

Brazil's emergence and the potential for Norwegian peacebuilding diplomacy

Jean-Paul Marthoz

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Executive Summary

The past decade has seen Brazil play an increasingly important role on the international stage. While always respected because of the reputation of its career diplomats and its commitment to multilateralism and peaceful conflict resolution, its new global clout has turned it into a major pillar of the emerging international system. Bolstered by economic growth, Brazil has become a prime mover among the emerging powers in calling for new responsibilities and new international rules.

Its regional and global profile has been raised by: the key role it played at the 2003 Cancun trade negotiations in building a southern coalition to counter northern agricultural policies; its efforts to put forward alternatives on hot issues such as Iran's nuclear intentions; its work on conflict resolution, especially in Latin America; and its leading peacekeeping role in Haiti.

Brazilian diplomacy has had some setbacks, however. It failed to get ousted President Zelaya reinstated in

Honduras and its campaign to reform the United Nations and secure a permanent seat on the Security Council has stalled. Other Latin American countries are becoming uneasy about Brazil's growing influence and both the US and EU are concerned about its relationship with Tehran.

Nevertheless, Brasilia is clearly determined to play a major international role and has the necessary assets to do so. The new President, Dilma Rousseff (Lula's protégée), will be faced with the challenge of assuring the continuity of a policy that has made Lula an immensely popular head of state and turned Brazil into an increasingly global player. In seeking to shape the new international economic order, the Brazilian government has taken a stand on crucial global issues such as climate change, nuclear proliferation and the fight against poverty. While working within the international system to expand Brazil's power under the current rules, it is also striving to reform the system in favour of the south.

Its democratic status, something lacking in other emerging countries, has enhanced Brazil's international legitimacy and attractiveness and, though weakened by high levels of violence and social inequality, has become a key component of its soft power. This has not, however, led the Brazilian government to be vocal on human rights diplomacy and, wary of jeopardising its Security Council ambitions, it has shied away from criticising authoritarian states in the name of non-intervention and respect for national sovereignty.

Though suspected by some of its neighbours of harbouring hegemonic intentions, Brazil raises fewer concerns than other emerging countries in terms of geopolitical domination and human rights violations and does not pose a radical challenge to the existing world system. It is therefore a promising partner for like-minded countries such as Norway that are keen to address the key challenges of the 21st century. It could providing an interesting space for joint work on peacebuilding and conflict resolution, environmental protection, trilateral development cooperation, dialogue on social cohesion, and the strengthening of civil society's role in foreign relations.

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Brazil's geopolitics

Considerable assets

Brazil's international influence is backed up by considerable assets. Its size (it is the fifth biggest country in the world), its population of 200 million (the sixth largest) and its GDP ranking (it is one of the top ten economies) make it by nature an important global actor. Indeed Brazil's new role as an international player owes much to its rising economic power. "Once hobbled with high inflation and perennially susceptible to worldwide crises," writes Juan Forero, "Brazil now has a vibrant consumer market, investment-grade status for its sovereign debt, vast foreign reserves and an agricultural sector that is vying to supplant that of the United States as the world's most productive. Brazil's \$1.3 trillion economy is bigger than those of India and Russia and its per capita income is nearly twice that of China."¹

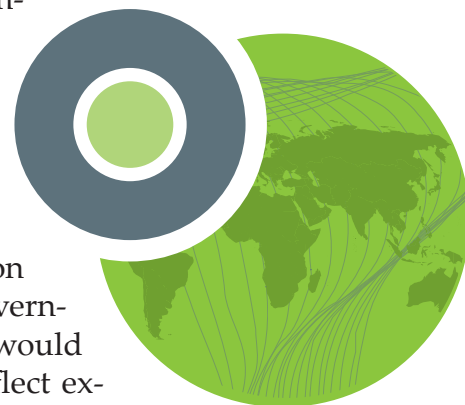
"Exports have tripled on rising global demand for the country's products," adds Riordan Roett. "Brazil has become the world's biggest exporter of beef, chicken, orange juice, green coffee, sugar, ethanol, tobacco, and the 'soya complex' of beans, meal and oil – as well as the fourth biggest exporter of maize and pork... It reached energy self-sufficiency in 2006. Then in 2007-2008, Petrobras announced major oil finds off the south-east coast."²

Brazil's per capita income is nearly twice that of China.

This new economic assertiveness has been bolstered by the recognition that the large countries of the south (China, India and Brazil) have been better able to withstand the

world crisis triggered by the Wall Street meltdown and even been instrumental in helping the world to emerge from recession. The sense that a structural economic upturn is changing the country's traditional vulnerabilities (such

as its excessive dependence on cyclical commodities and the primarization of its economy) has contributed to this new-found international confidence. Its position with regard to inter-governmental organizations has been strengthened, particularly since it paid off its debt to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (and had its voting rights increased in April 2010). It has also bolstered its case for the introduction of new global governance rules that would more faithfully reflect existing power relations in the world.



"The republic of the diplomats"

The country has also long been recognised in regional and international circles for the quality of its diplomacy. Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, commonly known as Itamaraty, the heirs to the Baron of Rio Branco (the "founder" of Brazilian diplomacy in the early 20th century) have regularly demonstrated their expertise and skills in the context of multilateral organisations, especially the United Nations (UN) – the late Sergio Vieira de Mello, the UN diplomat who was killed in the 2003 terrorist attack on the UN compound in Baghdad, being one of the prime examples. The nature of Itamaraty (its focus on career diplomacy and recruitment based on meritocracy, albeit within specific and rather closed elite circles, together with its tendency to appoint diplomats to ministerial positions) has led Alain Rouquié, a renowned Latin-Americanist and former French Ambassador in Brasilia, to call Brazil "the republic of the diplomats".³

However, Brazil has not always been clear about how its own perception of its international status, thus fuelling lingering uncertainty about its international ambitions. Does it really intend to become a world power within a new multipole

1 Juan Forero, "Booming economy, government programs help Brazil expand its middle class", *The Washington Post*, 3 January 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/02/AR2010010200619.html>, accessed 16 September 2010.

2 Riordan Roett, "How Reform Has Powered Brazil's Rise", *Current History*, Vol. 109, Issue 724, February 2010, <http://www.currenthistory.com/Article.php?ID=769>, accessed 16 September 2010.

3 Alain Rouquié, *Le Brésil au XXI^e siècle*. Naissance d'un nouveau grand, Paris, Fayard, 2006, p 335.

lar and post-American system, as described by Fareed Zakaria?⁴ Or is it content with a foreign policy that pragmatically conveys its economic objectives? Does it want to compete for leadership or does it want to limit the power of others without overly asserting its own? What is its real objective: to be the leading power within South America or a junior partner in the circle of world powers? Does the famous statement made by General Golbery do Couto e Silva in 1982, namely that “We would rather be the head of the mosquito than the tail of the lion”, still apply?⁵

Although most analysts admit that Brazilian diplomacy over the years has often displayed contradictory ambitions, depending on who was at the helm of its foreign relations at the time, they also concur that, for the most part, the country’s foreign relations have been pragmatically placed at the service of national economic development policy. Brazil’s questioning of the “oligarchisation of the world order” has been a constant in official discourse and, despite its origins in the intellectual and political school of dependency, would appear to be less an expression of ideology than a pragmatic desire to change international power relations in order to better defend Brazil’s economic interests.

Two trends can be identified: the recognition, especially under President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, that “integrating with global markets is the only way to ensure that Brazil would achieve the economic growth necessary to address the country’s yawning poverty divide”⁶ and the desire to redefine the mechanisms and rules of international decision-making in favour of emerging countries and, in particular, Brazil’s interests. Within this context it has seen South America as a natural staging ground and laboratory, not only for strengthening its regional clout but also for preparing itself and muscling up for more global ambitions.

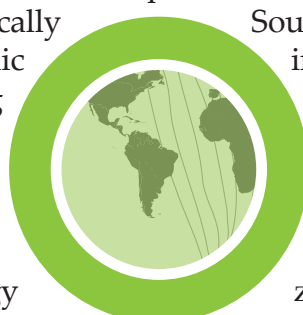
The Latin American lever

Although it has tried not to become entangled in the troubled history of its neighbours, Brazil has traditionally paid great heed to its relations with the rest of Latin America. Security considerations and the need to protect the integrity of its vast territory, particularly in the Amazon, have guided its approach to the continent. Priority has been given to maintaining peaceful relations with its neighbours. It has also sought to contain the regional aspirations of other countries, such as Argentina (and these days Venezuela), and to ensure its status as leader, or at least the first among equals, in South America.

This approach has constantly roused the suspicions of its neighbours who believe that the South American giant has hegemonic intentions. Most point to Brazil’s apparent belief in a doctrine of manifest destiny and the country’s sense of grandeur as grounds for questioning its “real intentions”. The professed benevolence of Brazil’s influence fails to fully convince other capitals that it does not have a hidden agenda of intrusive regional leadership.

In the 1960s and 1970s when Brazil was under military rule, Latin American and even Brazilian leftwing circles saw it as a “sub-imperialist country”, acting as an ally and subcontractor of the Pentagon in the implementation of its national security doctrine in the Southern cone, as well as a supporter of conservative and pro-US governments in the region and overseas, especially South Africa and Taiwan.

In the 1980s, however, the new civilian governments reviewed Brazil’s policy towards Latin America. Against the background of the Reagan presidency, which was bent on imposing a hard-line, militarist and unilateralist approach to national and international conflicts, Brasilia joined other Latin American nations in pushing for Latin American solutions to Latin American conflicts. The creation of the informal Rio Group in 1986 was an illustration of this preference for using regional diplomacy to respond to the challenges posed by civil wars in Central



4 Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2009.

5 A remark made to Alain Rouquié, *Le Brésil au XXI^e siècle*, p 344.

6 Sean W. Burges, “Brazil as Regional Leader: Meeting the Chavez Challenge”, *Current History*, vol 109, no. 724, February 2010, p 54, <http://www.currenthistory.com/Article.php?ID=769>, accessed 16 September 2010.

America. Brasilia also supported the Contadora initiative launched by Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela to find a negotiated alternative to the war logic pursued by the Reagan administration and pro-Cuba guerrilla groups, and later backed the peace plan spearheaded by Costa Rican President and future Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Oscar Arias Sanchez.

In the 1990s, Brazil emphasized its desire to pursue a “zero-problem” policy with regard to its neighbours. In normalising its relations with Argentina and setting up Mercosur (the Southern Common Market comprising Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay), it has sought to dispel the idea that its goal is to attain economic, political and military dominance over South America.

Ambiguous discourse

Brazil's discourse, however, is not devoid of ambiguities. While it insists that its actions are benevolent, it also regularly asserts its “natural pre-eminence” and *liderança* in the region. In the words of former foreign minister Luis Felipe Lampreia (1995-1999), “Brazil has a vocation to lead because of inertia and patrimony”.⁷ This perception of Brazil's role was reiterated by a leading Itamaraty diplomat in April 2010 at a conference in Brasilia hosted by IBSA, an international tripartite grouping comprising India, Brazil and South Africa.

Brazil is viewed positively by the Latin American public.

Brazil is keenly aware of the importance of Latin America to its economic and global strategies. “The construction of a regional South American space,” writes Liège University Professor Sebastian Santander, “appears to be a vehicle for preparing Brazil for the New World Deal”.⁸ The creation of Mercosur was seen as a way of helping to boost the competitiveness of Brazilian companies by testing them out first in a sub-regional context before going on to

challenge global competitors. More recently, in the wake of the world economic crisis, Brazil's South American hinterland has been recognised as constituting a buffer against excessive dependence on global economic developments.

Politically speaking, Brazil's Latin America policy is also seen as a stepping stone and a condition of its global influence. Regional leadership helps build Brazil's power base so that it can deal with both other emerging powers and the more established ones on the international stage. Are Latin Americans ready to play their part in Brazil's ambitions? The South American colossus is viewed positively by the Latin American public. In 2010 the BBC World Service reported that “Brazil is quite popular with its neighbours. Majorities have positive views in Chile (77%), Mexico (59%) and Central America (55%)”. However, on a few crucial issues, for example, the appointment of the director of the World Trade Organization and its campaign to have a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, Brazil has failed to receive total support from Latin American governments.

The country's economic presence in South America is overwhelming, prompting fears of an “invasion”. Many Southern Cone companies, particularly in the agribusiness sector, have been bought up by Brazilian interests, and in the fertile farmlands of Bolivia and Paraguay Brazilian companies are ubiquitous. Brazil's role within Mercosur, where it has instituted forms of economic exchange reminiscent of the typical north-south asymmetry so often denounced by leading proponents of the “dependency theory” in international economic relations, among them renowned Brazilian economist Celso Furtado, has also been perceived as overly dominant by its partners.

Brazil has tried to mollify its critics by making certain concessions, for example, tolerating Argentina's protectionist policies and revising the terms of the binational Itaipu Hydroelectric Project (which were very unfavourable to Paraguay), a gesture deemed vital for the stability of the new progressive Lugo government in

⁷ *Estado de São Paulo*, 21 January 2001, print edition.

⁸ Sebastian Santander, in *L'Emergence de Nouvelles Puissances. Vers un système multipolaire?*, Paris, Editions Ellipses, 2009, p 66.

Asuncion⁹, but it has not been able to completely dispel the lingering suspicion that Mercosur is a tactical step in its ambitions to use South American integration as a lever for its own international objectives.

Beyond South America

Beyond Latin America, Brazil has fostered relations with a wide range of countries in an attempt to use the diversification of its foreign relations not only as a lever for its commercial relations but also as a way of increasing its international room for manoeuvre by reducing its alignment with Washington.



As well as increasing its relations with the EU, with whom it has signed a strategic partnership agreement, it has courted other southern countries in particular.

This emphasis on the south in Brazil's diplomacy is nothing new, having existed for many years, even during the second period of military rule under the Geisel presidency when relations were developed with both Arab countries and Africa.

This desire to develop a south-south strategy has played a significant role during the Cardoso and Lula presidencies, with Brazil taking the lead in trying to create a "new commercial and economic world geography" by ensuring a rebalancing of power within multilateral organisations, in particular the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the IMF.

Waltzing with Washington?

Some observers, especially those examining the early years of military rule, have tended to see Brazil as a strategic "junior partner" of the US. However, Brazil has traditionally tried to have a balanced relationship with Washington, one that is neither servile nor hostile, in order to defend its own economic, regional and global interests. The creation of Mercosur under Fernando Col-

lor de Mello (1990-92) and the rejection of a free trade zone covering the whole of the Americas under Itamar Franco (1992-95) are examples of this Brazilian assertiveness and autonomy.

While President Cardoso (1995-2003) maintained warm relations with President Clinton, both of them being supporters of a "third way", in other words, a "social democracy adapted to the unavoidable reality of globalisation", he never gave up the core principles of Brazilian diplomacy. As his Foreign Minister Luiz Felipe Palmeira Lampreia pointed out, "Brazil must have the best relations with the United States, while not being subordinate to them and defending its own positions. Maintaining this balance has been the permanent challenge for Brazilian diplomacy since the time of Rio Branco. Closer relationships with the European Union and Japan must allow this balance to be maintained".¹⁰

Brazil has systematically distanced itself from the US when Washington's policies have collided with Brazilian core interests (on agricultural trade negotiations, for instance) or key foreign relations principles, in particular respect for national sovereignty, the use of force in international relations and adherence to the UN system and international law. This was particularly the case at the time of the Iraq invasion when Brazil bluntly criticised the Bush administration's unilateral action.

Lula's presidency

Continuity?

Has there been continuity between President Lula and his predecessor Fernando Henrique Cardoso? Lula's presence at the helm has been a significant factor in developing Brazil's ambitions and activism abroad. Although there has been continuity between the previous administration and this one, the tone has changed. From cautious pragmatism, Brazil has moved towards multidirectional activism and exploited the practice of "presidential diplomacy" to the hilt.

9 Lamia Oualalou, "Brazil: We've got the power", *Le Monde diplomatique*, 10 March 2010, <http://mondediplo.com/2010/03/11brazil>, accessed 2 October 2010.

10 "Para Lampreia, EUA são desafio para o Brasil", *Folha de São Paulo*, 31 December 2000, print edition.

Will there be continuity when Lula leaves power in January 2011 and his close collaborator and protégée Dilma Rousseff succeeds him? Most analysts predict that the new president will follow in the steps of her mentor. Although she is expected to emphasize the need to deepen the social reforms introduced by Lula in order to lift 20 million more Brazilians out of poverty, she appears as much convinced as Lula of the link between Brazil's domestic policies and the international standing of the country. The preparations for the World Cup and the Olympic Games will test this connection between the internal and external "Brazilian models".

Some observers say that President Lula has used foreign policy in part to pacify his own leftwing power base which was unhappy about his conventional and even conservative economic policies. His departure from US and European positions on hot issues such as the Iranian nuclear crisis and Cuba has also been

Brazil has moved from cautious pragmatism to multidirectional activism.

interpreted as being a sop to the left, although it also reflects Brazil's tradition of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries as well as its preference for negotiated solutions.

However, the stepping up of foreign initiatives since Lula came to power goes beyond such political calculations. The country's new assertiveness, especially towards northern powers, albeit within the context of free market tenets, forms part of a renewed "Third World agenda" that is more closely aligned with the concerns of the World Social Forum (WSF) in which progressive Brazilian intellectuals and social activists have played a prominent role.

Nevertheless, while questioning the northern domination paradigm, its asymmetric power relations and skewed rules, President Lula has not tried to "break" the international system but rather to ensure that the system works more to the advantage of Brazil and that decision-making processes become more democratic. Although some analysts maintain that Lula has mainly played by the rules of the neo-liberal globalisation agenda, others say that he

has tried to reform the system to make it more responsive to the challenges of poverty and inequality in the south. Lula, they add, has also called for the restoration of the role of the state as a national and international economic actor.

A more democratic world order

Lula's campaign to secure Brazil a permanent seat on the UN Security Council has been as a wish to improve the UN's representativity so that it better reflects the new realities of the international scene. In this context, Brazil sees itself as shining a torch on the south. It equates its interests and search for leadership with the interests of other South American countries and beyond to those of all developing countries.

Lula has clearly set out Brazil's regional and global ambitions. He has pushed for renewed South American integration under Brazilian guidance. He has taken the lead on behalf of southern countries in confronting the EU and the US at the WTO agricultural talks, particularly at the 2003 Cancun negotiations where he assembled the G-20+ coalition. He has increased links with other emerging countries through IBSA and BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) and pushed his way into the international economic elite, the G-20. In that context, according to Monica Hirst, "Brazil is also reshaping its defence policy in line with its new global agenda, while taking into consideration and trying to reconcile its regional interests, in particular with a view to defending its extensive borders and natural resources".

President Lula has not sought to antagonise Washington although he has firmly marked out the respective areas for cooperation and competition. Brasilia has confronted Washington at the WTO, questioned US policies in the Middle East and disagreed with it on a series of Latin American issues (the post-coup election in Honduras, the US-Colombia agreement on military bases and the development of the Rio Group as a challenger to the US-backed Organization of American States). More forcefully still, Brazil has distanced itself from US moves to impose sanctions on Iran by brokering, together with Turkey, a nuclear fuel swap arrangement.

Brazil has been particularly active in South America. The creation of the South American Community of Nations (CASA) in late 2004, followed by the launch of UNASUR and the South American Defence Council (CDS), owe much to Brasilia's efforts. President Lula has had to contend with the other regional power, Venezuela. Rather than confronting President Chavez, he has sought to tame him while using him to placate both the US and Brazil's own leftwing groups. He has skilfully used Hugo Chavez's strident anti-Americanism in order to come across by comparison as a "serious partner" and "quiet actor" on both the regional and international stage.

A success?

Has the Lula gamble been a success? Brazil has undoubtedly raised its international profile and acquired a level of influence that is increasingly taken into account. However, some circles in Brazil believe that Lula's diplomacy has been over-ambitious, opened up too many fronts and reached a level of overstretch that prevents the country from properly delivering on its promises. The consensus seems to be that the next government will have to reduce its commitments and set clearer priorities.

In fact, the actual results have not been entirely convincing. As already pointed out, Brazil has lost some major battles: its campaign to secure a permanent seat on the UN Security Council has stalled, and it has been unable to make its power felt in a couple of recent regional crises, namely the coup in Honduras, where its protégé, former President Zelaya, had to concede defeat, and in Colombia, where the Uribe government and the US have refused to heed its objections to the use of military bases by the US army.

In addition to the fears of regional hegemony expressed by Brazil's neighbours, some observers have raised concerns about the strategic and military aspects of the country's new international assertiveness. Its active involvement in

the Iranian nuclear issue is seen not only as an attempt at mediation and a testament to multilateralism but also as a way for it to keep its own nuclear options open in the face of suspicions from the US and the International Atomic Energy Agency. "Brazil is an emerging nuclear power (and) although its nuclear resources are used exclusively for peaceful purposes, it has refused," writes Clovis Brigagão, "to ratify the Additional Protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty".¹¹

The build-up of the Brazilian military, though justified by Brazil's new international role and even its commitment to UN peacekeeping, is decoded in some circles as being an ambiguous and even potentially ominous trend in a region that has embarked on a new arms race. Some observers, while acknowledging the challenges drug trafficking poses to Brazil's own security, point in particular to the danger of the Amazon region becoming excessively militarised.

Soft Power

The "good guy" card

Contrary to these suspicions, Brazil wants to be seen as a peaceful, stabilising and well-meaning power. This is part of a long-term strategy to build its influence regionally and internationally, one that has been pursued for decades and was even nursed under military rule between 1964 and 1985. However, it really came to the fore with the restoration of democracy. The last two presidents, Cardoso and Lula, have astutely played the "good guy" card on the international stage, particularly highlighting their commitment to multilateralism in the context of promoting Brazil's power and establishing a world system based on multipolarity.

However, its record when it comes to human rights diplomacy has been mixed and has, to some extent, dented its international image. Indeed, Brazil has been criticised for its human rights policies abroad and for its "excessive

¹¹ For more on this topic, see Clovis Brigagão, "The Strategic Lines of Brazilian Foreign Policy", Noref, May 2009, <http://peacebuilding.no/eng/Publications/Articles/The-Strategic-Lines-of-Brazilian-Foreign-Policy>, accessed 16 September 2010.

invocation" of the principles of national sovereignty and non-intervention in other countries' affairs. "Brazil has its critics, however," writes Peter Hakim, director of the Washington-based Inter-American Dialogue. "Some suggest that the nation's accomplishments and potential have been exaggerated, and its weaknesses underplayed. Others argue that Brazil's foreign policy lacks a moral center—that it seems mostly designed to satisfy narrow economic interests and the nation's vanity. In this view, Brazil has not been helpful in advancing international norms or values. Instead, it is a country that avoids taking stands on sensitive issues, rarely stands up for democracy or human rights, and has established close and uncritical relations with pariah countries like Iran and Venezuela."¹²

Brazil has been criticised
for its human rights policies abroad.

Brazil's record in this area has been patchy and at times contradictory. While it opposed sanctions on Peru following President Fujimori's fraudulent re-election in 2000, it took the lead in rolling back the 1999 coup in Paraguay and in condemning the "constitutional overthrow" of President Zelaya in Honduras in 2009. More recently, President Lula has upset international human rights organizations by refusing to condemn human rights abuses in countries such as Cuba, Iran and Sri Lanka. This "schmoozing" with authoritarian governments weakens Brazil's soft power image around the world.

Plurilateralism

Brazil's soft power has been based on developing bilateral relations with dozens of new countries. However, informal intergovernmental forums such as IBSA have also been used to project the image of a country that is committed to consultation and focused on the pressing development challenges (poverty, health, etc.) that are common to the south. As Professor Alcides Vaz from the University of Brasilia

states, "Brazil is developing the new concept of plurilateralism, namely, the idea of addressing different agendas simultaneously and working together but without necessarily speaking with a single voice".

In its external relations, especially with developing countries, Brazil stresses its cultural proximity. Its African heritage and own ongoing experience of major social problems that typically affect poor countries are presented as key factors in its ability to understand local societies and its desire not to impose imported, in other words, northern models.

These types of approach are found particularly in Brazil's international development assistance. The role played by the *Agência Brasileira de Cooperação* (ABC), the Brazilian Cooperation Agency, in Brazilian foreign policy, has been growing, especially since 2002, with priority being given to technical cooperation projects involving capacity building and knowledge exchange. The countries that have attracted most resources are Haiti, Cape Verde and East Timor. Portuguese-speaking African countries are clearly an area in which Brazil intends to be active.

Consistency between domestic and foreign policies

Most pundits, and also government officials, stress that Brazil's soft power relies on its ability to resolve its own domestic problems, first and foremost by reducing inequality, taming violence, strengthening the rule of law and combating corruption. Its calls for a more equitable world order depend on it attaining a more equitable national order. "Nothing would improve Brazil's moral standing worldwide more than a sustained confrontation of the country's social and racial divisions," writes Peter Hakim.¹³

This is particularly true in the context of Brazil's hosting of the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games. Its ability to mitigate both urban violence in the *favelas* and rural violence will be a key measure of its international image and in-

¹² Peter Hakim, "Rising Brazil: the Choices of a New Global Power", *Inter-American Dialogue*, 1 July 2010, <http://www.thedialogue.org/page.cfm?pageID=32&pubID=2273>, accessed 16 September 2010.

¹³ Peter Hakim, "Rising Brazil: the Choices of a New Global Power", July 2010.

fluence. Both at home and abroad, Brazil argues that there is a clear link between security and equitable and sustainable development but it still has a long way to go to address its own high levels of inequality and insecurity. Although it claims that its own domestic situation is the reason why it has a better understanding of the needs of poor countries, particularly in the context of development projects and peace-keeping, it is only too aware that failure to curb violence at home is bound to jeopardise its ambitions abroad.

Reducing poverty and inequality has been a priority for President Lula. A few months after assuming office, he reorganized the cash transfer programmes for the poor that had been initiated by President Cardoso, and set up the *Bolsa Familia* (family allowance) scheme that has reached over 11 million households. Although costing only 2.5 per cent of GDP, it has lifted millions of Brazilians out of poverty. Since 2003, according to the Center for Social Policy at the Getulio Vargas Foundation, over 32 million people have joined the middle class and some 20 million have been taken out of poverty.

Many countries, and not only Brazil's partners in IBSA, have been investigating whether similar anti-poverty programmes could be copied or adapted to their own national context. The success attributed to these pro-active social policies is one of the main indicators of Brazil's soft power at international level. According to the President's foreign advisors, Brazil's cooperation policy is also a reflection of its domestic approach, to the extent that the "model" that it exports is founded on the state's institutional capacity to address the most pressing issues.

Peaceful conflict resolution

"Constructive moderation"

Brazil has developed the concept of "constructive moderation" in international relations. This approach, coined by Celso Lafer, who was Foreign Minister under President Cardoso, is,

Since 2003, over 32 million Brazilians have joined the middle class and some 20 million have escaped poverty.

according to Alain Rouquié, intended "to reduce the impulsive expressions of power politics in favour of peace and development".¹⁴ This philosophy is evident on the international stage where Brazil opposes unilateralism, especially that of the US, supports negotiated solutions and non-punitive actions (on Iran), offers to act as a mediator and peacekeeper, and advocates international and national economic and social policies that seek to promote development and reduce conflict.

Its interest in conflict prevention is the logical corollary of this philosophy. In particular, it sees conflict prevention as an imperative in order, in the words of a senior presidential advisor, to avoid becoming trapped between "two bad foreign policy options", namely to dispatch troops, which might be damaging to its commitment to non-intervention, or to do nothing, which would be at odds with its pledge to actively contribute to peace, development and security.

Mediation

Brazil has had significant success as a mediator. In 1998, for instance, it succeeded in bringing a long-running territorial dispute between Ecuador and Peru to a positive settlement. It also helped calm growing tensions between Bolivia's ruling party and the opposition in 2008.

However, its role as a mediator has not always been welcome in the region. The Uribe government in Colombia, in particular, has rejected Brasilia's proposals to help settle its internal conflicts (involving the army, the FARC and the paramilitaries) because it has chosen to seek military victory rather than a negotiated solution with the FARC.

Brazil's attempts at mediation outside of South America have been met with scepticism, even at home. Lula's foray into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is generally viewed as overestimating Brazil's capabilities. However, Brazil sees this willingness to help settle conflicts as a logical

¹⁴ Alain Rouquié, *Le Brésil au 21^e siècle*, p 349.

consequence of its growing international status and responsibilities. Though criticised by the US and the EU and undermined by Russia and China's decision to vote in favour of further sanctions at the UN, the mediation initiative it conducted jointly with Turkey in May 2010 – on the Iranian nuclear fuel swap arrangement – has been presented in Brasilia as symbolising this commitment to calming international tensions through dialogue.

Peacekeeping

Since the 1956 Suez crisis, Brazil has participated in many UN peacekeeping operations, putting it 15th on the overall list of contributing countries. Its approach to peacekeeping is a reflection of the fundamentals of its foreign policy, namely its adherence to multilateralism and peaceful conflict resolution. Peacekeeping missions are seen not only as the expression of a humanitarian foreign policy but also as a lever of Brazil's international influence. Its participation is partly determined by other foreign policy objectives, in particular the desire to improve its chances of becoming a permanent member of the Security Council.

"Brazil is divided between its willingness to engage internationally and its high regard for sovereignty and non-intervention"

Peacekeeping also reflects the objectives of the Brazilian army. Peace missions are seen as helping to train the army and enhance its standing, as well as bolstering its calls for increased resources and equipment after long years of budgetary restrictions. The Brazilian-led UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (Minustah) is currently the country's main international engagement and although its participation has been generally credited with improving its international image, it remains cautious about getting involved again at that level in any future peace operations.

This caution, according to Defence Ministry sources, reflects the difficulty Brazil has in deploying the logistical, budgetary and material resources such an operation requires. It is also indicative of the view that peacekeeping is a

"subsidiary mission" of the armed forces, their primary mission being to defend the integrity of national territory.

This caution also stems from core foreign policy principles. "Brazil is divided between its willingness to engage internationally and its high regard for sovereignty and non-intervention" (Alcides Vaz). There should be no room for interventions that violate other countries' national sovereignty if they do not have an incontestable mandate from the UN Security Council. This is both a restatement of Brazil's diplomatic tradition and a repudiation of the first phase of military rule (1964-1985) which departed from that tradition when it dispatched Brazilian troops to join the OAS-endorsed US intervention against the social democrat government of President Juan Bosch in the Dominican Republic.

Brazil has admitted that in Haiti it inevitably "intervenes" in the country's internal affairs, especially since it has been involved in providing both security and development assistance, but Brazilian officials stress that this "intervention" was endorsed by the UN and carried out in accordance with the wishes of the local authorities. By helping Haiti to diversify its international relations and re-establish links with its Caribbean neighbours, Brazil has added a diplomatic dimension to its peacekeeping role.

However, Brazil is particularly careful not to misinterpret the "R2P" (responsibility to protect, a principle adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2005) as a license for military intervention, especially for unilateral interventions outside of the UN framework. All officials contacted during my mission rejected the idea of Brazil directly participating in peace operations deployed by a regional organization, be it the OAS or the African Union. Lastly, as Monica Hirst explains, "Brazil's caution with regard to other peacekeeping operations under Article 7 of the UN Charter stems from its reluctance to assume a leading role without having the capacity to influence a UN agenda that it fears might be a northern one".

Public support

The Brazilian Government also wants the support of its own population for its participation in peace operations and conflict resolution initiatives. Most of my Brazilian interlocutors have highlighted the public's general lack of interest in international affairs, due in particular to the perception that Brazil has huge domestic challenges to confront. However, civil society organizations are becoming increasingly interested in conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction, especially because of the work of Brazilian NGOs, such as VivaRio, and UN programmes in Africa.

The creation of the Brazilian Committee on Human Rights and Foreign Policy is a sign of the growing maturity of Brazilian civil society and its understanding of the country's new responsibilities as it emerges as a power capable of influencing international issues.

Brazil's involvement in Haiti initially had critics in many circles, especially on the left, who thought that the country was aiding and abetting the US and France in their decision to remove and expel President Aristide. Some were reluctant to back an operation that appeared to entail a major financial outlay at the expense of tackling crucial social needs inside Brazil. Others claimed that it distracted Brazil's armed forces from addressing more pressing security needs in the Amazon region.

The country's presence in Haiti is now a matter of pride for many in Brazil but that does not mean that the objections and concerns have gone away. The Brazilian Government is definitely determined not to rush into further operations abroad without being sure that it can justify that policy to its citizens. It is also conscious of the armed forces' call for strict criteria to be set for international operations, as well as the need for better inter-institutional coordination and the development of clear approaches to peacebuilding that will allow the policy to continue.

It also wants to be certain that it is in a position to address the crucial security threats Brazil itself is facing from the growing numbers of military

troops in the region (Colombia and Venezuela, in particular) and the increased military presence of "outsiders", such as the US and Russia, on its strategic South American perimeter. The Brazilian armed forces are aware that their resources are limited. Although Brazil accounts for approximately one third of total military expenditure in Latin America, it represents only one per cent of the world's total.¹⁵ The trend is changing, however, with the publication in 2008 of a new Brazilian National Defence Strategy that prioritizes the strengthening of the national defence industry, arms purchases and technological cooperation agreements.

Brazil and partnerships

Brazil is often seen as a regional giant that does not have to team up with others to achieve its foreign policy goals. In fact, it has consistently taken care to demonstrate its commitment to regional and international cooperation. Regionally, Brazil was among the countries backing the Contadora initiative in the 1980s when it helped found the Rio Group, a forum of Latin American democracies that were seeking Latin American solutions and a peaceful end to armed conflicts in the region.

Brazil was also a key proponent of Mercosur, a four-country agreement that not only improved trade and economic cooperation among the member states but also pushed for the adoption of a democratic charter that included a strong condemnation of attacks on institutional order, such as military coups. Lastly, within South America, Brazil has been a prime mover of economic integration and political consultation, especially via Unasur.

"Brazil shares key values and ideas with European donors."

Brazil is seeking partnerships and coalitions beyond the confines of South America, for example, via the G-20+, IBSA, BRIC and other forums. During my research trip, Foreign Min-

¹⁵ Sarah-Lea John de Sousa, "Brazil as an emerging security actor and its relations with the EU", *European Security Review*, no. 43, March 2009, p 2, http://www.isis-europe.org/pdf/2009_esr_68_esr43-mar09.pdf, accessed 16 September 2010.

istry and Presidency officials constantly spoke in favour of cooperation with other countries. "The question," according to one presidential advisor, "is to identify the various issues, the positions of each country and the areas of convergence and divergence".

There can indeed be disagreements. Brazil appears reluctant to fully accept the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness which it sees as laying down rules drawn up by the traditional donor countries. It is particularly wary of the use of forms of political conditionality that may conflict with its anti-interference principles. It is also determined to promote a south-south cooperation agenda that could well clash with the northern agenda.

However, as the German Development Institute notes in a briefing paper, "Brazil shares key values and ideas with European donors, as in particular the promotion of democracy and human rights in partner countries... Closer collaboration... could be of mutual benefit".¹⁶ Such examples of trilateral cooperation have involved France and Canada, among others.

Norwegian-Brazilian partnerships

Common understanding

Norway enjoys good economic, diplomatic and political relations with Brazil. Norwegian investment in the country ranks third after the US and the EU. The two countries agree on the need for multilateralism, peaceful conflict resolution and the need to take a strong stand on environmental issues. They share a common understanding of the links between security and development.

Norway has already undertaken projects with Brazil. It was the first country to give financial backing to the Brazilian fund to reduce deforestation in the Amazon. Its experience of working for peace and reconciliation, as well as its

social model founded on social cohesion and tripartite collective bargaining (workers, government and employers), are seen as exemplary in Brazil.

Recommendations

Help Brazil tackle its internal divisions and shortcomings

Brazil is keenly aware that it needs to solve its internal problems (poverty, violence, inequality, etc) in order to sustain its economic development and reinforce the legitimacy of its foreign policy. It has been researching other countries' experiences in these areas. Many Brazilian officials and academics are relatively knowledgeable about and open to "best practices" from elsewhere that could be an inspiration for their own country. The current generation of national leaders have been educated abroad, either as exiles (in the case of former President Cardoso and opposition candidate Jose Serra) or as students. Lula himself became acquainted with European labour relations and social dialogue through his contacts with European (especially Catholic) trades unions and foundations.

The Brazilian authorities have also become increasingly aware that some southern countries have a great deal to teach Brazil. This is one of the areas of exchange that was addressed at the IBSA academic forum in Brasilia last April. (In that instance, in fact, it was Brazil teaching others about its own policies for combating hunger and poverty.)

Although international donors should be very careful not to talk about "models" that could be exported, Brazil, particularly in view of its two major forthcoming challenges – the 2014 Soccer World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games – is looking for "best practices" from abroad that could help the country reduce, in particular, the levels of social exclusion and violence. Seminars involving Norwegian and Brazilian academics, public authorities and NGOs could be held to address these crucial issues.

¹⁶ "Brazil as an Emerging Actor in International Development Cooperation: A Good Partner for European Donors?", *Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungshilfe*, Briefing paper 5/2010, [http://www.die-gdi.de/CMS-Homepage/openwebcms3_e.nsf/\(ynDK_contentByKey\)/ANES-83EH29/\\$FILE/BP%205.2010.pdf](http://www.die-gdi.de/CMS-Homepage/openwebcms3_e.nsf/(ynDK_contentByKey)/ANES-83EH29/$FILE/BP%205.2010.pdf), accessed 16 September 2010.

Develop trilateral cooperation in countries where Brazil has a special comparative advantage

Brazil is open to joint projects with northern donors in poor countries. It pays particular attention to countries in Africa, especially the Lusophone countries, and is interested in projects that reflect its interests: anti-poverty programmes, banking schemes for migrants' money transfers, anti-AIDS campaigns and environmental protection.

The issue of drug trafficking could be an interesting area for trilateral cooperation. Brazil suffers from drug consumption and trafficking – many of the drugs entering Europe start out from Brazilian ports and pass through Africa, in particular Guinea Bissau, where they have devastating effects on public health and security. Norway could propose joint projects on drug policy in Lusophone countries, bearing in mind, however, that the Brazilian development agency's mission and modes of operation need to be redefined and streamlined. Joint trilateral actions on the environment, especially the protection of tropical forests, could also be developed on the back of the existing cooperation between Brazil and Norway in the Amazon region.

Develop an international human rights agenda for Brazil

Brazil and Norway differ with regard to human rights diplomacy. Brazil's non-intervention and national sovereignty doctrine would be better balanced if it took a more assertive stance on human rights diplomacy. Norway and Brazil should hold seminars with diplomats, international relations scholars, the media and other actors, such as national and international NGOs, in order to develop the argument for Brazil to take a more positive and pro-active stance on human rights diplomacy.

Engage Brazil in peace-building initiatives

Norway should approach Brazil to test its willingness to engage in conflict prevention initiatives. While reluctant to increase its peacekeeping role beyond its military capabilities and its understanding of the responsibility to protect

doctrine, Brazil is keen to project its image as a mediator and post-conflict peacebuilder. In particular, Norway could help Brazil improve its civilian capacities and devise development projects within the context of peace operations by organizing seminars and exchanges with relevant Brazilian actors.

Further Reading

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Annex

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Claudio Costa Pinheiro, researcher, Fundação Getulio Vargas, Brasilia/Rio.

Marcel Fortuna Biato, Special Advisor, Presidency of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Monica Hirst, Professor of International Relations, Torcuato di Tella University, Buenos Aires.

Claudia Meyer, Social Advisor, German Embassy, Brasilia.

Mariana Hoffmann, Centro internacional de politicas para o crescimento inclusivo, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Brasilia.

Antonio Jorge Ramalho da Rocha, Professor, University of Brasilia, Advisor to the Secretariat for Strategic Affairs, Presidency of the Republic, Brasilia.

Turid B. Rodrigues Eusebio, Norwegian Ambassador, Brasilia.

Alcides Vaz, Professor of International Relations, University of Brasilia.

