



Canada's Department of National Defence, in support of the VIII Conference of Defence Ministers of the Americas (VIII CDMA), is pleased to have provided financial assistance to **The Security and Defence Network of Latin America (RESDAL)** in order to produce the 2008 edition of the **Comparative Atlas of Defence in Latin America** in both of Canada's official languages in addition to the Spanish language. Canada sees this publication as a useful and lasting contribution to this year's theme of "Hemispheric, Regional and Sub-regional Defence and Security Enhancement: Confidence-Building Through Co-operation and Collaboration."

The development of democratic practices in the region has proved that in order to make decisions or carry out debates, insight into comparable experiences is the greatest asset for those seeking to design or analyze new public policies. With the support of the Open Society Institute, RESDAL in 2005 developed the original Comparative Atlas in the Spanish language as a convenient reference for defence and security issues within the region, as one of its main research projects. Canada's Department of National Defence has collaborated with RESDAL in the updating, translation and production of this current 2008 publication, in the English and French languages as well as in the Spanish language.

The structure of the RESDAL Atlas provides users with knowledge, decision-making tools and considerations on the practices followed by different countries. It contains information such as national legal frameworks and political definitions, defence system organization, budgets, armed forces, parliamentary processes, defence ministries, and other subject areas.

It is hoped that this publication will serve as an opportune reference both now and in the future for those attending the VIII Conference of Defence Ministers of the Americas. Canada would also like to thank those within RESDAL responsible for this publication, and in particular, Ms. Marcela Donadio of RESDAL for her considerable efforts in making this project a success.

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