



# KOSOVO

## COMPROMISE 2007

Your daily-updated analyses, charts and solution plug-ins for the Kosovo crisis.

---

September 12, 2008

### **South America's Kosovos**

By Alexis Troude, [www.kosovocompromise.com](http://www.kosovocompromise.com)

[http://www.kosovocompromise.com/PDF/Kosovo\\_Compromise\\_Newsletter\\_04\\_aug08.pdf](http://www.kosovocompromise.com/PDF/Kosovo_Compromise_Newsletter_04_aug08.pdf)

In Ecuador, the mayor of Guayaquil, supported by the media and conservative pro-American parties, claimed in late 2007 a status of autonomy for its department. In Bolivia, a referendum on May 4, 2008 saw 80 percent of votes favorable to the autonomy of Santa Cruz, followed only a week later by the formation of a government resembling secessionist states. Finally, a very conservative governor of the province of Zulia in Venezuela, Manuel Rosales, has been asking for autonomy since 2000: he created in 2006 the movement “rumbio propio”, which is promoting a “free territory”.

The similarities do not stop there, as the support of the US through the government offices of USAID and non-governmental organizations, such as the National Endowment for Democracy – already in place in Kosovo since the 1990s – are found in Latin America. This is not a coincidence, since the US ambassador in La Paz, Philip Goldberg, was Washington’s envoy to Kosovo just prior to the war in the late-1990s, after helping out Richard Holbrooke in the partition of Bosnia.

In Bolivia, Goldberg allowed the distribution of 125 million dollars to secessionist civil organizations through the anti-drugs program of USAID. Through the consulting firm “Chemonics Inc”, this money had been helping the development of democracy in a certain number of municipalities, and was, after 2005, distributed to civil movements. Since the nomination of Goldberg, this financing has been clearly promoting “federal autonomies”, like the one in Santa Cruz. Finally, in Ecuador, USAID has given some 5.6 million dollars between 2004 and 2007 for “decentralization” programs.



# KOSOVO

## COMPROMISE 2007

Your daily-updated analyses, charts and solution plug-ins for the Kosovo crisis.

---

These convergences between Kosovo and the Andean Arc are not a hazard because in all of the three South American regions where secessionist movements have « spontaneously » erupted, there is a great richness on and under the soil.

Kosovo has some of Europe's riches reserves in coal, zinc, lead and lignite – according to a World Bank report, the richness of Kosovo's resources could amount to 13 billion dollars. The state of Zulia in northwest Venezuela is neighboring the most important Latin American water mass (the lake of Maracaibo); it covers important resources in hydro-carburates, which assures the petrol power of Venezuela, whilst it is also an important agricultural zone. In Bolivia's Santa Cruz department, some 80 percent of the country's agricultural production is concentrated and it is rich in gas reserves. Its capital, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, is the richest city in the country, representing 35 percent of Bolivia's GDP. In Ecuador, the province of Guayas represents the majority of the country's GDP, with the capital Guayaquil hosting 40 percent of the country's companies.

In Latin America, the Andean Initiative or Plan Colombia – programs inspired by the Pentagon – have been initially created to help the fight against drugs and terrorism. But the true stake is rather strategic.

In Latin America, it is control by the American army of the petrol reserves of the arc Orinoco/Andes/Amazon, crossing the Orinoco fault, the rich deposits of the eastern Colombian fields and the promising but as yet unexplored regions of Putumayo; along with the gulf of Guayaquil in Ecuador and the departments of Santa Cruz in eastern Bolivia. In the Balkans, Kosovo is situated in the heart of a network of primary importance: at the intersection of corridors VIII and X and close to corridor IV (Germany-Turkey). Russia's South Stream pipeline project and the Washington-sponsored plan for the AMBO pipeline on Corridor VIII intersect just above Kosovo, on the very spot where corridor X north-south already exists. Thus, Russia's projects are competition for the US AMBO project to transport through the Balkans hydro-carbonates from Central Asia.



# KOSOVO

## COMPROMISE 2007

Your daily-updated analyses, charts and solution plug-ins for the Kosovo crisis.

---

In this geo-strategic context it is thus easy to understand US efforts to implant bases around Kosovo – in the whole of the Balkans – and along the Andes on the axis Colombia-Ecuador-Bolivia.

Since 1999, the strategy of the American government has been to transfer towards the Balkans key elements of its European forces in order to better redeploy them towards the Middle East. The result is Kosovo's Bondsteel base, as the central US base in this part of Europe.

Colombia, with its central position on the intersection of Central and South America, can serve to control the Andean petrol arc. After losing control of the Panama canal in 1999, the US has devoted massive military aid to Colombia through the Patriot Plan and in this context, has constructed two bases in strategic locations. The base of Arauca is situated on the border with Venezuela, neighbouring the immense reserves of the Orinoco fault. Two other bases created recently in the provinces of Putumayo and Caqueta are installed directly on the petrol arc. However, in the rest of the Andean petrol arc, the US has not ceased to implant military bases during the last several years, just as they did in the Balkans. On the mouths of the Orinoco and their delta rich in gas, the accord from 2007 between the US and Trinidad and Tobago approved the construction of an aero-naval basis: this would “close” the grip on Venezuela, with the base in Aruba neighbouring the Venezuelan states of Zulia and close to the world's largest petrochemical refinery complex in the world - Punta Cardon.

In the same manner, the construction of the naval base of Manta in Ecuador has in itself the only geo-strategic explanation: to control the Colombian Putumayo, as well as Ecuador's Gulf of Guayaquil. In order to exercise pressure on the secessionist provinces of Bolivia, the US have begun constructing the base of Boriscal, planned to host 16,000 men as well as runways for B-52s.



# KOSOVO

## COMPROMISE 2007

Your daily-updated analyses, charts and solution plug-ins for the Kosovo crisis.

---

Thus in geopolitical terms, the Andean autonomist movements, supported by the US, resemble the context of the independence of Kosovo.

*Alexis Troude is Researcher at the International Academy of Geopolitics in Paris and is author of "Geopolitics of Serbia" (Ellipses, 2006).*