

## ABSTRACT

From 1995-1997, Colombia and the United States entered in a period of unprecedented diplomatic crisis. The issue at stake was cooperation in drug control specifically. Americans argued that Colombia had failed to cooperate in the war against, and Colombia too accused the United States of lack of cooperation. Hence, the assumption that United States' and Colombia's interests on issues of illegal drugs contradicted each other was confirmed in the minds of policy makers. The *character* of the relationship changed from one of amity to one of enmity. The M.Phil. thesis submitted in 1998 searched specifically for the causes of political conflict based on the assumption that *operational* cooperation was existent before and during the crisis and that therefore the claim of 'lack of cooperation' was inaccurate. The M.Phil. thesis concludes that part of the heart of the 1995-1997 crisis in US-Colombian relations was related to the way in which the concept 'cooperation' was used, or said in other words, how the United States and Colombia measured cooperativeness in drug control. Discussions about policy preferences based on a cost benefit analyses allowing cooperation, or distribution of costs, or reciprocity, or domestic factors of cooperation are important but not enough. In some cases (like the US-Colombian one) *what really counts is how X sees or interprets Y's actions and then labels them as cooperation.*