

The Benign Multipolarity: Brazilian Foreign Policy Under Dilma Rousseff

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Abstract

The aim is to explain Brazilian foreign policy in Dilma Rousseff's administration, particularly the consolidation of the 'South American anchor', the attempts of rapprochement with the United States and the strengthening of cooperation with emerging economies in Asia and Africa. The first is related to more convergent preferences of Brazilian and other South American governments on the integration of productive chains, the consolidation of South American zone of peace and the implementation of social projects. The second are related to more convergent preferences of Brazilian and the U.S. governments on the coordination to fight the global economic crisis and reciprocal investments. The third is related to more convergent preferences of Brazilian government and emerging economies on the promotion of balanced North-South relations and South-South partnerships.

Keywords: Brazil; foreign policy; Dilma Rousseff; South America; United States; BRICS

Brazilian president Dilma Rousseff – whose administration started in January 2011 – developed a less personal foreign policy than the one developed by the previous administration of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010). Rousseff seemed not to emphasize ideological identities and personal abilities.

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In the view of members of her government, Rousseff enjoyed foreign policy making, knew the subject very well and was as dedicated to foreign issues as her predecessor, but, while Lula was more 'intuitive', Rousseff sought to learn more before taking decisionsⁱ. According to the first Brazilian foreign minister in Rousseff's government, Antonio Patriota, the main guideline of Brazilian foreign policy in the current administration is what he called 'benign multipolarity' or 'inclusive multipolarity'. This concept recognizes the existence of a multipolar structure of power in the world, but is based on the inclusive principle of multilateralism and highlights the necessity to strengthen the participation of emerging economies and developing states at the international decision-making processes, the consolidation of more legitimate and representative institutions of global governance and the democratization of the international systemⁱⁱ. This does not represent a radical break with the foreign policy of the previous administration. Patriota was a very close collaborator of the former foreign minister and now defense minister Celso Amorim. Patriota worked in the Brazilian Embassy in Washington from 2007 to 2009 and as Secretary-General of the Foreign Ministry after this period. In the light of Patriota's participation in foreign policy making of Lula's government, it would be difficult to radically change the essence of Brazil's international performance. Patriota resigned in August 2013 after one Brazilian diplomat acknowledged that he had helped a Bolivian senator, who had been accused of corruption, cross the border into Brazil. Patriota was appointed as Brazil's envoy to the United Nations, and then Brazilian U.N. ambassador, Luiz Alberto Figueiredo, became the foreign minister. Figueiredo did not implement radical changes when he took office.

Nevertheless, in comparison to the previous administrations, some changes were implemented and indicated in the first foreign policy decisions of Rousseff's administration, particularly with regard to two issues: the attempts of rapprochement with the United States and a more explicit defense of human rights than Lula's governmentⁱⁱⁱ. Rousseff celebrated the partnership with the U.S. President Barack Obama and cooperation in various fields such as education, social inclusion, investment and trade, energy and environmental issues, science and technology, democracy and human rights. They also deepened cooperation on the solution of problems related to climate change, energy efficiency and the global financial crisis. However, many differences remain between the two states. Rousseff advocated the recognition of Palestine as a state and its accession to the United Nations, which faced U.S. opposition.

Rousseff showed her support for preventive diplomacy as opposed to military intervention by major powers in conflict zones and advocated the elimination of the privileges of nuclear-weapon states to maintain their arsenals. In July 2013, impasses in bilateral relations emerged with the complaint that United States' agencies were spying Latin American states, including Brazil. Rousseff also said she would give priority to human rights issues in the new Brazilian foreign policy and explicitly criticized Brazil's omission at the voting of the Iranian human right issues at the UN Human Rights Council in the past. The Rousseff government voted in favor of sending a UN rapporteur to investigate possible human rights violations in Iran. However, in 2011, Brazil abstained from voting at the UN Security Council on the intervention in Libya by not being fully convinced that the great powers would preserve and defend human rights in a humanitarian intervention. Then Brazil's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti defended that the use of force by international troops could not effectively protect civilians and promote the immediate end of violence. Members of Itamaraty – Brazilian foreign ministry – said that, although Brazilian foreign policy in Rousseff's government prioritized human rights, Brazil would not accept humanitarian interventions with other vested interests^{iv}.

Despite some changes, there is a clear institutional continuity of management from Lula's to Rousseff's administration. The election of the candidate of the same party of former President – the Workers' Party (PT) – brought very few modifications in the institutional structure of the Executive branch. The maintenance of important names of the former government in relevant positions for Brazil's action in the international arena in the near future ensured a high degree of continuity and helped to promote stability. Lula's sport minister Orlando Silva was Rousseff's sport minister from January to October 2011, Lula's finance minister Guido Mantega is Rousseff's finance minister, and Henrique Meirelles – the Central Bank president in Lula's administration – was appointed by Rousseff for the coordination of the works of the 2016 Olympic Games. The maintenance of the coalition between two major parties (PT and PMDB) in the Congress could promote the continuation of several projects that were already underway, such as the welfare programs that have gained international prominence during Lula's government. In multilateral forums, Patriota continued to promote the engagement to other emerging states, especially in South-South relations.

Brazil strengthened relations with some regional partners in South America such as Argentina and Venezuela in fora such as MERCOSUR and UNASUR, but also consolidated its cooperation with the other G4 states – Japan, Germany and India – and its partners in IBSA – India and South Africa – to discuss the UN reform, an issue intensively debated when Amorim was Lula's foreign minister. With the other BRICS members – Russia, China and also India and South Africa –, Brazil kept its defense of a greater participation by emerging states in the economic restructuring after the 2008 financial crisis, especially institutional reforms at the IMF and the World Bank. Brazil also showed its support to G20, which enhanced the representation of emerging and developing states in the international economy^v.

The aim of this article is to explain three of the main dimensions of Brazilian foreign policy during Dilma Rousseff's administration: the consolidation of the 'South American anchor' of Brazilian foreign policy, the attempts of rapprochement with the United States and the strengthening of cooperation with emerging economies in Africa and Asia. I argue that:

- 1) The consolidation of the 'South American anchor' of Brazilian foreign policy is related to the structure of more convergent preferences of Rousseff and members of Itamaraty, other Brazilian ministries and agencies with South American governments' preferences on the integration of productive chains that would benefit local populations; the consolidation of South America as a zone of peace, cooperation and democracy; and the implementation of projects that could promote convergence, competitiveness and social cohesion in South America.
- 2) The attempts of rapprochement with the United States are related to the structure of more convergent preferences of Rousseff and members of Itamaraty, other Brazilian ministries and agencies with the U.S. government preferences on the coordination for the response to the global economic crisis and the intensification of reciprocal investments, particularly in infrastructure, energy and high technology. However, the preferences of Brazilian and U.S. authorities still diverged on the priority given to non-intervention and multilateralism and the use of coercion.

- 3) The strengthening of cooperation with emerging economies in Africa and Asia is related to the structure of more convergent preferences of Rousseff and members of Itamaraty, other Brazilian ministries and agencies with the emerging economies' government preferences on the promotion of more balanced North-South relations and the search for South-South partnerships guided by the imperatives of economic, social and technological development.
- 4) The preferences of some domestic actors diverged from Rousseff's government in economic and human rights issues. Domestic actors such as businessmen and NGOs indicated the necessity to review priorities and alliances in key international economic fora and pressed for the reassessment of Brazilian international action in human rights issues, respectively.

First, I will examine the three main dimensions of Rousseff's foreign policy. Then I will discuss the domestic pressures on foreign policy making during Rousseff's administration, especially from the business sector and NGOs.

The Consolidation of the 'South American Anchor'

In 2012, Rousseff asked the main government ministries and agencies involved in the international area to rethink Brazilian foreign policy to fit the world stage post-Arab Spring and the European crisis in order to seize the moment to raise the state's influence internationally. A group of ministers and special advisers in foreign issues discussed different ways to diversify Brazilian action. The team was led by Patriota, Mantega and the Environment Minister, Izabella Teixeira. Within their respective areas, they sought to map the opportunities to strengthen Brazilian presence in the global agenda. In this context, the government decided to strengthen the 'regional anchor' of its foreign policy, focused on the preservation of peace and democracy in South America. The emphasis in South America was seen not only in the engagement of various ministries, but changes in the Foreign Ministry itself. In 2012, the foreign ministry announced changes in two strategic areas. Brazil's ambassador to Paraguay, Eduardo Santos, assumed the Secretariat General of the Foreign Ministry. For Undersecretary General for Economic and Financial Affairs, Enio Cordeiro was chosen. Cordeiro has been Brazilian Ambassador to Argentina^{vi}.

The emphasis of Rousseff government on the 'South American anchor' can be identified since the beginning of the administration. In his first speech at Itamaraty as the foreign minister in January 2011, Patriota indicated that Brazil would have at its disposal a robust MERCOSUR and an increasingly cohesive UNASUR. The main purpose was to complete the transformation of South America into a human, physical and economic integrated space, where dialogue and political consultations would be responsible for preserving peace and democracy. The relations between Brazil and Argentina were seen by Patriota as fundamental^{vii}. In his visit to Argentina in January 2011, Patriota held a working meeting with Argentina's Minister of External Relations, International Trade and Worship, Héctor Timerman. They addressed the following steps in the Brazil-Argentina Integration and Coordination Mechanism (MICBA) which, under the guidance of both Foreign Ministries, provided for biannual presidential meetings to ensure political momentum to priority projects. They also discussed strategies to bolster the close coordination between the two states in multilateral and regional fora, with a view to foster regional integration – particularly MERCOSUR and UNASUR –, strengthen multilateralism and democratize the global governance mechanisms. The relations with Argentina were particularly important, because Brazil was the prime destination for Argentine exports and was also Argentina's main supplier. The bilateral commerce was also characterized by the high rate of industrialized products with high added value, which reflected the growth in integration of the productive chains between both states^{viii}.

Rousseff's first international destination as the Brazilian president was Argentina, which reaffirmed the priority assigned to Brazil's main South American partner. At the meeting with President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner in January 2011, Rousseff gave special attention to the creation of a citizen-oriented agenda in issues such as housing, wastewater collection and urban development, education, culture and the promotion of equal opportunities. She also wanted to strengthen bilateral cooperation in strategic areas in which there were ongoing projects, such as nuclear and space cooperation and physical infrastructure integration, among others. Brazil and Argentina also signed a Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation on Bionenergy and launched the proposal for a Brazil-Argentina Business Forum in order to consolidate a culture of integration among businesspeople of both states^{ix}.

In their meeting in Brasilia in July 2011, Rousseff and Kirchner reaffirmed the strategic character of dialog, coordination and trust consolidated in bilateral nuclear relations and welcomed the progress achieved in cooperation projects at the Binational Commission of Nuclear Energy, especially the joint development of multipurpose research reactors. They also reaffirmed the importance of strategic relations in defense affairs between Brazil and Argentina^x.

In January 2011, Patriota visited Paraguay and Uruguay. The foreign ministers of Brazil and Paraguay addressed the implementation stage of the agreements enshrined in the Joint Declaration signed in 2009 and examined ways to expand mutual cooperation in areas such as security and social public policies^{xi}. In Uruguay, the main issues were the works of the Bilateral Committee for Strategic Planning and Productive Integration (CBPE), with the aim of ensuring the implementation of joint projects in infrastructure, productive integration and science and technology. They also addressed ways to strengthen regional integration^{xii}. In her visit to Uruguay in May 2011, Rousseff strengthened the cooperation with Uruguayan president José Mujica regarding strategic planning, productive integration and border cooperation. Both presidents showed their support to the agreements signed between the authorities of the two states on technical and scientific cooperation^{xiii}.

Rousseff also emphasized the strategic dimension of the bilateral partnership with Venezuela. In her meeting with then president Hugo Chávez in June 2011, Rousseff expressed her satisfaction with the clear recovery trend of trade in 2010, reversing the decline in the growth rate in 2009, due to the global economic crisis. Both presidents reaffirmed their intention to promote a more balanced trade between the two states, highlighted the significant participation of Brazilian companies in the area of infrastructure and energy in various projects in Venezuela and stressed the importance of ensuring the continuity of projects, including dams and roads. They also strengthened bilateral cooperation for development, especially in housing, agricultural cooperation, planning and public policy, basic industries and mining^{xiv}. After Hugo Chávez's death in March 2013, Rousseff tried to continue the sequence of periodic high-level meetings between officials of Brazil and Venezuela. In May 2013, Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro Moros visited Brazil and held conversations with Rousseff in order to develop initiatives on productive integration, food security, public policies, health and social and technological development^{xv}.

Regarding regional integration, MERCOSUR received special attention from Rousseff's administration. In spite of the criticism to the supposed 'paralysis' of MERCOSUR, Patriota tried to defend that reality did not match this perception. The results of MERCOSUR were positive, concrete and real: on trade, despite the negative effects of the 2008 global economic crisis, the performance of intra-zone trade was higher than international trade. According to Patriota, MERCOSUR was an important instrument for the expansion of Brazilian exports, particularly of manufactured products. Brazilian industry saw in MERCOSUR its most important export market, and productive investments were also enhanced among member and associated states. Regarding the key issue of reducing and overcoming asymmetries between member states, MERCOSUR's Structural Convergence Fund (FOCEM) approved projects that should promote structural convergence, competitiveness and social cohesion – particularly in smaller economies and less developed regions – and support the operation of the institutional framework and strengthening of the integration process^{xvi}.

In order to consolidate the commitment to the promotion of democracy in the region, Patriota supported the signature of the 2011 Montevideo Protocol on the Commitment to Democracy, which updated the 1998 Ushuaia Protocol on Democratic Commitment within MERCOSUR and inserted additional mediation and sanction mechanisms in case of breaches or attempted breaches of democratic order^{xvii}. In June 2012, Rousseff's administration condemned the summary proceeding to impeach the Paraguayan President Fernando Lugo, in which the full right to defense was not granted. Brazilian government considered that this procedure compromised a fundamental pillar of democracy, seen as an essential condition to regional integration^{xviii}. Paraguay was temporarily suspended from MERCOSUR as well from UNASUR. In the case of MERCOSUR, the decision to suspend Paraguay was taken in the application of the Ushuaia Protocol. During the suspension of Paraguay – whose Congress created barriers to approve Venezuela's entry as a full member of MERCOSUR –, an Extraordinary Summit of MERCOSUR Heads of State in July 2012 welcomed the entry of Venezuela as a full member of the bloc. According to Itamaraty, 'the admission of Venezuela alters the strategic position of the bloc, which now extends from the Caribbean to the continent's deep south. MERCOSUR also asserts itself as a global energy power, both in renewable and non-renewable resources'^{xix}.

Brazil in Rousseff's administration intensified MERCOSUR's relations with other regions of the world. Delegations from MERCOSUR and the European Union held working meetings for the negotiation of a future Bi-Regional Association Agreement after negotiations were re-launched in Madrid in May 2010, in the context of the MERCOSUR – EU Summit. Negotiations were held in the Political, Cooperation and Trade pillars of the agreement, and substantial progress was achieved^{xx}. During Rousseff's administration, MERCOSUR signed a free trade agreement with Palestine in December 2011, which expressed the support from MERCOSUR member states for the establishment of an independent and democratic Palestinian state^{xxi}.

Rousseff and her team also gave attention in foreign policy making to UNASUR. In the meeting of UNASUR's council of heads of state and government, Rousseff highlighted the value of the electoral missions as mechanisms of cooperation, participation and strengthening of democratic order in the region, as well as the electoral monitoring mission to Venezuela in 2012 as the first institutional experience of UNASUR. Brazil and other UNASUR member states indicated the necessity to strengthen the South American Defense Council in order to develop regional programs of education and training of military and civilian people in defense issues and celebrated the creation of the Council of Citizen Security, Justice and Fight Against Transnational Organized Crime. They also said that the maintenance of South America as a Zone of Peace implied the respect for principles and norms of international law^{xxii}. According to Patriota, a significant dimension in UNASUR is physical integration, because the low level of integration among South American states in terms of transport and energy was incompatible with the idea of a South American shared prosperity^{xxiii}.

The Attempts of Rapprochement with the United States

At the beginning of Rousseff's administration, the United States was the largest foreign investor in Brazil, the second largest importer of Brazilian products and Brazil's second largest trading partner. Rousseff and her team tried to strengthen ties with the United States, because they were weakened during Lula's administration in the light of differences regarding the solution of the economic crisis and the controversial situation of Iran's nuclear program.

U.S. President Barack Obama visited Brazil in March 2011 – some months after the beginning of Rousseff’s administration – and held working meetings with Brazilian authorities. They addressed affairs of mutual interest in the bilateral, regional and global agendas, with particular attention to cooperation on reciprocal trade and investment, energy, environment, science, technology and innovation and education^{xxiv}. In the Joint Statement by Rousseff and Obama, Brazil and the United States were considered ‘global partners’. Rousseff and Obama decided to elevate to the presidential level the major dialogues between the two states, such as the Global Partnership Dialogue, the Economic and Financial Dialogue – building on the cooperation achieved in coordinating the response to the global economic crisis through G20 – and the Strategic Energy Dialogue – in the light of their converging interests in energy-related matters, including oil, natural gas, biofuels and other renewables. Both presidents acknowledged the potential of reciprocal investments – particularly in the areas of infrastructure, energy and high technology – and welcomed agreements on trade and economic cooperation and also air transportation. Rousseff also agreed with Obama to cooperate in advancing democracy and human rights for all people bilaterally and through the United Nations and other multilateral institutions^{xxv}.

In Rousseff’s visit to the United States in April 2012, she and Obama directed a new Defense Cooperation Dialogue between their two Defense Ministers that would also report regularly to the Presidents. Both presidents highlighted the important discussions that have taken place under the Economic and Financial Dialogue, especially the expanded focus on infrastructure and investment in both states, and welcomed the creation of a dialogue on investment under the Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation. The leaders committed to work closely together to satisfy the requirements of the US Visa Waiver Program and Brazil’s applicable legislation to enable US and Brazilian citizens visa free travel^{xxvi}.

Although more common perspectives between Brazil and the United States were developed during Rouseff's administration, many differences between the two states remained. In his first speech as the foreign minister at Itamaraty, Patriota – implicitly in criticism to military interventions conducted by the United States and NATO members – indicated that Brazil would continue to give priority to dialogue and diplomacy as a method of resolving tensions and controversies; uphold respect for international law, non-intervention and multilateralism; and reject the use of coercion without a base on the commitments of international community^{xxvii}. Brazil tried to consolidate, especially when it was a non-permanent member of the Security Council, the interdependence between security and development in dealing with conflict and post-conflict situations. It also developed debates on specific aspects of peacekeeping operations, including the protection of the civilian population, women and children in armed conflicts^{xxviii}. In November 2011, Brazil's United Nations delegation presented a concept note proposing 'responsibility while protecting' (RWP) to the UN Security Council, days after the end of the NATO operation in Libya and the killing of Libya's former president Muammar Gaddafi. According to members of Rouseff's administration, RWP would make civilian protection interventions, particularly the military ones, more accountable and proportionate. It would also rein in the misuse of the 'responsibility to protect' (R2P). The original RWP note indicated the pillars of R2P would have to follow a strict line of political subordination and chronological sequencing: before military action, all possible diplomatic solutions would have to be pursued and a comprehensive and judicious analysis of the possible consequences carried out. For the Brazilians, this clarification was necessary because the mission in Libya had gone beyond its R2P-based Security Council mandate and was more about ousting the Gaddafi regime than protecting civilians. However, some of RWP's opponents – including many US authorities – understood the new concept as a deliberate ploy by states aligned with China and Russia to impede intervention and impose limits on the international community's ability to override sovereignty in order to protect populations. RWP's emphasis on the role of the UN Security Council in debating and authorizing every step of an intervention might be a great barrier to collective action^{xxix}.

On nuclear affairs, coherent with Obama's "nuclear zero" proposal, Rousseff underscored the importance of compliance with and full implementation of all disarmament and non-proliferation related international obligations, including relevant UN Security Council and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) resolutions calling for states to demonstrate the exclusively peaceful nature of their nuclear programs^{xxx}. At the second Summit on Nuclear Physical Security in Seoul in March 2012, Brazil deemed that nuclear physical security should address the creation of a secure global environment that could foster and strengthen the promotion of peaceful and legitimate uses of nuclear energy. Brazil also defended that nuclear physical security, in a wider sense, is closely related to the promotion of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation^{xxxi}. In many different occasions, Rousseff indicated that nuclear weapon states such as the United States have not done enough in order to eliminate their nuclear arsenals and contribute to global disarmament.

Another contentious issue was the allegation in July 2013 that electronic and telephone communications of Brazilian citizens were subject to spying by branches of US intelligence. The Brazilian government has requested clarification from the US government through the Embassy of Brazil in Washington as well as from the United States Ambassador to Brazil. Patriota indicated that the Brazilian government would promote, within the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the improvement of multilateral rules on telecommunications security. In addition, Brazil would launch at the UN initiatives aimed at prohibiting abuse and preventing invasion of privacy of virtual network users, 'establishing clear standards of behavior for states in the field of information and telecommunications in order to ensure cyber security that protects citizens' rights and preserves the sovereignty of all states'^{xxxii}. Relations became tense when Brazilian press indicated that Rousseff and her advisors were subject to spying by the U.S. National Security Agency. Brazilian president even cancelled her visit to the United States scheduled for October 2013 in the light of the events.

In commercial affairs, Brazil welcomed in 2011 the final report of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Panel that examined the legality of anti-dumping measures applied by the United States on imports of Brazilian orange juice. This represented a major victory of Brazil in a matter of relevance to the bilateral trade, and Brazil hoped that this decision would encourage the United States to abandon the practice of 'zeroing' in all anti-dumping proceedings^{xxxiii}.

Regarding the multilateral commercial system, upon instruction from Rousseff, Brazil presented the candidacy of Ambassador Roberto Azevêdo for Director-General of WTO for the 2013-2017 term of office. Azevêdo won the dispute in May 2013. In the context of the Doha Development Round, Brazil advocated the engagement of members to meet the goals of WTO, with a view to improving living standards and expanding production and trade of goods and services^{xxxiv}.

The Strengthening of Cooperation with Emerging Economies

At his first speech as the foreign minister at Itamaraty, Patriota indicated that the priority given to the South American neighboring states would not be at the expense of close relations with other Southern states. Brazil was interested in intensifying relations with a plurality of partners in trade, investment and political dialogue, among many others. In a world in which North-South dichotomies were not yet fully dissipated, Brazil's diplomatic action could contribute to promoting more balanced relationships around shared interests. The imperatives of economic, social and technological development guided the search for partnerships on a variety of topics that included education, innovation, energy, agriculture, industrial productivity and defense^{xxxv}.

Rousseff reaffirmed with then Russian president Dmitry A. Medvedev the strategic partnership between Brazil and Russia in April 2011. In May 2011, Brazilian vice-president Michel Temer and then Russian prime minister Vladimir Putin reiterated their willingness to promote multilateralism, the rule of law, the central role of United Nations in world affairs, disarmament and non-proliferation. They also reaffirmed their commitment with cooperation in science, technology and innovation, among other themes^{xxxvi}. Patriota also visited Moscow in September 2011 for political consultations with Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov. Among areas with great potential for future partnerships were sectors such as energy, space and education. Brazil also wished to increase academic exchanges with Russia^{xxxvii}. Rousseff visited Russia in December 2012 and was hosted by then President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev. The leaders of Brazil and Russia addressed the strengthening of the Strategic Cooperation between the two states, with special attention to initiatives aiming at the modernization of productive structures and professional training^{xxxviii}.

Rousseff and Putin welcomed the signing of the agreement between Brazil and Russia on Defense Cooperation. In this context, they agreed to give priority to the area of technological development and reiterated the importance of developing long-term cooperation, based on the principle of technology transfer, the establishment of industrial partnerships and staff training programs^{xxxix}. Other meetings between authorities of both states happened in February and June 2013^{xl}.

In its cooperation with the Indian government, Rousseff's government held comprehensive discussions which covered all aspects of bilateral relations and multilateral issues such as disarmament and non-proliferation, climate change and human rights. In March 2011, the foreign ministers of Brazil and India reaffirmed their commitment to the reform of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council through the expansion of permanent and non-permanent members, with increased representation of developing states in both, to improve its efficiency, representativeness, and legitimacy. They also intensified relations in areas such as defense, science and technology, agriculture, energy security and civil nuclear cooperation^{xli}. Rousseff also visited India in March 2012 for the BRICS Summit and met with President Pratibha Patil and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh with a view to examine issues in the bilateral agenda, such as science and technology, education, defense, culture, environment and social policies. Beyond the bilateral level, Brazil and India also maintained close coordination in the United Nations and WTO and cooperated in G4 and G20^{xlii}.

During Rousseff's visit to China in April 2011, cooperation documents between Brazil and China were signed in areas such as defense, science and technology, water resources, sport, education, agriculture, energy and telecommunications, among others. Rousseff and then Chinese president Hu Jintao positively evaluated the major advances in trade and economic cooperation between the two states in recent years and expressed satisfaction with the rapid expansion of trade flows and bilateral investment. In 2009, China became the largest trading partner of Brazil and, in 2010, one of the main sources of foreign investment in Brazil. The presidents also recognized the need to intensify the dialogue on structures of trade and investment and the diversification of bilateral trade. Both sides acknowledged their mutual interest in raising military and defense cooperation to a new level through the activities under the Brazil-China Joint Defense Committee and welcomed the signing of the Agreement on Defense Cooperation^{xliii}.

In March 2012, Rousseff and then Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao announced the elevation of the Sino-Brazilian relationship to the level of Global Strategic Partnership and welcomed the signing of the Ten-Year Cooperation Plan (2012-2021), which added to the Brazil-China Joint Action Plan substantial advances in promoting bilateral cooperation and strengthening the strategic content of the Sino-Brazilian relations. The Ten-Year Cooperation Plan would guide cooperation actions in the following ten years in the areas of science, technology and innovation, space, energy, mining, infrastructure and transport, investment, industrial partnerships and financial cooperation, trade and economic cooperation and cultural and educational cooperation^{xliv}. In March 2013, Brazil and China, through their central banks, signed an agreement of local currency swap amounting to 60 billion reais (190 billion yuan), aimed at facilitating bilateral trade between the two states and protecting both states from dollar fluctuations^{xlv}. At the BRICS Finance Ministers' meeting in March 2013, Mantega said that Brazil was open to the Chinese participation in energy enterprises, especially oil and gas, since these sectors represented a great level of synergy and complementarity^{xlvi}.

In July 2011, Patriota and South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Maite Nkoane-Mashabane reaffirmed the importance of the bilateral Strategic Partnership launched in July 2010 and agreed to assign priority to cooperation on science and technology and on education. They underscored that, in light of the lack of significant progress in multilateral trade negotiations and the thriving commercial exchange among developing states, the full potential of interregional arrangements should be explored. Both ministers also addressed pending trade issues between the two states, such as trade defense measures and restrictions that affect bilateral exchanges. Both condemned the human rights violations in Libya and Syria and underscored the central role played by the African Union in seeking a political solution to the Libyan conflict^{xlvii}. Nkoane-Mashabane visited Brazil in July 2013 to discuss with Patriota the bilateral cooperation in areas such as agriculture, social development, information society and science, technology and innovation, among others^{xlviii}.

Regarding the BRICS, at the third summit of the group in Sanya, China, in April 2011, Rousseff and the other four leaders defended that global economic governance should be strengthened and the voice of emerging and developing states in international affairs should be enhanced.

Regarding the turbulence in the Middle East, the North African and West African regions, they indicated that they shared the principle that the use of force should be avoided and believed that the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of each state should be respected^{xlix}. In order to strengthen the partnership for global stability, security and prosperity, at the fourth BRICS summit in New Delhi, in March 2012, BRICS leaders said they would examine the feasibility of a common investment bank to fund infrastructure and sustainable economy projects in developing states^l. In March 2013, at their fifth summit in Durban, Rousseff and the other BRICS leaders announced that they have agreed to establish a new development bank for mobilizing resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging economies and developing states, to supplement the existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global growth and development. They have also concluded that the establishment of a self-managed contingent reserve arrangement would have a positive precautionary effect, help BRICS states forestall short-term liquidity pressures, provide mutual support and further strengthen financial stability^{li}.

Similar decisions have been taken by Brazil and the other BRICS states in multilateral fora. They also tried to adopt coordinated positions. At the 66th UN General Assembly, in September 2011, there was convergence regarding the creation of an independent Palestine state, the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the reform of international institutions^{lii}. In 2011, alongside Brazil, all other BRICS states were represented in the United Nations Security Council, which contributed to the debate of the major issues in the Security Council's agenda, added a healthy political diversity to the organ and strengthened diplomatic dialogue among these states^{liii}. Brazil, India and South Africa abstained from voting in the UN Security Council on sanctions against Syria in October 2011. China and Russia vetoed the resolution project supported by European states. The BRICS members criticized the United States and Europe because of their action in Libya and said that it had surpassed the mandate approved by the UN Security Council. In November 2011, the deputy foreign ministers of the group agreed that the transformations after the Arab Spring should be compatible with the respect for sovereignty and nonviolence^{liiv}. In February 2012, under heavy criticism from Western and Arab states, Russia and China vetoed the UNSC resolution that would exhort Syrian president, Bashar al-Assad, to leave power.

Brazil voted for a resolution that condemned the Syrian regime in the General Assembly. Nevertheless, Brazilian leaders argued that military intervention should be the last action in any conflict^{lv}.

BRICS members' concern with a contagion of the European crisis was not translated into innovative joint initiatives to deal with this issue. Brazil and the other BRICS members agreed on contributing via IMF in order not only to claim for the fund's reform, but also strengthen the role of developing states in international institutions^{lvi}. The concern at the ongoing deterioration of the global economic scenario was also visible at IBSA. Member states stressed the importance of the implementation of a credible plan of macroeconomic and financial policies and structural reforms by the Eurozone states, as a necessary step to prevent further negative shocks to the world economy. They also emphasized the need to increase policy coordination amongst G20 nations, with a view to avert a new recession. Rouseff and the other IBSA leaders also affirmed that South-South cooperation was complementary to – and not a substitute for – North-South Cooperation and encompassed all the aspects of international relations beyond the traditional economic and technical areas^{lvii}.

The Domestic Pressure

During Rouseff's government, some domestic actors have increased their participation in Brazilian foreign policy making. Some ministries – such as the Finance Ministry, the Environment Ministry and others – intensified their cooperation with Itamaraty in order to implement strategies for Brazil's international insertion. Outside the Executive branch, businessmen in the industrial sector were a great example. Their participation has increased especially after the stagnation of international agendas relevant to these actors due to conflicts of interest at the external level. The international economic fora have shown limited ability to promote consensus to advance on agendas stalled by conflicts of interest, as was the case of the WTO Doha Round. The G20 itself was facing difficulties in strengthening commitments to limit the freedom to adopt autonomous national policies, even when they had negative impacts on other economies.

Domestically, the significant growth of imports and the loss of market share of manufactured products in total exports imposed increasing pressure on industry businessmen for greater activism in trade policy, particularly demands for increased protection through tariffs or the more intensive use of trade defense instruments. China in particular was conceived as a great opportunity, but increasingly as a major threat: China contributed to the performance of commodity exports, but the strong growth of Brazilian imports of Chinese products fueled the debate on the need for the state to develop a strategy to deal with China. The business sector pressed the Rousseff government to promote changes in the direction of foreign economic policy adopted in the two Lula's terms. On the one hand, it would be necessary, in the opinion of many businessmen, to review priorities and alliances in key international economic fora. On the other hand, greater intervention in domestic trade policy was possible, but brought the challenge of avoiding a return to protectionist strategies that might interfere in the competition in the domestic market and competitiveness of exportable products^{lviii}.

A number of NGOs – especially those related to human rights issues – also wanted to expand their participation in foreign policy making in Brazil. Both national and international NGOs – such as Human Rights Watch – pressed the Rousseff government to reassess Brazilian international action and give greater importance to human rights. In the view of many of these groups, the foreign policy of Lula's government neglected human rights issues. Those groups showed more satisfaction with the Rousseff government's increased concern on the subject, especially when the president said clearly that she was not in accordance with Brazilian foreign policy on human rights, specifically in the case of Iran and the positions that Lula had in relation to women's rights on that state. However, despite the apparent initial signs of change, in 2011 Brazil again abstained from a vote in the UN General Assembly which condemned human rights violations in Iran. Groups defending human rights criticized Rousseff for not condemning violations in Cuba during her visit to the island. In 2011, numerous groups have criticized the fact that, in crises in Libya or Syria, Brazil's performance in the first year of Rousseff government brought no major changes compared to its predecessor.^{lix}.

While Brazil was a nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council, Rousseff's government indicated that Brazil reaffirmed its diplomatic identity as a peace-loving state, 'strongly committed to preventive diplomacy, to the settlement of tensions and crises through dialogue, to the respect to the international law and to the terms of the UNSC decisions, and to the promotion and protection of human rights'^{lx}. However, many NGOs indicated the fragility of Brazilian performance in the area of human rights, especially regarding the Syrian situation. Brazil did not support operations that involved military intervention, but was also unable to point out any concrete alternative, a policy considered by NGOs as largely doubtful facing one of the most criticized regimes around the world – Syria – because of its human rights records. In 2012, Rousseff instructed the Brazilian delegation to the UN to abstain in the vote on a resolution condemning human rights violations committed by the Iranian regime. The Foreign Ministry said that human rights issues should be addressed in the appropriate forums to avoid the risk of politicization, but, when confronted by an 'appropriate forum' such as Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States (OAS), as in the case of suspension of the construction of the Belo Monte dam for violations of rights of indigenous peoples, fishermen and agricultural producers, Rousseff's government withdrew the Brazilian ambassador at the agency and temporarily suspended financial contributions^{lxi}.

Final Considerations

It is possible to say that the 'South American anchor' of Brazilian foreign policy was consolidated in Rousseff's administration in the light of more convergent preferences of Brazilian and other South American governments on the integration of productive chains, the strengthening of South America as a zone of peace and democracy and the implementation of projects that could promote convergence and social cohesion. The attempts of rapprochement with the United States were connected to more convergent preferences of Brazilian and the U.S. governments on the coordination to fight the global economic crisis and the intensification of reciprocal investments. However, the preferences of Brazilian and U.S. authorities still diverged on the priority given to non-intervention and multilateralism and the use of coercion.

The strengthening of cooperation with emerging economies in Africa and Asia is related to more convergent preferences of Rousseff and members of Itamaraty, other Brazilian ministries and agencies with the emerging economies on the promotion of more balanced North-South relations and the search for partnerships guided by the imperatives of development. Nevertheless, some domestic groups indicated the necessity to review priorities and alliances in economic issues and pressed for the reassessment of Brazilian human rights international positions.

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