

## Brazil's foreign policy under Lula

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## Brazil's Foreign Policy under Lula

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### **Brazil's Foreign Policy under Lula**

Brazil's foreign policy had traditionally been considered as highly stable, as "*Política de Estado*", in which continuity always dominated in the face of partisan or personnel changes – an atypical phenomenon in Latin America. The mild shifts in policy over the course of Brazil's foreign relations can more likely be traced back to an understanding of foreign policy as being primarily a means to domestic economic development and, therefore, to fluctuations in development strategy. In this sense, Brazil was historically described as an introverted Lusitanian giant, which – in a Hispanic environment that is rather foreign to it – focuses solely on its own economic development, dreams of a leadership role and, in the best case scenario, hopes for the future.

Since the end of last century, this characterisation had grown obsolete. Following the return of democracy in 1985 and the end of the Cold War, an increase in Brazil's involvement in regional and international politics became evident. It was primarily during the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995–2002) that the country displayed an increased awareness for international relations – a development that peaked during the subsequent presidency of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003–2010). Especially under his government, Brazil launched numerous initiatives within the Latin American and the international context, raised its profile by acting as a mediator in proximate as well as distant conflicts, played an active role in international organisations and governance clubs, and participated in diverse debates on global governance. Consequently, it is not far-fetched to describe this period as Brazil's foreign policy ascent. This development has been expressed in terms such as regional power, leading power, emerging power and regional and global player. It is also evident in the acronyms IBSA, BRICS or BASIC, which stand for supra-regional groups of states with Brazilian participation.

This change was the result of a continuous expansion of foreign policy activity that had been advanced with an extraordinary amount of energy. Contemporary Brazilian foreign policy can no longer be reduced simply to foreign trade policy. It has become more comprehensive, multi-layered and complex. Topical, geographic, institutional and instrumental diversifications have taken place, with points of emphasis and

priorities shifting as well. From a historical perspective, this constitutes a pronounced change of style and approach. Former President Lula, whose discursive strategy consisted primarily of emphasising the departure from the country's previous (foreign) policy tradition, is considered the most important driving force behind this process. What were the foreign policy trends during his government and in which framework for action were they embedded?

1. The following features of Lula's foreign policy deserve closer attention: (1) Erosion of the monopoly status of the Ministry for External Relations, due to pluralisation, party politicisation and the presidentialisation of foreign policy. (2) South-South orientation, based on an intensification of cooperation with developing countries and newly industrialising countries, with a focus on South America and Africa as well as the Middle East. (3) An anti-status quo and pro-justice discourse, which exposed the unequal distribution of material and immaterial resources on a global level, activated a North-South cleavage and was reflected in selective alliances Brazil entered into with other emerging powers, such as IBSA and BRICS (4) The international profiling of Brazil as a trading power.

2. The real innovation during the "Lula Era", however, was the termination of the country's foreign policy consensus that had been characteristic for Brazil thus far. Among its diplomatic, political and societal elites, the degree of cohesion on foreign policy issues declined. Yet, the basis of Brazil's foreign policy remained the country's national consciousness, which rests on three main pillars: national unity, appreciation of territorial size, and a vision of prosperity. The Lula government sought to conquer the international stage, instrumentalising its national size and socio-economic success for foreign policy purposes. Within the country, the hope for prosperity had been almost fulfilled – this fed a feeling of entitlement for recognition and a more relevant role on the global stage. Nationalism, equality among sovereign states and pragmatism continued to be guiding principles of Brazil's foreign policy action. But while, in the past, the country had striven to defend its autonomy primarily through distancing itself and withdrawing from the international arena, Lula now took a more assertive approach – autonomy should now be realised through foreign policy participation and diversification.

# Foreign Policy Context

Traditionally, Brazil's foreign policy has been carried out in a favourable context with few structural obstacles or power constraints. Accordingly, the internal and external sovereignty of the country have never been seriously threatened over the past 140 years.<sup>1</sup> A number of historical developments throughout the last three decades further reduced the factors limiting governmental action – including the end of the Cold War, the limited US involvement in Latin America, the “Northern model’s” loss of legitimacy and the “Asian hunger” for South American export products. Thus, an array of multiple options opened up for Brazil, which not only enabled a transformation of foreign policy, but even encouraged such a change.

One of the prevailing circumstances lending stability to Brazil's foreign policy is the good fortune not to be in serious conflict with any other state in the region or the world. Accordingly, Nelson Jobim, Minister of Defence from 2007 until August 2011, confirmed that “Brazil has no enemies”.<sup>2</sup> One of the few uncontested achievements of Mercosur (*Mercado Común del Sur*),<sup>3</sup> the Southern Common Market formed in 1991, was a contribution to the establishment of lasting trust between the neighbours. Today, Argentina and Brazil no longer pose a threat to one another.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, Argentina has experienced a foreign policy decline. From a Brazilian perspective, this means that a competitor (and at this point a benign one) has left the regional stage. Already at the outset of the 20th century, Brazil succeeded in peacefully resolving border conflicts. The country's territorial integrity

is not challenged from within, despite its immense size.<sup>5</sup> But even beyond South America, there are no violent conflicts which could carry direct impacts for Brazil. This removes certain pressures from Brazil's foreign policy.<sup>6</sup> It has long seen itself as a “geopolitically satisfied country”.<sup>7</sup>

Latin America was, for a long time, an important sphere of influence of the USA. Apart from this security policy circumstance, Brazil had largely seen the risks and limitations of its foreign policy dealings in terms of economic factors. External vulnerability was, therefore, assessed first and foremost in economic terms – Brazil's foreign policy thereby gained a strong development policy component (“*desenvolvimentismo*”).<sup>8</sup> Since the end of last century, however, there have been decisive changes in the field of security and development policy, which have expanded Brazil's structural context for action. After 1989, fundamental shifts in the strategies and interests of the USA in Latin America took place. Following 11 September 2001 and over the course of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (from 2001 and 2003, respectively), Washington's engagement in the region was extensively scaled back. To date, it has remained at a comparatively low level.<sup>9</sup> The sole exception here is the fight against drug-related criminality in Latin America. US military assistance to Colombia plays a crucial role here. Otherwise, since the new millennium began, the United States has no longer focused its foreign and defence policy priorities and the corresponding resources on its southern neighbours. This “loosening-up” within the international and regional arena provided Brazil with the space needed to embark on a dynamic and

1 On 1 March 2010, Brazil celebrated an unbroken period of 140 years of peace with its neighbouring countries since the end of the War of the Triple Alliance.

2 Interview with Nelson Jobim: “Una buena defensa es tener la capacidad de decir que no” [A Good Defence Is Constituted by the Ability to Say No], *El País*, 28 October 2009.

3 The Mercosur founding members are Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. Venezuela signed off on its accession in 2006 and was suspended from the block in December 2016. Since 2015, Bolivia is in accession process. Except for Brazil, all national Parliaments had approved until end 2016 Bolivia's incorporation to Mercosur.

4 Peter Birle, “Argentinien und Brasilien zwischen Rivalität und Partnerschaft” [Argentina and Brazil between Rivalry and Partnership], *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, no. 12 (2010): 3–8.

5 Brazil's national territory covers 8.5 million square kilometres and shares a border along 15,621 kilometres (excluding the Atlantic coast) with ten different states.

6 Peter Hakim, “Brasil: Decisiones de una nueva potencia” [Brazil: Decisions of a New Power], *Política Exterior*, (September and October 2010): 86–99.

7 Marina Regina Soares de Lima and Mônica Hirst, “Brazil as an Intermediate State and Regional Power: Action, Choice and Responsibilities”, *International Affairs* 82, no. 1 (2006): 21–40.

8 *Ibid.*, 22.

9 The change of power from the Republican George W. Bush to the Democrat Barack Obama led to no significant change in US policy towards Latin America.



formative foreign policy – or, in the words of the former Minister for External Relations and current Minister of Defence Celso Amorim, a “*política externa altiva e ativa*” (haughty/lofty and active foreign policy).<sup>10</sup>

An additional factor that expanded South American governments’ scope of action – particularly Brazil’s – is trade policy. Demand for South America’s most important export products (primarily raw materials) increased, which strengthened economies across the region. Asian countries, above all China, constituted the motor driving this commodity boom.<sup>11</sup> It was, therefore, not only of crucial importance that the export volumes and prices for raw materials surged, but also that the rise of a consumer aside from the USA and the European Union (EU) meant greater market diversification. The fact remains that the international situation over the last years was extremely advantageous for Brazil – both politically and economically.<sup>12</sup> The country demonstrated its robustness even when facing the effects of the global economic and financial crisis.<sup>13</sup> After economic growth had fallen from 5.1 percent in 2008 to roughly –0.2 percent in 2009, a rate of 7.5 percent was reached in 2010.<sup>14</sup>

This regional and international framework created the conditions for a change in Brazil’s foreign policy; four closely tied dimensions should be emphasised in this regard: (1) the erosion of the Ministry of External Relations’ monopoly over foreign policy issues, (2) a South-South orientation, (3) an anti-status quo and pro-justice foreign policy discourse and (4) the international profiling of Brazil as a trading power.

**10** Celso Amorim was Minister of External Relations from 2003 until 2011 and – during the Itamar Franco government – 1993 until 1994. From June until September 1993, he acted as Secretary General of External Relations. In addition, he was a Professor of International Relations Theory at the Universidade de Brasília. In August 2011 he replaced Nelson Jobim as Minister of Defence.

**11** Here “commodities” refer to raw materials or goods that are traded on an exchange. This includes non-metallic materials such as cacao, sugar and grain as well as metallic raw materials.

**12** Andrew Hurrell, “Brazil: What Kind of Rising State in What Kind of Institutional Order?”, in *Rising States, Rising Institutions. Challenges for Global Governance*, ed. Alan S. Alexandroff and Andrew F. Cooper (Baltimore, 2010), 128–50 (137).

**13** Caroline Silva-Garbade and Claudia Zilla, “Brasilien: Jazz auf hohem Niveau” [Brazil: Jazz on a High Level], in *Globale Ordnungspolitik am Scheideweg. Eine Analyse der aktuellen Finanzkrise*, ed. Hanns Günther Hilpert and Stormy-Annika Mildner, SWP-Studie 4/2009 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, February 2009), 42–46.

**14** Data from IMF, *World Economic Outlook. Slowing Growth, Rising Risks*, September 2011, 2.

# The Erosion of the Ministry of External Relations' Monopoly Status

In the past, the high degree of consistency in Brazil's foreign policy was principally attributable to the Itamaraty, the country's Ministry of External Relations, known internationally for its professionalism. The Ministry had always enjoyed a high level of bureaucratic autonomy and was correspondingly shielded from the influences of party politics or civil society.<sup>15</sup> Outside the Itamaraty, there was largely a lack of foreign policy expertise, especially since foreign affairs hardly played a role in electoral campaigns. This guaranteed the Ministry a de facto hegemony over this policy area. Furthermore, the broad foreign policy consensus among Brazil's elites fed into the impression that technocratic logic was impervious *vis-à-vis* the preferences of party politics. In the "Lula Era", however, increasing pressure built up against the monopoly status enjoyed by the Itamaraty in formulating and implementing foreign policy. This development is usually described as a "presidentialisation of foreign policy".<sup>16</sup> Two other trends also played a role in this development, namely the pluralisation and party politicisation of this policy area.

## Pluralisation

Today, numerous institutions, agencies and actors participate in foreign policy making – a tendency that has long been evident in most industrialised nations. In a horizontal sense, pluralisation constitutes the expansion, differentiation (in terms of internal diversification) and, to some extent, the delegation of specific areas and responsibilities from the Ministry of External Relations to other ministries. The key driving force behind this development is globalisation. By

increasing the pressure for specialisation, it breaks up the uniformity of state decision-making power.

In Brazil's case, there has been an internal fragmentation of the Ministry of External Relations since 2003, with a rise in the number of departments within the Itamaraty. This was a reaction to new regional and global challenges as well as the country's growing level of responsibility within international organisations. New foreign policy topics and subject areas emerged, the result being administrative restructuring.<sup>17</sup> The Department of Environmental and Special Affairs was established in 2006 with a Division of Environmental Policy and Sustainable Development (DPAD). "Mixed policy fields" have gained increasing importance while, at the same time, becoming more and more complex. They force departments that were once operated independently to coordinate with each other, and push for the internationalisation of ministries that once only carried out domestic policy functions. This advances the creation of inter-ministerial agencies.<sup>18</sup>

Moreover, there has been a vertical opening of foreign policy *vis-à-vis* non-state actors.<sup>19</sup> Other actors have joined the diplomatic elite in debates and in shaping the decision making process. This is, first and foremost, the result of a series of initiatives that provided targeted support for promoting dialogue with civil society on foreign policy issues.<sup>20</sup> The Council of Entrepreneurs, for instance, was established by

<sup>15</sup> Andrés Rivarola Puntigliano, "Going Global: An Organizational Study of Brazilian Foreign Policy. Tornando-se Global: Um estudo organizacional da política externa brasileira", *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 51, no. 1 (2008): 28–52 (30).

<sup>16</sup> Jeffrey W. Cason and Timothy J. Power, "Presidentialization, Pluralization, and the Rollback of Itamaraty: Explaining Change in Brazilian Foreign Policy Making in the Cardoso-Lula Era", *International Political Science Review* 30, no. 2 (2009): 117–40.

<sup>17</sup> Rivarola Puntigliano, "Going Global: An Organizational Study of Brazilian Foreign Policy" (see note 15).

<sup>18</sup> One such example is provided by CAMEX (Câmara de Comércio Exterior), which was created by a decree from President Cardoso and is the chamber of commerce under the aegis of the government council (Conselho de Governo). Key responsibilities of the External Ministry of External Relations' Undersecretary-General for Cooperation and Trade Promotion (SGEC) were transferred to CAMEX.

<sup>19</sup> Diego Santos Vieira de Jesus, "Alternative Analytical Axes of Brazilian Foreign Policy", *International Political Sociology*, no. 4 (2010): 419–35 (428).

<sup>20</sup> Claudia Zilla, "Brasilien: Eine Regionalmacht mit globalen Ansprüchen" [Brazil: A Regional Power with Global Ambitions], in *Neue Führungsmächte: Partner deutscher Außenpolitik?* [New Leading Powers: German Foreign Policy Partners?], ed. Jörg Husar, Günther Maihold and Stefan Mair, *Internationale Politik und Sicherheit*, vol. 69 (Baden-Baden, 2009), 49–67.

Cardoso within the institutional framework of the Ministry of External Relations while he served as minister. It functions as a consultative and advisory body.<sup>21</sup>

This horizontal and vertical pluralisation put pressure on the steering role of the Ministry of External Relations. The flipside to this development was an expansion of the President's role: today, the President exercises orientation and initiative functions related to foreign policy that supersede the Ministry. This presidentialisation of foreign policy was advanced to a tremendous degree under Lula.

### Presidentialisation

The concept of "presidentialisation" of foreign policy refers to a process in which the President becomes increasingly involved in diplomatic discussions and activities. In the case of the Brazilian executive branch, this caused a shift of power from the Ministry of External Relations to the Office of the President. In a purely quantitative sense, this tendency initially manifests itself in the number of times the President travels abroad – a figure that was already increasing under Cardoso, but reached record highs under Lula.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, these two Presidents were much more involved in technical and operative negotiations than their predecessors. While this could also be traced back to the fact that Cardoso and Lula were invited more frequently to summits, the "summitisation" of international policy does not, however, fully explain the pronounced personal engagement of these two heads of state – particularly not in Lula's case. Instead, this development is rather a reflection of the intentions of Brazil's leadership. After all, Cardoso and Lula were not just jolly frequent travellers, but also often hosted foreign visitors themselves. Among other things, they intensified their international contacts by organising summits within their own country. It was Cardoso who initiated efforts to move Brazil from the periphery into the centre of international affairs. His successor reinforced this trend, which culminated in

both the football World Cup 2014 as well as the Olympic Games 2016 being awarded to Brazil – two of the world's largest and most commercially important sporting events. These made the South American country an international venue and ultimately a global brand.<sup>23</sup>

A further indicator of the increase in presidential diplomacy can be found in the presidents' personal participation in international negotiations. Up until 16 years ago, it had primarily been Brazil's Minister of External Relations or other high-level representatives from the Itamaraty or the respective embassies, who had represented their country during such rounds of negotiation. In order to fulfil this diplomatic role in person, Cardoso and Lula had special, albeit different, resources at their disposal. Cardoso was able to draw on past foreign policy experience, direct knowledge in the area and international contacts that he had accumulated while serving as Minister of External Relations (October 1992 until May 1993) during the Itamar Franco government (1992–1994).<sup>24</sup> Lula was superbly prepared for dealing with complex negotiation processes, as a long-serving union leader within the metalworking industry.

Overall, presidential diplomacy has contributed to the ongoing erosion of the Itamaraty's monopoly over foreign policy matters as well as the ministerial logic in this policy area. Presidents are subject to elections. Therefore, they have a more short-dated time horizon and must also pay attention to a larger portion of the public than the Ministry of External Relations. Consequently, party political viewpoints gain greater influence over foreign policy actions. In the Brazilian case, this development was closely linked to the positions of the two politicians within their own parties. Cardoso and Lula were both among the founders of the two most influential political parties of re-democratised Brazil – Cardoso a founder of the PSDB (*Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira*) and Lula a founder of the PT (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*).<sup>25</sup> Both also succeeded in being re-elected to the presidency and therefore served terms totalling eight years each.<sup>26</sup> This highlighted the popu-

<sup>21</sup> Celso Amorim, "South American Integration", *Diplomacy, Strategy & Politics*, no. 10 (October/December 2009): 5–25 (10).

<sup>22</sup> Paulo Roberto de Almeida, "Uma nova 'arquitetura' diplomática? Interpretações divergentes sobre a política externa do governo Lula (2003–2006)" [A New Diplomatic 'Architecture'? Different Interpretations of the Foreign Policy of the Lula Government (2003–2006)], *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 49, no. 1 (2006): 95–116 (100).

<sup>23</sup> Peter Hakim, "Rising Brazil: The Choices of a New Global Power", *Política Externa*, 1 July 2010, <http://www.thedialogue.org/page.cfm?pageID=32&pubID=2273> (accessed 19 September 2011).

<sup>24</sup> Hurrell, "Brazil: What Kind of Rising State?" (see note 12), 142.

<sup>25</sup> Cason and Power, "Presidentialization, Pluralization, and the Rollback of Itamaraty" (see note 16), 126.

<sup>26</sup> Brazil's constitution only allows for a direct re-election.

larity of the politicians within their own country. Lula left office with an approval rating of 80 percent. His popularity, however, extended far beyond the national borders. In *Latinobarómetro 2009*, Lula ranked second behind Barack Obama on the popularity scale of heads of state and government in America and Spain.<sup>27</sup>

## Party Politicisation

Many authors attempt to explain the party politicisation of foreign policy, which took place under Lula, using an approach that could be characterised in a Freudian sense as “policy sublimation”.<sup>28</sup> According to this explanation, the process entails a redirection of party preferences away from the original focus on a core element of national policy – financial or economic policy – towards another policy field that had previously been of less central importance. Lula pursued a relatively orthodox economic policy,<sup>29</sup> which was closer to the principles of the Cardoso government than to the PT programme. His foreign policy, however, corresponded fully with the self-conceptions and discourse of the PT. He favoured a South-South orientation involving increased engagement within South America. For guidance, Lula relied on an equity discourse that denounced socio-economic and power-political asymmetry on a global level. This policy also entailed the cultivation of “solidary relations” with leftist governments, particularly those in Latin America.<sup>30</sup>

In an ideological sense, Lula’s foreign policy orientation compensated his party for an economic policy

that was not aligned with the PT; at the same time, this allowed him to draw a clear contrast between himself and his predecessor Cardoso. Certainly, the President was also focused on putting his own beliefs into practice and bolstering his political profile. Aside from Lula’s own personal and psychological motivations, however, it is clear that the PT had traditionally disposed of a fully developed foreign and regional policy programme, an active Secretariat for International Relations as well as contacts with social movements beyond Brazil’s borders.<sup>31</sup> Among other things, the above-described “policy reversal” explains the seemingly ironic circumstance of Lula visiting the World Economic Forum in Davos just as naturally as its respective counter event, the World Social Forum – as both a favourite of the economic elite and as the great hope of the social movements.

In line with Brazilian tradition, not a single ambassador under Lula came from political circles – even the Minister of External Relations, Celso Amorim, was a career diplomat.<sup>32</sup> The Ministry’s technocratic profile, however, was weakened when Amorim joined the PT in September 2009.<sup>33</sup> The actions of Ambassador Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães had a similar effect. He was the acting Secretary General for External Relations until October 2009, making him the second in command at the Itamaraty.<sup>34</sup> While this position had already been of great importance for the formulation and implementation of foreign policy in the past, the post’s influence had played out within the government itself. Pinheiro Guimarães’ exercise of office, however, had a much stronger external, public orientation. He fostered his reputation as the government’s foreign policy “ideologue” by maintaining a distinctive presence within the media and journals –

<sup>27</sup> Corporación Latinobarómetro, *Informe 2009* [Report 2009], (Santiago de Chile, November 2009), [http://www.oas.org/en/ser/dia/outreach/docs/INFORME\\_LATINOBAROMETRO\\_2009%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.oas.org/en/ser/dia/outreach/docs/INFORME_LATINOBAROMETRO_2009%5B1%5D.pdf) (accessed 19 September 2011).

<sup>28</sup> For example: Hurrell, “Brazil: What Kind of Rising State?” (see note 12), 137; Celso Lafer, *A identidade internacional do Brasil e a política externa brasileira. Passado, presente e futuro* [The International Identity of Brazil and Brazilian Foreign Policy. Past, Present and Future], (São Paulo, 2009), 141.

<sup>29</sup> Under orthodox economic policy, monetary and fiscal policy are oriented towards the preservation of macro-economic stability.

<sup>30</sup> Lula distanced himself from the PT’s “genuine” foreign policy approach with regard to economic issues. He strove to transform Brazil into an architect of globalisation – while at the same time the party was traditionally characterised by state-centric nationalism, anti-hegemonism and mistrust *vis-à-vis* foreign capital, free trade and global markets. See Roberto de Almeida, “Uma nova ‘arquitetura’ diplomática?” (see note 22), 101.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

<sup>32</sup> Brazil’s Ministry of External Relations has the uncommon privilege – in a Latin American context – of having sole responsibility for the filling of posts within its areas of responsibility. This has a positive impact in terms of consistency in personnel as well as homogeneous socialisation, which in turn improves continuity in terms of content, Rivarola Puntigliano, “‘Going Global’: An Organizational Study of Brazilian Foreign Policy” (see note 15), 31.

<sup>33</sup> This occurred shortly before the deadline that needed to be met in order to present candidate lists for the October elections. Even though Amorim did not participate in the end, he initially refused in interviews to exclude the possibility of a PT candidacy.

<sup>34</sup> Guimarães’s successor was Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, who had been Brazil’s ambassador in Washington up until that point. In early 2011, Patriota took over the post of Minister of External Relations in the Dilma Rousseff government.

for example, by authoring opinion pieces that often transcended foreign policy topics.

The political clout of the two highest ranking diplomats, however, was not only relativised by Lula's foreign policy activism. In addition to the Minister of External Relations, the Secretary General for External Relations and the President, there was a fourth figure, who enjoyed considerable influence and prominence: Lula's foreign policy advisor Marco Aurelio García. The function of the President's advisor, a post filled in previous governments by diplomats, was originally to "directly and discretely" support the President in the role of a "note-taker" or "*introdutor diplomático*".<sup>35</sup> However, the post's profile fundamentally changed under Lula's government. García was a long-serving PT Secretary for External Relations. His regular domestic and international public appearances could be regarded a PR campaign for the government. At times, the media spoke of a division of labour – the Minister of External Relations was responsible for global issues, while the President's advisor dealt with regional affairs. This double-track foreign policy, i.e. presidential and ministerial, but at the same time "party politicised" policy was exercised without major institutional or personal conflicts arising. This can be traced back to Lula's integration efforts<sup>36</sup> and the unifying party political element within the "foreign policy *quadrige*" consisting of Lula, García, Amorim and Pinheiro Guimarães.

<sup>35</sup> Roberto de Almeida, "Uma nova 'arquitetura' diplomática?" (see note 22), 98.

<sup>36</sup> Günther Maihold, *Too Big a World? Lula, Brazil and the Middle East*, Análisis del Real Instituto Elcano (ARI), 62/2010 (Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, 17 May 2010), [http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano\\_eng/Content?WCM\\_GLOBAL\\_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano\\_in/zonas\\_in/latin+america/ari62-2010](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_eng/Content?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_in/zonas_in/latin+america/ari62-2010) (accessed 19 September 2011).

## South-South-Orientation

Over the “Lula Era”, Brazil increasingly turned to the “Southern” states and regions. This is immediately evident in the frequency with which he focused on corresponding destinations within the context of his travelling diplomacy. Brazil made efforts to consolidate its role as a regional power in South America, to expand its presence in Africa and to intensify its relations with the Arab world.

### South America

Traditionally, Brazil had not seen itself as a *Latin American country*, but rather just a *country in Latin America*.<sup>37</sup> It was only the country’s process of growing acceptance regarding its own “geographic fate” that made the creation of Mercosur in the 1990s possible. From 2003, this development fed into target-oriented policy based on the construction of a South American identity. During Lula’s presidency, the country moved away from a (vague) Latin American identity towards a (more clearly defined) South American identity.<sup>38</sup> In justifying why the term “South America” was preferred over “Latin America”, Minister of External Relations Celso Amorim indicated that South America constitutes a geopolitical entity on its own; the developments in this region differ from those taking place in Mexico, Central America or the Caribbean. He also stated that a particularly high degree of confidence and self-assertion is evident in this particular region. According to Amorim, South America is nobody’s backyard and China displaced the USA and the EU and relegated them to the region’s second and third most important trading partners.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Hurrell, “Brazil: What Kind of Rising State?” (see note 12), 142.

<sup>38</sup> Wolf Grabendorff, “Brasilien’s Aufstieg: Möglichkeiten und Grenzen regionaler und globaler Politik” [The Rise of Brazil: Opportunities and Limits of Regional and Global Policy], *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, no. 12 (2010): 16–22 (18).

<sup>39</sup> “I use the term ‘South America’ here, rather than ‘Latin America’, because despite the obvious historical affinities that bring together the whole of Latin America and Caribbean countries, South America constitutes a distinct geopolitical entity. It is very different from what happens in Central America and Mexico and, to some extent, the Caribbean”,

These arguments clearly show which states and regions Brazil referred to during the Lula government in defining its regional identity. First, the boundary to construct this identity ran between Colombia and Panama. In a manner of speaking, Central America and Mexico (as well as the Caribbean) were thus excluded from Brazil’s “actual” gravitational field. This is tied to the second dimension of this identity, namely the relationship with the USA. During the Lula government, Washington’s influence reached a low point in the history of inter-American relations, above all in South America. Third, China’s rise as an economic power provided the South American nations with an alternative business partner and therefore introduced more latitude for action into their relations with the USA and the EU. China has become one of South America’s most important trading partners; at the same time its role as a source of foreign direct investment in the region has expanded. This provided the material basis for Brazil’s growing confidence, which Lula expressed as follows: “Our critics are those who believe that when we wake in the morning, we have to ask the USA for permission to sneeze and Europe for permission to cough.”<sup>40</sup>

The unusual frequency – compared to other high-level Brazilian politicians – with which President Lula and Minister of External Relations Amorim visited countries in the sub-continent was an expression of South American identity.<sup>41</sup> Brazil’s geopolitical atten-

Celso Amorim, *Second Plenary Session: Security Systems and Institutions: Regional Perspectives. The 8th IISS Global Strategic Review: Global Security Governance and the Emerging Distribution of Power*, 11 September 2010, 2.

<sup>40</sup> From Lula during his final press conference as Brazil’s President, as quoted in *La Nación*, 28 December 2010, 2 (translated from the original Spanish by the author).

<sup>41</sup> Amorim pointed to this development – the new foreign policy approach becomes particularly conspicuous due to his statement that he served as Minister of External Relations under Itamar Franco as well as Lula: “I had served as Minister of External Relations under Itamar Franco’s Government, although for only one year and a half, and I never visited Peru, Ecuador, Guayana, or Suriname during that time. Under President Lula’s Government, I have been six times to Peru, three or four times to Ecuador, and many times to Colombia – a significant change in dynamics”, Amorim, “South American Integration” (see note 21), 15.

tion to the sub-region was emphasised on a formal level with the creation of the *Unión Suramericana de Naciones* (UNASUR, Union of South American Nations) in 2008.<sup>42</sup> According to the vocabulary of South American politicians, UNASUR represents a political and economic integration project. The Union, however, has been developing less into an integrated economic zone and more into an institutional framework for action, low-intensity policy coordination and ad-hoc conflict management. From Brazil's standpoint, UNASUR contributes, above all, to the country's own political and strategic clout and its own position in the region. In regards to Brazil's foreign policy projection, South America also takes on greater importance *vis-à-vis* the core *Cono Sur* region (the portion of the sub-continent below the Tropic of Capricorn). Amorim's comparison of UNASUR and Mercosur underlines this: "From a foreign policy perspective, I believe that South America has at least as much clout as Mercosur, if not more, because the problems confronting the region extend beyond the boundaries of Mercosur."<sup>43</sup>

UNASUR thus provided the South American sub-continent with the quality of an entity.<sup>44</sup> At the same time, however, it extended Brazil's radius of activity beyond the *Cono Sur* and marked a sphere of action from which the USA was kept away as far as possible, institutionally as well as in terms of power politics. Accordingly, Brazil was strongly opposed to any form of participation by Washington in the *Consejo de Defensa Suramericano* (CDS), the South American Defence Council of the UNASUR, which was created on initiative of Lula in 2008.<sup>45</sup> Correspondingly, the reaction of Lula and most of the Presidents of the

42 Grabendorff, "Brasiliens Aufstieg" [The Rise of Brazil] (see note 38), 18.

43 Original text: "From the standpoint of external, international policy, I believe South America has as much, if not greater weight, as Mercosur, as the great issues faced by the region in general transcend Mercosur boundaries", Amorim, "South American Integration" (see note 21), 21.

44 Ibid., 17.

45 According to statements from the Lula government, under no circumstances was the CDS to become a "SATO", that is, a NATO for the South providing the framework for representing US interests and carrying out joint military operations. The CDS should serve more as a platform for coordination of defense policy without infringing on the principles of national sovereignty and non-intervention, Günther Maihold and Claudia Zilla, *Geteilte Sicherheit in Lateinamerika. Neue subregionale Initiativen und das Engagement der USA*, SWP-Aktuell 36/2008 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, May 2008).

UNASUR countries was negative when the Colombian government of Álvaro Uribe decided in August 2009 to authorize the USA to use seven military bases in the country.<sup>46</sup> Without providing a concept for an alternative regional solution to the armed conflict in Colombia<sup>47</sup> and the transnational drug problems in the region, Lula opposed an increase in US-military presence in the neighbourhood. Nevertheless, in April 2010, he signed an agreement for military cooperation with Washington, which was meant, first and foremost, to promote economic cooperation in the defence sector.

By repeatedly taking on the role of a conflict manager in South America, Brazil met the objective of keeping Washington's influence small. The focus was on ensuring stability within individual states or friendly relations between governments. In this connection, Lula established a series of "Groups of Friends" during his presidency, which served as mediators in various conflicts within or among South American countries.<sup>48</sup> This demonstrated that the Brazilian government had become a recognised mediator in South America. Even when regional institutions (OAS, UNASUR, Rio Group) provided the framework for action, conflict management mainly took place in an informal and highly inter-governmental manner through the creation of ad-hoc groups and mostly on initiative or under leadership of the Brazilian President. In addition to these "mediation interventions", there was another innovation. During elections in neighbouring countries, Lula publicly sided with specific presidential candidates, with particular vigour in the cases of Bolivia and Paraguay. This behaviour also signalled an important development in Brazil's foreign policy: there was a *de facto* abandonment of the principle of non-interference into the domestic affairs of third countries – a maxim that had long been strictly observed.<sup>49</sup> Within Brazil's (foreign) policy elite, this sparked controversy, particularly due to the prominent role played by Lula himself in this development.<sup>50</sup>

46 This happened after Ecuador decided not to extend the treaty for the US military base in Manta, which had expired in September 2009 after a period of ten years.

47 This refers to the violent conflict linked to drug trafficking that exists between guerilla groups, paramilitary units and the state security apparatus.

48 For example: "Group of Friends of Venezuela" (January 2003), "Group of Friends of Bolivia" (September 2008), "Group of Friends of Venezuela and Colombia" (February 2010).

49 Soares de Lima and Hirst, "Brazil as an Intermediate State and Regional Power" (see note 7), 32.

50 For example: Rubens Ricupero, "The Main Lineaments of Brazil's Current Foreign Policy", in *Brazilian Foreign Policy*.

In this context, however, attention must be paid to the cases in which Lula was not willing to “interfere” or in which he did seek dialogue, but rather took an unyielding position himself. An example of the first scenario is the conflict between Argentina and Uruguay that centred around the construction of two cellulose plants on the Uruguayan side of Uruguay River, which marks the border between the two countries. This conflict was not resolved until 2010. The 2009 crisis in Honduras provides an example of the second scenario. Brazil did not exactly play the role of a neutral party striving for reconciliation. Instead, “South America’s mediator” positioned itself at the top of a group of hardliners, who were opposed to efforts to resolve the conflict in the Central American country through elections.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, it seems questionable whether Brazil’s activities as a mediator within South America followed a different logic than within the tighter boundaries of Mercosur or in distant Central America. It can be suspected that Lula’s decisions with regard to other contexts (Mercosur, Central America) were designed to support Brazil’s role as the regional power in South America. Accordingly, the President accepted the negative consequences for the consolidation of Mercosur and the stabilisation of Honduras in order to raise Brazil’s profile in South America and to gain popularity within his own party.

At times, this understanding of Lula’s role entailed that political objectives gained precedence over economic considerations. This often came at the expense of economic interests and, therefore, the Brazilian President was harshly criticized within his own country, for instance, for his “lenience”, his “olympic patience” and his “diplomacy of generosity” towards Hugo Chávez and Evo Morales, the Presidents of Venezuela and Bolivia. Many times, the opposition accused Lula of not pursuing national, but rather his own party political interests.<sup>52</sup>

*Present and Future*, ed. Fundação Liberdade e Cidadania [Foundation for Liberty and Citizenship] (Washington, D.C., 2010), 7–16.

<sup>51</sup> Only the “conflict politicians” were not allowed to stand as candidates during these elections, namely the deposed President Manuel Zelaya and the de-facto President Roberto Micheletti.

<sup>52</sup> For a critique of Lula’s dealings with ideologically like-minded governments in Latin America, see, among others, the articles in *Brazilian Foreign Policy*, ed. Fundação Liberdade e Cidadania (see note 50), as well as Georges D. Landau, “A Diplomacia Latino-Americana do Governo Lula” [The Latin American Diplomacy of the Lula Government], in *O Brasil no*

Within scholarly and policy circles, it is often claimed that Brazil bore the political and economic costs (burden sharing) related to its leadership role in the sub-continent and the consolidation of regional institutions reluctantly. In light of the foreign policy actions described here, this argument should be relativised or at least reformulated more precisely. The foreign policy the Lula government embarked on did not contribute in any notable way to the formation of supra-national institutions or to a reduction in the regional asymmetries in South America. Moreover, it undermined deeper integration within the Mercosur as well as its international projection.<sup>53</sup> In fact, integration and international projection did not appear to be priorities of Brazilian regional policy. Moreover, the government did not consider the loss of sovereignty and financial burdens a “price” worth paying. The situation was different, however, with the economic costs that Lula willingly paid in order to be “everybody’s friend” or the “good guy”, because this helped him gain recognition as a mediator in South America.

## Africa

As Brazil has turned its focus to the global South, Africa also received greater attention. Relations between Brazil and Africa showed an extremely dynamic development over the two presidential periods of Lula on diplomatic, political and economic levels. This was a novelty in the country’s foreign policy. Lula dedicated his first visit to Africa in November 2003 to the issue of Brazil’s historical debt towards the continent. He hereby created the framework for interpretation of the heightened transatlantic interest. Brazil imported (until 1850) and enslaved (until 1888) approximately four million Africans. Today, the country is home to the largest population of people of African descent outside Africa. In leadership positions, however, this segment of the population continues to be considerably under-represented.<sup>54</sup> In the context of a worldwide

*contexto político regional* [Brazil in a Regional Policy Context], ed. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Cadernos Adenauer XI/2010, no. 4 (2010), 11–24.

<sup>53</sup> Among other things, the promotion of UNASUR as a policy and strategy platform was responsible for this.

<sup>54</sup> Günther Maihold, “Die brasilianische Afrikapolitik – neues Engagement oder bewusster Pragmatismus?” [Brazil’s Africa Policy – New Commitment or Conscious Pragmatism], in *Brasilien. Großmacht in Lateinamerika*, Argumente und Mate-



process of increasingly returning to ethnic affiliations and, accordingly, the politicisation of ethnicity and collective identity, Brazil, too, witnessed the emergence of a movement that has critically examined the myth of the country's "racial democracy" and the homogeneous "national culture" since the mid-1980s. In Lula's Africa policy, the entanglement of a national search for identity and the country's conception of its foreign policy role were particularly evident. The solidarity with the developing and emerging nations that the President generally expressed was, therefore, supplemented with the recognition of responsibility, historical ties and cultural affinities towards the region.

On a diplomatic level, this special relationship was expressed in three different manners. First, no other Brazilian President visited Africa as frequently as Lula. Over the course of his two terms, he visited 27 African states – more than the sum of all countries on the continent visited by all of his predecessors.<sup>55</sup> Visits to the region by Minister of External Relations Amorim were similarly frequent. Second, a number of Brazilian embassies, which had been closed under Cardoso, were re-opened in Africa during the Lula government (among others, Addis Ababa, Dar es Salaam, Yaoundé, Kinshasa, Lomé and Lusaka).<sup>56</sup> Brazil established new embassies in other capitals across the continent (among others, São Tomé, Khartoum, Cotonou, Gaborone, Conakry, Malabo). Between 2003 and 2009, a total of 17 diplomatic missions were (re-)opened across the continent.<sup>57</sup> The number of ambassadors from African states accredited in Brazil rose accordingly. Third, the improved relations with Africa led to an administrative restructuring within the Brazilian Ministry of External Relations. The Africa division was separated from the original joint Department for Africa and the Middle East. It was expanded and raised to the status of an independent regional department (DEAF). In addition to Africa-I (DAF-I) and Africa-II (DAF-II), a third division was created (DAF-III).<sup>58</sup>

rialien zum Zeitgeschehen, 55, ed. Bernd Rill (Munich: Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung, 2007), 73–91 (73).

<sup>55</sup> Paulo Fagundes Visentini, *Prestige Diplomacy, Southern Solidarity or "Soft Imperialism"? Lula's Brazil-Africa Relations (2003 onwards)*, April 2009, 3, Conference paper, <http://www.ascleiden.nl/PDF/seminarvisentini.pdf> (accessed 19 September 2011).

<sup>56</sup> While there were 34 Brazilian diplomats in Africa in 1989, this number dropped to 24 during the Cardoso presidency, *ibid.*, 3.

<sup>57</sup> Statement from Celso Amorim in ABC, *Brazilian Technical Cooperation in Africa* (Brasília, 2009), 5.

<sup>58</sup> Cláudio Oliveria Riberio, "A política africana do governo de Lula (2003–2006)" [The Africa Policy of the Lula Govern-

ment (2003–2006)], *Tempo social, revista de sociologia da USP* 21, no. 2 (2009): 185–209 (187f.).

Within the context of South-South relations, "horizontal cooperation" with Africa was considered very important. Accordingly, Brazil regarded itself particularly competent in promoting development. As Minister of External Relations Amorim stated, due to its own experiences Brazil has a special understanding of Africa's problems as well as proven solutions that could be transferred.<sup>59</sup> Since 2005, through its *Agência Brasileira de Cooperação* (ABC, the development agency within the Ministry of External Relations), Brazil has signed framework agreements for technical cooperation (TC) with more than a dozen African states and with the African Union.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, the Lula government cancelled bilateral debts with a number of African states while also providing new loans. The importance of cultural affinity towards Africa was also evident within the TC framework, as the principal lines of support have affected the lusophone countries, i.e. those that speak Portuguese. Of the TC funding provided by Brazil to Africa, 55 percent was given to Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe as well as Cape Verde. Africa, particularly the Lusophone part, also took on greater prominence in Brazil's external cultural policy. The *Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* (CPLP, Community of Portuguese Language Countries), founded in 1996, represented a focus area of Brazil's Africa policy.<sup>61</sup> The multilateral forum includes Brazil and Portugal as

ment (2003–2006)], *Tempo social, revista de sociologia da USP* 21, no. 2 (2009): 185–209 (187f.).

<sup>59</sup> Amorim described special aspects and advantages of this type of international cooperation as follows: "Several challenges faced by African countries are not unknown to Brazil, a country where inequality is still very substantial. Contributing to the development of Africa through the sharing of solutions we found to our very own problems is the chief purpose of our technical cooperation", in ABC, *Brazilian Technical Cooperation in Africa* (see note 57), 5.

<sup>60</sup> In 2005, Brazil signed framework cooperation agreements with Botswana, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Benin, Gambia and Equatorial Guinea, in 2006, with Zambia and Tanzania, in 2007, with the African Union and Rwanda, in 2009, with Swaziland and Sierra Leone, and, in 2010, with Lesotho.

<sup>61</sup> To promote research and scientific exchange, the Programme for Undergraduate Students (PEC) was expanded. It had already been created during the military dictatorship and then also included graduate students. In July 2006, the Brazilian city of Salvador da Bahia served as the venue for the "Second Conference of Intellectuals from Africa and the Diaspora and the African Renaissance". The international broadcast of "TV Brazil", the state television station founded in 2008, is received in Africa. In addition, the region has long been an important market for the beloved Brazilian tele-novelas.

well as East Timor, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe, Mozambique and Angola.

The Brazilian government's decision to strengthen relations with Africa was interpreted by domestic opposition parties as part of a strategy focused on consolidating the necessary support within the UN General Assembly to secure a permanent seat on the Security Council. "This is the only explanation for why Brazil opened a dozen embassies in countries of no relevance."<sup>62</sup> Critics of Lula denounced this costly policy arguing that too much was bet on an uncertain hand that might not even get to be played if the aspired reform of the UN institutions would not occur.

Brazil's Africa orientation can, however, also be viewed in light of economic interests. For if one shifts the focus from development and external cultural policy to trade and investment policy towards Africa, then a different setting of priorities becomes apparent – one which is predominantly centred around securing raw materials and markets.<sup>63</sup> This economic strategy has led many observers to conclude that Brazil was exercising a type of "soft imperialism" here.<sup>64</sup> But even though the trade volume between Brazil and Africa has more than quintupled since 2003, it remains at quite a low level.<sup>65</sup> Brazil's prioritisation, within its trade relations with Africa, of securing raw materials is revealed not only through the range of Brazil's import products, but also through the concentration on specific states as trading partners.<sup>66</sup> Brazil's investment policy in Africa paints a similar picture. On the other hand, the financial resources that Brazil expended on development cooperation remained very limited. So did its efforts towards creating value chains across the continent. The interest in resources, therefore, played the key role in economic relations with

Africa – this casts a shadow over Lula's discourse on South-South solidarity.

Lula sought to create a platform for dialogue for both focus regions in Brazil's South-South policy by launching an initiative supporting regular summits between America and South Africa (*Cumbre América del Sur-África*, ASA). For the first time, their heads of state and governments assembled in November 2006 in Abuja, Nigeria. In the Abuja Declaration,<sup>67</sup> they recognised the necessity of cooperating in multilateral formats, such as the UN, WTO and the Bretton Woods Institutions, and the necessity for working towards their reform. Moreover, they supported cooperation across diverse political, economic and social areas. The Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (ASACOF) was created as an executive body, with its activities coordinated from Brazil and Nigeria. Although a decision was made in Abuja to meet on a regular two-year cycle, the second summit did not take place until September 2009 on the island of Margarita in Venezuela.<sup>68</sup> The third ASA summit was originally planned for September 2011 in Libya.<sup>69</sup> In light of the developments in this country, the summit was finally held in February 2013 in the city of Malabo (Equatorial Guinea).<sup>70</sup>

## Middle East

The extent of the "expansion" and diversification of Brazil's foreign policy as described here can also be traced back to the fresh impetus in the relations between Brazil and the Middle East. Lula was the first President of the Republic of Brazil to visit this region.

<sup>67</sup> ASA, *Abuja Declaration* (Abuja, 26–30 November 2006), <http://www2.mre.gov.br/deaf/asa/declaration%20of%20the%20first%20-%20%28english%29.pdf> (accessed 27 October 2011).

<sup>68</sup> See ASA, *Declaración de Nueva Esparta*, II Cumbre América del Sur – África. República Bolivariana de Venezuela, Isla de Margarita, Nueva Esparta [Declaration from Nueva Esparta II Summit South America – Africa, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Isla de Margarita, Nueva Esparta], 26/27 September 2009.

<sup>69</sup> Lula entered Libyan territory in June 2009 as a guest of honour at the African Union Summit.

<sup>70</sup> An additional format that links the two shores of the Atlantic is the Zona de Paz y Cooperación del Atlántico Sur (ZPCAS, South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone) created within the UN framework on a Brazilian initiative in 1986. The following countries are party to the ZPCAS: Angola, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo, DR Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Togo and Uruguay.

<sup>62</sup> For example, the attempted explanation from Landau, "A Diplomacia Latino-Americana do Governo Lula" (see note 52), 12 (Translation from the original Portuguese by the author).

<sup>63</sup> Gerhard Seibert, *Brasilien in Afrika: Globaler Geltungsanspruch und Rohstoffe* [Brazil in Africa: Global Claims and Resources], GIGA Focus, no. 8 (Hamburg: German Institute of Global and Area Studies [GIGA], 2009).

<sup>64</sup> Fagundes Visentini, *Prestige Diplomacy, Southern Solidarity or "Soft Imperialism"?* (see note 55), 3.

<sup>65</sup> On trade relations between Brazil and Africa, see the chapter "Brasilien als Handelsmacht" [Brazil as a Trade Power], 26ff.

<sup>66</sup> In addition to oil, Brazil primarily imported minerals as well as plant and animal resources from Africa between 2000 and 2010, while the states in Africa mainly imported sugar and derivatives (bio-ethanol), meat and processed products from Brazil.

Just as in the case of Africa, he worked to emphasise the development policy and cultural commonalities between the “foreign region” and Brazil as a multi-ethnic emerging country. Among other things, the justification for this new affinity was that the South American nation is home to some 10 million people of Arab ancestry, who live in peace and harmony with 120,000 Jews.

In this case, Lula also followed a course of “summit diplomacy” and the linking of focus regions. He initiated the *Cúpula América do Sul-Países Árabes* (ASPA, Summit of South American-Arab Countries). This newly founded dialogue mechanism was formalised during its first meeting in Brasília in May 2005.<sup>71</sup> It is a forum for coordination which is comprised of 34 countries – 12 South American (the UNASUR members) and 22 Arab – as well as the Secretary General of the Arab League. Five years later, the Brazilian metropolis Rio de Janeiro was the venue for the Third Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, an initiative launched in 2005 by Spain and Turkey and institutionalised by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in 2007. Its purpose is to provide a framework for cooperation between the Western and Muslim world – with the aim of advancing cultural dialogue, eliminating socio-economic asymmetry and fighting terrorism.

As “South America’s conflict manager”, Lula also attempted to play a bridging role in the Middle East and offered corresponding mediation services, particularly towards the end of his presidency. Together with Turkey, which, like Brazil, was a member of the UN Security Council in 2010, Lula arbitrated in the nuclear disagreement with Iran (more on this in the following chapter). Previously, in November 2009, he had received Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Brasília – just a few months after the contested June elections and the subsequent violent suppression of mass demonstrations in Iran. Within two weeks, both the Israeli President Shimon Peres and the President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, paid an official visit to the Brazilian capital in November 2009.<sup>72</sup>

The message that Brazil was trying to send – and not just through symbolic politics – was “we can work

with everyone”. The Lula government supported the right of the Palestinians to have a sovereign state and demanded a stop to the construction of Israeli settlements within the occupied territories. At the same time, it rejected the Holocaust denial of the Iranian government as unacceptable. Within this conflict-laden context, it was impossible to completely avoid receiving any blame. Abbas condemned the 2010 decision by Mercosur to approve a free trade agreement with Israel – the first agreement of this kind with any third party state – that did not exclude trade in products manufactured in the occupied territories.<sup>73</sup> The governments of Israel and the USA, in turn, criticised Brazil’s diplomatic decision in November 2010 to recognise the Palestinian state according to its 1967 boundaries.

The strengthening of Brazil’s relations with the Middle East contributed to national economic development as well as to a diversification of trading partners. Over the two Lula’s presidential terms, the level of trade between Brazil and this region tripled; between 2003 and 2009, the volume increased from US\$4.4 billion to US\$14.4 billion. Brazil only had a negative trade balance with Israel and Iraq; with the other countries across the region there was a surplus.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, Brazil signed a variety of economic, technical or financial cooperation agreements with countries like Bahrain, Jordan, Qatar and Kuwait. It also sent business delegations and participated in international forums and exhibitions taking place in the region. Thus Brazil achieved a previously unknown presence across this region.

<sup>71</sup> The second ASPA summit took place in 2009 in Qatar; the third meeting, which was originally planned for 2011 in Peru, took place a year later due to the “Arab Spring”. In addition to the “Cúpulas”, eleven ministerial meetings and seven meetings of senior officials were also held.

<sup>72</sup> The last time that an Israeli president officially visited Brazil was in the 1970s.

<sup>73</sup> Maihold, *Too Big a World?* (see note 36), 5.

<sup>74</sup> All figures from the Ministério das Relações Exteriores. Secretaria de Planejamento Diplomático, *Balanco de Política Externa* [Ministry for External Relations. Secretariat for Diplomatic Planning, Balance of Foreign Policy], 2003–2010 (Brasília).

# North-South Conflict

Political change often comes hand-in-hand with the emergence of new actors, who were previously not participants in the political game or were not members of the group of “acknowledged players”. This holds true for the rise of Lula’s political party, the PT, to the national stage, and also for Brazil’s increased importance within an international context. The PT developed from an opposition labour party, viewed with suspicion by the country’s traditional elites, into a responsible and pragmatic governmental party which functions within the system. On a global level, however, “Lula’s Brazil” showed two faces. As an emerging power, the country operated along the cleavage between the South and the North. It entered into alliances with other countries that occupied similarly ambivalent positions within the international hierarchy. The objective behind this building of groups was for these states to identify common interests and to assert themselves against the North. The importance of the USA and the EU for Brazil’s foreign policy decreased. Lula’s government called for a more balanced global distribution of material and immaterial goods, and confidently pointed to Brazil’s socio-economic achievements. These claims condensed into a pro-justice discourse, which was not directed against the system, but against the status quo.

## Anti-Status Quo- and Pro-Justice Discourse

Even if Brazil’s foreign policy under Lula was not simply an extension of national economic policy or equivalent to foreign trade policy, the President’s socio-economic approach did radiate out into foreign policy. This is where a certain continuity that existed in Brazil’s foreign policy was reversed under Lula: While foreign policy once served national development (introversion), the Brazilian development model under Lula was understood as a resource for foreign policy (extraversion). Former Minister of External Relations, Celso Lafer, defined the task of foreign policy as being the “translation of internal needs into external opportunities in order to expand society’s ability to

command its own fate”.<sup>75</sup> Based on this, one could say in Lula’s case that internal strengths were transformed into external opportunities to give the country a better position in the international context. Domestically, economic effectivity – defined as growth combined with redistribution – provided a source of political legitimacy at the domestic level and was presented accordingly abroad.

Brazil’s achievements in combating poverty have accredited the country internationally in two different ways. On the one hand, they raised its profile as a “model example” and an “emerging donor” *vis-à-vis* other developing and emerging countries. “We have succeeded; we know how it works” – this was how Brazil understood its role within the context of its South-South relations. This line of reasoning was also used by the Itamaraty and its development agency, the ABC, for example, when addressing international cooperation projects with poorer countries. Brazil’s self-perception was further bolstered by important foreign players, who repeatedly pointed to “Lula’s Brazil” as a model for countries in the region as well as for the non-industrialised world, thereby recognising the government’s socio-economic achievements.

On the other hand, Brazil played the role of a rebel with the revisionist<sup>76</sup> attitude, denouncing existing power relations. In the same manner that he advocated solidarity among developing and emerging countries, Lula rhetorically promoted an equitable distribution of power and opportunity between the North and the South. The Brazilian government’s efforts towards a fairer allocation of resources within its own borders – through prominent social policy – therefore corresponded to similar demands within a global context. In this regard, Lula’s criticism was directed, first, towards the prevailing rules of global trade and the international financial system; second, against West-

<sup>75</sup> “Traduzir necessidades internas em possibilidades externas para ampliar o poder de controle de uma sociedade sobre o seu destino, que é no meu entender a tarefa da política externa, considerada como política pública”, Lafer, *A identidade internacional do Brasil* (see note 28), 16.

<sup>76</sup> The term revisionism is used here in an analytical descriptive sense and refers to efforts to call traditional theoretical convictions or historical policy relations into question.

ern expectations towards developing and emerging countries in terms of their efforts related to environmental and climate change issues; third, against the oligarchic character of international institutions like the UN Security Council; and, fourth, against the geopolitical hegemony of the USA. Accordingly, social justice, as it relates to the distribution of material and immaterial goods, also became the dominant narrative of the Lula government's foreign policy. It was rooted in the construct of a vertical cleavage between the South and the North. At the same time, horizontal differences that become apparent if one uses other criteria such as the type of regime (e.g. democracy vs. autocracy) were neglected.

Lula's "uninhibited rapprochement" with Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in May 2010 can be interpreted within this context. At this time, Lula came out against sanctions in the dispute over Iran's nuclear program and he attempted to act as a mediator on this issue. Aside from the facts that Brazil has ratified the Non-Proliferation Treaty<sup>77</sup> and that there are doubts over Iran's peaceful intentions, two factors proved decisive for the South American country. First, there was the issue of Iran's right to the development of civil nuclear power – a right that Brazil has also claimed for itself. The Brazilian government viewed the North's non-proliferation policy as discriminatory. It accused the industrialised Western nations of not working towards disarmament, silently accepting de facto nuclear powers like India and Israel, and selectively holding fast to the Non-Proliferation Treaty when dealing with certain countries in the South. Second, Brazil sought to participate in the quest for a resolution to the nuclear dispute.<sup>78</sup> In addition to Brazil's traditional position – against sanctions, in favour of peaceful conflict resolution within a multilateral framework – in this specific case, a material as well as an immaterial dimension was evident in the vertical North-South cleavage.

This cleavage also dominated human rights issues. Within multilateral bodies, Brazil had won the (bad) reputation of never voting against Cuba, but of always voting against Israel. In addition, it generally breaks with Argentina, Chile or Uruguay in its votes. Human

<sup>77</sup> Brazil has not, however, signed the supplementary protocol. It justified this decision by pointing to the fear that it could infringe on rights to industrial secrets.

<sup>78</sup> The text of the 17 May 2010 joint declaration from Iran, Turkey and Brazil is available at: <http://www.cfr.org/brazil/joint-declaration-iran-turkey-brazil-nuclear-fuel-may-2010/p22140> (accessed 5 October 2011).

rights organisations have repeatedly criticised Brazil for impeding the work of the Human Rights Council through its support of autocracies.<sup>79</sup> The Lula government unfailingly justified its position in terms of the vertical cleavage. It claimed to be acting against selective treatment which discriminates the countries in the South. Accordingly, the President's foreign policy advisor, Marco Aurelio García, enjoyed announcing that his country was not responsible for handing out certificates of good conduct around the world.<sup>80</sup> Reference was often made of principles, such as state sovereignty and non-intervention into the internal affairs of other countries.<sup>81</sup>

Brazil's position was also controversial in a Latin American context. Lula garnered intense criticism after he spoke out during an interview on the case of the imprisoned Cuban dissidents Orlando Zapata and Guillermo Fariñas. Both had started hunger strikes; Zapata died as a consequence and Fariñas fell into an acute medical condition. Lula relativised his previous statement with the argument that a hunger strike cannot be seen as a reason to release prisoners. He said that one must respect the right of the Cuban government to imprison people in line with existing national laws.<sup>82</sup>

Overall, Lula's foreign policy discourse was directed against the status quo, but did not have an antisystemic character. A number of examples illustrate this point. Brazil's government did not, for instance, come out against the Bretton Woods Institutions, but rather pushed for greater autonomy *vis-à-vis* these institutions. To this end, Brazil focused on two parallel strategies. First, it reduced the influence of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on its own policy by repaying its liabilities. In December 2005, Brazil's Minister of Finance announced an early repayment of the remain-

<sup>79</sup> For example Julie de Rivero's statement "Brazil's Support for Abusive Governments Is Undermining the Human Rights Council's Performance". Human Rights Watch, *Brazil: Support Victims, Not Abusers. Lula Should Show Solidarity for Human Rights at UN Council*, June 15, 2009, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/06/15/brazil-support-victims-not-abusers?print> (accessed 19 September 2011).

<sup>80</sup> As quoted, for example, by Andrés Oppenheimer, "Brazil Deserves Criticism for Awful Foreign Policy", *Miami Herald*, 24 June 2009.

<sup>81</sup> For example, in 2009 – on the one hand, to explain why Brazil abstained from voting on the resolutions on North Korea and the D.R. Congo, and on the other hand, with a view to the situation in Sri Lanka.

<sup>82</sup> Quoted in "Brazil's Lula Criticised for Cuba Dissidents Comment", *BBC News*, 11 March 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8561718.stm> (accessed 19 September 2011).

der of its IMF debts totalling US\$15.5 billion.<sup>83</sup> At the same time, Brazil called for a reform of the IMF, which would provide a greater say to developing and emerging countries. Among other things, the Brazilian government worked within the G20 framework for a redistribution of quotas and voting rights. The goal was to give Southern states more influence within the institution and increase the legitimacy of the IMF itself. Reforms were then agreed on in 2008 and 2010, causing an increase in Brazil's impact within the IMF. The country transformed from a major borrower into an important donor. In 2003, Lula had made a failed attempt to fill the post of WTO President with a Brazilian diplomat, Ambassador Felipe de Seixas Correa.<sup>84</sup> These efforts to improve Brazil's standing within international institutions cannot be understood as part of an antisystemic strategy. On the contrary, they characterise the behaviour of an actor that has opted for "insider activism", a type of reformism that would become effective within the system.<sup>85</sup>

Brazil also called for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. The Lula government has levied the criticism that the low number of permanent members of this body reflects an outdated geo-political map of the world. It advocated an expansion of representation within the organisation so that developing and emerging nations as well as further regions would be included. To gather support in favour of Brazil receiving a permanent seat, the country solicited nations in the North and the South, on its own continent – among Latin American governments and the USA – as well as within the context of IBSA and BRIC. A material argument that was made during the process was Brazil's commitment to UN peacekeeping missions, above all the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Furthermore, it was alleged that the aim of making the institutions more democratic and representative was driving Brazil's efforts. The title of

<sup>83</sup> Argentina did the same, Heribert Dieter, "Der IWF auf dem Weg in die Bedeutungslosigkeit?" [The IMF on a Path to Insignificance], *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, no. 7 (2008): 9–14; idem, *Europa und die Reform des IWF* [Europe and the Reform of the IMF], SWP-Aktuell 16/2006 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, March 2006).

<sup>84</sup> Significantly, de Seixas Correa was not a Mercosur candidate. Uruguay presented its own recommendation, which was supported by Argentina, Stefan Schirm, "Leaders in Need of Followers: Emerging Powers in Global Governance", *European Journal of International Relations* 16, no. 2 (2010): 197–221 (205f.). In 2013 the Brazilian candidate, Roberto Azevêdo, was appointed as sixth WTO Director-General für a four-year term.

<sup>85</sup> Hurrell, "Brazil: What Kind of Rising State?" (see note 12).

a March 2011 article by Minister of External Relations, Celso Amorim, got right to the heart of the Brazilian appeal: "Let us in."<sup>86</sup> Two aspects, in particular, of Amorim's argumentation should be emphasised.

Accordingly, the critical question was not whether the country had "earned" a permanent seat. The point was rather the Security Council's legitimacy and assertiveness, which would be dependent on the inclusion of emerging powers. The composition of the Council no longer corresponds with the "reality of global power relations" if one considers that the Brazilian economy is just as large as the French and British economies and, in contrast to these, was still showing strong growth rates. It is at this point that one can discern a logic of reasoning according to which international hierarchies are based on economic factors, and therefore "hard power". In addition, however, Amorim also asserted that emerging powers like Brazil would bring new perspectives and soft power efforts to the Security Council. They would serve as a bridge to the developing world and could promote their acceptance of decisions of the "North" or "West". Above all, Brazil has influence within its region – whether because the country's decisions are followed or because it is a role model for others.<sup>87</sup>

Brazil does not claim, however, that it fulfils a representative role. The country is neither a representative of the global South nor of Latin America – as members of the Lula government repeatedly stated, it just represents itself. While the UN Security Council's integration of Brazil into its ranks would lend it "a piece of the global South and Latin America", Brazil would not be a spokesperson for third states. This line of argumentation is understandable from two different perspectives. On the one hand, Brazil insists on its entitlement to represent its own interests in a manner similar to that of the USA or France. The focus is, therefore, on the unspoken ambition of being recognised as belonging to the major powers and industrialised nations and as a player on equal footing – on its own account and with its own rights. On the other hand, as long as important countries within the region such as Argentina and Mexico do not support Brazil's call for a permanent seat, it can hardly claim to represent the sub-continent. Argentina and Mexico argue

<sup>86</sup> Celso Amorim, "Let Us In. Why Barack Obama Must Support Brazil's Drive for a Permanent Seat on the UN Security Council", *Foreign Policy*, 14 March 2011, [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/03/14/let\\_us\\_in](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/03/14/let_us_in) (accessed 19 September 2011).

<sup>87</sup> These arguments can be found in Amorim's article in *Foreign Policy*, *ibid.*

that Brazil gaining a permanent seat would destroy the balance of power within the region.<sup>88</sup> This type of reaction alludes to the following tendency: a non-universal institution will not necessarily gain acceptance among outsiders if it becomes less exclusive by expanding its membership. After all, states that remain excluded from the institution will now feel even more discriminated against. This phenomenon of organisational sociology rebuts Brazil's argument that, if it should gain a permanent seat, the UN Security Council will be more highly regarded by countries in the South.

By understanding itself as an emerging power – together with other states – and seeking entrance into “oligarchic institutions” or participation in “hegemonic decision-making processes”, Brazil stands out from the South and aims for the North. The upgrading of Brazil's position within the international system<sup>89</sup> implies the establishment of a hierarchy for the South. This in turn creates a point of tension for the egalitarian discourse, which subsists on the North-South dichotomy. Selective alliances like IBSA and BRIC or governance clubs like the G20 are already an expression of a “special class”; without doubt they would lose appeal for Brazil if they were to be significantly expanded. At the same time it is more the exception than the rule that Brazil and its strategies meet with real recognition from the South as well as the North – as was the case, for example, in its leadership role within the context of the UN stabilization mission in Haiti. In most cases, its twin ambitions of being a voice for the South and having its voice heard in the North result in a trade-off.

## Emerging Powers

Lula's government had a foreign policy focus on alliances with countries that could be understood as being “on an equal footing” with Brazil (coalitional politics). Acronyms like IBSA (for India, Brazil, South Africa) and BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) do not

<sup>88</sup> Argentina was more of a proponent of increasing the number of non-permanent seats of the UN Security Council. For an argument against Brazil gaining a permanent seat, see the article by Mexico's former Secretary of Foreign Affairs, “The Trouble with the BRICs. Why It's Too Soon to Give Brazil and India Permanent Seats on the U.N. Security Council”, *Foreign Policy*, 14 March 2011, [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/03/14/the\\_trouble\\_with\\_the\\_brics](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/03/14/the_trouble_with_the_brics) (accessed 19 September 2011).

<sup>89</sup> Schirm, “Leaders in Need of Followers” (see note 84).

refer to groups of states that were formed according to strict criteria of homogeneity, or to groups that fit into categories like “developing countries”, “emerging countries” or “countries of the South”. Instead, these constellations highlight the pressure to adapt that confronts the world order established in 1945. At the same time, they underscore the increased demand for recognition shared by the actors participating in these “clubs” and, associated with this, their pursuit of status. Brazil's search for partners enjoying a similar “global status” did not lead to the establishment of groups of “like-minded” states, but rather states with “equal weight”. The binding element is not so much a horizontal perspective of general accordance, shared positions on key elements of foreign policy, or sectoral interests (for example in the case of the WTO, G20 or the Cairns Group). A much more decisive element is the vertical perspective of a demarcation from the countries that are better positioned within the existing international hierarchy. The point of reference is, therefore, provided by those states in the international system that set the tone inside as well as outside the institutions and therefore shape the global order and act as norm-makers.

One club format that Brazil entered into during the Lula government is the BRIC group. The name can be traced back to an acronym used since 2001 within a wide range of publications created by the financial services provider *Goldman Sachs*.<sup>90</sup> The authors were focused on the increasing relative importance of the four economies within a global context, above all in terms of gross domestic product and growth rates. Initially, ministers and heads of state of Brazil, Russia, India and China gathered in a number of informal meetings that were held on the side during international events. Coordination among the countries began in September 2006. The first official summit

<sup>90</sup> Jim O'Neill, *Building Better Global Economic BRICs*, Global Economics Paper no. 66 (Goldman Sachs, 30 November 2001), <http://www.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/archive/archive-pdfs/build-better-brics.pdf>; Dominic Wilson and Roopa Purushothaman, *Dreaming with BRICS: The Path to 2050*, Global Economics Paper no. 99 (Goldman Sachs, 1 October 2003), <http://www.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/archive/archive-pdfs/brics-dream.pdf>; Jim O'Neill, Dominic Wilson, Roopa Purushothaman and Anna Stupnytska, *How Solid Are the BRICs?*, Global Economics Paper no. 134 (Goldman Sachs, 1 December 2005), <http://www.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/archive/archive-pdfs/how-solid.pdf>; Goldman Sachs, *BRICs and Beyond* (Global Investment Research, November 2007), <http://www.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/archive/BRICs-and-Beyond.html> (each accessed 31 August 2011).

between Lula, Dmitry Medvedev, Manmohan Singh and Hu Jintao took place in June 2009 in Yekaterinburg, the second in April 2010 in Brasilia.<sup>91</sup> In April 2011, the government representatives met in the Southern Chinese city of Sanya, and this time they were joined by South Africa's President, Jacob Zuma. Since then, the addition of a fifth country resulted in the expanded acronym BRICS. The group of states sees itself as an informal mechanism that should serve to increase dialogue among the members, coordinate their positions on topics on the global agenda, and intensify their cooperation across specific policy areas on a governmental as well as civil society level.

An additional format is IBSA, the dialogue forum established in June 2003 by the "Brasilia Declaration" including India, Brazil and South Africa. Its origins lie in talks that took place during the G8 summit in Evian, France, that same year. IBSA sees itself as a coordination mechanism between three multi-ethnic and multi-cultural democracies, which are all seeking to contribute to a new international architecture, to align their positions on global issues and to strengthen their cooperation across diverse policy areas. From the perspective of Lula government, the relevance of IBSA was threefold: the format should (1) improve the standing of all three nations in multilateral forums and on a global level in general, (2) act as a catalyst for the development of relations among the members and (3) serve as a mechanism for South-South cooperation, particularly via the newly established financial funds.<sup>92</sup> The fact that the participating countries are located on different continents and, to a certain degree, have taken on a regional leadership role in their respective regions (or other states expect this of them), was seen as geo-strategic potential. Moreover, a common theme among all three countries is that they are all laying claim to a greater degree of participation and recognition on a global level and are calling for a reform of global governance structures with the goal of shaping these into a more democratic, inclusive and representative form, thus increasing their legitimacy.

<sup>91</sup> Since 2006, sporadic meetings have been held among the four countries including the participation of ministers of various departments, representatives of development banks, heads of statistics offices, judges and civil society representatives (from think tanks, business associations, cooperatives, etc.).

<sup>92</sup> Secretary Figueiredo de Souza, IBSA-Department, Itamaraty, in Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, *Emerging Powers: India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) and the Future of South-South Cooperation*, Special Report (Washington, D.C., August 2009).

Even though IBSA has achieved a higher degree of institutionalisation than BRICS, both formats have the "fluid character" of coordinating mechanisms with informal structures. They are based neither on a founding document nor on statutes; they also lack a permanent secretariat with an independent budget. Thus, they lack an implementation mechanism or an entity ensuring a consolidation of the operative activities. While Brazil's Ministry of External Relations refers to IBSA and BRIC on its website as key issues within the context of inter-regional mechanisms, a stronger organisational anchoring of IBSA within the Itamaraty (in the *Subsecretaria-General Polıtica II* division) is noticeable. Overall, however, the depth of relations among the participating actors in both formats remains at a low level.

It has also proven difficult to achieve sectoral convergence or intense cooperation across diverse policy areas. The socio-cultural and political heterogeneity within these groups is far too pronounced. The collective benefits that the participating actors expect from coordinated action on a global level could be all the more crucial. The basis for this lies in their self-perception as "middle powers" within an international context. Within the IBSA framework it seems to be easier to define what this "centre-field existence" means in concrete terms and what its implications are than for BRICS. None of the democratic states (Brazil, India and South Africa) is a member of the G8 or represented with a permanent seat on the UN Security Council; at the same time, all three are part of the G20. Among the BRICS members, however, China and Russia have a permanent mandate on the Security Council; Russia is also in the G8. In addition, both countries are not democratic regimes – or at least their democratic qualities are extremely limited – and they are acknowledged nuclear powers. India joins this group according to the „nuclear criterion“ as a de facto nuclear power (see Table 1, p. 24). At the same time, the differences within IBSA and BRICS in regards to crucial international disputes are too pronounced for these groups to develop concerted action that is both substantial and assertive. Thus Brazil still has not recognised China with full market economy status, while China has not issued clear support for Brazil's call for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council – these are paradigmatic examples of a lack of convergence.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>93</sup> A further example is the attitude towards the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court: While Brazil and South Africa ratified it and Russia at least signed it, India and China refused to sign.



**Table 1**  
**Basic Statistics for Brazil, China, India, Russia and South Africa**

<i>State</i>	<i>Democracy</i>	<i>Nuclear power</i>	<i>Security Council (permanent seat)</i>	<i>GDP (in billions of Euro)</i>	<i>GDP per capita (in Euro)</i>	<i>Growth rate 2010 (in percent)</i>	<i>Population (in millions)</i>
Brazil	x	-	-	1526.4	7898.4	7.5	193.3
China	-	x	x	4333.7	3230.7	10.5	1341.4
India	x	x	-	1078.7	887.1	9.7	1215.9
Russia	(-)	x	x	1114.1	7936.8	4.0	140.4
South Africa	x	-	-	267.3	4175.2*	3.0	49.4*

\* Estimates based on statistics from 2008.

Source: European Union, DG Trade, the statistics for 2010 correspond to estimates based on statistics from 2009.

# Brazil as a Trade Power

The Lula government's foreign policy agenda included establishing a high profile in terms of trade policy. „Brazil as a trade power“ – the South American nation had never fostered this self-conception in the past. Under Lula, this was evident not only in a discursive sense, but also in a series of foreign policy decisions. It affected Brazil's actions in formal and informal institutions like the WTO and G20 (developing and emerging countries), the expansion of relations with certain states and regions as well as the country's aggressive „ethanol diplomacy“. Overall, the newly set priorities contributed to the USA and the EU losing importance in Brazil's foreign trade, and to a diversification shaped by South-South relations. Mercosur's importance, however, has also decreased. This trend was less the result of targeted efforts by the government and based more on Brazil's exploitation of the opportunity offered by China's ascent. Overall, however, Brazil's trade capacity remained limited, and it can only be considered a „global trader“ in the export of raw materials. In the case of highly processed products, which are mostly sold within Latin America, Brazil remained in the role of a „regional trader“. It is solely within the bioethanol sector that Brazil has the potential to develop into a global trading power.

## Trends in External Trade

During the 1990s, it was a dominant perception within Brazil that an active trade policy could play an important role in the country's economic development and that trade liberalisation could be the key. During Lula's presidency, however, the rhetorical positioning of Brazil as an international trading power served less of a domestic development policy objective and much more a strategic foreign policy goal, namely expanding Brazil's role as a global player. After all, Brazil's domestic market – and not foreign trade, drove the stable economic growth since 2003. Unlike other emerging nations, the economy was not driven by high investment rates, but rather internal demand for long and

short-life consumer goods.<sup>94</sup> These goods became available to segments of the population that had once lived in poverty and had now risen to the middle class.

Additional data must be used to put the fact into perspective that Brazilian exports have risen in absolute numbers and the country has continuously enjoyed a positive trade balance since 2000. First, although Brazil is Latin America's largest economy, it is not one of the region's most open economies. Among other things, this explains why the country was only lightly affected by the global financial and economic crisis. Brazil's customs duties are not particularly low and its export quota (exports as a proportion of GDP) is also not particularly high. The latter figure was only 24.8 percent over the 2007–2009 period. For the sake of comparison: China's export quota was 58.7 percent. Moreover, Brazil and Mercosur – unlike Chile, for example – did not follow any active strategy to enter into free trade agreements with other states or groups of states. Second, the nominal increase in Brazilian exports was not only based on increased demand for commodities, but rather also – and decisively so – on the associated price increase. This development contradicts the Prebisch-Singer thesis of a “secular decline in the terms of trade”.<sup>95</sup> The growth recorded in Brazilian exports was, therefore, less a reflection of the volume and much more based on the value of the goods. Third, there was an appreciation of Brazil's currency: imports developed more dynamically than exports, which caused the country's positive

<sup>94</sup> Ricardo Sennes, *Interesses brasileiros, estratégias e parcerias em política comercial* [Brazilian Interests, Strategies and Partnerships in Trade Policy], manuscript presented within the context of the *Primeiro Fórum de Diálogo com o Brasil – “O Brasil na nova ordem global”* [First Dialogue Forum with Brazil – “Brazil in the New Global Order”], (Hamburg: GIGA, February 2011), 1; Ricardo Sennes and Ângela Cristina Tepassê, “Brasil y China. Una nueva relación comercial” [Brazil and China. A New Trade Relationship], *Foreign Affairs Latinoamérica* 11, no. 1 (2011): 22–32.

<sup>95</sup> According to the Prebisch-Singer thesis, it is disadvantageous for exporters of primary goods (mostly developing countries) to be linked into the international division of labour – that is, the global economic system. This tends to worsen the exchange ratio between the exported raw materials and the imported processed products.

trade balance to constantly shrink. Fourth, unprocessed products became increasingly important as part of the country's exports. Between 1998 and 2009 the proportion of low and medium level technology export goods decreased from 32 to 28.9 percent and from 25.9 to 18.1 percent, respectively. The proportion of unprocessed export goods, on the other hand, increased markedly over the same timeframe from 19.9 to 31 percent.<sup>96</sup> Brazil's range of exports has therefore increasingly centred on low value added products. Fifth, it should be mentioned that between 2000 and 2009, Brazil's share of global imports just rose from 0.94 to 1.09 percent, while the volume of exports rose from 0.93 to 1.22 percent. In this sense, Brazil's global weight has not increased significantly over the past ten years.<sup>97</sup>

## Trading Partners

In 2009, 23.5 percent of Brazilian exports remained within Latin America. The sub-continent therefore took second place behind Asia (25.8 percent) as the largest consumer region.<sup>98</sup> Latin America constituted the most important market for processed export goods. This trend was supported by regional trade liberalisation and competitive advantages enjoyed by national and foreign companies within Brazil *vis-à-vis* other companies in the region.<sup>99</sup> Within the context of Lula's regional trade strategy, however, Mercosur only played a rhetorical role.<sup>100</sup> In Latin America and particularly in Brazil, the commitment to trade liberalisation receded continuously during Lula's presidency. Lula thought it was more important to expand the integration system rather than deepen it. This is, for example, illustrated by the fact that he invited Venezuela to join Mercosur. The member states have implemented less than 40 percent of Mercosur's *acquis communautaire* – its community norms – and Brazil

remains below the average. In addition, during Lula's second term, not only was an increased bilateralisation between Argentina and Brazil evident within the group, but also a considerable worsening of trade and economic relations between these two states. Ad hoc protectionist measures increasingly became the rule rather than the exception. As a result, for Brazil, Mercosur's relevance fell in terms of trade policy in two regards. For one thing, its material weight decreased, with Mercosur only making up 10 percent of Brazil's overall foreign trade in 2009.<sup>101</sup> For another, Mercosur has long since lost the function that it was initially meant to fulfil when it was created: enabling integration into global markets in the spirit of open regionalism.

The decreasing impetus towards free trade in the region, however, correlated with a more recent tendency towards growing Brazilian investment in Latin America. For a number of years, Mercosur has offered Brazil less of a springboard to the global market and more of a first platform for domestic companies on the path to internationalisation.<sup>102</sup> This "South Americanisation" of Brazilian companies was pushed by their highly developed lobbying abilities and a denationalisation process of the industry in the neighbouring countries, particularly in Argentina. Over the 2001–2008 period, Brazil's investments in Latin America and the Caribbean were heavily focused on Mercosur (78.6 percent). Other important target areas were Chile and the Andean Community<sup>103</sup> (7.5 percent each). Within South America, Brazil invested first and foremost in acquisitions (32.1 percent), expansions (17.3 percent) and strategic fusions (10 percent). The construction of new manufacturing plants or creation of additional jobs occurred far less frequently. Brazil's acquisitions within South America were focused on capital-intensive companies without the potential for

<sup>96</sup> Statistics from the Central Bank of Brazil (Banco Central do Brasil), quoted in Sennes, *Interesses brasileiros* (see note 94), 3.

<sup>97</sup> Statistics from the IMF, *World Economic Outlook Database*, October 2010.

<sup>98</sup> Statistics from the Secretaria de Comércio Exterior (SECEX) – Ministério do Desenvolvimento, Indústria e Comércio Exterior (MEDIC), quoted in Sennes, *Interesses brasileiros* (see note 94), 4.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> Janina Onuki, "Interesses comerciais brasileiros na América do Sul" [Brazilian Commercial Interests in South America], in *O Brasil no contexto político regional*, ed. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (see note 52), 165–76 (169).

<sup>101</sup> Statistics for 2009 from Eurostat. During the 1990s, the Mercosur proportion of Brazil's overall foreign trade reached the 20 percent mark.

<sup>102</sup> The following statistics and many of the arguments are based on: Daniela Perrota, Gastón Fulguet and Eugenia Inchauspe, *Luces y sombras de la internacionalización de las empresas brasileñas en Sudamérica: ¿integración o interacción?* [Light and Shadow of the Internationalisation of Brazilian Companies in South America: Integration or Interaction?], (Buenos Aires: Nueva Sociedad [un proyecto de Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung], 2011), [http://www.riosvivos.org.br/arquivos/site\\_noticias\\_1717826015.pdf](http://www.riosvivos.org.br/arquivos/site_noticias_1717826015.pdf) (accessed 27 October 2011).

<sup>103</sup> The Andean Community (Comunidad Andina de Naciones, CAN) is an integration system that currently consists of Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Peru.

promoting productive complementarity in the region or the development of value chains. This added an additional structural asymmetry to Mercosur. Brazil's investment policy within the region was to some extent a substitute for intra-regional trade. In addition, it constituted a strategy for reducing export costs, since for monetary policy reasons it was less expensive to ship international exports from Argentina than from Brazil. This "trade redirection" reveals that there is no common Mercosur market and not even a common external tariff.

Brazil's trade relations with Africa are even less essential to the country's international image as a trading power. They represent a rather modest addition to Brazil's efforts of diversifying its foreign trade partner structure – and a means to establishing itself politically and economically on the continent. In 2010, Africa accounted for 4.5 percent and 6.6 percent, respectively, of Brazil's exports and imports (2009: 5.7 and 9.1 percent, respectively).<sup>104</sup> The trade balance for Brazil is negative (at about US\$–2 billion).<sup>105</sup> The lion's share of foreign trade is conducted with just three countries: Nigeria, Angola and South Africa. Together, they purchase around half of Brazil's exports to Africa, while at the same time two-thirds of Brazil's African imports originated in these three countries. It was almost exclusively oil that Brazil imports from Nigeria (Brazil's largest African provider) and Angola (Brazil's most important trading partner from within the Portuguese-Speaking African Countries, PALOP, and its largest importer on the continent). In total, Africa provided 65.2 percent of Brazil's total oil imports.<sup>106</sup> Other PALOP states are rather unimportant trade partners, which mainly purchase Brazilian products.

**104** Statistics from the Ministerio do Desenvolvimento, Indústria e Comércio Exterior, Secretaria de Comércio Exterior, *Conhecendo o Brasil em Números* [Ministry for Development, Industry and External Commerce. Secretariat for External Commerce, Brazil in Numbers], October 2010, [http://www.mdic.gov.br/arquivos/dwnl\\_1278014345.pdf](http://www.mdic.gov.br/arquivos/dwnl_1278014345.pdf) (accessed 19 September 2011).

**105** The volume of Brazil's exports to Africa was approximately US\$9.2 billion in 2010. In the same year, Brazil's imports from Africa totalled US\$11.3 billion, see *ibid*.

**106** Data from the Agência Nacional de Petróleo, Gás Natural e Biocombustíveis [National Agency of Petroleum, Natural Gas and Biofuels], <http://www.anp.gov.br> (accessed 15 September 2011).

**Table 2**  
**Proportion of Trade with China, India, Russia and South Africa of Brazil's Overall Trade (2009, in percent; respective rank in parentheses)**

<i>Partner</i>	<i>Import</i>	<i>Export</i>	<i>Total trade</i>
China	12.8 (3)	12.6 (2)	12.7 (3)
India	1.8 (10)	2.1 (7)	2.0 (9)
Russia	1.1 (15)	1.9 (8)	1.5 (12)
South Africa	0.4 (33)	0.9 (25)	0.6 (29)

Source: European Union, DG Trade, <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/html/113359.htm> (accessed 21 September 2011).

Building alliances with other "middle powers" within the context of IBSA and BRICS was also justified using the argument that these states were looking to expand the increased levels of trade among the partners even further. As shown in Table 2, China is Brazil's only major import and export partner within IBSA and BRICS. Conversely, Brazil is less relevant for China as a trade partner (ranked 10th with 2 percent of total trade) and of even less importance for Russia (1 percent, ranked 11th), South Africa (1.4 percent, ranked 16th) and India (1.1 percent, ranked 19th).<sup>107</sup> It may be one of the declared objectives of IBSA and BRICS to promote bilateral trade, but this is no simple task, since the participating countries each belong to different free trade areas and integration systems. As an (incomplete) customs union, Mercosur limits Brazil's options for unilaterally entering into trade agreements with third states. At the same time, China has become the largest purchaser of Brazilian exports (12.6 percent) among national markets and has thereby pushed the USA (10.6 percent) and Argentina (8.4 percent) down to the second and third place. Among groups of states, the EU remains Brazil's largest sales market (22.5 percent).<sup>108</sup> The dominant role played by China's demand not only for Brazilian raw materials, but for those of Latin America in general, has created an imbalance in the trade relations that was described by one expert as follows: "Latin America has linked itself to the motor of the 21st century's global economy with a 19th century industrial structure."<sup>109</sup> Brazil's

**107** Trade statistics from the DG Trade, EU, <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/creating-opportunities/bilateral-relations/statistics> (accessed 19 September 2011).

**108** Statistics from the DG Trade, EU, March 2011, [http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc\\_113359.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113359.pdf) (accessed 19 September 2011).

**109** According to Osvaldo Rosales, Director of the Trade and Integration Division of the Economic Commission for Latin

trade relations with China therefore have reproduced the same imbalance that also characterises trade between Brazil and the industrialised nations of the West.

In the meantime, Brazil fostered its own ambitions of developing into a global oil exporter. The discovery of extensive oil reserves in the Pré-Sal area off Brazil's Atlantic coast contributed to these ambitions.<sup>110</sup> Over the 2009–2010 period, daily oil production increased by 5.6 percent (somewhat more than the annual average over the past ten years) and reached a level of 750 million barrels per day. In regards to foreign trade in oil, the trend of shrinking imports and growing exports is continuing. In 2010, oil imports receded by 13.8 percent to 123.6 million barrels, while oil exports increased by 20.1 percent to 230.5 million barrels. The Asia-Pacific region was the largest purchaser of Brazilian oil exports (33.4 percent) with China (25.5 percent) and India (7.5 percent) in first and second place. Brazil exported 23.8 percent of its oil to the USA. Despite the discovery of new reserves and the expansion of production and exports, Brazil was still not among the top-10 countries; the South American state is ranked 15th among the countries with the largest oil reserves,<sup>111</sup> and 12th among oil producers.

It is only in the biofuels sector that Brazil has the potential to become a “global trader” in the biofuels sector.<sup>112</sup> The country was responsible for 34 percent of global ethanol production and 10 percent of biodiesel production. As the second largest manufacturer of bioethanol (after the USA with 54 percent), Brazil enjoyed important competitive advantages. This gives it the opportunity to conquer a global market that is

still establishing. In 2011, only 10 percent of the ethanol used in the world were traded internationally. The only significant trade flows were Brazil's exports to the USA and the EU. Brazil's manufacturing capacities for biofuels arose from the *Pró-Álcool* programme of the 1970s, which was developed in order to substitute for oil imports – the objective was energy security. The Lula government's “ethanol diplomacy”, in contrast, was heavily focused on exports, even though only 20 percent of the bioethanol produced in the country was exported.

Brazil used an international bioethanol campaign to raise its profile as an “alternative energy power”. Biofuels were presented as a contribution to global energy security, environmental protection and socio-economic development in poorer countries. The Brazilian government lobbied to establish an international market for biofuels and to reduce tariffs (currently over 50 percent in the EU and 25 percent in the USA). A further goal was to classify ethanol as an environmental good, and biodiesel as a commodity, each with a globally consistent pricing structure. Within this context, Brazil participated in various multilateral cooperation mechanisms, such as the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP) and the International Biofuels Forum (IBF). At the same time, the country fostered bilateral partnerships in the biofuels sector, for example with the USA and Germany.

America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) of the UN, in the context of the 56th discussion on globalisation at the KfW Entwicklungsbank, Berlin, 23 November 2010, see the article on this event: Michael Schmidt, “Warum Lateinamerika so gut dasteht” [Why Latin America Is So Well Positioned], *Tagesspiegel online*, 25 November 2010, <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/wirtschaft/teil-der-loesung/3269490.html> (accessed 19 September 2011).

**110** The Pré-sal reserves are located in an area that spans 800 kilometres between Espírito Santo and Santa Catarina, five to seven kilometres beneath the sea floor. The following statistics come from the Agência Nacional de Petróleo, Gás Natural e Biocombustíveis [National Agency for Petroleum, Gas and Biofuels], <http://www.anp.gov.br> (accessed 15 September 2011).

**111** Of the proven oil reserves, 93.6 percent are located offshore and 6.4 percent onshore.

**112** Arguments and statistics in this section come from: Sybille Acosta and Claudia Zilla, *Markets and Minds. Trade and Value Conflicts over Biofuels*, SWP Research Paper 7/2011 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, May 2011).

# Foreign Policy Tradition and Lula's Legacy

Without a doubt, a foreign policy change took place during the eight-year Lula presidency. Within Brazil itself, the changes were attentively followed and became subject to controversial debate. This is no surprise considering that Brazil's diplomacy has traditionally been led by a pronounced historical consciousness.<sup>113</sup> In actual terms, however, the change of course was less pronounced than Lula claimed in his speeches. The President chose a discursive strategy, which placed an inordinate emphasis on breaking with the past – and not just in terms of foreign policy or in comparison with his predecessor Cardoso. “Never before in the country's history” was a rhetorical formula with which Lula started almost every one of his speeches in order to establish the interpretive framework for the “extraordinary” accomplishments of his government. Many of the values underpinning Lula's foreign policy, however, could actually be derived entirely from national traditions. In this respect, the foreign policy agenda changed more than its normative foundation. Brazil's foreign policy self-conception, which developed historically, even remained largely intact in the face of some deviations and changes of policy, since it is impossible for change to take place independently of identity, even if it is able to change this identity.

## The End of Foreign Policy Consensus

A key aspect of the foreign policy change that took place in “Lula's Brazil” was the erosion of the Itamaraty's monopoly status. This gets at the manner in which foreign policy is made within the country. Lula's political party, the PT, took over a decisive role. Even if the “philosophical identification” was not complete, hardly any other policy area<sup>114</sup> showed such a degree of conformity between what the PT elaborated

and what was actually implemented.<sup>115</sup> Foreign policy, therefore, became “suspected of ideology” – also because it was shaped by the President's actionism, because it broke in many regards with traditional guidelines, and because it touched on the system of norms in which the Itamaraty's ministerial logic had formerly been ingrained. Here the question arises as to whether a policy that has distanced itself from traditional majority positions may only have a real chance of being implemented if it is personality-driven, based on anti-hegemonic pathos and, at the same time, laying claim to prestige and status. Or could it be that this sort of “pyrotechnic style”, which places emphasis on breaking with tradition rather than maintaining continuity, is all too provocative and makes it more difficult to achieve consensus? In any case, Lula's presidency provides evidence for both explanatory models.

Ideology usually comes up as a topic when the prevailing consensus diminishes and cleavages become visible. Political objectives and different positions are viewed as “ideological” (as opposed, for example, to economic interests) if they jar with one's own objectives or views, or those of the mainstream, and if they question consolidated interest hierarchies. The claim that there is, on the one hand, an ideological policy and, on the other, a purely interest-driven policy, is based on the naïve assumption<sup>116</sup> that interests are objective facts and value-neutral matters.<sup>117</sup> Political

**115** Roberto de Almeida, “Uma nova ‘arquitetura’ diplomática?” (see note 22), 101.

**116** This assumption can be found in the context of the realist school of international relations.

**117** “In order to support this contention it is important to note that interests need to be defined in order to come to exist. Interests are nothing in themselves and only something in connection with a someone for whom they are interests”, Erik Ringmar, “The Recognition Game: Soviet Russia against the West”, *Cooperation and Conflict*, no. 37 (2002): 115–36 (118). Ringmar continues with this line of argumentation on the same page: “It follows, as a point of logic, that questions regarding interests can only begin to be discussed once questions regarding identities have been settled, at least in a preliminary fashion. It is only once we know who we are that we can know what we want. If this point is accepted, a theory of rational action will always come to presuppose a theory of how identities are created, established and maintained.”

**113** Luiz Felipe de Seixas Corrêa, “Diplomacia e História: política externa e identidade nacional brasileira” [Diplomacy and History: External Policy and Brazil's National Identity], *Política Externa* 9, no. 1 (2000): 22–32 (25).

**114** This level of accord is perhaps most likely to be found in terms of social policy.

science analyses that draw, for example, the conclusion that the Lula government tended not to define “the” national interests realistically, but instead normatively, substantiate (explicitly) the value-driven policy of the President, but by the same token confirm (implicitly) the similarly value-driven arguments of the authors. It is just because the two value systems do not converge that their existence is “detected” in the first place by the other.<sup>118</sup> An associated claim is similarly dependent on perspective, namely, that during the Lula government foreign policy was not used to serve the state, but rather the political party, which is why it lost the traditional character of policy shaped by continuity (*Política de Estado*).<sup>119</sup> Contrary to such lines of argumentation, which naturalise and de-subjectify the notion of interests, this study takes the stance that state interests are not objectively predetermined, but are instead defined by the actors themselves, i.e. socially constructed. The extent to which material interests are relevant depends on immaterial or normative aspects. The transformation that many critics of Lula describe goes back to the fact that the Itamaraty has lost its technocratic monopoly over foreign policy and the cross-party consensus that once lent stability to this policy area eroded. The more “visible” and “prominent” foreign policy becomes, the greater the probability that it will become the object of party political disagreements. While the discord

**118** On this point, a quotation from an interview with Lula's foreign policy advisor, Marco Aurelio García, “Brasil: un gigante que despierta”, *Le Monde Diplomatique en español*, 1 October 2010: “Afirmar que la política externa es una política de Estado [en Brasil] tiene una dosis de verdad, pero los críticos de la política externa de Lula han usado esa tesis para defender posiciones conservadoras, atacándonos con el discurso de que llevamos adelante una política externa ‘ideológica’. La verdad es que nunca tuvimos en Brasil una política externa librada de, entre comillas, algún tipo de ‘contaminación ideológica’, porque tenemos ideas distintas en la cabeza, y eso es bueno.” [The claim that Brazil's foreign policy is state policy has an element of truth to it, but critics of Lula's foreign policy have used this thesis to defend conservative positions and to attack us with the argument that we follow an ‘ideological’ foreign policy. It is correct that we have never had a foreign policy in Brazil that – in quotation marks – was free of any sort of ‘ideological contamination’ because we all have different ideas in our minds and this is a good thing.]

**119** See among others, Rubens Recupero, “À sombra de Charles de Gaulle: Uma diplomacia carismática e intransferível. A política externa do governo Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003–2010)” [The Shadow of Charles de Gaulle: Charismatic and Non-Transferable Diplomacy. The Foreign Policy of the Government of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003–2010)], *Nuevos Estudios*, CEBRAP, no. 87 (July 2010): 35–58.

over economic policy has decreased considerably, foreign policy has become a contested policy. Brazil's external relations increasingly became the object of controversial disputes within the political and diplomatic elite as well as within society. This end to foreign policy consensus is the actual unprecedented element of the “Lula Era”. Since policy generally grows more unpredictable through a diversity of interests, it can be expected that Brazil's foreign policy characterised by continuity will diminish over the long term in favour of a “government policy tonality”. In other words, changes in political power will have a greater tendency to entail shifts in foreign policy. This also increases the potential for conflict between actors and institutions involved in the foreign policy decision-making process. After all, a fragmented context in which the Ministry of External Relations has lost the capacity to control foreign policy bolsters the hegemony of the President.

## Growing of a Giant

Luiz Felipe de Seixas Corrêa, a Brazilian diplomat and former Ambassador to Germany, spoke in 2000 of the “trinity” of Brazil's national feeling – composed of national unity, geographical size and a vision promising economic prosperity.<sup>120</sup> Under Lula, this triad also shaped Brazilian identity and therefore remained the basis of foreign policy.

1. Brazil regards national unity as its greatest value. This can be explained, on the one hand, historically from the experience of witnessing the disintegration of Spain's Latin American colonies into numerous different republics. On the other hand, a societal cohesion is also postulated, which exists despite all the social, cultural and regional differences that arose due to the country's asymmetric and unjust development.<sup>121</sup>

2. The appreciation of geographical size forms a constant throughout Brazil's history. It is based on three phases of development of foreign policy regarding national territory. In the first period of nation-building, the “definition of the territory” was established; during this time, Brazil followed an expansionist foreign policy within South America. In a second phase of “consolidation of the territory”, the country's leaders strove to expand the state monopoly on the use of force across the Brazilian territory and to

**120** Seixas Corrêa, “Diplomacia e História” (see note 113).

**121** Words of Cardoso paraphrased in *ibid.*, 27.

defend this monopoly against other states. A third phase aimed at the “development of the national territory” – now foreign policy was used to foster socio-economic progress in the country. These three phases could be supplemented with a fourth “Lula-ist” period,<sup>122</sup> which was dedicated to a “conquest of international territory”. It was characteristic of this phase that national size and domestic socio-economic achievements were used for foreign policy purposes.

3. Brazil’s forward-looking orientation was promoted by a present characterised by deep-seated socio-economic deficits and by a relatively short past – since there was hardly anything in the past to cling to, everything seemed to lie ahead. This awakened a comforting hope that national unity and geographic size would sooner or later materialize as prosperity and wealth. It is possible to continue along with this thought as follows: the socio-economic achievements of the Lula government have now almost fulfilled earlier hopes and have therefore fed into the demand that the country should now, corresponding to its material and immaterial resources, receive greater recognition and a more important role on a global level.

De Seixas Corrêa added three additional guiding principles to the normative triad of unity, size and vision, which have historically shaped Brazil’s foreign policy projection: nationalism (which originally had an expansionist orientation, but then acquired a development-oriented function aimed at integrating the national territory),<sup>123</sup> equality between sovereign states and pragmatism. Over the centuries, all three elements fed Brazil’s aspirations of independence. Previously, an attempt had been made to achieve this through alienation and retreat, or in other words a defensive protectionist strategy – in the sense of an introverted giant. Under Lula, however, an offensive and active approach dominated: autonomy was now to be achieved through foreign policy participation and diversification. The objective consequently became a greater engagement in international organisations and formats as well as an expansion in the number and diversity of its foreign policy partners.

In terms of foreign trade, however, Lula’s policy remained constricted by the ambivalence typical of

Brazil – swinging between an open liberal model and a closed interventionist model. An additional contradiction was Brazil’s simultaneous identification with the developed North and the under-developed South. This tension generated by national and international asymmetries is not new. Over the past decade, however, it became an increasingly sensitive issue, as Brazil’s foreign relations with Northern and Southern groups of states became more visible and dense.

The combination of nationalist tendencies, a fixation on sovereignty and a pragmatic attitude may explain why among Brazil’s economic and political elite a foreign policy discourse was dominating, which continued – if not increasingly so – to carry realist arguments.<sup>124</sup> After President Lula’s two terms, it seemed that the promise of prosperity had been fulfilled. Then this was supposed to be translated into a corresponding position of power within the global hierarchy – this was a point of agreement between the “Lulistas” and the “non-Lulistas” or “anti-Lulistas”. For the view had spread across party lines in Brazil that the country had gained a greater scope for foreign policy action over the past decade and therefore had earned a larger voice on a global level. Representatives of opposition parties and members of past governments concur that Brazil was then “a country that counts”;<sup>125</sup> internationally. Its influence had never been as strong as under the presidency of Lula.

During the government of Dilma Rousseff and her successor Michel Temer, Brazil has notably scaled down its regional and international engagement. Domestic political and economic challenges, corruption scandals as well as coalition instability have put foreign policy in the back burner. While Dilma saw herself still in a continuity line with Lula, Temer stresses the need for a change in foreign policy. It still remains to be seen, if Brazil will be able to consolidate a new approach and where this will lead to.

<sup>124</sup> Here “realism” refers to the realist school of international relations.

<sup>125</sup> According to the assessment of the former Minister of External Relations during the Cardoso government, Luiz Felipe Lampreia, who is now Director of the Council for International Affairs of the Industry Federation of Rio de Janeiro), quoted in “El gobierno de Brasil marcaría distancia con Venezuela y se acercaría a EE.UU” [Brazil’s Government Would Distance Itself from Venezuela and Approach the USA], *Infolatam*, 29 March 2011, <http://www.infolatam.com/2011/03/29/el-gobierno-de-brasil-marcaria-distancia-con-venezuela-y-se-acercaria-a-ee-uu/> (accessed 19 September 2011).

<sup>122</sup> The start of this phase, however, can already be pinpointed in the Cardoso government. He paved the way for economic stability and socio-economic development (through pronounced social policy) and for a more active foreign policy.

<sup>123</sup> Lafer, *A identidade internacional do Brasil* (see note 28), 87; Hélio Jaguaribe, *O Nacionalismo na Atualidade Brasileira* [Nationalism in Brazil Today], (Rio de Janeiro, 1958), 52.



## Abbreviations

ABC	Agência Brasileira de Cooperaçao (Development Agency in Brazil's Ministry of External Relations)
ASA	Africa-South America Summit
ASACOF	Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (of the ASA)
ASPA	Cúpula América do Sul – Países Árabes (Summit of South American – Arab States)
BASIC	Brazil, South Africa, India, China
BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India, China
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CAMEX	Câmara de Comércio Exterior (Chamber of Commerce)
CDS	Consejo de Defensa Sudamericano (South American Defence Council)
CEBRAP	Centro Brasileiro de Análise e Planejamento (Brazilian Center for Analysis and Planning, São Paulo)
CNI	Confederação Nacional da Indústria (National Confederation of Industry)
CPLP	Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa (Community of Portuguese Language Countries)
DC	Development Cooperation
DG Trade	Directorate General for Trade of the European Commission
DPAD	Division of Environmental Policy and Sustainable Development
GBEP	Global Bioenergy Partnership
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIGA	German Institute of Global and Area Studies (Hamburg)
IBF	International Biofuels Forum
IBOPE	Instituto Brasileiro de Opinião Pública e Estatística (Brazilian Institute of Public Opinion and Statistics)
IBSA	India, Brazil, South Africa
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies (London)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDIC	Ministério do Desenvolvimento, Indústria e Comércio Exterior (Ministry for Development, Industry and External Commerce)
Mercosur	Mercado Común del Sur (Southern Common Market)
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAS	Organisation of American States
PALOP	Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa (Portuguese-Speaking African Countries)
PSDB	Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira (Brazilian Social Democracy Party)
PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers' Party)
TC	Technical Cooperation
UNASUR	Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (Union of South American Nations)
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZPCAS	Zona de Paz y Cooperación del Atlántico Sur (South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone)