



Universidad del Azuay

Faculty of Law

School of International Studies

Analysis of the policies implemented by the Ecuadorian State from the year 2013 to the present, regarding Citizen Participation and its interference in the plenary session of UNASUR

Thesis prior to obtaining a Bilingual Bachelor's Degree in International Studies with a minor in Foreign Trade

Author: María Verónica Iñiguez Pulgarin

Director: Dr. Remigio Auquilla

Cuenca, Ecuador

2017

This thesis is dedicated to my family, whom I thank for their trust and unconditional support during the course of my university career.

To my friends and director of thesis that constantly motivated me to the fight to obtain my professional title.

CONTENT INDEX

Dedicated To.....	i
Context Index.....	ii
Abstract.....	v
Introduction.....	1

Chapter I: Analysis of Citizen Participation in Ecuadorian Foreign Policy

Introduction.....	3
1.1 Main historic events of Citizen Participation	4
1.2 Changes within the Citizen Participation since the implementation of the model called: Citizen's Revolution.....	9
1.2.1 2006 Presidential Elections.....	10
1.2.2 Importance of Citizen Participation within the Citizen's Revolution	12
1.3 Policies and Mechanisms adopted by the Ecuadorian State in relation to Citizen Participation	15
1.3.1 Sectoral Citizen Councils	15
1.3.2 Advisory Councils	16
1.3.3 Public Hearings	17
1.3.4 Participatory Budgets.....	18
1.3.5 Citizens' Assemblies.....	19
1.3.6 Empty Chair.....	20
1.3.7 Popultar Forums.....	21
1.4 Chapter Conclusions.....	22

Chapter II: Analysis of the influence exercised by the Executive Power in governmental decision-making and its interference within the Citizen Participation in the UNASUR plenary.

Introduction.....23

2.1 The role of the Executive in decision-making.....24

2.2 Profile of the President26

2.3 Policies and Mechanisms implemented within UNASUR on citizen participation27

2.4 Analysis of the relationship and influence of the policies and objectives adopted by the Ecuadorian State in the actions of the Union of South American Nations....31

2.5 Case example of Citizen Participation implemented by UNASUR.....36

 2.5.1 Inauguration Headquarters UNASUR Quito- Ecuador Case.....37

 2.5.2 Parliamentary Elections in Venezuela Case37

 2.5.3 I Citizen Participation Forum39

2.5 Chapter Conclusions.....40

Chapter III: Examination of the relationship between the Fifth Power of Ecuador and the policies adopted in the Union of South American Nations.

Introduction.....41

3.1 Transparency and Social Control Function42

3.2 Council on Citizen Participation and Social Control.....43

 3.2.1 Accountability 2015.....45

 3.2.2 CPCCS Responsibilities.....47

3.3 The role of the State and citizenship within the CPCCS47

3.4 Analysis of a possible implementation of the CPCCS in the plenary session of UNASUR.....49

Conclusion.....51

Conclusions y Recommendations.....	54
References.....	56

ABSTRACT

This research is based on an exhaustive analysis of policies and mechanics implemented by the government of Rafael Correa Delgado, during the period of 2013- until now on citizen participation and its interference in the Union of South American Nations. The research primarily aims to reach conclusions that demonstrate if the measures taken by the Ecuadorian government promote citizen participation, which is considered one of the main objectives of the Union of South American Nations and of Ecuador's Foreign Policy.

In addition, this paper will help determine if Ecuadorian actions and mechanisms have contributed to the increasingly strengthened regional integration.

Introduction:

Ecuadorian Foreign Policy has been developed on the basis of the importance of maintaining close ties between South American countries, reflecting a framework of unity that allows great advances in the participation of South America in the international arena. Following the promulgation of the 2008 Constitution, Ecuador underwent a restructuring process in different spheres (social, cultural, political), especially in matters of citizen participation, which has allowed its citizens to be active participants in the Development Agenda, which has generated an analysis on the international level of the influence that Ecuador can have on a regional and international level.

The purpose of this document is to analyze the Ecuadorian State and its role as guarantor of effective citizen participation, through the study of the policies and mechanisms implemented at national level and its relation with the objectives regarding the promotion of more committed and participatory citizens. The analysis starts with a comparison of the history of citizen participation and the changes that have been generated with the model called "Citizen Revolution" in the current government of the economist Rafael Correa Delgado. It will be concluded whether it is feasible to implement such mechanisms at the regional level, specifically in the plenary of the Union of South American Nations considered as one of the referent agencies of regional integration. The general objective is to know whether or not there is effective citizen participation and if the implementation of the Transparency and Social Control Function called "The Fifth Power" has contributed to its progress. This way it will be possible to later determine conclusions and make recommendations in favor of an Ecuadorian Foreign Policy based on an integration and participation that gives greater importance to South America.

The present thesis assignment is divided into 3 chapters. The first one examines the history of citizen participation that has developed throughout the Republican life of Ecuador, the analysis of the policies and mechanisms implemented in the current

government and its influence at the regional level. The second chapter examines the role of the Executive power in the establishment of the Development Agenda, which analyzes whether there is a supremacy of the Executive branch over the other powers. Likewise, specific cases are developed in which citizen participation has been exercised at a regional level. Finally, the third chapter focuses on the Function of Transparency and Social Control, specifically on the operation and importance of the Council of Citizen Participation and Social Control, where the possibility of implementing said council within UNASUR is questioned.

The methodology used throughout this thesis is based on the analysis of multiple documents and articles that carry out a study of the history and theory of citizen participation in the Ecuadorian State and its interference in the UNASUR plenary. This information was obtained from secondary sources, which later allowed a comparison of the changes and advances that have been developed within this area. Some tools that were used include different “enlaces ciudadanos” or citizen links, which are radio and TV governmental programs, as well as news and bulletins that are related to the study in question that allowed to clarify the present role of participation. Likewise, the study of specific cases was developed, within which citizen participation has been the main actor in the resolution of different problems at the regional level.

Chapter I: Analysis of Citizen Participation in Ecuadorian Foreign Policy.

The desire for an increasingly solid and representative regional integration is one of the fundamental aspects in the development of the South American countries and their perception as an international bloc. Their objective is to consolidate themselves as active participants in society and strengthening their fight against dependence on the Northern countries, which have historically influenced their development.

The Ecuadorian Foreign Policy has been developed on the basis of the importance of maintaining close ties between the South American countries, creating a framework of regional unity that contributes to the progress of the participation of South America; it ratifies the importance of strengthening the existing regional unity.

Throughout history, citizen participation has become more relevant, and it has come to be known as one of the most feasible mechanisms, in theory, which increases the participation of citizens within the public administration. In addition, its importance stems from the results that have been generated since its implementation at the international level, although their full operation is now a challenge for governments.

This chapter begins with an analysis of the most relevant historic events of citizen participation in Ecuador, in order to understand the importance it has generated within the Ecuadorian Development Agenda and its projection at the international level. Also, the changes that have been generated especially since the implementation of the model called "Citizen Revolution" will be examined exhaustively, with the objective of specifically determining the main contributions of the Ecuadorian State and its influence at regional level. It is also pointed out in the study of the policies and mechanisms implemented and their impact on public management at the national and international levels.

1.1 Main Historic Events of Citizen Participation

The constant struggle of society for the respect of their rights and their aspiration for a better quality of life have undoubtedly been the determining factors in the development and construction of society. Historically, Latin America has gone through different scenarios characterized by dictatorships that allowed specific groups to develop and implement coercive measures, generating even more vulnerable societies. In response to the constant violation of fundamental rights and guarantees, society, empowered by its knowledge of its rights, begins to demand its fundamental rights through public actions that exert pressure at the international level, resulting in the end of existing dictatorships. This is why, starting from the processes of transition of democracy in 1979, different mechanisms of participation and democracy have been incorporated in Latin America that have forged what is now known as citizen participation (Welp, 2008). Citizen participation is not born in the current government of the economist Rafael Correa Delgado. However, within this administration, the guidelines for establishing mechanisms in response to society's growing demand for active participation in decision-making are strengthened in theory. To understand the nature of the term "citizen participation", it is necessary to analyze the events that have directly influenced the construction of such terminology, placing special emphasis on the intervention and influence of society.

The advances in citizen participation have been generated in response to the hegemony that exists and existed on the part of the central governments whose purpose were to maintain total control of the society, limiting its intervention within the decision making process. Its main objective was to include society within its own development, avoiding that governments capture the concept of participation for their own interests. Different scholars of the theory of participation such as the writers: Orlando Fals-Borda and Anisur Rahman, define it as: "a special power, considered the power of the people,

belonging to exploited groups, classes and organizations that seek the defense of their interests and the common goals of social life, generating changes within the participatory system" (Fals-Borda, 1988).

The importance of citizen participation is developed based on two perspectives, the vision developed by the citizens and the perception by the State. On the one hand, citizenship observes participation as a mechanism that allows them to counteract the common system of bureaucracy and dependence on the institution, emphasizing that the validity and importance of institutionality is not questioned. On the contrary, it is considered as the sole purpose to implement measures that allow to incorporate more and more to the society. This justifies participation, not only because it expresses the will of the people, but also because it is the way in which the people, making use of different tools (dialogue, interaction, proposals) are part of their own development and progress. On the other hand, the State perceives participation as a mechanism of intervention within its free action, allowing the people control over the Development Agenda considered as the only competence of the central government. As a result, it can be determined that the implementation of an increasingly influential citizen participation would generate, from the citizen approach, new spaces of participation that would directly incorporate society in the establishment of the Development Agenda; and from the state's focus, the uncertainty and concern for the central government and its own interests would grow.

The term "citizen participation" has had numerous names that have resulted from its constant use by society and the central government. It was formerly known as "popular participation," a term that was born as an alternative society to engage in decisions taken by central governments. According to the author Majid Rahnema (1993), popular participation fulfilled mainly four functions: in cognitive terms, within the social context, instrumental scope and with political characteristics.

In cognitive terms, the objective of participation was to break the ambiguous scheme and practices of participation, directing it towards a different form of interpretation that

placed the main emphasis on the different realities within the policy field, giving an empowerment to the social actors who had no voice or influence within society. This led to the aim of establishing a bridge between the central government and society. In social terms, there was a boom in institutions, groups and people who decided to group together to meet their basic needs in a joint way, which in instrumental terms, led to the development of alternative strategies that solved certain aspects of participation that did not produce results, which led to the inclusion of society within its own development. Finally in political terms it was observed that the different denominations had a point of convergence that was the incorporation of the society as agent of change in the establishment of public policies that later would be applied at regional level.

When speaking of citizen participation, a thorough analysis of its evolution must be carried out throughout history, in order to establish if citizen influence has been considered within the changes that have arisen in the matter of participation and later to know if its objectives have been modified since its establishment.

Analyzing the history we can find that for the first time within the Ecuadorian Development Agenda, terms like "participatory" and "participation" appeared for the first time in the 1950s, which began to be used to give greater prominence to the citizenship. However, the problem of implementing new terms created a level of confusion for the citizens, given that different interpretations were given to those terms, which mostly corresponded to their own interests. On the other hand, there was an intervention, albeit on a smaller scale, of the first actors and social movements that were created in response to the existing oppression by the State. although its true influence would be reflected in later years. At that time, participation was seen as a representation mechanism in which citizens were supported by a group of people struggling to modify the common top-down scheme, where there was total state control and subordination of society. Being a simple mechanism of participation, the intervention citizens was limited through its representatives, which continued generating an exclusion to certain part of the population that influenced indirectly within the decisions.

Developing a concept of participation was very complex due to the different forms of interpretation that was given to it. On the one hand, society considered participation a mechanism that allowed the public to actively influence state decisions leading to changes. However, in the political sphere, the State considered it a double-edged sword that gave control to different social actors that influenced the management of the policy, and its misuse was detrimental to the central government. According to the anthropologists Nici Nelson and Susan Wright (1995), to establish a specific definition of participation is very difficult, taking into account the different terms that have been used throughout history, and that continue to be used. This raises the question of how feasible it is to establish a specific term or concept regarding participation, if in the end they can be interpreted from different perspectives and in certain cases in response to unilateral interests.

In the mid-1960s and early 1970s, new terms appeared such as "popular participation" and "political participation" that restructured the approach of participation by society and the state. This new approach was characterized by the development of new terms that constituted a measure of pressure towards the central government, which later generated changes at national and international level (Galo & Hugo, 2004).

The so-called popular participation generated a mobilization of several sectors of the population whose purpose was the establishment of new associations and protest groups that were constituted as mechanisms of pressure towards the central government. The results were favorable and were reflected in the institutionalization of participation by the local councils, who established the parameters of participation, maintaining the status of local governments.

The focus of citizen participation was broadened by restructuring the relationship between the state and civil society that sought jointly to satisfy the interests and needs that society demanded. As a result, in the 1980s collective participation concentrated on developing ways of promoting democracy through processes of democratization, within which citizens began to make an in-depth analysis of their own participation and

influence within society with the purpose of analyzing whether it has generated changes within governmental decisions.

As a result of citizen pressure towards the State, in the 1980s and 1990s participation can be considered the central axis of public policy at the Latin American level, where institutional restructuring and implementation of participatory mechanisms was generated (dialogues, demonstrations, assemblies). These were the basis of coexistence between the State and society, where the decentralization of power played a very important role that gave way to the construction of a technocratic concept of participation that was considered for society as an advance in the field of participation. Yet, it was perceived by the State as an obstacle for it to be able to act freely.

In the mid-1990s there was a rise in protests and demonstrations by different social movements and in general by the population, since they were considered as efficient mechanisms that guarantee the inclusion of society in the decisions of the State. The people, aware of their empowerment and observing their influence in the political arena, were the protagonists of multiple events that would mark the development agenda of Ecuador, among them we can highlight the mobilization driven by the people in 1997 whose objective was the overthrow of the ex-President Abdalá Bucaram. The favorable results obtained from such mobilization, besides reflecting the will of the people, was an event that marked the trend of social movements in later years (Ospina A., 2012). In this new political scenario, the participation of indigenous people, who were encouraged to improve their quality of life and to be visible actors within a society, can be highlighted. This resulted in the creation of new political and social movements to counteract the abuse of the mechanisms of democracy by the State, which they considered to be non-inclusive.

The scope and results of citizen participation contributed to the establishment of a new perspective where the concept of participation is developed in representative terms and a participatory mechanism is incorporated, in which all citizens had the power to directly influence public policy. This led to a change in the technocratic concept of "citizen

participation" in the 1990s and gave rise to the establishment of mechanisms for direct participation within the Ecuadorian State.

Scholars of civic participation, defined it as "the result of a process under construction based on a historical journey, the outcome of the organization and mobilization of people, peoples and diverse social groups, seeking to improve their living conditions and influence the social and political life of the country" (Moncada, 2012). Ensuring that the determining factors of social movements were the search for a better quality of life, gaining respect for their rights and to be included in society. As a result, citizen participation and its technocratic concept of the 80s was replaced by a political concept more closely endorsed by different processes of participatory democracy that generated new spaces within public management.

1.2. Changes within the Citizen Participation since the implementation of the model called: Citizen's Revolution.

During the last years, Latin America has undergone different changes, in the economic, social and political aspects, which have become the fundamental changes that define the current Latin American reality (Casilda, Emerging Latin America, 2012).

In the 1990's, the situation in Latin America was critical and unfolded in a scenario where different events emerged as a threat to the great advances already established at the regional level. In Ecuador, there was a collapse of party politics and one of the strongest economic and financial crises occurred at the international level due to the currency change produced in 2000 that resulted in the closing of several financial institutions. In addition, there was a marked political instability of the Ecuadorian government, which can be observed with the departure of three presidents in less than 10 years, dismissed by popular revolts that demanded their overthrow (Ecuador Immediate, 2015). By the end of the 90's, the situation of the country was aggravated in the social area by the phenomenon of "El Niño" of 1998, which generated great destruction on a national level. Economic losses were also generated due to the fall of oil prices between

1998-1999. These different events created great uncertainty and concern in the Ecuadorian society.

1.2.1 2006 Presidential Elections

The presidential elections of 2006 forged a new beginning in the agenda of development of the Ecuadorian State, which generated great changes and advances that will be analyzed based on citizen participation.

Since the 2006 elections, Ecuador's political scene changed radically with the emergence of new actors driven by the desire to end the political instability that characterized Ecuador. When the economist Rafael Correa Delgado in representation of his party Alianza Pais arrived to power, a series of guidelines were generated that have contributed to the increase of citizen participation in subjects that were previously only handled by the central government. When convening a new Constituent Assembly, the Constitution of the Republic of 2008 was established in Montecristi, which was a legal framework that focused on the well-being and inclusion of society (Recalde, 2006).

The changes that can be observed between the Political Constitution of 1998 and the present Constitution of Montecristi, lie in the importance given to the rights of citizenship, reflected in the incorporation of a new title called "Participation and Organization of Power". This details the principles of the application of rights and includes the rights of Good Living, rights of participation, freedom, protection, among others.

The author of the book "Rights without popular power", Paul Cordova, states that the current Constitution that is applied in the Ecuadorian State "is the result of the struggle of the Ecuadorian society, developed by social organizations, trade unions, indigenous peoples, women's rights, environmentalists, pro-rights of sexual minorities and other groups." (Cordova, 2013). In it, participation rights were not implemented for the first

time. On the contrary, the process of elaboration was the own exercise of consultation and participation in which the Constituent Assembly invited to diverse social and political groups to form part of the writing. Which is why since the making of the Ecuadorian Constitution a level of direct participation of citizens has already existed, however, it should be analyzed whether the changes driven by the people have been a fundamental part of their establishment.

With the Constitution of the Republic of 2008, new actors within the political-social sphere were the main authors in promoting citizen participation within the local agenda but more relevant at the Latin American level. In Ecuador different mechanisms of participation were consolidated, among which the election processes constitute the most used mechanism, which indicates that there is a scarce use of the other instruments of participation established in the Constitution. Ecuador, as a State that guarantees rights, stipulates in its constitution, declaratively, the different instances of participation. However, due to peoples ignorance of such mechanisms, the people rarely make use of them.

Given this situation the presidential elections of 2006 in Ecuador played a predominant role for the future of the country, generating changes in the social, economic and especially political aspects. The electoral contests had 2 key moments, the first and second round, in which the nominations of Rafael Correa and Álvaro Noboa, from Alianza País and Partido Renovador Institucional Acción Nacional (PRIAN) respectively, were the protagonists and it resulted in the victory of the Alianza País party, represented by the economist Rafael Correa Delgado,

In response to the growing demand of the population, and supported by the proposals presented in the electoral contests of 2006, on January 15, 2007 the model called "The Citizen Revolution" was established in Ecuador, developed by President-elect economist Rafael Correa Delgado representative of the Alianza País Party. The new model implemented in Ecuador is defined by its own founder as "a project that is part of a new

paradigm of economic, political and social organization" (Casilda, A Road to Good Living, 2015).

1.2.2 Importance of Citizen Participation within the Citizen's Revolution

The "Citizen Revolution" emerges as a moment of hope for the Ecuadorian crisis, promising to culminate the unstable political past characterized by corruption and total control by the elites. It granted spaces of direct participation for the citizens and contributed to the strengthening of the commitment of the government to act as mediator of the well-being of the Ecuadorian people and its inclusion in the State's decisions.

Among the elements that constitute the discourse of the "citizen revolution" model, there is an acknowledgment of an increase of democracy and mechanisms of citizen participation, mechanisms that are included in the current Constitution of Ecuador. In addition, a new discourse is established based on a "New democracy" that encompassed the representative and participatory social perspective, allowing the strengthening of the ties between the State and society. However, it is necessary to analyze whether the speech proclaimed by the president is related to the policies implemented in the area of citizen participation, or if they are simply declarative proposals that seek to strengthen a political party.

The citizens' revolution focuses on respect for human dignity, sovereignty, participation and even the defense of nature. These aspects that were not previously considered in the development agenda, but their implementation provides for the well-being of the Ecuadorian people and the establishment of "changes within the internal politics that are supported by a foreign policy that promotes the development of Ecuador at the national and international level " (Yepez, 2009). In addition, new spaces were created for the direct participation of citizens to promote common welfare based on a system of equity and justice, thus demonstrating that since the economist Rafael Correa Delgado began to play his role as President of the Republic, there has been a significant increase in

people's confidence in the government, especially in the political sphere. However, it is important to note that the confidence level acquired by the president was based on the perception of the people at the time and the hope of the citizens based on the political discourse used.

With the economist Rafael Correa Delgado's arrival to power, a Constituent Assembly gathered in order to set-up the institutional framework that would give way to a called "post-neoliberal" phase. The objective of this call was to demonstrate that the new government adopted a position of openness to the different proposals coming from social actors, local governments and even NGOs with the objective of acquiring different perspectives of the population that would be reflected throughout the constitution. However, at the moment the president holds a closed position with different social groups, especially those who have criticized the decisions taken by the central government. The importance of NGOs has been overshadowed by a misperception based mainly on the views and positions of various government institutions and competent authorities.

The result of this consultation was favorable and gave way to the elaboration of a new constitution, which was a key element for the strengthening of citizen participation, since mechanisms previously used were only viewed as "opinion polls." Their conception changed after the referendum created by the current president, granting the citizens for the first time to be active participants in the elaboration of their own Constitution that would later be approved.

The Constituent Assembly was one of the main changes that emerged from the establishment of the Citizen Revolution model. The Assembly's objective was to establish a "national agreement that generates normative support for the state, society and political regime", leaving behind the old political regime (Ortiz C, 2008). In the new Constitution a broader context of citizen participation was portrayed, which evidenced structural changes in its dogmatic part, the recognition of different social organizations and their power to participate in public policy.

The Constitution of 2008 is considered one of the most historic social co-existing pacts in Ecuador, and is the result of a joint society-state agreement, where its importance lies not only in its content, but in the level of participation for its establishment. As a result, in the book entitled "Citizen Voices", José Agualsaca states that the Constitution of Montecristi is "a new alliance and contract of the citizens of Ecuador for the construction of a new society, a new plurinational, intercultural, democratic State and a new power based on citizenship". This power translates into the rise of citizen participation" (Social, Voces Ciudadanas. Porque mi voz si cuenta y decide, 2012).

Furthermore, participation is defined as the "leading intervention in decision-making in public affairs", granting to the citizens a power of incidence in the State. Within the Constitution, the approach to participation rights is deepened by adding new rights, including resistance as a right (Ortiz, Santiago Flacso-Ecuador, 2008).

It is important to mention that indigenous organizations that throughout history have been excluded from participating in the political sphere are recognized within the new constitutional text as autonomous forms of authority and justice, with the power to influence directly in the establishment of their own forms of self-government regarding their territory, budget and other key aspects of their coexistence.

The importance of citizen participation is especially reflected in the creation of the Function of Transparency and Social Control that is part of the 5 functions of the State: Executive, Legislative, Judicial and Electoral Function. This allows participation to appear as a determining factor in the establishment of the development agenda and the recognition of several instances of participation that subsequently acquired relevance at the international level. In addition, collective persons and nationalities are identified as subjects of rights, defining participation as a right encompassing democratic participation, but also other mechanisms for consultation, initiative, and revocation, among others (National, Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, 2008).

1.3 Policies and Mechanisms adopted by the Ecuadorian State in relation to Citizen Participation.

Citizen participation was not born with the Constitution of 2008, yet, it established the legal framework that subsequently establishes all mechanisms, policies and instances in terms of participation. Therefore, in response to the aspiration of the public to influence and be an active part of the development and establishment of policies, The Ecuadorian State established within the Council of Participation and Social Control different mechanisms of participation (Council of Citizen Participation and Social Control, 2008).

1.3.1 Sectoral Citizen Councils

The Sectoral Citizen Councils are spaces for dialogue and deliberation that are carried out at least twice a year. Its main objective is the analysis of the public policies implemented, evaluating their effectiveness at both the sectoral and national levels. These spaces are mainly promoted by the Executive Function as a mechanism for direct participation of citizens, however, it can also be convened by the Sectoral Citizens Councils themselves when they consider relevant and if there is a majority consensus.

The State considers this mechanism as a means of interaction with citizens for the joint establishment of sectoral and national policies. The Citizens Councils have the power to evaluate the legitimacy of the policies implemented and establish forums for debate in which an impact is generated by society. This mechanism of participation is typified in the Organic Law of Citizen Participation, mainly in its Arts. 52, 53, 54 and 55 in which it establishes how the councils are made up of and the functions that they play.

The implementation of these spaces of deliberation aim to acquire information on a specific topic in order to generate policies jointly between the State and society.

However, it is important to analyze their degree of incidence. In recent years, Ecuador has developed in a scenario of constant revolts in response to different proposals emanating from the Executive Function, which is why the government has generated mechanisms of interaction to avoid disagreements and to reach its unique purpose of complying with the will of the people.

There is a great deal of debate about how these mechanisms of participation work. For example, in June 2015, different marches were held against the bills for the Redistribution of Wealth (Herencias) and Goodwill, which was proposed by the Executive power. The president decided to withdraw such projects temporarily from the Assembly when he observed the rejection citizens had towards it. In response, the President gave use of the Sectoral Citizen Councils to debate on this issue, which demonstrated that he wanted society to participate in the decision-making process. In the beginning, the President showed interest in what was being said by the people and put at their disposal a great measure of participation. However, this mechanism became limited and exclusionary when the Government established that it "will activate the Sectoral Citizen Councils of each Ministry of State to engage in dialogue only with the political, economic and social sectors in good faith and not with those of a violent spirit of destabilization, who believe that it is appropriate to think of the elimination of the Government" (EL UNIVERSO, 2015). This leads for us to question under what parameters does the government establish that a citizen is of "good faith" or "not". In addition, it is not clearly informed under which parameters the participating groups, the number of participants, among other aspects would be chosen, which limits the objective of the participation mechanisms and often it leads citizens to question its feasibility.

1.3.2 Advisory Councils

The Advisory Councils, as its name indicates, consists of consultation spaces that can be convened when such advice is deemed necessary. It also functions as a counseling mechanism made up of professional groups with knowledge and experience in the consultation issues. Their legal basis is based on Art. 61: Rights of Participation, and

Art. 95: Principles of Participation of the Constitution of Ecuador. Likewise, within the Organic Law of Citizen Participation in its article 80.

The Advisory Councils have been spaces designed to provide more information to the public on a specific topic, which is provided by experts on the subject. For example, the Provincial Delegation of the National Electoral Council (CNE), every year provides training to different political groups in order to resolve doubts and serve as a guide for elections. This year was no exception, since towards the end of March of this year, it will act as an advisory body for citizens who wish to participate in the political arena. In my opinion, this is one of the major mechanisms used by citizens who are interested in being part of the decisions and changes made by the government.

1.3.3 Public Hearings

Public Hearings are instances of participation that serve to meet the requests and pronouncements made by the public, with the objective of generating efficient actions that meet the needs of the population. The competent authority attend Public Hearings that deals with subjects related to the political administrative district to which they belong, the results derived from this intervention of the State, and they have the obligation to be published so that the citizenship makes the appropriate follow-up. This mechanism of participation is explained in Article 95 of the Constitution of Ecuador and Articles 73, 74 and 75 of the Organic Law of Citizen Participation.

Through the Public Hearings, the Decentralized Autonomous Governments allow the citizens, in theory, to cooperate with the entity to generate provincial development projects. In this way, the possible solutions are sought based on the necessities raised. Within the Public Hearings, the groups directly involved participate, that is to say, those who are directly responsible for the subject are the main actors. A clear example of this was the Public Hearing held in the city of Machala and Piñas on March 5th, which had the objective to meet the requirements of the agricultural and craft representations. Through this mechanism of participation, they presented their multiple requests that throughout the hearing were analyzed and the pertinent solutions were proposed for each

one of them. This mechanism seeks to facilitate the interaction that exists between decentralized central governments and citizens for the joint search for true solutions.

1.3.4 Participatory Budgets

Participatory Budgets comprises spaces shared between decentralized autonomous governments, citizens and social organizations, which have the objective to make the correct decisions that would generate a fair distribution of public budgets. This mechanism seeks to achieve a consensus among social and institutional actors to implement the Strategic Plan, responding to the needs of the population.

In general, a public debate on the use of state resources is established, giving power to organizations and citizens that have a direct impact on decision-making. Citizens have the power to request information and accountability on the results obtained to generate a form of control.

In the table below we can see how the participatory budgets can be used by decentralized autonomous governments and citizens.

DAG's	Citizens
Equal distribution of resources	Mechanism used to express their needs
Includes citizens in the decision-making process.	Strengthens transparency in the actions of the Decentralized Autonomous Governments
Generates a transparent use and management of the budget	Contributes to the development agenda
Increases the people's confidence in the public institution	Knows the availability of resources and their form of distribution
Strengthens participatory democracy	Maintains co-responsibility

Created by: Verónica Iñiguez

Source: Participation and Social Control Council/ <http://www.cpccs.gob.ec/>

The management of participatory budgets and their competence is established in Article 100 of the Constitution of the Republic, and in the Organic Law of Citizen Participation in its Arts. 64, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, including in the Organic Code of Territorial Organization Autonomies and Decentralization, Arts. 251, 233 to article 241.

Currently, participatory budgets is a topic that generates great debate because, since they were established as a mechanism of participation, they were mostly intended only to cover feasibility issues, without taking into account important aspects such as "priority attention groups, the creation of public spaces, training and productive enterprises" (El Tiempo, 2015). That is why a study and restructuring of the use of participatory budgets was generated and nowadays, through accountability, the management of these budgets can be easily known.

1.3.5 Citizens' Assemblies

The participation mechanism known as "Citizens' Assembly" refers to a social organization made up of citizens whose purpose is to generate spaces for deliberation among citizens. The main objective is to create incidence within the public policies, provision of services and in subjects of public management.

The Citizens' Assemblies are integrated by social organizations, citizens and territorial and thematic identities that, supported by the Organic Law of Citizen Participation, fulfill 6 functions:

- Respect and enforce rights
- Propose local development agendas, plans, programs and policies
- Promote social organization and citizen training
- Independently organize the exercise of accountability of the authorities
- Promote debates, deliberation and consensus-building
- Implement social control methods

The Citizens' Assemblies are supported by the Constitution, the Organic Law of Citizen Participation and COOTAD, which establish the recognition of all forms of people's organization, which reflects popular sovereignty, and receive the support of the government to make effective the exercise of their rights of participation through this mechanism.

1.3.1 Empty Chair

Under the current Ecuadorian Constitution, it is established that all sessions of the Decentralized Autonomous Governments (DAGs), when considered public, will install an empty chair that will be occupied by one representative or several representatives, depending on the issues to be addressed. The empty chair's sole purpose is to generate interaction among the people through the representation of one or two people who participate directly in the debate and in the decision-making. The participation of said representative is not inferior to the other participants. In other words, this person or people act in the same way as the other members with voice and vote within the sessions.

The Empty Chair is determined from the art 95-101 as a mechanism of citizen participation, in addition, it is based on Art 311 of COOTAD and its power and scope typified in Art 77 of the Organic of Citizen Participation.

This mechanism of participation can be used by all citizens who are entitled to all rights and privileges and exercise such mechanism on behalf of a group. The empty chair is one of the least used mechanisms due to the lack of information and knowledge of the citizens. That is to say, this right is granted but its ignorance diminishes its effectiveness.

1.3.7 Popular Forums

A Popular Forum is a call that is openly held to discuss issues related to municipal management, unlike the other mechanisms for participation, popular councils act only as a consultative and not a decision-making method. In order to generate such a call, different parameters must be established, including the objective, procedure, form, date,

time and place of the popular council. Its legal basis is stipulated in the Constitution of Ecuador, Art. 61 Rights of Participation and Art. 95, Principles of Participation. In the same way, it is protected by Organic Law of Citizen Participation, in its Art. 76 of the Popular Forum.

Within the new constitutional framework, we can observe that any planning process that is carried out in the Ecuadorian State is of a participatory nature. That is to say, that the Constitution guarantees the citizen participation within the decision-making that derives from the public administration, granting to the people the right to request information and to demand accountability on the actions of the State. Also, the State is responsible for promoting and enabling the necessary conditions for participation to become effective.

Within the policies adopted by Ecuador in the area of citizen participation, participation rights previously denominated politicians stand out, which stipulate the power of the citizens to choose and be elected, participating directly in the political affairs of the State. In the same way, citizens have the power to exercise their right to vote, which as a State policy, is mandatory for all Ecuadorian citizens over the age of 18 and is optional for people between 16 and 18 years of age and those over 65 years of age. It also generates an equal representation of both men and women within the political sphere, allowing women to be more active participants in society (Arias, 2008).

Citizen participation is a right that is addressed by the Ecuadorian Constitution and the law, in which Art 95 states, "Citizens, individually and collectively, will participate in the decisions, planning and management of Public affairs, and in the popular control of state institutions and society, and their representatives, in a permanent process of building citizen power" (Nacional, Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, 2008). Additionally it will be based on equality, autonomy, public deliberation, respect for difference, popular control, among others.

Article 95 of the Constitution of Ecuador grants citizens the power to intervene in any public matter and the establishment of policies jointly, however, the society does not

show interest in being part of these processes or simply maintains a lack of knowledge of the same. In summary, within the constitution and specifically in art. 95, it states that participation is evidenced by three forms of democracy: citizens exercise their power through elected representatives, they do so directly within an assembly, and finally, decisions are made on the basis of their own regulations of organizations, peoples and communities that are backed up within the Constitution (Crónica, 2014).

Citizen Participation is one of the fundamental rights of human beings that through its different mechanisms empowers the citizen to have a voice and vote within the decisions and free action of governments. Participation has now extended its simple "representation" approach that was previously what characterized it, and now it is considered a "participatory" incidence. It is important to point out the continuous progress that has been made in the area of citizen participation. These advances cannot be fully perceived due to the lack of practice and knowledge of the mechanisms that are guaranteed by the State. On the other hand, its scarce use is due to the lack of credibility on the part of society in these spaces of participation, which are cataloged by citizens as simple forums that simply contribute to the development of a political model.

1.4 Chapter Conclusions

Throughout this chapter we have been able to observe the changes that have been generated in the area of citizen participation, which has given us the necessary guidelines to analyze the importance it has played and that it currently exercises within the State. In addition, its development is reviewed to determine if it is related to the objectives set at a national and an international level.

In this chapter, emphasis was placed on the functioning of each of the mechanisms for citizen participation, so that in the following chapters, a comprehensive analysis will be carried out of their effectiveness and use by the public and the State's position in that area.

Chapter II: Analysis of the influence exercised by the Executive Power in governmental decision-making and its interference within the Citizen Participation in the UNASUR plenary.

"Surely union is what we will lack to complete the work of our regeneration"

SIMÓN BOLÍVAR.

The role of the Executive Power has evolved throughout the Republican history generating an increase of its participation in the establishment of the Development Agenda, which has created a debate around its competence and field of action on knowing if it maintains a supremacy over the other powers of the State.

The present chapter studies the influence of the Executive Power in the establishment of the Development Agenda and the foreign policy maintained by the Ecuadorian State. In addition, the different policies and mechanisms adopted both at the level of government and at the UNASUR plenary are examined to determine if they are related to the objectives of the States in promoting Citizen Participation. In this way, it emphasizes the participation of the Ecuadorian State in order to later present the conclusions and make recommendations for the continuous progress of a Foreign Policy based on an integration and participation that will give greater importance to South America.

It will also address specific cases that show the actions of the Union of South American Nations in the strengthening of citizen participation that has been a key element in the discourse of regional integration. The objective of this chapter is to deepen the mechanisms that have been implemented in Ecuador and its contribution to UNASUR considered to be the present main reference of regional integration.

2.1 The role of the Executive Power in decision-making.

Historically, the executive branch was in charge of maintaining internal order and promoting external security through mechanisms that ensured the welfare of the state. It was also responsible for convening the Congress (now National Assembly) to sanction laws and decrees established therein. This power was also empowered to conclude treaties at the international level and the appointment of representatives of Ecuador at the international level.

According to Machiavelli, historically the Executive Power acts in two ways, to win adherents: "or it is made wanted by the citizens through its public management or is made feared by instituting fear mainly towards its adversaries" (Machiavelli, 2010).

Since its consolidation as the Republic of Ecuador in 1830, the presidents who have held the Executive Function have belonged to different political ideologies which has been a determining factor in their way of proceeding. In Ecuador, the executive branch has constantly generated radical changes within the formation of Ecuadorian state politics.

The Executive Power is one of the three classic powers of the political system in Ecuador. Within the Constitution, the executive power is described as "the power that is personified by the President of the Ecuadorian State who, together with the other powers, are in charge of public administration" (National Constitution of Ecuador, Art 144, 2008). It comprises "the Presidency and Vice Presidency of the Republic, the Ministries of State and the other agencies and institutions necessary to fulfill, within their competence, different powers including: rectory, planning, execution and evaluation of national public policies and the plans for its execution" (National, Constitution of Ecuador, Art 144, 2008).

At the moment, the President is influential in the internal and external policies of the Ecuadorian State. Its scope of action is typified and endorsed within the Constitution of

2008 in which its parameters, objectives and powers are established. The role of the executive has evolved throughout Republican history, generating an increase of its participation in the establishment of the Development Agenda, which generates the debate if the executive branch has supremacy over the other powers.

The Executive Branch is described as an independent power, but its actions are limited to the execution of the mechanisms and policies previously adopted by the Legislative Power, without detracting from the fact that the role that the Executive Power has acquired throughout history. This power has allowed it to become an active participant within the creation of the laws, modifying its scheme as a simple executor. There is a great debate about the powers of the Executive and Legislative Power, since, despite being described in the Constitution, in reality a conflict arises in terms of their powers. Therefore, it is vital to know their competencies to analyze their scope of action. On the one hand, the Legislative Branch possesses the President, it is a participant in the constitutional reform, is responsible for issuing, repealing and amending laws and maintaining a gradual control of the activities carried out by the other branches of government. On the other hand, the Executive Power, as its own name says, is responsible for executing what was previously established by the Legislative Branch, analyzing social needs to make them tangible through the creation of institutions that guarantee compliance with them. The Executive and Legislative branch act in an area limited by their powers, and the conflicts created between them will generate for that power to be limited which negatively influence the achievement of their independent and joint objectives.

It is important to mention that within its powers, the Executive has the power to establish public policies of force, that is, of a general and mandatory nature, which could be a means used by the Executive to achieve their own interests.

As mentioned above, the Executive Branch is independent, however, in the case of Ecuador, it cannot implement government policies that are not supported by the National Assembly, which is the body responsible for analyzing whether the policies proposed by

the President are subject to the Constitution. In addition, the Executive works to "Fulfill and enforce the Constitution, laws, international treaties and other legal norms within the scope of its competence" (National, Constitution of Ecuador, Art 147, 2008), which is why it is supported by the Constitution.

At the international level, the Executive Power, as President of the Republic, is empowered to establish its Foreign Policy, the President, protected by Art. 147 of the Constitution of 2008, is in charge of "defining foreign policy, subscribing and ratifying international treaties, appointing and removing ambassadors and heads of Ecuadorian mission "(National, Constitution of Ecuador, Art 147, 2008).

In recent years, political parties have been shaped around a representative, rather than a political project. A clear example is the Alianza Patria Activa y Soberana (ALIANZA PAÍS or COUNTRY ALLIANCE) party that from its birth evidenced Messianism and personalism which characterized the political life of Ecuador at that time that has directly influenced the role of the Executive Power to assume greater responsibility and importance in the establishment of policies and public management.

2.2 Profile of the President:

Economist Rafael Correa Delgado, representative of the Alianza País party, was consolidated as President of the Republic on November 26, 2006, defeating the businessman Álvaro Noboa Pontón in the second round, despite having a short history in the political sphere comparing to his opponents. The formation, profession, beliefs and thoughts of the Prime Minister have generated incidence for the development of his political formation. President Correa has been characterized by his religious character, in a way that the church and religion continue to play a determining role within the State. In addition, his career as a volunteer allowed him to see socioeconomic aspects of the country that shaped his political consciousness. As for his training as an economist, it is easy to determine his position regarding different issues that are developed in Ecuador. When he exercised as a public official, he made multiple publications in which he

manifested his clear rejection of neoliberalism, partisanship and other aspects that were characteristic of Ecuador at that time. Likewise, Correa made an analysis of the previous administrations, concluding that they were disastrous for the development of the country. Although his actions as a civil servant were the subject of controversy among Ecuadorian sectors, they positively influenced his consolidation as a profile of a non-traditional politician, characterized by his decision-making power, reflecting a commitment to social and with a broad academic background.

The Constituent Assembly was the most visible proposal of the government of Rafael Correa, although it was not entirely well-liked because it was strongly criticized and questioned by the traditional parties that denounced this proposal like a simple populist promise. Nevertheless, it obtained great reception by those who longed for a radical change within the structure that governed at that time. Faced with this situation, the political discourse that the president maintained and currently maintains is developed based on the commitment with the people to generate great changes and denounce certain political parties that he catalogs as those responsible for the great evils of the country.

As can be observed, the executive power influences the Development Agenda both nationally and internationally, being this the case of the administration of the economist Rafael Correa Delgado, his position and ideology, the guidelines to understand his behavior in face of the different problems of the Ecuadorian State. Currently, the development agenda maintained by the Prime Minister covers different aspects that were not previously considered in the State's policy, which generates a new vision and perception, proving that the role of the Executive Power influences in a representative and a personal manner the policies of the Ecuadorian State (Yepez, 2009).

2.3 Policies and mechanisms implemented within UNASUR on citizen participation.

Latin American countries, since their birth as subjects of International Law, have been formed by "the bases and framework of their own contributions in order to generate changes at the international level, resulting in the creation and recreation of institutions,

principles and postulates with the objective of defining the mechanisms and manner of action of the countries that make up the inter-American system" (Ruales, 1990).

The new international scenario is characterized by the rise of the countries of the South, which have been part of the modification of the physiognomy of international relations in the 21st century (Ayllon, 2013). The objective at the regional level is to consolidate international cooperation so that the different challenges that can arise and cannot be solved by States as individuals are dealt with at the international level, as a block.

Currently, the Union of South American Nations constitutes one of the main references of regional integration. Its constitution was the result of a long process that began around the year 2000, where a series of annual meetings were established between the presidents of the South American countries, concluding with a signed declaration, which showed the intention to advance the integration of South America based on the defense of representative democracy. The second presidents meeting took place in Ecuador in 2002, where the "Consensus of Guayaquil on Integration, Security and Infrastructure for Development" was created. This was a document that outlined the main guidelines that emerged from the first meetings to conclude with the evocation of the Inter-American Democratic Charter that aimed at curbing the danger of a democratic breakdown that threatened South American countries (Orsi).

The initiative of different South America countries was the basis for what we know today as the Union of South American Nations. In general, UNASUR began to take shape with multiple meetings of Heads of State and Government of South America that gradually began to be held more frequently. As a result of these countries' initiative, headed by Brazil, around 2004, the possibility of establishing a South American Community of Nations based on certain aspects concerning the European Union was discussed. For this, the South American countries carried out an analysis of the existing integration organizations and their shortcomings in order to avoid a contradiction within the objectives of this new community that later became important at the regional level.

Currently, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) is known as the organization that has acquired the greatest amount of importance at an international level. This international body is made up of the twelve countries belonging to the South American region: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile , Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela. It was founded in 2004 under the name "South American Community of Nations (CSN)", that in April 2007 became the Union of South American Nations, UNASUR, as it is known today (Union of South American Nations, s.f.).

Although its characteristics resemble a simple political forum, within its preamble, objectives and in general, within its constitution, it is classified as a political, economic and social integration organization among its member states (UNASUR, 2008). Its objective is to build participatory spaces that allow the union among its peoples in the cultural, social, economic and political spheres, highlighting the importance of political dialogue, inclusive social policies, infrastructure, among other determining factors. It is focused on strengthening citizen participation and the inclusion of each of the Member States in pursuit of the objectives set.

It is important to emphasize the importance of the Declaration of Brasilia created on May 10th and 11th, 2005, in which its predecessor, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, together with the member states, sign this declaration with the objective to strengthen regional relations, expand cooperation and establish a partnership to act as promoter in development, justice and international peace, which are the main objectives of UNASUR. This is a document for the construction of a legal framework that delimits the scope of action of the Union of South American Nations.

Regarding Citizen Participation, at the regional level on May 23, 2008, Brasilia subscribes to the Constitutive Treaty of UNASUR, which stipulates in Art 18 that "it is the obligation of the member states to generate mechanisms and innovative spaces for discussion on different issues that guarantee citizen participation." With the

establishment of this treaty, there is an overall basis that requires countries to comply with what has been previously established within it, reaffirming commitment on the members' part. They also decided to implement mechanisms that promote their development, which gave way for the establishment of the UNASUR Citizen Participation Forum, a space in which the main actors are citizens that influence in their own development (Humana, 2013). This space fulfills two of the main objectives, which include citizen participation through certain mechanisms such as interaction and dialogue between UNASUR and social actors to jointly generate South American integration policies, in addition to focusing on strengthening the fight against corruption. Within the regional process, the implementation of the Citizen Participation Forum was the result of a process elaborated and approved by the member countries of UNASUR. The first phase was developed in Lima in June of 2013, where the construction of the guidelines were established, which were later approved in August in the capital city of Paramaribo Suriname. This culminated in a meeting with headquarters in Argentina in September in which the details and preparations concerning the implementation of the First Forum of Citizen Participation were finalized. The member countries in relation to what was previously established, created internal spaces of participation that likewise reflect what was established on the international level.

The Union of South American Nations has defined different parameters to generate a positive impact in the strengthening of citizen participation. Among its duties are the issuing of recommendations to the countries on specific issues that are being developed, either as an initiative or as a result of the consultations to acquire relevant information that will enable the Council of Heads of State and Government and other bodies of UNASUR to make feasible proposals and act as a regional support agency. It is also in charge of carrying out a follow-up process with the objective of analyzing and evaluating policies on integration, and then suggesting topics of interest for the promotion of internal participation of each of its members that is reflected at the international level.

On the other hand, UNASUR acts as a research entity that, through studies and seminars, obtains information of a regional nature with the purpose of learning the failures of the

entity in order to work in the search of solutions that allow a strengthening of the region's representation as a block.

2.4 Analysis of the relationship and influence of the policies and objectives adopted by the Ecuadorian State in the actions of the Union of South American Nations.

Latin American integration, historically, beyond being just a desire, is established as a need for overcoming obstacle by the people of the region. For its fulfillment, this objective is established in the Ecuadorian Constitution of 2008 and even internally within other countries of the region.

Internally, the Ecuadorian state in its Development Agenda has established the National Plan for Good Living 2013-2017¹, which establishes a long-term political vision that guides the cooperation of Ecuadorian institutions with other countries in their regional environment. It established Ecuador's view of cooperation as an opportunity to multiply the South-South nexus and generate a diversification of its external relations in order to prevent its actions from being specially influenced by the countries of the North. It also describes cooperation as a complementary mechanism to national policies that have previously been established in a sovereign manner. In this context it is concluded that "the international order is in a profound dynamic of transformation and, in that sense, Ecuador's position, as determined by its Constitution (Article 423), aims to build processes of rupture with existing realities, through the consolidation of mechanisms that allow integration between the countries of the South."

The low amount of citizen participation was overshadowed by the old system of decision-making in which previous administrations adopted decisions in an arbitrary way and even without informing the people. Due to this, within the 2008 constitution, the right of participation is included in decision-making, planning and public management, where policies are jointly constructed, granting power and representation to the citizen. Ecuador considers it appropriate to analyze the different positions and

¹ El Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir 2013-2017" representa una postura política definida, constituye una guía de gobierno que el país aspira implementar en los próximos 4 años"

contributions of sectors that have historically been excluded in order to generate spaces for dialogue, deliberation and monitoring of public policies

The Ecuadorian State, as stated by President Economist Rafael Correa Delgado, "is a Republican citizenship, not liberal, that is to say, that it not only demands rights but participates and has obligations, which allows it to leave behind the bourgeois state to put it to the service of the citizen where our revolution is of the citizens because the power is held by the citizens."

At the regional level, Ecuador emphasizes the importance of a collective action that allows a complex development of the countries of the South, through mechanisms and policies that generate multilateral benefits. Additionally, it establishes that when there are problems among all of the countries, they must adopt collective solutions that allow to generate a greater effect within the international level.

The influence and participation of the president, economist Rafael Correa Delgado, has been highlighted by different socio-political opinion sites including an important international media website called Aporrea.org, that describes the profile of Correa as a regional leader that has generated respect and great influence on the changes that were developed at the regional level. It also highlights the measures taken by the Ecuadorian government to encourage regional integration, specifically in the Union of South American Nations plenary (UNASUR).

Ecuador has implemented different policies and mechanisms that have strengthened the ties at the regional level. These can be perceived in specific cases, such as in the relations that the Ecuadorian State maintains with the border communities in the neighboring countries. The Ecuador Plan together with the Binational Plan with Peru are supported by the national government with the aim of generating social inclusion, respecting human rights and fully complying with the internal and regional objectives

that the country has established. Also, the country has manifested that "border development is one of the priorities for the Ecuadorian government."

Within the Ecuadorian model called "Citizens' Revolution", a primordial axis is "the rescue of the dignity, sovereignty and the search for Latin American integration." This is a policy that has been adopted internally and has generated changes at the international level. It highlights the actions taken by the State to strengthen integration, the creation of spaces within international organizations such as UNASUR, ALBA, MERCOSUR, which allows for greater participation as a block at the international level. It has also contributed to the strengthening of other aspects that have allowed development as a South American block by establishing close links through simple mechanisms such as the establishment of new embassies in strategic countries such as Africa, the Middle East and Asia. This is in response to the need to adopt specific mechanisms and strategies that would allow a stronger development of integration with the countries of the South, emphasizing that these mechanisms have been taken jointly by the Member States.

In relation to the Union of South American Nations, the Ecuadorian state has been one of the countries directly involved in its development, implementing internal objectives that have supported the agency's actions. Among them are the following:

1. To promote the process of consolidation of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) as the main block in the continent, generating incidence within global geopolitics.
2. To position UNASUR as a regional block based on the respect for human rights, the defense of democracy and other indispensable objectives at the regional level.
3. Improve the interconnection of the region and study the possibility of generating its own source of regional financing.

4. Establish policies and programs that improve the quality of life, promote the inclusion of citizens in decisions taken by central governments, and make progress in education.
5. To promote the construction of a South American citizenship with the objective of maintaining a representation as a block at the international level.
6. Establish mechanisms to strengthen trading as a block.
7. Influence, based on Ecuadorian politics, the process of regional integration from the perspective of good living and development on a regional scale.
8. Implement a new Regional Financial Architecture (Humana, 2013).

The Ecuadorian internal objectives are related to the objectives set out in the plenary session of UNASUR, which highlight, in an important way, the influence exerted by the Ecuadorian state within the guidelines that govern the Union of South American Nations. In addition, Ecuador has held the Pro-tempore Presidency four times, at which time Ecuador consolidated itself as the main actor in the changes and policies that were implemented during its influence in this position, which promoted the development and strengthening of this entity.

The Ecuadorian State is in "a time of change and lives a change of time," as President Correa Delgado said on several occasions. However, it is necessary that the results obtained within the internal policy are supported by a foreign policy that promotes the development of the country. This is why the government has established in its national planning the PLANEX, a document that includes different principles, standards, projects and programs to be implemented, through long-term strategies established from 2006 to 2020.

In addition, the Ecuadorian state has implemented foundation measures that contribute to greater regional integration, such as the elimination of all kinds of visa for foreigners who want to visit Ecuador, regardless of the country of origin. It also allows the possibility to vote for foreign residents and political participation in sectional elections, which constitutes inclusion in participation spaces.

In terms of citizen participation, the Civic Participation and Social Control Council was created, which has a purpose to develop processes and mechanisms that link autonomous actions of civil society with the management of state entities, generating an increase in citizen participation, transparency and anti-corruption, which are key objectives for regional integration. As specified in Article 207 of the Constitution, the Council of Citizen Participation and Social Control constitutes "the main mechanism to encourage the exercise of rights relating to citizen participation, promoting mechanisms of social control in matters of public interest" (National, Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, 2008).

On the other hand, the rights approach is deepened when participation appears as a determining factor that is exercised by the citizens. It is based on the scenario where there is a rectory by the State and a new model is being developed that recognizes new and multiple social actors and rights that were not previously contemplated, in areas such as education, health, participation, among others. It also gives greater attention to young people, indigenous people and women who were historically excluded from participating in public management and finally, it contemplates the use of mechanisms called "direct democracy" that are typified in the Constitution.

Previously, Ecuador already established mechanisms to strengthen citizen participation at the national and international levels, which has allowed Ecuador to be an active and key player in strengthening regional integration. It has been considered as a model country that has developed policies and mechanisms internally that have served as a basis for what has subsequently been established as a policy in the UNASUR plenary, which expresses respect for the principles and rights stipulated in the Constitution and its practice. This contributes with basic actions for the establishment of the foreign policy of the Ecuadorian state.

On the other hand, one of the most important contributions of the Ecuadorian State has been to consolidate itself as protagonist and host in the construction of the UNASUR headquarters located in the capital of Ecuador, Quito, specifically in the Middle of the World, as a mechanism to strengthen Regional integration. This project clearly reflects

Ecuador's interest in developing a closer link with its neighbors in order to increase participation as a regional block in the international arena. The inauguration of the headquarters of the Union of South American Nations in Quito-Ecuador was a significant step for the role that the organization has developed and will develop in the years to come on an international level. In the inauguration speech of said headquarters, the economist Rafael Correa Delgado, during his speech, exclaimed that, "America lives not a time of changes, but a real change of era, where the power of the elites who always dominated, weakens and collapses to give way to popular power. How America is changing!"

2.5 Case examples of citizen participation implemented by the Union of South American Nations.

The different interpretations that are assigned to the concept of citizen participation often generate contradictions between the defenders of representative democracy and representatives of participatory democracy. The conflict is derived mainly from the approach developed by different scholars of the subject. For some authors what matters is for participation to be considered as a synonym for democracy because, through the right to vote, social change is created and a more participative society is generated. For other authors it is considered as a representative participation in which it foresees the need for the direct intervention of the citizens.

In present times, UNASUR focuses on democratic participation, referring to the right to participate in democratic life and having the right to vote, and also representative participation in terms of participation in the designation of authorities, generating a space for integration and union in the cultural, social, economic and political sphere among the South American peoples. It establishes in its Constitutive Treaty the main objectives ratified by all member countries and this body is considered as the main reference for regional integration in which the joint actions of its members converge to develop regional policies and mechanisms as a block. In the area of citizen participation, what is intended is to establish a plurality of actors to modify the common scheme in which only the State intervened within public management.

It is important to carry out an analysis to corroborate that citizen participation is one of the main objectives of the Union of South American Nations, that it has generated a real impact and has been a key element in the discourse of integration. Nevertheless it is important to examine whether this discourse has materialized. For this reason, specific cases will be analyzed where the actions of UNASUR as a promoter of citizen participation are evidenced.

2.5.1 INAGURATION OF UNASUR QUITO-ECUADOR HEADQUARTERS CASE:

The construction of a headquarters of the most influential international organization in the international sphere constitutes one of the main economic contributions of the Ecuadorian State for the strengthening of UNASUR and demonstrates the intention of the State to be an active participant within the new reality of South American countries.

Ecuador presents Quito as the capital of South American integration at the inauguration of the new headquarters of the Union of South American Nations held on December 5, 2014. Here, not only the Heads of State of the 12 member countries were summoned to participate, but there was participation of the Ecuadorian people who acted witnesses of the progress in regional integration ((Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Movilidad Humana, 2014).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility held a national call for different sectors of the country to be part of the inauguration of UNASUR headquarters in the city of Quito, aiming to increase the participation of citizens in spaces that have generated incidence within the Foreign Policy maintained by the Ecuadorian State. This allowed citizens to be part of the changes and advances that were generated in the area of integration and citizen participation.

2.5.2 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN VENEZUELA CASE:

Currently, the political and economic situation that Venezuela faces is one of the main concerns at the national and international level, mainly within international organizations such as UNASUR, which has spoken about the different events that today constitute the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. It is considered that the peaceful resolution to the current situation of the Venezuelan state depends on the institutional capacity to seek the necessary means to maintain political stability (ALTAG, 2013).

For Venezuela, the parliamentary elections represent a new opportunity to modify the political scheme that currently characterizes the country, which is why it is of vital importance to build the right conditions so that the popular will is reflected in the results. In the same way, it is important to be part of the change, and they can do so by voting, which is a form of democratic exercise (Virtuoso, 2014).

The parliamentary elections of 2015 played a very important role in the political field of the Venezuelan country, which is why the Union of South American Nations considered it necessary for it to participate within this electoral process. This international organization formed an Electoral Mission that was present in the elections of last May 17, 2015. The constitution of this mission was characterized by having "a technical component and a Political Chief, selected in consensus by the Foreign Ministries of the member countries of UNASUR, who will be in charge of managing the whole environment of the elections and thus serve as Guarantor of the contents and results." For greater efficiency, the mission was supported and coordinated by the National Electoral Council of Venezuela and the Presidency of the South American Electoral Council. It is important to remember that UNASUR has organized 14 electoral missions in different countries of South America, which has allowed this organization to be an active participant in the promotion and strengthening of citizen participation, acquiring "a high institutional recognition for the seriousness, transparency and high technical level" that it has had within these processes (UNASUR, 2015)

Currently, the role of the Union of South American Nations is essential for the strengthening of integration as a regional block at the international level. One of its main

objectives is to promote citizen participation. This entity is involved in different topics that influences each one of its member states, with the aim of seeking possible solutions and consolidating itself as a mediator in the resolution to different issues that are developing nowadays.

2.5.3 I CITIZEN PARTICIPATION FORUM:

The implementation of forums for citizen participation at the regional level constitutes a mechanism of direct participation that has been implemented by the Union of South American Nations in promoting an increased inclusion of citizens in the decisions and policies adopted by the member countries of UNASUR. The first forum of citizen participation was the result of the regional consensus of generating spaces of interaction between the citizens and the political actors in charge of public management.

The first forum for citizen participation, as an initiative of UNASUR, was held in Cochabamba, Bolivia from August 13th-15th, in which the contribution of the citizens' opinions and proposals were presented, who were in full exercise of their rights within the public administration of the State. The main objective of the creation of these spaces is to promote "the good practice of South American identities and diversities within the framework of respect for the individual and collective rights of civil society" (Campaña Latinoamericana por el derecho a la Educacion, 2014).

It is important to emphasize that the participation of civil society is not only limited to participating as "observers". On the contrary, within the bases of implementation of participation forums is the intervention of groups such as migrants, indigenous peoples, peasants, women, youth, girls and boys, seniors, among other priority attention groups. At the regional level, the constitution of the forums includes the participation of a minimum of 10 representatives and maximum 25 representatives from each of the national spaces of the UNASUR member countries. These spaces are developed in the thematic of work tables with the objective of learning about the different positions of the

participants and concluding in concrete proposals that are born with the vision of the citizens and later they are backed up by the government (Campaña Latinoamericana por el derecho a la Educacion, 2014).

The objective of UNASUR, in creating spaces for direct citizen participation, is to deepen the different themes that afflict the member states in order to generate concrete solutions that can be reached via the Citizen Participation Council (ALER, 2014).

2.5 Chapter Conclusions

Within the chapter, an analysis was made of the role played by the Executive Power in the implementation of policies and mechanisms for citizen participation. In developing this analysis, the influence of the executive branch within the posture and agenda of development maintained by the Ecuadorian State was able to be observed, which leaves doubt of whether said power maintains a supremacy in relation to the other powers. In addition, the analysis of the profile of the first president was the basis for understanding how he has proceeded throughout his term in different areas that have undergone changes during his administration.

Chapter III: Examination of the relationship between the Fifth Power of Ecuador and the policies adopted in the Union of South American Nations.

Since the establishment of the 2008 Ecuadorian Constitution, a new institutional restructuring was developed that placed citizens' rights as the central axis, thus becoming a constitutional State of Rights based on a participatory democratic system that allowed and guaranteed Ecuadorians to be involved in the decision-making process. With this new restructuring, citizens became enforcement agencies of the public power, generating direct control of the actions and decisions made by the competent authorities.

Within the new political scenario, participation was considered as one of the transversal axes to establish a real democracy, within which citizens generate influence and have access to the adopted decisions of the central government, without the necessity to belong to a political party or hold public office. This ideal was created in order to create a counterweight by involving citizens as mediators contributing their ideas to avoid for the power to be found only in the hands of the rulers (Participacion Ciudadana, 2016).

This chapter focuses on the functioning of the Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control in Ecuador, considered as a reference to the contribution and growth of an increasingly influential participation by citizens. This makes the citizen's role of great importance since it constitutes one of the main agents of change within the foreign policy.

This third chapter aims to evaluate the work carried out by the Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control, hereinafter referred to as CPCCS, to determine whether its results have directly influenced the society's involvement and whether its actions have been reflected in the international plan. This will be useful in order to determine whether it is feasible to use the Ecuadorian State as a reference and to implement at the regional level, especially in the plenary session of UNASUR, the Citizen Participation and Social Control Council, which currently governs Ecuador.

3.1 Transparency and Social Control Function

Since the promulgation of the 2008 Constitution, Ecuador broke with the common scheme of the three branches of government (executive, legislative and judicial) and added in its constitutional text the Electoral Function and the Transparency and Social Control Function. This last function will be analyzed in this chapter.

One of the innovations generated in the area of citizen participation within the current Constitution refers to the inclusion of the so-called "Fifth Power" framed within the Function of Transparency and Social Control. According to Article 204 of the constitution, it establishes that this function "shall promote the control of entities and bodies of the public sector, and natural or juridical persons of the private sector that provide services or carry out activities of public interest, so that they can carry them out with responsibility, transparency and equity; Encourage citizen participation; Protect the exercise and fulfillment of rights; And prevent and combat corruption" (Nacional, Constitucion de la República del Ecuador, 2008). That is to say that it is "the body responsible for the control of public management at all levels: transparency, efficiency, equity and the fight against corruption."

The Transparency and Social Control Function is formed by the Council of Citizen Participation and Social Control, the Ombudsman's Office, the Comptroller General of the State and the Superintendencies. Each one possesses legal personality and administrative, financial, budgetary and organizational autonomy (Nacional, Constitucion de la República del Ecuador, 2008).

Being the objective of the Transparency and Social Control Function to act as mediator and representative of the citizenship, what is sought is for the members' proposals be based on the citizens' own organizations, in order for the citizens to feel supported, without prejudice to public tenders, understanding that "In a democracy, the power itself is its representativeness" (Augusto, 2009).

3.2 Citizen Participation and Social Control Council

Historically, the terms "limited" and "excluding" have been used to describe citizen participation, a concept that is rooted in the conscience of the South American countries that have founded the bases for development, creation and establishment of policies and mechanisms that allow the society to be involved within the decision-making process, eliminating the authoritarianism that described to the region. This has become a major player in the struggle for a more just and equitable society.

In response to the need for a more committed and participatory citizenship, the Citizen Participation and Control Council was formed, which allowed, in theory, a greater incidence and inclusion of citizens in the decisions taken by the central government. However, there have been multiple criticisms about its functioning, which has led to the participation of citizens to be overshadowed by the principles of interest in power, opportunism and politicking with which this initiative is handled and as a result, citizens have not been content.

The Citizen Participation and Social Control Council has been a key step in the establishment of inclusive participation spaces. Its conception arises from the objective of consolidating itself as a space of collective contribution, allowing citizens to be active players in planning, development, analysis and decision-making by establishing a participatory state that truly reflects the needs of citizens.

Clearly, we can observe that a new conception of citizen participation is developed that goes hand in hand with a new institutional restructuring that allowed a deeper linkage of civil society in the State. A major turning point in terms of participation was the alteration of the tripartite division of state power, creating two new functions that allow citizens, in theory, to participate in the decisions made by the central government.

The CPCCS constitutes an autonomous entity that derives from the Transparency and Social Control Function. Its key objective is the promotion of participation and social control rights based on increasing the empowerment of citizens as the sole purpose of including society in decision-making and form a true participatory democracy.

The creation of the CPCCS was generated in response to the constitutional mandate that guarantees the existence of a society free of corruption, consolidating itself as a body responsible for "receiving and investigating allegations that could affect citizen participation, generate corruption or go against social interest, as well as a way of processing citizen applications" (Social, Cpccs.gob.ec, sf)

The CPCCS was the result of a previously established process with the purpose of guaranteeing a correct functioning and directing it to the fulfillment of each one of its objectives for which it was constituted. In the first instance, a CPCCS was created, called a transitory one whose objective was to determine the bases of operation of said council by means of the establishment of an organic law that determines its organization and operation, in addition to establishing the parameters of selection of the authorities of said council. In Ecuador, the transitional CPCCS began its work on January 26th, 2009 and ended on September 14th, 2010 when the definitive CPCCS was established, which began to meet the short and long term objectives in order to guarantee citizen participation.

The definitive CPCCS is made up by seven principal directors and councilors, who together with seven alternates are selected to play the role of representatives of this council and they are chosen through public tenders. Members may be representatives of social organizations or may participate individually.

Since the creation of the CPCCS, multiple criticisms have been made that have been for and against it, referring to its effectiveness and functioning. On the one hand, it is argued that when there is a single council, proposed by representatives who, in theory, play the role of spokesmen for the needs of citizenship, in a certain way it limits the free participation of the citizens. On the other hand, this body is seen as the only way for citizens to be supported by an entity that seeks their purposes and objectives.

The CPCCS was established in response to the need to promote and ensure proper citizen participation. However, citizens themselves have seen it as a limiting factor in the free action of different political and social organizations, which previously expounded their different points of view in a less controlled way. In addition, it is important to note that there is growing discontent among citizens towards the central government, which has contributed to the development of a more critical and distrustful society. For this reason, there is a questioning about the validity and efficiency of a council created by the central government itself, leaving doubts as to whether this council responds simply to the interests of the State, and that as a guarantor, intervenes directly and indirectly within the participation spaces.

Unlike other agencies, the CPCCS does not focus only on the outcome since its scope is much broader. Within its instances of participation, the procedure and the way in which the possible resolutions to problems that are currently being developed are evaluated, in other words, it analyzes if these results come from an effective participation and involvement of the citizens, which is the goal that must be achieved.

In response to what was mentioned above, the CPCCS has implemented Accountability, "a process whereby those who make decisions about the management of the public, fulfill their duty and responsibility to explain, make known or respond to citizens about the management of the public and its results achieved, so that citizens can evaluate this management" (Accountability, 2015), or so that it is possible to show the real progress that has been generated.

3.2.1 Accountability 2015

In this next section the measures implemented in the area of citizen participation that have been generated up to December 2015, which is, to this date, the last one that has been presented as part of the accountability mechanism, are detailed below.

The Technical Secretariat for Participation and Social Control in its final report has presented the following progress:

- Development of 643 processes implemented to strengthen citizen participation rights, social control and accountability initiatives.
- Implementation of 49 Schools of Citizen Training and Exchange of Knowledge created with the aim of increasing the interest of citizens.
- 18 processes of spaces of public deliberation which has benefited 1726 people from 12 provinces involved
- 125 Observations activated in 22 provinces
- 8 Observatories implemented at provincial level and 5 at national level
- 3,791 Public sector institutions trained in the Accountability Model
- 6,774 Institutions and authorities submitted an Accountability Report.

On the other hand, the Technical Secretariat for Transparency and Fight against Corruption in its final report has presented the following progress:

- 1,043 people were trained to file complaints and requests for acts of corruption.
- 1 reform project, for the implementation of the deconcentration in the processing of complaints and orders submitted for approval.
- 96 public institutions implement the Transparent Practices Model.
- 10% progress in actions to manage the implementation of the Transparent Practices Model with joint ventures (CEM and GMN)
- 37 complaints have been investigated and consist of a conclusive report of compliance with regulations
- 31 training workshops to create a secure environment for those that report acts of corruption.
- 81 complaints filed and processed (Rendición de Cuentas, 2015),

With the above data and information, we can observe that although significant progress has been made in terms of citizen participation, effective participation has not been exercised by the citizens, since the same processes that are deficient in the Decision-

making process and establishment of the Development Agenda of the Ecuadorian State are still being implemented.

3.2.2 CPCCS Responsibilities:

Within the Citizen Participation and Social Control is the promotion and free exercise of the rights of participation that are enshrined in the constitution, in addition to exercising control of the actions and decisions taken in the public sphere, including the actions of the officials and managers who would be reflected in the accountability.

Regarding transparency and the fight against corruption, the CPCCS seeks to implement anti-corruption mechanisms and policies based on analysis and research on possible issues or specific cases that affect citizen participation. It also acts as an investigative body for complaints filed by citizens who are supported and protected during the development of the investigation.

Likewise, among its powers is the designation of authorities, where it is in charge of organizing and ensuring the correct fulfillment of the selection processes of authorities that are carried out through public tenders and procedures that are established within the Constitution.

3.3 The role of the State and citizenship within the CPCCS.

Based on Article 11, paragraph 9, of the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, one of the main duties of the State consists of "respecting and enforcing the rights guaranteed in the Constitution" (National Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, 2008). This is why it is of vital importance to analyze the position adopted by the State in relation to matters of public interest.

The role of the State in the area of citizen participation is also of high importance. The State cannot be limited to generating mechanisms of participation, it must be the main

actor in the promotion and execution of proposals that create instances of direct participation that allow the citizens to feel supported and assume an empowered role that allows generating great ideas in the achievement of possible solutions around different problems. In addition, the State is in charge of facilitating the adequate resources and processes to guarantee an effective participatory democracy protected by the Constitution.

It is important to emphasize that participation does not refer only to the isolated intervention of a citizen, its strength is evidenced in the organized form of groups of people in its quest to exert pressure on the central government and directly influence the decision-making process. For this, they rely on dialogue and deliberation with the aim of establishing measures of general benefit, eliminating the particular benefits that are the main obstacles within the system (Augusto, 2009).

It is important to emphasize that being a citizen is not based simply on demanding rights and fulfilling obligations, its definition is much broader and more transcendental to determine the type of society and coexistence that one wishes to construct. The role of a citizen is a key factor for strengthening citizen participation since measures need to be implemented that motivate them to increase their interest in issues that are incorrectly defined as State affairs. This is because citizens should actively participate in the Development agenda, participate and present their views in a free and responsible manner, with the objective of demonstrating such participation in the decision-making process.

However, as we find ourselves in an increasingly globalized society, it is customary for the different problems that arise to be re-directed to experts in the field, which clearly limits the role of citizenship. This generates doubts about the importance of generating debate and opinions on the part of the citizen if later these contributions would be overshadowed by the position and intervention of the specialists considered as those who really know about the subject (¿Por que es importante incentivar la participacion ciudadana?, 2016).

3.4 Analysis of a possible implementation of the CPCCS in the plenary session of UNASUR

With the arrival to power of the economist Rafael Correa Delgado, the Ecuadorian State underwent a series of changes in the political, economic and social aspect. This allowed for the State to be for the first time a promoter and protagonist of important initiatives that have been developed at the local level and have generated influence at the international level. A clear example of this is the importance that has been given to citizen participation and the progress that has been made.

Within the new constitutional text, participation was placed on the same level of importance that that of representation, reason for which, it was necessary to establish an institutional structure that allows the materialization of participation. There were two alternatives for this, the first one consisted of "the establishment of channels and procedures for participation to have a real and effective impact on public life and the other through the formation of state agencies in which it is reflected" (Pachano , 2010).

The first alternative sought recognition of citizen action with the aim of making existing state institutions adopt the requirements and needs of citizens, On the other hand, the second alternative had to do with the conversion of the citizen action itself into a new state instance generating, in my opinion, more bureaucracy.

In the case of Ecuador, the second alternative was chosen, which resulted in the formation of the Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control (CPCCS), which is classified as "a governing body for popular participation and at the same time as a body responsible for actions of control of corruption" (Pachano, 2010). Likewise, within the Constitution, the parameters, duties and attributions of the CPCCS have been established with the purpose of promoting citizen participation considered as one of the basic pillars within the policy maintained by Ecuador both nationally and internationally and generating the means necessary to promote citizen participation of a South American character.

The CPCCS is the entity in charge of promoting the rights of participation and social control of the public, where the role of the State is fundamental because it is the main guarantor and promoter of the resources and means necessary to generate spaces for deliberation. Here, citizenship participation prevails, allowing it to become an indispensable player in the decision-making process, which was previously the sole responsibility of the government.

In summary, the creation of the CPCCS was born from the need to create new mechanisms and instances of participation that directly link the citizenship within the decision making and in the establishment of the Development Agenda. However, it is important to analyze whether these objectives are materialized or simply constitute a declarative part.

The work of the CPCCS has been limited to gathering information on denunciations, investigations and different projects that have been born of the citizenship itself. That is to say, there has not been investigation driven by the council, which reflects a deficit as an investigative entity. However, most of the projects presented by the citizens are not treated immediately and there have even been initiatives that have been written only on paper. This leaves evidence that despite the fact that progress has been made in terms of citizen participation, it have not been that easily noticed and has been influenced by the needs and interests of government officials.

Citizen initiative projects are referred to the highest body of legislative administration, the Administrative Council of the Legislature, which determines whether or not it is important. This has resulted in total disinterest on the part of the citizens, who argue that their participation is limited to the opinion and qualification of a council that, in the case of Ecuador, is made up of government sympathizers belonging to the same party (Ospina P., 2009-2012).

The initiative to create the CPCCS seeks to fulfill the objective of the Ecuadorian State to forge a system of citizen participation of a South American character that allows to exert a greater impact as a block at the international level. As a result, a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness and operation of this council is made with the objective of determining if its implementation within the Union of South American Nations is

feasible, an organization that is currently classified as one of the main references of the regional integration. However, based on the above, we can conclude that there are several shortcomings regarding the functioning and effectiveness of the CPCCS, so it would not be feasible to consider its implementation at the regional level, until it can solve these shortcomings and criticisms that revolve around its constitution and form of local management.

The Ecuadorian State is of the countries at a regional level that has been characterized by being the pioneer of multiple initiatives. For this reason, it has not ruled out the possibility that the adopted mechanisms and policies in the matter of citizen participation can be the base of study for what could be implemented in the future at the regional level, provided that they are able to solve such mistakes that currently persist.

Conclusion

Citizen Participation in the Government of the economist Rafael Correa, through the implementation of the Council of Citizen Participation, with its level of Power, its independence and the political influence that it gained during the exercise of its functions, should be considered as a milestone and an advance of actions leading to the ideal of establishing better standards of democracy. Although in practice its intended or planned development by the Government was not accomplished, it was a clear attempt to rely on social control and give society the space it deserves. Part of its failure was the personal interest of its members who, in many occasions, took advantage of their political role, which caused that their efforts, dedication and even performance be disregarded of their responsibilities. Nevertheless, it did not stop being a recognition for citizen participation with the highest attributions.

Social control understood as such, and applied in the right way, would be a decanter of the policies of the current government, and a vigilant of the fulfillment of the commitments. It would also become the most important and direct link between the needs and control that the president may have over the execution of the other powers of the state. However, there is a wide gap between what has been raised in theory and what has been developed in practice, which has generated the conclusions that the basic

objectives of the creation of this council are not completely fulfilled, putting doubts on the justification of its existence.

Since the implementation of the Council on Citizen Participation and Social Control, the selection mechanism of its members was listed as one of the key aspects for citizens to regain confidence in proposals derived from the central government. The idea of keeping the CPCCS dissociated from politics gave it some legitimacy in the face of public opinion and public posture. However, the designation of authorities is directly influenced by the Transparency and Social Control Function, which in turn is controlled by the State. Indirectly, it is developed based on the political line that currently governs in Ecuador, which has generated a growing disenchantment on the part of the citizens who have opted to maintain an indifferent stance.

The thesis was limited in the sense of analyzing citizen participation within the government, without there being relevant historic events of citizen participation, at this level it is considered a gradual advance for the sake of a democracy that prevails and prevails over any arbitrariness or abuse of power that could be generated by the government authorities on duty. It is necessary to go back to the concept and spirit of the Law in order to try to make it effective autonomously but efficiently. That is to say, to promote training on the functions, the scope of this power and its members and especially in its designation, establishing requirements that truly guarantee a high degree of preparation and uprightness in the behavior of those who will serve in those positions.

In the main points, I would like to reiterate that this is a very important advance that has merited international recognition, giving the people power of social control, through which they feel part of the government and can make observations within their competencies to improve or boost issues that were previously not even known, or even worse, were not reviewed and or controlled. However, the materialization of this intervention of the citizens leaves much to be desired, although it has called citizens to give an opinion and to debate on subjects that the central government was only in charge of. The final reports are developed on the basis of resolutions that have already been

established previously by the competent authorities, leaving the proposals of the citizenship in papers without importance or worse still in simple words.

In addition, within the multiple mechanisms of participation, the reports or resolutions that come out of the citizens' initiative have no formal or enforceable character, they are merely simple recommendations that in many cases become a greeting to the flag and begin to swell the extensive report files that have never been and will never be considered. On the other hand, citizens' commissions and observatories only conform exclusively to specific purposes, especially when the issue has relevance or publicity echo, which generates that certain issues and proposals that citizens consider relevant are in the background.

When discussing a possible future implementation of this council at an international level, in the first instance corrective measures should be implemented to cover the gaps between what was theoretically set out and what has been put into practice, in order to encourage and motivate citizens to become involved in Public affairs, to regain the confidence that citizenship has lost in government institutions and in the proposals and initiatives derived from the central government.

The Council of Citizen Participation, being a power of the state, has permanent legal validity and its functions and attributions are established in the Law, which is why it demands a high degree of responsibility on the part of its holders, being its work of a general, national and continuous nature .

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Citizen participation was perceived as a simple mechanism of representation in which a group of people acted as intermediaries between society and the government to establish their needs.
- Generating a concept of citizen participation is difficult because of its multiple interpretations.
- The new approach to participation was developed around the restructuring of the relationship between the State and society.
- The rise of protests and demonstrations were key aspects for the inclusion of society in the decision-making process.
- Social movements, especially the indigenous movement were determining factors in what is now known as citizen participation.
- In a new perspective, citizen participation is considered as a representative mechanism that includes mechanisms of direct participation.
- The 2006 presidential elections marked a new beginning within the establishment of the Ecuadorian Development Agenda, with the objective of ending the instability that the country was experiencing.
- The importance of citizen participation was observed from the outset, with the promulgation of the 2008 Constitution being the result of contributions from different social and political groups that participated in its drafting.
- The new constitution stipulates the different forms of participation, allowing the citizens to make use of them. However, the ignorance of these has generated that these mechanisms not be used.
- With the arrival to power of the economist Rafael Correa, the model called Citizen Revolution was established, whose purpose was to end the existing instability and act as a mediator of the well-being and inclusion of the Ecuadorian people.
- Within the new constitutional text, rights are placed as the central axis and even guarantees are provided to sectors that were previously excluded, such as indigenous organizations.

- Citizen participation is strengthened with the creation of the Transparency and Social Control Function, which is a fundamental step, in theory, to generate an increasingly equitable and inclusive participation.
- Citizen participation was not born with the 2008 constitution, despite the fact that it establishes the legal framework that regulates its operation.
- The mechanisms of participation allow citizens to strengthen themselves as active participants in the debates and decision-making process in relation to different issues of interest.
- The State is a key player in ensuring that mechanisms for participation are effective, since it is responsible for generating the necessary means to guarantee an effective participation.
- The scarce use of the mechanisms of participation is generated by the lack of knowledge and involvement of the citizens in matters of interest.
- Citizenship has lost credibility in the processes, so it has limited the use of the different tools that have been implemented as an initiative of the government itself.
- Regional integration has been a key aspect for the development of the South American countries and their fight against the dependence on the countries of the North.
- The policy pursued by the Ecuadorian State has reflected the firm intention of contributing to the formation of a framework of unity that will allow for joint progress at the national and international levels.
- Citizen participation has been consolidated as one of the most influential mechanisms within the decisions taken by the central government.
- In 1979, from the transition processes of democracy in Latin America, new parameters and mechanisms of participation have been incorporated that have been the basis for what today defines citizen participation.
- In Ecuador, citizen participation is not born in the government of the economist Rafael Correa Delgado, however, for the first time it is typified within the Constitution.

- Citizen participation is observed from two perspectives. On the one hand, society makes it viable as a guarantee mechanism for its influence in decision making and on the other hand, the State perceives it as a mechanism that intervenes in its free action.
- The influence of the Executive Power has increased within the establishment of the Development Agenda, which has generated criticism about the hierarchy that it maintains over the other state powers.
- The Executive branch has the power to conclude treaties and agreements of national and international character.
- The chief executive exercises the Executive Power, generating a decisive influence in the establishment of the foreign policy of the State.
- The competence of the Executive Power is described and supported in the Constitution that presently governs the Ecuadorian State.
- The role of the Executive Power has been changed from a simple executor to a precursor of creation and establishment of policies and mechanisms, which generates a conflict of powers in reference to the legislative power, who in a certain way is influenced by the Executive branch.
- The Executive Branch is in charge of ensuring compliance and the correct application of the Constitution within its field of competence.
- At the international level, the Executive Branch is personified by the President, who acts as the representative of the State and is empowered to establish foreign policy.
- Currently, political parties have been modified around one person, the representative of their party, which has shown that the role of the Executive branch is influenced by the person who represents him.
- Since the arrival of the economist Rafael Correa, the executive branch was characterized by its power of decision reflected in the interests of the social problems that occurred at that time.
- The Constituent Assembly was the main campaign proposal of the "Alianza Pais" movement, and one of the determining factors in the political restructuring of the Ecuadorian State.

- The profile of the president has generated influence within the foreign policy adopted by the State, which has been reflected in the policies and mechanisms implemented.
- The Latin American countries have forged their own bases to modify the common scheme of the international relations where they maintained an absolute dependence of the countries of the North
- The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) is one of the organizations that has allowed the promotion of South American countries and their integration at the regional level.
- UNASUR is the result of the initiative of the Latin American countries led by Brazil, who decided to adopt mechanisms jointly to counteract the dependence and abuse of the great powers that previously controlled in a totalitarian way the international plane.
- UNASUR is comprised of 12 countries in the South American region, driven by the objective of generating spaces for integration in the political, economic and social spheres.
- The Constitutive Treaty of UNASUR signed in 2008, constitutes the legal basis for the development of this regional body, stipulating within them the scope of action, power, objectives and obligations maintained by this body
- In terms of citizen participation, UNASUR has implemented different mechanisms such as the Citizen Participation Forum that has allowed citizens to be active participants in decision-making at the level of each State and jointly as a regional body.
- Citizen participation is one of the main goals of UNASUR, and has been made possible through the proposals and recommendations that have been made by the member countries.
- There have been different administrations that have been characterized by an arbitrary system of decision-making, which has generated a low citizen participation

- Economist Rafael Correa has stated that the revolution is classified as a citizen revolution because its main objective is to give power to citizens who are backed by the government.
- The Ecuadorian State stresses the importance of general mechanisms and policies at the regional level in a joint manner that can solve the existing problems of the region.
- Ecuador has been a participant and supporter of multiple regional agreements that have contributed to the goal of strengthening ties as a regional block.
- The objectives of Ecuador in terms of citizen participation are related to the objectives proposed at the regional level, especially in the UNASUR plenary.
- One of the great contributions of the Ecuadorian State has been to consolidate the headquarters of UNASUR in Quito, which, beyond a structure, means a fundamental step towards regional integration.
- Within the key objectives of UNASUR, citizen participation plays a relevant role in generating spaces that allow greater integration of citizens in decision-making.
- The First Citizen Participation Forum, developed in Cochabamba, Bolivia, played an important role for the development of future spaces of opinion and participation that began to develop at the regional level, as an initiative of UNASUR.
- Citizens have played the role of auditors of the public sector, which has allowed greater influence in decision-making process.
- Citizen participation was based on the creation of new channels and spaces of interaction to avoid that the control is polarized.
- The Transparency and Social Control Function seeks to link citizens within a decision-making process.
- Citizens have undoubtedly been the main actors in the struggle to build a more equitable and participatory society.
- Criticism about the functioning of the CPCCS has led to the fact that this council is overshadowed by the opportunism and politicking that is currently being handled.

- The CPCCS promotes participation, acts as a monitoring and investigative body and receives complaints from citizens, in order to generate a correct participation.
- The role of the citizenry has been overshadowed by the creation of a council that regulates participation that was previously handled in a free way.
- The efficiency of the CPCCS is questioned around the idea that because it is an entity created by the government, it responds simply to its own interests.
- The State plays a role of facilitator of the resources and guarantees the correct fulfillment of the rights in order to promote participatory democracy.
- The strength of participation is based on the organized intervention of the group whose purpose is to exert pressure on the rulers through the different instances of participation.
- The participation of citizens is limited by the intervention of experts who claim to be specialists on specific issues.
- In the area of citizen participation, the State has the obligation to generate instances of participation and even the resources necessary for its execution.
- The strength of participation is evidenced by the way in which the citizenship is organized to generate pressure on the central government.
- The active role of citizenship is of vital importance in generating debate and influence in the decision-making process
- The Ecuadorian State opted for the creation of state bodies in which the progress and new implementations in the area of citizen participation are reflected.
- There has not been any own research driven by the CPCCS and for this reason, this council has only been limited to collecting information and initiatives that are born from the citizens.
- Several citizen initiative projects that have been proposed have simply not been recognized as "treatable", based on the criteria of the National Assembly.
- In the case of Ecuador, public discontent has been expressed by observing that the CPCCS is presided over by members who are endowed with great powers but respond to state interests.

- As there are multiple shortcomings in the operation of the CPCCS at the local level, it is still not feasible to discuss its possible implementation at the regional level.