among the areas of protection by the state, the federation, or private entities (10%). This characteristic has affected the urbanization process in Amapá, as it prevents the population from

³ Cf. 'SEMA. Relatório de Desmatamento no Amapá.' Macapá, 2013. <<http://www.sema.ap.gov.br/index.php/cgtia/publicacoes>>, accessed on August 26, 2011.

occupying those areas. (PORTO, BIANCHETTI: 2005) The cities are the greatest victim of the territorial overlapping, that is, the legally delimited municipalities in Amapá are of federal (INCRA, IBAMA, the Army) or state responsibility, where the mayor in each case has no managerial empowerment.

In Amazon in general and Amapá in particular, the above is a serious limitation, given that the political-administrative institutions at the municipal level constitute, at times, the only effective means by which the state makes itself ever present in large portions of its territory. The cities represent the *locus par excellence* of the multiple communitarian articulations, as well as of the headquarters of companies dedicated to the exploitation of natural resources, and the point of attraction to migratory flows. They are also the spot for the concentration of a considerable part of the population as well as the most acute social and environmental problems.

3. THE CITIES OF OIAPOQUE AND LARANJAL DO JARI, AND THE SECURITY AND DEFENSE OF THE AMAZON BORDER

At the international border of the state of Amapá, the cities of Oiapoque e Laranjal do Jari share serious problems in their urban infrastructure such as the absence of basic sanitation, poor dwelling conditions, high density of solid residue without proper collection, open sewers, and lack of urban mobility. Several of such problems are connected to the application of the policies of territorial use in the state without taking into account the the urban areas' needs or the accomplishment of its initial planning. (TOTES 2010) Even under such circumstances, both cities are relevant for the integration of the state into the internal and the external markets. They promote the occupation of the border and are in charge of the daily maintenance of the social and economic relations that enhance and guarantee the national sovereignty on the border area, thus playing a role in the security and defense of the national Amazon border.

In the Laranjal do Jari region, the process of occupation and building of the urban nucleus is connected to the installation of the Industrial Complex of Jari in the neighboring state of Pará and the opening of the BR 156 highway resumed by the federal government in the 1970s linking the South of the state to the capital. The intense migratory flow, especially that of low-qualified labor, attracted by the economic dynamics of that venture, led to the emergence of Vila do Beiradão. According to Brito & Tostes (2010), given the lack of any planning or sanitation or wholesomeness, environmentally fragile areas have been taken up by households based on stilts. This, in turn, has led to the formation of one of the largest river slums in the world. (CLARETO: 2003)

In the backdrop of the building of the city, there are the public policies launched by the military government during the 1960s and 1970s aimed at promoting the occupation of low-demographic-density areas, as well as the proposal of economic integration of Amazon by means of incentives to the implementing of great enterprises open to foreign capital. Tax-reduction incentives, forced political stability, and transfer of profits have attracted the international capital to enable the national project of integration and development of Amazon.

The process of urbanization characterizing the reality of Laranjal do Jari had its start, therefore, as an artifact of capital stimulated by the state. The intensity of the migration process, added to the inexistence of local or federal policies which could enable the urban nucleus with a minimum statute of occupation of the space, have brought about on the left bank of the Jari River the antithesis of the comfortable city planned by Jari Celulose and its permanent employees on the side of the state of Pará. This context reveals the less attractive face of the large industrial enterprises installed in the Amazon.

In 1987, Beiradão was replaced by the city of Laranjal do Jari, which did not bring about meaningful changes for the city. It was in 2005 only, with the support and massive intervention on the part of a study group from Federal University of Amapá, that its master plan was elaborated. The city is the third largest in the state, with 39,805 inhabitants. (IBGE: 2010). Its land is split up into areas of environmental protection submitted to federal and state jurisdiction, and indigenous land, highlighting the implementation of the National Park of Montanhas do Tumucumaque by the federal government, without prior consultation of the municipality, occupying large part of its area. The situation of its land instantiates the phenomenon of the virtuality of the municipality's power, insofar as the municipality owns the area legally delimited, without, however, any managerial rights on the land, remaining as the holder of an administrative act only. (PORTO: 2010)

This context becomes more serious due to the political fragility of the city management as it is characterized by clientelist practices, according to Brito & Tostes (2010), and by the impoverishment of the city hall. As the local public power lacks qualified technical staff, adequate or sufficient equipment, and technological resources, it cannot respond to the serious economical and social problems routinely experienced by the population, such as regular flooding, fire, and prostitution. In association to this, there are the high level of dependence of the city hall on the meager constitutional transfer from the Participation Fund of the Municipalities, and default in the case of the expenses in relation to the application of federal funds, which represents a hindrance to obtaining new resources or participation in programs such as, for instance, Calha Norte.

The municipality of Oiapoque, despite important differences, does not display a more encouraging reality than the one found in Laranjal do Jari. Created in 1945, when Amapá was still a federal territory, Oiapoque's condition of a bordering city was a determining factor for the occupation of the territory by means of the colonization induced by public policies and geopolitical strategies of national security such as the building of BR 156. The highway has been an element of great importance in guaranteeing the Brazilian presence in the region. From a geopolitical positioning, the national state sought to integrate the far-North border by means of a process of populating, militarizing (especially in Clevelândia do Norte), linking the region to the dynamical center of Amapá's economy.

However, after more than half a century, the precariousness of the area's infrastructure is an indisputable fact. The BR156 highway remains partially without asphalt, which makes the journey between the capital and Oiapoque too long and risky, especially during the rainy season. The public streets in the urban nucleus are mostly without asphalt, the houses are precarious and have an irregular design, whereas the services of education, security, and health are poor, thus reflecting the limitations of the local public institutions in meeting the population's basic needs.

According to Tostes⁴, Oiapoque has undergone a series of misfortunes in relation to the city management in the last 20 years: mayors dismissed for administrative improbity, corruption, misappropriation of public funds, impoverishment of the city hall, administrative-bureaucratic inefficiency, political inability to establish longer-term planning, predominance of clientelistic practices of power. As a result of such picture, the indicators of social problems accumulate and are aggravated by the lack of employment, high consumption of drugs, insufficient allocation of federal funding, default, intense migration, and prostitution.

The municipality is the fourth largest in the state, with 20,426 inhabitants. Despite the legal requirement, it has no master plan. The building of the binational bridge, expected to be finished at least 15 years ago, has not elicited the needed investment in infrastructure. In the analysis provided by Tostes⁵, '[t]he city of Oiapoque has not even the necessary legal instruments of urban planning, organization, and development.' In connection with this picture, the local power still suffers from the virtuality of its managerial ability, given that its land is under federal jurisdiction and is divided into areas of environmental protection, such as the National Park of Montanhas do Tumucumaque and National Park of Cabo Orange, and indigenous land, such as Galibi, Juminá (Galibis and Karipunas) and Uaçá (Karipunas).

The serious problems experienced in both cities are also mixed with other ones, which result from their condition of international border, especially in the case of Oiapoque, given its interaction with the twin-city of Saint Georges. In the map of crime⁶, Amapá's bordering area appears as marked by smuggling, foreign currency flight, human traffic, child sexual exploitation, sex tourism, environmental crime, among others. Such crimes are associated to the inability of the local institutional power, which gives evidence of the fragility of the border, whose porosity turns these cities into links in the chain of illegal routes spread over the Amazon.

⁴ TOSTES, José Alberto. 'Território Federal do Oiapoque.' Edited version on <http://josealbertostes.blogspot.com>, accessed on July 20, 2011.

⁵ Ibidem.

⁶ O GLOBO. 'Mapa dos Crimes. Forças Armadas: modernização custa R\$38 bi. Sistema para proteger fronteiras começa pela Amazônia; número de homens do Exército na região vai aumentar.' June 04, 2011.

The socioeconomic issues and crime constituting the life in most bordering cities in the Amazon would, by means of the new National Defense Policy of 2005, become part of the range of concerns in the broadened conception of defense and security. This has happened because such conception has gone through transformations in the face of the new economic and geopolitical picture of the post-Cold War world, which has lowered the importance of military aspects and provoked the emergence of issues related to socioeconomy, local development, and international integration.

Development emerges as one of the main strategies for the promotion of safety of such areas given the precariousness of the living conditions found over there, the difficult access, the low demographic density, and the possibility of integration into the South-American market. Development is now understood as a basic element that might enable the security policies and the effective actions of defense. On the decree approving the National Strategy of Defense, this relation is defined in the following way: the '*National strategy of defense is inseparable from a national strategy of development. The latter motivates the former. The former provides a defense for the latter.*' (BRASIL: 2008) Faced with this strategy, the armed forces have taken up an important instrumental role in the state's political action, incorporating in its actions and projects the need to promote the local development.

The orientation of the Calha Norte Program (PCN, in Brazilian Portuguese) is an example of this kind of incorporation. By keeping the objectives of defending, protecting, and guaranteeing the integrity of the national territory, the program took up emphatically the purpose of leveraging the development of the Amazon and, in particular, the border strip. (DURBENS: 2010) PCN is consolidated as public policy of security, defense, and regional development. This effort can also be found in the Amazon Vigilance System (SIVAM, in Brazilian Portuguese), which constitutes a multidisciplinary system of information management, coordination of actions of vigilance and monitoring of the Amazon and, thus, makes it possible to use the information obtained by means of the projects in order to meet the demands of national defense and security and lower the infrastructural costs necessary to the proposal of sustainable development of the region and leverage its national and international integration.

During the military regime, the strategy for the region, under the geopolitical focus, would be based on commending the human occupation by means of a colonization made viable by the large industrial enterprises and works of infrastructure. In the decades of 1990 and 2000, however, the model starts to be replaced by the valuing of the presence of the state (PCN), of the artificial intelligence technology (SIVAM), and by the public policies of integration of international borders present in the pluriannual plans from 1996 to 2007 and the South-American Regional Integration Initiative (IIRSA, in Brazilian Portuguese).

However, even after the incorporation of the proposal of regional development in PDN as a strategy enabling the security and the actions of defense of the border and a greater presence of the state, the reality of the bordering cities in Amapá has not change in respect to the precariousness of its infrastructure or the fragility and virtuality of its power. The cities of Oiapoque and Laranjal do Jari are examples of that. Despite playing the role of occupying that land and guaranteeing the national dominance, their ability to handle the severe social problems and stand up to the threats to their bordering condition is minimal. The cities serve, thus, as the scenario for smuggling, foreign currency flight, traffic, sexual exploitation (including children), among other forms of crime that should be fought by means of ordinary strategies of security and defense by diverse levels of public power. Yet, as they are left under the responsibility of municipalities, which are the weakest links in this chain, the map of crime tends to become broader and more complex, even more so in Oiapoque, where the building of the binational bridge makes the life on the border even more painful.

4. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Its condition of Amazonian space simultaneously strategic and peripheral has given to Amapá's bordering municipalities peculiar characteristics, resulting from the planning policies of their territory. The land occupation of Northern Amazon has had the international capital as one of its most important inducers of public policies, alongside the big federal projects with geopolitical purposes.

The cities of Oiapoque and Laranjal do Jari, on the international border, result from such policies. Both were born and grew up without organization or spatial planning. The infrastructural precariousness and the weakness of its public services are its most noticeable characteristics, in

addition to the administrative and political fragility of the city halls. This picture is, furthermore, worsened by the virtuality of the local power in the administration of its territory, which is subdivided into protected areas and indigenous areas, under the jurisdiction of federal and state institutions.

Even in the face of this scenario, both municipalities are relevant for the integration between the state and the internal and external market. They are also important from the perspective of security and defense as they promote the occupation of the border and are responsible for the daily maintenance of the social and economic relations that give life to and guarantee the national sovereignty in the bordering area.

Even though the public policies of defense and security have taken up the role of leveraging the development of these regions, contributing to the improvement of infrastructure and fighting crime modalities typical of the border area, they still do not display ability to make profound changes in those municipalities. Confined to their reality, the border cities are faced with the inability of the public government to articulate at the three spheres (federal, state, and municipal) the confrontation with the map of crime and the need and the meeting of their basic living needs. The socioeconomic, political, and infrastructural conditions of the municipalities constituting the Northern border of Brazilian Amazon reveal the fragility of the policies of security and defense in that region.

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