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Brazil and the Economic, Political, and Environmental Multilateralism: the Lula years (2003-2010)

O Brasil e o multilateralismo econômico, político e ambiental: o governo Lula (2003 – 2010)

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Introduction¹

During the first decade of the 21st century, the multilateral dimension was a challenge to Brazilian foreign policy through two inflections. In the 1990s, it followed the medium powers, changing from resistance to the ongoing regime towards an acceptance of its bases and rules, putting them in harmony with the general principles of the system that emerged, their regimes and procedures. This move implied distancing itself from the third-world discourse and a perception based on the North-South divide. It involved instead the adoption of the international mainstream and the replacement, according to governmental discourse, of the “autonomy through distance” (*autonomia pela distância*) model to the “autonomy through participation” (*autonomia pela participação*) one (VIGEVANI, CEPALUNI, 2007).

The multilateral space had been defined by Brazilian diplomacy in the 1990s as the best setting for the country’s performance, eagerly willing to participate in the building up of rules for the framing of a new world order. During Cardoso’s administration, the development strategy was based not on a critique of the international system, but on the attempt to influence the construction of its rules with the means of potentializing the country’s international insertion.

With the change in government, and the swearing-in of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the multilateral policy would keep its central position, although its contents and strategies were deeply reoriented. The new multilateral conception was based on a perception of the international system as having a multipolar tendency

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and power diffusion, but still jeopardizing developing countries. As such, Brazil stood strong behind the need for increased representation in discussion forums as a means to democratize and augment the efficiency of organizations such as the UN. On the action front, it has sought to explore new bargaining and negotiation spaces through the intense usage of articulation groups.

On the other hand, the multilateral agenda received a new makeover, adding the substantial issues of economic development and trade openness to the necessity of further democratizing the decision-making process (UN). As a result, an institutionalized coordination has been established with other developing countries in forums such as IBSA and the G-20.

Thus, the purpose of this article is to analyze Brazilian multilateral diplomacy's new conception through the study of Brazil's international insertion in economical, political and environmental global issues. It will precisely attempt to verify how the formation of "variable geometry" groups (IBSA and G-20) is working to add new dynamism in multilateral negotiations and to reinforce Brazil's development model.

Foreign Policy under Lula: Multilateralism and Variable Geometry

In his inaugural speech as president, President Lula announced an inflection in foreign policy with the construction of a new international political matrix. Lula stated that foreign policy would also reflect the aspirations for change seen on the streets, guided by a humanistic perspective and as an instrument for national development. The main tools for national development would be the promotion of free trade, the building up of capacities through advanced technology, and the search for productive investments, regional integration, and trade negotiations with other blocs and countries. With regard to trade negotiations, Lula remembered the protectionism practiced by developed countries, so detrimental to Brazilian exports. The President also reaffirmed the willingness to negotiate in every forum and with every region in the world, yet the priority would be South America and Mercosur (SILVA, 2003).

In bilateral relations, Brazilian diplomacy stated its disposition to enlarge and strengthen partnerships in all continents. Regarding developed countries, the President made reference to the enhancement of understandings and cooperation, at the same time manifesting the desire to deepen relations with the great developing nations such as China, India, Russia, and South Africa, among others. After stating his willingness to boost relations with the African continent, Lula went on to deal with multilateral relations. He defended the need to democratize international relations, stimulating multipolarity and so avoiding hegemonies. In the context of the Iraq invasion, unauthorized by UN's Security Council, Lula laid claim to enhance the importance of multilateral organizations and of International Law. He also advocated the UN Security Council reform so that it would represent

contemporary reality through the inclusion, as permanent members, of developed and developing countries from all regions (SILVA, 2003).

The appointment of Ambassador Celso Amorim to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE) symbolized the great lines of Brazilian foreign policy under Lula's government. The designation of a career diplomat, a former Chancellor under Itamar Franco's administration, posed as another sign that the country's foreign policy would neither undergo an abrupt change nor adopt a "militant and ideological" posture, as some analysts speculated. On the other hand, the guidelines defined by the new Chancellor pointed to a deepening of some initiatives taken under the Cardoso government since the worsening of the international crisis. During the last two years of Cardoso's government, Brazilian diplomacy developed a significant agenda for South America as a way to overcome the crisis in Mercosur and to keep the integration process flowing even under adverse circumstances. By the same token, very discretely, it sought to regain certain autonomy before the United States since the beginning of the Bush administration.

The new diplomacy sought to negotiate and bargain with more impetus the country's international agenda regarding the great powers. At the same time, neighbors are offered the opportunity of a much needed partnership to resume economic growth, which is an imperative condition for integration to stop being virtual. Furthermore, there is also the need for some strategic action at a global level to revert the growing marginalization the region has been suffering. Regional integration could ensure governability and development across South America. Moreover, a reinforced South-American integration is an essential instrument of negotiation when facing the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). As a result, Brazilian diplomacy sought to guarantee the country's autonomy, multiple international insertion and a more consistent and less rhetorical action than the one led by Fernando Henrique Cardoso.

Finally, the government's internal project has also had a significant international impact as its social proposals met the agenda planned to correct the distortions created by globalization centered only on trade and free investments. The implication was to revise the current development model, a move which gave new bases for regional integration. However, in order to assure that a production economy could replace the neoliberal project – which generated a tendency for stagnation –, it would be necessary to reinforce multilateral organisms and, within them, to reinforce Brazil's performance in all its strength. That is the meaning implied by the expression "a more active and affirmative diplomacy" (*diplomacia mais ativa e afirmativa*) which seeks to react to adverse international conditions.

In April 2003, in the opening academic session at *Instituto Rio Branco*, Chancellor Celso Amorim evaluated the first hundred days of government. The session was developed into four parts translating what can be considered the four strategic axes of Brazil's international insertion: (a) South America; (b) the commitment to multilateralism in the process of peace development; (c) the

affirmative commercial agenda, and (d) diversified partnerships with developed and developing countries (AMORIM, 2003). Starting with Lula's government, Brazilian foreign policy sought to revalue the strong core of national economy and to promote an international insertion to regain spaces lost during the 1990s.

The G-20, the WTO and Economic Multilateralism

In the context of the transformations in Brazilian foreign policy, the G-20 came into being on August 20th 2003, during the preparatory meetings for the fifth WTO Ministerial Conference, held in Cancún (Mexico) between September 10th and 14th 2003. The group, accounting for nearly 60% of the world population and for 70% of all rural population, focuses its actions on agriculture – the central theme in the Doha Development Agenda. In fact, since the last Ministerial Conference (Doha, 2001), WTO member-countries unsuccessfully tried to reach some form of agreement regarding the agenda adopted on Qatar's capital, whose main axis was precisely development and agriculture. On September 1st 2003, the G-20 sent Uruguayan ambassador Carlos Perez del Castillo a letter demanding his agricultural liberalization proposal to be referred to Cancún. The G-20's decision was a response to Perez del Castillo's initiative to send his final declaration draft to Cancún, a document which was considered to be too close to the joint interests of the United States and of the European Union. Overall, he had presented a very limited agricultural liberalization proposal if compared to the one posed by the G-20 (ROSSI, 2003. p. B1).

During the first G-20 Ministerial Meeting – held in Brasilia on the 11th and 12th of December 2003 –, the Ministers highlighted that by congregating developing countries from Africa, the Americas and Asia – all with different structures and agricultural orientations –, around a common negotiation platform, the G-20 contributed substantially to make the WTO's process more inclusive. Furthermore, they showed their desire to extend cooperation with other groups. The Ministers also urged WTO members to consider the concerns expressed by of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The G-20 recognized the difficulties faced by countries dependent on trade preferences and emphasized the Cairo Declaration, adopted by the African countries, acknowledging the existence of many convergence points between the G-20 and the African Group. It has been observed that closer cooperation between the two groups should be pursued, taking into account the economic, social, and political importance of cotton to a large number of African countries.

Since Brazil articulated and led the movement, the discussion started to focus on the countries' capacity, together with Argentina, China, India and South Africa, to face the world's biggest powers. In other words, would it not be isolated by trying to face the interests of developed countries? The answer can be found in the number of members in the G-20. Starting with five members, the group was

able to reach twenty during the meeting in Cancún. Nonetheless, some countries began to back down under direct American pressure through advantageous bilateral agreements, especially in the Americas. Consequently, Colombia, Peru, Uruguay, and Guatemala all declined from the group. The G-20 reached its peak as G-23, but then backed down to G-12. As the number of countries varied, the group came to be named “G-X” or even G-20-plus, by Chancellor Celso Amorim himself, who indirectly recognized the American competence in undermining the group. Even so, the G-20 holds a large geographical representation with 19 members at present: five from Africa (South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe), six from Asia (China, Philippines, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Thailand), and eight from Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Paraguay, and Venezuela) (ALENCAR, 2003, p. B6).

In that context, Brazilian diplomacy watched the launching of Uruguayan Perez del Castillo’s candidature to director-general at the WTO. As a response, it launched Brazilian diplomat Seixas Correia to the same position. Nevertheless, the country was not able to mobilize the support of the majority of Latin American, G-20, and Cairns Group countries, even when linking the name of the Uruguayan ambassador to the failure of the Cancun round. Ambassador Clodoaldo Hugueney Filho, subsecretary-general for Economic and Technological Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and main negotiator for the country in the WTO, criticized the Uruguayan candidature, stating that the Uruguayan ambassador led the failed WTO ministerial meeting in Cancun in September 2003 (PEIXOTO, 2004. p. B1).

On March 19th 2005, during the India Meeting (which was considered to be a very fruitful meeting), Uruguay confirmed its entry to the G-20. The bloc conquered Uruguayan accession and it also managed to create a prosperous environment for the closing of a free trade agreement between India and Mercosur. In April 2005, following the first consultation round regarding the WTO elections, the Brazilian government withdrew its candidature.

Due to the lack of concrete results during the Cancun meeting, the G-20 decided to focus on several technical and political consultations as a means to make the negotiation process more dynamic. Ministerial Meetings followed in Brasília (December 2003), Sao Paulo (June 2004), New Delhi (March 2005), Durban (September 2005), and Geneva (October and November 2005), as well as frequent meetings at the level of Heads of Delegation and High-Level Officials in Geneva. Furthermore, the G-20 promoted technical meetings to discuss specific proposals regarding the WTO negotiations on agriculture and to compose technical documents to support the group’s common opinion.

The first Ministerial Meeting held in Brazil took place in Brasília on the 11th and 12th December 2003, aiming at coordinating positions to continue the struggle on agricultural negotiations and to secure progress on the Doha Round. At the end of the assemblage, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva offered his greetings to the Ministers at the event and delivered a speech on agricultural negotiations

and international trade (COMUNICADO, 2003). WTO's Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi as well as the European Union's Commissioner for Trade Pascal Lamy – both present as special guests –, met with G-20 Ministers. On that occasion, the Official Communiqué listed and restated the group's main goals, namely the elimination of distorted trade and agricultural practices along with food security. The Ministers reiterated the need to preserve the whole of the Doha Development Agenda and emphasized that any reinterpretation or dilution of the group's mandate would affect the delicate balance among the various negotiation fronts, compromising the focus of the work program. They also affirmed that an effective liberalization and reform of agricultural trade would largely contribute to the development goals in the Doha Agenda.

Since the creation of the G-20, there have been some difficulties in bringing the group and the Cairns Group closer together due to differences in positions and interests. The G-20 includes only developing countries, while the other one consists of rich countries such as Canada and Australia and poor countries such as Paraguay and Colombia. Brazil is a member of both groups, and attempted to bring them together during the Cairns Group Meeting held in Costa Rica in February 2004. The United States Trade Representative Robert Zoellick was also present on the occasion and confirmed the North-American willingness to be more flexible during negotiations. Nevertheless, he complained about the American position of conditioning concessions to European Union reciprocity.

At the same time, Brazil won several battles on the WTO in disputes considered disloyal by the Brazilian government. The country won a battle against Canada over subsidies concerning the selling of Bombardier airplanes (2001). The final decision assured Brazilians the right to apply retaliating measures against Canadian products. In 2004, it reached success against American subsidies given to cotton production and exports. Brazil argued that the United States came to distort the worldwide cotton trade with subsidies, then provoking an international price reduction on the fiber. During the same year, Brazil won – along with Australia and Thailand –, another proceeding, this time against the European Union, regarding subsidies paid by the block governments to sugar producers (AS VITÓRIAS, 2005, p. B9). On March 2005, Brazil was successful at yet another case against the United States on WTO. It was also authorized by the organization to apply sanctions towards the Americans on the cotton case.

The G-20 has been able to articulate itself with other groups, as well as to achieve international arrangements with countries which present a lower degree of development. The Ministers and High-Level Officials of the G-20 and coordinators of G-33, the African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries Group of States (ACP), the Least Developed Countries Group (LDCs), the African Group, the Small Vulnerable Economies (SVEs), the Sectoral Initiative in favor of Cotton (C4), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and the Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA-11) met in Geneva on June 11th 2007 to evaluate the state of agricultural

negotiations in the Doha Round. During that meeting, representatives released a joint statement reaffirming the need to make progress in the Doha Round and reinforced the importance of the agricultural issue and of the principle of balance during negotiations (Declaração de Imprensa, 2007).

IBSA, Multipolarity Defense and the Development of the South

Concomitantly with the creation of the G-20, the Brazilian government took part in the formation of the G-3, gathering Brazil, India, and South Africa (IBSA). The India-Brazil-South Africa Trilateral Dialogue Forum, launched on June 2003, consists of the three countries' strategic articulation. They agreed on the following principles: the respect for the rules of International Law, the strengthening of the United Nations and its Security Council, and the importance of prioritizing diplomacy as a means of maintaining international peace and security. They restated the need to fight threats to both international peace and security in accordance to the United Nations Chart and the juridical instruments Brazil, India and South Africa abide by. Another focal point was the United Nations Reform, with emphasis to its Security Council. In this regard, they pointed out the necessity to expand the Security Council, both in its permanent and non-permanent members, to include developing countries. Brazil, India and South Africa also agreed to join efforts to increase the UN General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council's efficiency. The Chancellors identified trilateral cooperation as a valuable instrument to reach social and economic development. Additionally, they highlighted their intention to give greater impetus to cooperation among the three countries, especially in the fields of technology, computer science and agriculture (Declaração de Brasília, 2003).

After a general announcement to the United Nations General Assembly on September 2003, India, Brazil, and South Africa decided to establish a fiduciary fund in the scope of UNDP to contribute to poverty and hunger relief in an improved international cooperation framework, and also aiming at the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The fiduciary fund is used to implement scalable projects to be disseminated in developing countries which may show interest in it. The projects are seen as instances of positive practice in the fight against poverty and hunger, as well as actions in health, education, sanitary safety, and food security improvement. The IBSA Facility Fund for Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger, a special fiduciary fund of UNDP, had Guinea-Bissau as its first beneficiary country in the field of agricultural development, followed by a relief project for Haiti concerning solid waste collection.

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs from India (Yashwant Sinha), Brazil (Celso Amorim), and South Africa (Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma) met in New Delhi in March 2004 for the First Meeting of the Trilateral Commission of the IBSA Dialogue Forum. On the occasion, the three countries focused their

discussions on two main areas: cooperation for defense, health, and trade along with the increase on Southern countries' influence on international institutions, particularly the UN and the WTO. The Ministers stated that IBSA should contribute significantly to the design of South-South cooperation as well as to be a positive factor in the promotion of human development, establishing potential synergies among its members. They also advocated the strengthening of the multilateral system, the United Nations reform – especially of its Security Council –, the fight against international terrorism, the defense of the environment, the preservation of biodiversity, the strengthening of the G-20, the pursuit of social development, and the strengthening of cultural ties. The representatives also agreed to intensify cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other forums, aiming at securing the free growth and development of pacific forms of use for atomic energy through the provision of technology, equipment, and material under the appropriate safeguards. Furthermore, the necessity to maintain Iraq's integrity and unity was stressed by the Ministers, together with the re-establishment of security and stability in the country. Still on this subject, they urged the transfer of full sovereignty to the Iraqi people as soon as possible.

The Ministers understood that it would be an important challenge before the international community to maximize the benefits of globalization, and to assure that the latter becomes a positive force for sustainable economic growth in developing countries. They emphasized the strong need for developing countries to have their own agenda to establish their goals in a globalized world. They have to coordinate this agenda with multilateral processes in order to influence negotiations and reach profitable results for the South.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva visited India in January 2004 and there he signed commercial and technological cooperation deals. On the occasion, Lula asserted that the union among poor countries could change the world's commercial geography of and break the unilateralism imposed by developed nations on commercial relations. During this meeting, Mercosur member-countries (Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay) and India also signed a Preferential Trade Agreement, the block's first commercial agreement with an Asian country. The deal was considered to be the first step towards a Free Trade Area between Mercosur and India. Lula also highlighted the similarities between Brazil and India, stressing the possible benefits to be brought by the tightening of relations between the two countries.

In March 2005, a commercial agreement between Mercosur and India came into being in New Delhi, envisaging an expansion to South Africa. According to Itamaraty, this idea was launched during the agreement signing ceremony which stipulated preferential trade tariffs with India on 900 products. Chancellor Amorim participated in the ceremony, as well as in the G-20 meeting (ACORDO, 2005). By analyzing the speeches delivered, it is possible to say that the Trilateral Forum advances as central themes: 1) a fairer and more righteous globalization, 2)

the expansion of Southern countries' representation on the UN Security Council, 3) the defense and maintenance of the G-20, 4) the promotion of a South-South economic integration, and 5) the exchange of social and environmental projects.

In September 2006, the First Summit Meeting of the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum was held in Brasília. During the meeting, the three countries defended a reform in international organisms to increase the representation of developing countries. Moreover, they asked rich countries to make concessions in trade negotiations. In the meeting, the Brazilian President also suggested a G-3 managerial meeting be formed to advance economic and commercial integration among the countries.

In October 2007, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, and South-African President Thabo Mbeki took part in the Second IBSA Summit Meeting in Pretoria. They requested a unifying voice from their Southern hemisphere economies to influence international agenda. Lula criticized developing countries participatory formula in world decision forums such as the UN and the G-8, advocating a larger influence for these nations in international debates. At the meeting, Lula also affirmed IBSA's capacity to express its ideas on several topics on the international agenda, reflecting Brazilian credibility and aptitude to contribute to a fairer and further democratic world order.

The United Nations reform and the Brazilian political protagonism

Among IBSA's main goals, besides technical cooperation and possibilities for integration and articulation among similar developing countries, it is pertinent to mention political matters related to the reordering of the post-Cold war international system and the United Nations Security Council reform. Since Itamar Franco's administration, Brazil has started to work systematically on the countries' candidature as a permanent member to the Security Council. The following President, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, also embraced the task during his two terms in office, although adopting a distinct perspective. By subscribing entirely to a new globalized international agenda and complying with the economic openness model, he believed it would be possible to qualify the country for such a position, with the recognition by the five permanent members of Brazil's legitimacy. It was nevertheless a slight delusional hope since politics is not a game where people voluntarily share what is theirs; it is necessary to conquer one's share. In order to conquer it, one needs to increase one's power, not renounce to it as the former president had done.

The debate on the UN reform progressed slowly, with several propositions and candidatures competing against each other (Mexico and Argentina were also on the run, trying at the same time to block the Brazilian initiative). The war on Iraq soon followed, bringing with it the Bush administration's shocking disrespect of the UN's position on the matter as the war did not have a UN mandate. To a great

number of analysts, the organization was becoming demoralized. Nonetheless, numerous countries saw through the situation the urgent need for reform as a means to establish a multilateral and multipolar order, instead of a new hegemony.

Under President Lula, Brazilian diplomacy has prioritized autonomy, a moderate and propositional contestation, strategic alliances compatible with the country's weight – especially with the great developing countries –, South-American leadership and the region's integration, and a campaign in favor of the social dimension. Brazilian performance along with the WTO, the G-3 creation, the material and political support to countries in need, and the opposition to the war, had a considerable impact on the international community. As such, Brazil conquered an important political space, posing as “new” in international relations and laying at the center of a political movement to acquire a permanent seat onto the UN Security Council. The positive expressions of other members such as France, China, and even the United Kingdom to the Brazilian candidature underline the importance of the new Brazilian diplomacy.

A strong point in the country's foreign policy under Lula was the tightening of relations with Africa. The President visited the African continent various times. Half of the Brazilian population has African roots; there are similarities between the two cultures, the African continent lays nearby – being a part of the Brazilian geopolitical scenario –, and the economies on both sides complement each other. Despite all these factors, Africa has always been a secondary front for Brazilian diplomacy. During the 1970s, intense collaboration with African countries in economic multilateral forums began, along with an intense common political agenda and a growing trade of goods and services. Nevertheless, the permanent war on Southern Africa only allowed for the achievement of modest results. It was a difficult situation whose solution only came with the end of the white minority regime in South Africa and Nelson Mandela's election in 1994.

From Fernando Collor to Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Brazilian government prioritized relations with OECD countries and, to a smaller degree, with Mercosur. Little attention was paid to Mandela's proposal in 1996 to turn his country into a Mercosur associate member. With Lula's election, strategic partnership between Brasília and Pretoria started to be built in matters concerning not only regional issues, but also global – such as the G-3, peace, and development. Both countries are strong candidates for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, as well as to being regional leaders in a multipolar system. Lula's government has been searching for a new partnership with Africa, particularly with South Africa, which has similar interests within the international system such as the defense of multipolarity.

On the other hand, Brazil has been able to sustain an effective participation within the UN. The project for a permanent spot on the Security Council, an old dream of the Brazilian diplomacy, has gained new force and activism. Beyond that, the UN Millennium Development Goals, approved in 2000 during the United

Nations Millennium Summit, show a large resemblance with Lula's internal development project in such topics as the fight against poverty, increasing the country's protagonism in this forum.

During the opening ceremony of the United Nations General Assembly 59th Session, on September 21st 2004, one photograph made a strong statement in the international political scene: Indian and Japanese Prime Ministers Manmohan Singh and Junichiro Koizumi, German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, and President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, holding hands, pledged to support each other's intentions to conquer a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. The two economic giants, once defeated during the Second World War, and the two biggest and most important developing countries sealed a formal alliance to defend their candidatures in the context of the UN reform. For Germany, it was about restoring its full sovereignty, lost since 1945, after a reunification accomplished not long ago. At the same time, Brazil and India, as well as other countries, claimed the same right as representatives of their respective regions. However, due to a series of pressures and unique strategy, Japan announced its withdrawal from the G-4 in January 2006, but it later resumed talks with the group in July 2007 during a meeting in New York.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva traveled to New York on September 13th 2005 to participate in the UN Millennium Summit which was a part of the organization's 60th Session of the General Assembly. During the summit, Lula attacked agricultural subsidies given in developed countries and demanded the promised financial help for Haiti, besides defending the enlargement of the permanent and non-permanent members in the Security Council. The Final Resolution, signed by 170 countries, did not satisfy Brazilian expectations, since it only acknowledges the need for a reform without stipulating timelines for it. With regards to the fight against hunger and poverty, Lula announced that Brazil was seeking to tax international air tickets to finance the fight against the problem in the world. The committee formed by Brazil, Chile, France, Algeria, Spain, and Germany also put forward a series of proposals to finance strategies against hunger and poverty. Lula still took the time to meet with North-American businessmen.

President Lula, during the Security Council meeting on the activities for the Millennium Summit in September 2005, brought once more to the table the matter of increasing the number of permanent members in the council. Later on, he advocated the fight against hunger as an essential tool for the accomplishment of the Millennium Goals and to ensure peace and international security. The Millennium Declaration, approved in 2000 during the Millennium Summit in New York, reflects the development goals for 147 chiefs of State and government for 189 countries. The eight objectives are the following: 1) to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, 2) to achieve universal primary education, 3) to promote gender equality and empower women, 4) to reduce child mortality, 5) to improve maternal health, 6) to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, 7) to

ensure environmental sustainability, and 8) to develop a global partnership for development (SILVA, 2005).

To augment its presence in the UN, Brazil took on the coordination of troops in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in 2004. In January 2009, the Minustah forces comprised approximately seven thousand soldiers, the biggest contingent coming from Brazil, Uruguay, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Jordan.

Brazil and Environmental Multilateralism

Under Lula, Brazil sought to promote multilateral forums to discuss environmental issues, underlining the importance of a unified political treatment to the environmental agenda. The idea for Rio+20, a new UN Conference on Sustainable Development, fits into this approach. Another issue raised by Brazilian government as to the environment concerns the world's energy matrix. The country stands for a joint effort by the international community to research and invest on renewable energy sources. To this regard, the Brazilian diplomacy worked on stimulating the debate on this field through an International Conference on Biofuels, setting the basis for worldwide cooperation in the energy sector.

In 2009, the Brazilian speech in the UN General Assembly took a more incisive tone as it prompted developed countries to take part in solving problems related to climate change. According to the Brazilian diplomacy's conception on the matter, developed countries have bigger responsibilities in the environmental issue than developing countries, "solving these and other dead-locked subjects can only happen if the threats related to climate change are faced under the realization that we all have common, yet differentiated responsibilities" (SILVA, 2009).

According to Presidential Messages to the National Congress, the government developed a participatory environmental policy in multilateral conventions addressing climate change and international cooperation in the field of renewable forms of energy (considering proposals presented in 2004 during the Rio+ meeting in Johannesburg). The country also endorsed the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, taking into account that "the country's double condition as megadiverse as well as a great agricultural exporter gives power and specific weight to Brazilian participation in such an important international instrument" (BRASIL, 2005, p. 234).

Brazil has also acted in favor of developed countries' ratification of the Kyoto Protocol. The country takes interest in implementing the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) as predicted on the protocol, a move which would allow for investment in projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries. To that matter, in 2004 Brazil signed Memorandums of Understanding with Canada, Italy, and the Netherlands.

On the 10th Session of the Conference of Parties (COP 10) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Buenos Aires in 2004, Brazil

presented its first National Communication, which created a large international repercussion. During the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Brazilian delegation sought to defend a country's sovereignty over its natural resources. In 2007, Brazil hosted the 8th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Third Meeting of the Parties (MOP 3) of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The country also restated its commitment to participate in the Global Environment Facility (GEF), as well as cooperating with the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) to promote the region's sustainable development.

During the UN General Assembly Session in 2007, President Lula launched the proposal for a new Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, twenty years after Rio-92, and offered Brazil to host the event. In 2008, during the 9th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Bonn, Brazil – along with other developing countries – defended the creation of an international agreement to assure the proper distribution of benefits arising from the usage of biodiversity, helping to fight biopiracy. The country also took part in the 13th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Indonesia, an occasion to advocate in favor of renewable sources of energy and positive incentives to countries avoiding deforestation. By the end of the year, the 14th COP was held in Poland, a preparation for the Copenhagen Conference in 2009.

Regarding biofuels, which have been targeted by criticism over the last couple of years, Brazil carried out a clarifying policy about the value of this kind of renewable energy form that would promote sustainable development for periphery countries. That was the approach endorsed during the International Conference on Biofuels in São Paulo in December 2008 (BRASIL, 2009, p. 236). Therefore, Brazil has been able to sustain a strong presence in international conventions discussing environmental issues. Such a presence is justified by Brazil's position as a megadiverse country and by its concern with the effects of atmospheric pollution on the whole world such as global warming and the ozone layer depletion. Brazil also adopts a demanding position to argue in favor of natural resources sovereignty and the fair distribution of benefits earned through biodiversity.

Thus, on environmental matters, Brazilian foreign policy seeks to associate the need for development with the usage of natural resources by all nations. On the same line of thought, the country also shows a strong position in two topics: equal and fair distribution of the profits resulting from the extraction of natural resources between countries with advanced research and technology levels and megadiverse ones; the recognition that all countries should contribute to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, acknowledging the existence of common but differentiated responsibilities. Higher costs would bear upon those who have historically been polluting more rather than on developing countries. Therefore,

a South-South alignment on issues concerning the environment is also present once Brazil engaged alongside other megadiverse and developing countries such as India, China, South Africa, and Amazonian countries to act on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The block's focus was on a nation's sovereignty over its natural resources and sustainable use of biodiversity (BRASIL, 2005, p. 234).

On the subject of renewable energy sources, Brazilian diplomacy supported an investment on biofuels in several international forums. This action was indeed highly criticized by part of the international society which blames ethanol and biodiesel production for the increase in food pricing over the last couple of years. On the contrary, Brazilian foreign policy holds a speech on the double benefits of biofuels, especially for developing countries, with prospects for energetic autonomy, the opening of a new sector for investments and labor opportunities which would prompt growth and lead the way for sustainable development.

To this extent, the International Biofuels Forum was launched in 2007 with the presence of South Africa, China, the European Commission, the United States, India, and Brazil. The forum's main goal was to establish a dialogue and to coordinate positions on the matter. During that same year, a bilateral approach between Brazil and the United States translated itself into the Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Brazil to Advance Cooperation on Biofuels during President Bush's visit to Brazil. The memorandum sought to promote cooperation, develop the sector in third countries, and form a world market for biofuels. Brazil also pursued the establishment of other bilateral memorandums, particularly with Latin American, Caribbean, and African countries. The partnership between Brazil and the United States started to show results already in 2008. They mainly concern cooperation with third countries with the beginning of studies for ethanol production in various countries in Central America and Africa.

In matters of environmental policy, Brazilian diplomacy uses both South-South cooperation dynamic and its relations with central powers. Biofuels came as an opportunity for it to reinforce the country's international insertion. Such a possibility is due to Brazilian technological lead on biofuel production, which facilitated bilateral cooperation with several nations including the United States and the European Union. Hence, the environmental issue is articulated in the government's foreign policy for the construction of a new world order, one that is sustainable, multilateral, less asymmetric, and built on democratic institutions. The matters of sustainable development, of access to technology to achieve it, of differentiated responsibilities, and of sovereignty on models of development and on a country's right to its natural resources show Brazil's strong performance as a developing country which seeks to open space on international decision-making processes.

Conclusion

It is important to highlight that some features in the current Brazilian foreign policy have begun during Fernando Henrique Cardoso's terms in office. Nevertheless, he was severely restrained on his intentions due to internal difficulties and the international crisis at the time. Under Lula, Brazil started to work on an intense international agenda, transcending a subordinated approach to globalization and simple personal projection objectives. It tried to regain the country's capacity to negotiate concomitantly breaking from the North-Atlantic Liberal Consensus.

Brazil has started to act with optimism and political will, constantly originating political facts on the international scene. Previously, it had low self-esteem, taking into account that Collor and Cardoso saw the country as delayed concerning the adjustments demanded by the rich countries. On the contrary, Brazil now sees itself as a leader capable of negotiating and the beholder of a project that can even contribute to insert a social agenda into globalization. Such a position makes the country eligible to pursue several initiatives such as its entrance into a reformed UN Security Council as a permanent member.

Finally, instead of focusing on cooperation within large and saturated markets or with countries which see Brazil as secondary, Itamaraty has chosen to concentrate itself on unoccupied spaces. By coming closer together with its South-American neighbors – particularly Andean ones –, Southern Africa, Arab countries, and giants such as India, China, and Russia, Brazilian diplomacy was able to advance considerably and immediately, with astonishing business perspectives. The presence of Argentine guests and businessmen in the Presidential Delegation is an important remark of the new diplomacy's sensibility.

Beyond that, cooperation allowed for the construction of "variable geometry" alliances such as the G-3 and the G-20, which are able to exert a global influence. Rather than practicing an ideologically strong diplomacy, Brazil developed an active and pragmatic posture, seeking allies for each problem, contesting without challenging the big ones (as in trade negotiations and on the disrespect towards the UN), respecting, although not supporting, the position of problematic countries such as Venezuela, Cuba, and Iran.

The G-3, as announced during its launching, may come to be a G-5, with the virtual inclusion of China and Russia. Evidently, these two countries possess an important weight in the international system, and could form a group capable of exercising great influence in the alliance with Brazil, India and South Africa. As such, the G-3 initiative also seeks to reinforce and articulate less powerful partners from the group of emerging powers, attempting to turn them into acceptable protagonists. Thus, it is an action which brings Brazil to occupy an idle power space at a low cost, as can be apprehended from the rapid advancement of the initiative.

On the other hand, the G-20 gave Brazil a large bargaining capacity as the leader of a group of countries with an important agricultural production, and forced a change of focus in multilateral trade negotiations. However, it is necessary to enlarge and incorporate other actors, especially African ones. The G-20 still suffers restrictions from poorer countries, and its action has been facing resistance from the African block of countries in agricultural liberalization negotiations in the WTO. To be able to reach its goals, Brazilian diplomacy will have to broaden its political capacity to articulate the “variable geometries” with North-South contradictions and demands.

Brazilian multilateral environmental diplomacy has also put the country forward as a protagonist, not only through the relevance of the Amazon rainforest, but also through initiatives to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and to defend the environment associated with development. Even though environmental policies in Brazil need to advance, the country is on the way of achieving the status of “environmental power” as a respectable interlocutor in main forums and debates.

Finally, through the reinforcement of multilateralism, taking into account a flexible perspective of alliances and the creation of coalition groups, Brazil has developed its unique diplomacy that is adequate to the era of globalization, also having a development project for the country. However, the unique diplomacy can raise a problem because huge expectations may be created upon it, and it will only provide the expected results along with economic development and changes in the international system. In recent years, building a multilateral environment favorable to the defense of national interests has been one of the central elements for the defense of multipolarity, development and democratization of international relations.

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Abstract

This article discusses Brazil's multilateral policy under Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's administration, highlighting economic, political and environmental themes. The main argument is that Brazil's multilateral relations during this government reached a new significance with the reinforcement of international coalitions and the articulation with the country's new development model. The country has been using multilateral forums as a way to achieve international projection and support for its development project, highlighting bargaining aspects, variable geometry coalitions and the strengthening of South-South cooperation.

Resumo

Nesse artigo, discute-se a política multilateral do Brasil no governo de Luís Inácio Lula da Silva, destacando os temas econômicos, políticos e ambientais. O argumento central é que as relações multilaterais do Brasil durante este governo alcançaram um novo significado com o reforço de coalizões internacionais e a articulação com o novo modelo de desenvolvimento econômico do país. O País tem usado fóruns multilaterais como meio de alcançar projeção internacional e apoio para seu desenvolvimento econômico, enfatizando os aspectos de barganha, coalizões de geometria variável e o fortalecimento da cooperação sul-sul.

Key-words: Multilateralism; Brazilian diplomacy; Brazil and International Organizations.

Palavras-chave: multilateralismo; diplomacia brasileira; organizações internacionais e o Brasil.