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*Cooperation on food security with Africa as  
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- 2010)*

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## COOPERATION ON FOOD SECURITY WITH AFRICA AS AN INSTRUMENT OF BRAZIL'S FOREIGN POLICY (2003-2010)<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** In a context of growing interdependence, diversified possibilities for emerging powers to act and more commonly perceived transcendence of domestic subjects to the international arena, Brazil is a singular player: it is facing relevant internal transformations that allow the development of policies for mitigating historic inequalities, such as the ones to fight hunger and poverty; and aims at assuming greater responsibilities in an international arena characterized by growing multipolarity. Brazil's diplomatic corps tries to show the country as a necessary interlocutor and negotiator for the establishment of a more just and democratic world order. In this sense, many public policies associated with the agendas comprised by the concept of food security are instrumentalized by the policymakers as a means to assemble legitimacy, political support and economic opportunities for the South American powerhouse. These dynamics are clearly observed in the relations between Brazil and its African partners, which will be the focus of this paper.

**Keywords:** Brazilian foreign policy; International development cooperation; Brazil-Africa relations; Lula da Silva's government; food security.

## COOPERAÇÃO EM SEGURANÇA ALIMENTAR COM A ÁFRICA COMO UM INSTRUMENTO DE POLÍTICA EXTERNA BRASILEIRA (2003-2010)

**Resumo:** Em contexto de crescente interdependência, diversificadas possibilidades da atuação para potências emergentes e transcendência mais perceptível de questões domésticas para a arena internacional, o Brasil é ator singular: passa por transformações internas relevantes que permitem o desenvolvimento de políticas como as de combate à fome e à pobreza, voltadas para a mitigação de desigualdades históricas; e busca assumir maiores responsabilidades em arena internacional caracterizada por crescente multipolaridade. O corpo diplomático brasileiro busca mostrar o país como um interlocutor e negociador necessário para o estabelecimento de ordem global mais justa e democrática. Nesse sentido, variadas políticas públicas associadas com as agendas envolvidas pelo conceito de segurança alimentar são instrumentalizadas pelos formuladores de política externa como um meio de assegurar legitimidade, apoios políticos e oportunidades econômicas para o país sul-americano. Tais dinâmicas são claramente observadas nas relações entre o Brasil e seus parceiros africanos, assunto que será o tema desse artigo.

**Palavras-chave:** Política externa brasileira; Cooperação internacional para o desenvolvimento; Relações Brasil-África; Governo Lula da Silva; Segurança alimentar.

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### Introduction<sup>3</sup>

Brazil-Africa's relations occupy, currently, a strategic position in Brazilian foreign policy<sup>4</sup>, representing one pillar of Brazil's international insertion and a locus for developing cooperation<sup>5</sup> projects.<sup>6</sup> In the context of the post 9/11, which is marked by the fragmentation of the consensus born after the Cold War; the proliferation of security issues; the ascension of emerging powers; not to mention growing multipolarity, the African continent has gained unprecedented attention of Brazil's foreign policy formulators.<sup>7</sup>

After almost a decade of low intensity in the relations between the African continent and Brazil, Africa has regained importance in the country's foreign policy decisions. During the two tenures of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's presidency, and the chancellery of Celso Amorim, the region has been interwoven with Brazilian objectives, a discourse that was accompanied by a myriad of practical initiatives such as: opening embassies and consulates; presidential and ministerial visits; trade and financial investments; political-diplomatic concertation; technical cooperation actions; pardons of foreign debts; among others. Africa has started to be considered by Brazilian foreign policy formulators in terms of the relevance of its political, economic, cultural and security aspects for Brazil's interests.

This changing attitude in foreign policy was tributary to multiply variables, international and domestic ones. Externally, we refer to the economic growth of the

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<sup>4</sup> The term foreign policy echoes, in this article, the definition of Pinheiro (2004). It is considered as a set of actions and decisions of a specific actor – the state – in relation to other states or external actors, being defined by means of certain opportunities and demands from domestic and international fronts.

<sup>5</sup> We reckon the existence of varied types of international cooperation practices and their characteristics. Nevertheless, we will focus, in this article, mostly on Brazil's bilateral cooperation with its African partners.

<sup>6</sup> "Brazil has been making of the cooperation with the most needed an important directive of its diplomatic action", phrase of the discourse of the Ministry of External Relations, ambassador Celso Amorim in the graduation of the 2007-2009 Rio Branco Institute, the diplomatic academy of Brazil. Available at: <http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/sala-de-imprensa/discursos-artigos-entrevistas-e-outras-comunicacoes/ministro-estado-relacoes-exteriores/discurso-por-ocasio-do-dia-do-diplomata/print-nota>, accessed on 20/11/2013.

<sup>7</sup> "We reaffirm the profound laces that unite us to the whole African continent so as our disposition to actively contribute for it to develop its enormous possibilities", phrase of the discourse of the president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to the National Congress. Available at: <http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/folha/brasil/ult96u44275.shtml>, accessed on 08/12/2013.

African region, after its relative marginalization and isolation throughout the 1990s,<sup>8</sup> which has aroused increased attention not only from Brazil, but also from other emerging powers, mainly China, India, South Africa and Turkey. Moreover, the continent's political weight is of utmost importance in multilateral negotiations, in reason of African Union's (AU) composition, with 54 members that normally concert positions in multilateral forums. Coordinating supports alongside the AU was decisive, for instance, for the election of José Graziano da Silva, a Brazilian, for the position of Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in mid-2011.

With this effort to amplify relations, by means of a differentiated vision towards Africa, Brazil endeavors to legitimize claims coming from peripheral states and, thus, to contribute for its own image in multilateral arenas. By collectivizing its demands and presenting them as being similar to several ones coming from Africa, the South American country claims it is bringing a larger cluster of interests to the table, acting as a responsible international policy entrepreneur and as a "bridge" to the divide between developing and developed states.<sup>9</sup>

On the domestic front, an agenda driven to cooperation – involving civil society sectors, entrepreneurs, bureaucrats, governmental agencies and a number of other actors -, focusing on strengthening Brazilian presence in Africa, was crafted. On the one hand, the theoretical division between domestic and external arenas is object to question, which gives space to the establishment of new decision-making processes. On the other hand, the historic bureaucratic and societal insulation of Brazil's Ministry of External Relations is being eroded, since new channels of participation are being built.<sup>10</sup> This denotes perceived changes in the formulation and implementation of the national foreign policy (SARAIVA, J, 2002; 2012).

It is possible to argument these initiatives are fomented by the Brazilian government – relying on the participation of actors such as the National Congress, the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA); private companies; ministries as the ones of Agrarian Development and Agriculture; civil society, etc. Nevertheless, even

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<sup>8</sup> Initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), crafted in 2001, and the African Union, organized in 2003, are attempts to respond to this challenge.

<sup>9</sup> On the responsibility of emerging powers, see Robert Zoellick's remarks to National Committee on U.S.-China relations. Available at: <http://2001-2009.state.gov/s/d/former/zoellick/rem/53682.htm>, accessed on: 08/12/2014.

<sup>10</sup> On the issue of foreign policy analysis, Carlsnaes (1992); Hudson (2005); and Moravcsik (1997), among others, are important contributions to the debate.

though the presence of these players is of consideration, it is the Ministry of External Relations (MRE)/Itamaraty the responsible for unifying the distinct demands which may be vocalized.

We understand that Itamaraty is still the body that reunites the many different agendas – in the specific case of this paper, the one about food security – and associates them with Brazil's international interests. In this sense, the distinguished performance of Brazil in the field of food security cooperation, for which the relations with the African continent are to be remarked,<sup>11</sup> is a result of its MRE's option to diversity Brazilian foreign policy.<sup>12</sup>

The strategy of approaching Africa is, at the same time, part of the country's effort to regain and materialize its “universalistic approach”, and to “reclaim the national identity” in the foreign policy formulation (AMORIM, 2010: 5). “Capitalizing on the cultural affinity between Africa and Brazil, the Lula government saw the country's historic links with the African continent as an instrument to deepen relations in the area of foreign policy and trade” (STOLTE, 2014: 9). Consequently, the match between rhetoric and practice provided the country some diffuse gains when it comes to its relative position in the international arena.

Hence, Brazil makes use<sup>13</sup> of development cooperation policies<sup>14</sup> as one of its

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<sup>11</sup> The Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) brings a compendium of the technical cooperation projects Brazil undertakes towards the African Continent in the Brazil-Africa Dialogue on Food Security, Fight against Hunger and Rural Development (2010a). More information can be found also in ABC (2010b). This last document says that more than 300 hundred initiatives, among projects and isolated activities, which account for US\$ 65 million, would be carried into effect with 37 African countries.

<sup>12</sup> Here, we will work with the idea that foreign policy is a public policy. However, when it comes to considering foreign policy analysis theoretical frameworks, we understand foreign policy to be a “macro” public policy that incorporates other possible public policies under its “umbrella” in order to compose the external actions of a country.

<sup>13</sup> “The Brazilian cooperation for international development is driven to principles that are aligned with visions of equitable relations and with social justice, constituting itself an important instrument of foreign policy” (ABC; IPEA; MRE, 2010: 16).

<sup>14</sup> According to the document “Brazilian cooperation for international development”, published by the country's Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA), ABC and Itamaraty, which tried to organize and list cooperation policies and actions taken from 2005 to 2009, and to develop a conceptual framework for treating the issue, Brazilian cooperation for international development is defined to be: “(...) the total amount of resources invested by the Brazilian federal government, totally non-refundable, in other countries' governments, in other countries' nationals at the Brazilian territory, or in international organizations with the purpose of contributing to international development, which is understood as the strengthening of international organizations capacities and of groups or populations of other countries to the improvement of their socioeconomic conditions” (ABC; IPEA; MRE, 2010: 17). Among the modalities defined by the cited document as schematic types of Brazilian cooperation for international development (the term is known as CBDI, in Portuguese), there are: humanitarian assistance; giving scholarships to foreigners; technical,

current foreign policy strategic foundations. Through these actions, the country internationalize its public policies and gather legitimacy for being depicted as an actor who can contribute to pacific changes in the international order.<sup>15</sup> Hence, cooperation policies are executed with diverse regions and countries, with or without the support of developed countries or international institutions. These cooperative acts, due to they involve themes such as public health or food security,<sup>16</sup> strengthen international regimes and the relative stance of Brazil in them, along with the peripheral world, so as with developed countries.

### **Food security cooperation as a foreign policy tool**

During Lula da Silva's two mandates (2003-2010), Brazil has tried to intertwine economic and social development, by way of creating domestic policies driven to surpass its the historical framework of famine and misery, many of these proposals having being able to profound previous governments' initiatives.<sup>17</sup> The national law 11.346/2006, known as the organic law of food and nutrition security, for instance, established the National Food and Nutrition Security System (SISAN), which has the responsibility to

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scientific and technological cooperation; contributions to international organizations and to regional banks; and peace operations. Along this article we will work only with the technical, scientific and technological cooperation, specifically, in our case, on food security. It is important to remark too that we will not be held hostage to the concept of CBDI echoed by the official sources. We will question it whenever necessary.

<sup>15</sup> Rosenau and Czempiel (2000) understand that the international order consists of "a series of daily agreements through which one can influence world politics". For them, although different, an international order impregnated by diverse and egoistic intentions can be convergent with the concept of governance. They remark that there cannot be governance without order or order without governance.

<sup>16</sup> The concept of food security was made public during the First International Conference on Global Food Security, in 1974, and is also present in the article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations, signed in 1948. Current understanding of the FAO on the expression "food security" follows: "food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life". In accordance with the agency, "food insecurity exists when people do not have adequate physical, social or economic access to food as defined above" (FAO, 2003). For this article, it is important to notice that Itamaraty amplifies the concept of food security mentioned. Beyond the idea defended by the FAO, Brazil's Ministry of External Relations argues that an augmentation on agriculture production – even if we consider cultures such as cotton or soybeans that do not exactly correspond to the definition of basic nutrition food – can lead to general development of a country, creating jobs, income and other positive externalities. Defining food security in this way is a political choice that strengthens the interconnection of agendas and grants the concept more dynamism and empirical application.

<sup>17</sup> Brazil was elected, in 2001, for the third time, leader of the hunger fighting international ranking, which is organized by the NGO Action Aid. Available at: <http://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/noticia/2011-10/pela-terceira-vez-brasil-lidera-ranking-de-combate-fome>, accessed on: 03/03/2014.

assure the human right to proper nutrition.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, the constitutional amendment 64 inserted the right to food as a constitutional obligation and as a state policy.

Apart from legislative provisions, there are many initiatives on the domestic front, for instance: the Zero Hunger Program (“Fome Zero”), which encompasses 25 policies guided to fight hunger and poverty, and involves 13 million families nationally; the Brazil Without Poverty Plan (“Brasil sem Miséria”)<sup>19</sup>; the National Program of School Feeding (PNAE)<sup>20</sup>; investments in professional capacitating projects and in income transferring for familiar agriculture actions; the creation of the National Food and Nutrition Security Council (Consea), in 2003, which is directly linked to the presidency<sup>21</sup>; thorough the conception of the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MSD) and of the National Program of Family Agriculture (Pronaf)<sup>22</sup>; not to mention others.<sup>23</sup>

These actions, hinging on the domestic front, achieved considerable success in alleviating the framework of endemic poverty and misery in many regions of Brazil, even though the country continues to face these challenges. Such endeavors were subject of the presidential campaign in 2002 and part of the political agenda of the Worker’s Party (PT), which has the presidency since 2003, throughout Lula da Silva’s two terms and currently

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<sup>18</sup> SISAN is composed by the National Food and Nutrition Security Council (Consea) and by the Interministerial Chamber on Food and Nutrition Security (Caisan). For more insights on the law 11.346/2006, check: [https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/\\_Ato2004-2006/2006/Lei/L11346.htm](https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_Ato2004-2006/2006/Lei/L11346.htm), accessed on: 28/08/2014.

<sup>19</sup> Brazil’s Ministry of Social Development released a thorough publication on the plan (BRASIL, 2014).

<sup>20</sup> This national school meal program has provided free meals in public schools to more than 43 million children in 2012 (FAO, 2014).

<sup>21</sup> Consea was created in 1993, during Itamar Franco’s presidency, and discontinued in 1995, under the first mandate of Fernando Henrique Cardoso. It was reestablished in 2003, in the beginning of Lula da Silva’s first administration. It has an advisory role to the presidency on the creation of public policies for the country to achieve the human and constitutional right to proper nutrition. The fact Consea did not have a perennial lifetime helps us to understand how food and nutrition security regained the top of the country’s political agenda during Lula da Silva’s government. From a government policy, it was uplifted to a state incumbency, as national law 11.346/2006 shows.

<sup>22</sup> In 2009, PNAE adopted a policy to reserve at least 30 percent of food expenditures to direct purchases from family farmers. By 2012, 80 percent of Brazilian public schools acquisitions were made directly from family farmers (FAO, 2014).

<sup>23</sup> The multiplicity of domestic actors who act in the Brazilian case validates Milner’s work on polyarchy. “International politics and foreign policy become part of the domestic struggle for power and the search for internal compromise” (MILNER, 1997: 11). However, the processes of formulating Brazil’s foreign policy is still highly centered and controlled by the country’s MRE. International development cooperation projects, for instance, are conducted by ABC, which is a division of Itamaraty.

with Dilma Rousseff's.<sup>24</sup>

It is possible to observe, in the course of Lula da Silva's administrations, that the domestic accomplishments did not have, solely, a national component. Such themes were also considered strategic pillars by Brazilian foreign policymakers and employed as a tool of the state's international insertion. Accordingly, they were related to the international preoccupations and agendas Brazil's foreign policy comprises. As a clear example of this interrelation, Brazil has already achieved some Millennium Development Goals (MDG), which were approved in the UN's Millennium Declaration (2000), to be met by 2015.<sup>25</sup>

Among them, the first, to "eradicate extreme famine and hunger", has close relation to the broaden agenda of food security and to the public policies developed recently. Extreme famine<sup>26</sup> was reduced, from 1990 to 2012, from 25,5% to 3,5%. Moreover, Brazil's Gini index improved during the same time frame, going from 0,612 to 0,526 (IPEA, 2014). Between 2001 and 2012, overall poverty fell from 24,3% to 8,4% and the income of the poorest 20 percent of the population grew three times as much as that of the wealthiest 20 percent. "In Brazil, efforts that started in 2003 have resulted in successful participatory processes and coordinating institutions, delivering policies that have effectively reduced poverty and hunger" (FAO, 2014: 20).<sup>27</sup>

Comprehensively, by complying with a set of goals outlined domestically and by international institutions, Brazilian policymakers reinforce the argument that its national policies are successful, which eases the use of them as an instrument of foreign policy.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> The contributions of Miriam Gomes Saraiva (2010), who focuses on the disputes between the decision-making groups inside the Ministry of External Relations - the pragmatic institutionalist group and the autonomist group - is notorious for analyzing the current Brazilian foreign policy.

<sup>25</sup> Brazil's fifth national MDG report to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) brings data on the country's progress. Available at: [http://www.pnud.org.br/Docs/5\\_RelatorioNacionalAcompanhamentoODM.pdf](http://www.pnud.org.br/Docs/5_RelatorioNacionalAcompanhamentoODM.pdf), accessed on 26/11/2014. A set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) will replace MDG from 2015 onwards.

<sup>26</sup> "Extreme famine" refers, according to the UNDP, to the population living on less than \$ 1.25 a day.

<sup>27</sup> Brazil is one of the seven countries cited individually on FAO's report on the state of food insecurity. "In 2013, social protection programmes accounted for the largest portion of Federal allocations to food security and nutrition, while programmes related to food production and distribution, including those to promote family farming, accounted for one-sixth" (FAO, 2014: 24). The document mentions, as well, that the prevalence of stunting in children under five years of age dropped from 13,4% in 1996 to 6,7% in 2006, while child wasting fell from 4,2% to 1,8%. Federal expenditures on food security and nutrition programs and actions totaled approximately US\$ 35 billion in 2013, according to the UN agency.

<sup>28</sup> Pinheiro and Milani (2012) defends that this movement of internationalization – in contrary to mere exportation of public policies - presupposes a high level of legitimacy and acceptance by other actors.



This dynamic has close relationship with the country's projects of South-South cooperation put into motion with its partners of Africa – mainly the members of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries -, Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia. Also, several projects are carried in partnership with international organizations such as the FAO.<sup>29</sup>

Brasilia does so by internationalizing practices for example the Zero Hunger Program, referring to the necessity of overcoming common problems shared by a great number of developing states. Since its policies are not only having crucial impact in tackling structural problems in Brazil, but also being seen globally as of reference, the country can portray itself as a an actor with feasible and successfully tested solutions to shared challenges. When Brazil employs its cooperation, it sees its domestic practices gain international leverage, which contributes to sustain its position as a responsible stakeholder and proactive actor in the post Cold War context.

Theoretical contributions of some authors inspired by the guidelines of the English School of International Relations, which rely on the existence of an international society, are to be remembered here. This happens because since Brazil cooperates to tackle problems concerning the totality of states, the South American country is perceived as being a contributor to the internationalization and building up of values, rules and norms. These are measures driven to foster good governance, which could bring to a more stable and predictable international order, preventing possible unilateral disruptions.

By cooperating with the use of its national policies in actions that extrapolate the domestic arena and go international<sup>30</sup>, Brazil envisions to demonstrate food insecurity as a problem not only restricted to the least developed countries, but with several possible solutions. Moreover, it is pivotal to assure that this issue is related, in a scenario of soaring interdependence, to other agendas, not being dissociated from them<sup>31</sup>.

The Brazilian diplomatic corps relates in its official discourse, be in multilateral forums, be in its bilateral relations, the specific concept of food security with the idea of

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<sup>29</sup> A list of projects can be found in ABC; IPEA; MRE (2010). IPEA; Banco Mundial (2011) brings data on the projects of South-South cooperation provided specifically by Brazil to Africa.

<sup>30</sup> Milner (1997) and Lima (2000), using foreign policy analysis theoretical frameworks, conduct interesting insights on this issue.

<sup>31</sup> The National Food and Nutrition Security Council (Consea) published in 2011 a report that also identifies this trend. Available at: [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs1011/CFS37/documents/CFS\\_37\\_Final\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs1011/CFS37/documents/CFS_37_Final_Report_FINAL.pdf), accessed on: 03/03/2014.

security in a broader sense.<sup>32</sup> For Brazilian foreign policymakers, the existence of poverty and famine in some country or region may guide to domestic or supranational socioeconomic instabilities, which can, in consequence, generate a potential menace to international peace and security. As say Buzan, Weaver and De Wilde (1997), the post Cold War context is characterized for being a moment of decentralization and “horizontalization” of insecurities. In other words, in reason of the existence of new and more intertwined agendas that go beyond the classic theoretical divide between *low* and *high* politics.<sup>33</sup>

Accordingly, issues allegedly limited to the domestic scope, such as food security, can engender international attention, as prove the current Horn of Africa food crisis so as several conflicts related to food production, distribution and access at African Great Lakes, to mention other example.<sup>34</sup> These cases propel migration and refugee’s movements, fustigate social disturbance as well as can end up in armed fight, sectarianism and persecutions.

In this sense, not treating these globally relevant issues can harm any prospects of building or reinforcing a perspective of “society” and pave the way to more “anarchy” amid states’ relations. For being an emerging power who attempts to gain more representativeness in the current changing world order,<sup>35</sup> Brazil seeks to characterize its actions in the field of international cooperation on food security as being positive to the global order as a whole and not solely to its own interests.

Brazil envisions to be depicted as a state distinguished from those who built the international order after the Second World War, actors to be – in the Brazilian official view - more accustomed with power considerations and less prone to pave a way to stability. This posture is comprehensible, since the South American country, even though having some power credentials such as considerable population, territory and armed forces, does

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<sup>32</sup> For instance, Lula da Silva’s speech during the Biofuels International Conference, in 2008: “the signs of menace in themes such as climate change, energy security and food security are clear. If we want to avoid catastrophes, we have to change (...) by adopting more transparent rules and more democratic decisions”.

<sup>33</sup> A divide which some liberal authors as Joseph Nye first reinforces in his 2004 book to then question in his last 2011 work. The argument that *low* and *high* politics and *soft* and *hard* power are increasingly interwoven is gaining more importance in recent publications.

<sup>34</sup> United Nations’ report of the secretary-general (2014) mentions that food insecurity and malnutrition are exacerbated by climate change and, in some cases, conflicts and political instability. We also add that food insecurity may be a cause for turmoil.

<sup>35</sup> Here we work with the idea of a change in the order and not a change of the order. Countries such as Brazil do not have sufficient differentials of power, influence or incentives to alter completely the international order. In this sense, we understand they act more on a soft balancing or soft revisionist basis.

not have them in the same magnitude as China or the United States, for just mentioning these two.

Additionally, Brazil is not yet universally reckoned as a nation who assumes certain responsibilities in some international security agendas. Nor does the country agree fully with some stances approved in decision-making instances such as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Notwithstanding, this external perception is slowly changing in recent years. Brazilian attempts to help solving the Israeli-Palestinian crises during Lula da Silva's terms, for example, although not resulting in permanent progresses, has shown to some – especially to other emerging powers – that Brazil can actively participate in the concert of most powerful nations.

This thought, historically nurtured by Brazilian diplomatic corps, is not shared by all permanent members of the UNSC. This is one of the factors that explains why Brazil has not yet been welcomed as a permanent member with veto power. The country's self image of greatness has not properly met what some of the P5 members think about it.

Brazilian actions in the field of security *lato sensu* encompass, primarily, conflict mediation in areas such as South and Latin America, so as to solving dissents related to Portuguese speaking countries in Africa and Oceania, as proves the Brazilian leadership of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission for Guinea-Bissau. In the multilateral spectrum, however, the situation is diverse. This occurs because for not having clearly acknowledged power differentials and legitimacy, Brazil prefers to act converging agendas of high and low politics, articulating, for example, food security with international trade or development with human security and conflict prevention.

It is an intelligent and sensible artifice, since stresses the idea that there aren't fully independent agendas or problems uniquely limited to the domestic scope. Hence, this makes virtually all major ongoing issues open to the participation of more actors, namely the emerging powers. The argument that new visions should add to current discussions is based on the idea that they would foster more legitimacy and democracy in treating with transnational issues. Behind this façade, lies a strategy to involve Brazil even more in global prospects. Moreover, for inserting itself, whenever possible, under a multilateral umbrella, Brazil faces less distributive costs derived from fierce negotiations and gain more bargain power to defend its interests (BURGES, 2012).

In understanding its own power limitations and the interdependence patterns that mark current international relations, Brazil promotes initiatives that are related to its

comparative advantages. This can open more spaces for the country to gather more responsibilities in the eyes of others and improve its position globally. When it comes to the object of this article, Brasilia does exactly that when it chooses to correlate food security strengthening with human development and world stability.

### **Brazilian cooperative practices in the African continent and the election of José Graziano da Silva**

As we have already mentioned, Brazil's foreign policymakers encourage several initiatives in the field of food security in the country's ties with Africa. In this section, for matters of space and methodology, we have chosen to focus briefly on some of the most representative of these projects: the IBSA Dialogue Forum, composed by India, Brazil and South Africa and its Fund for the Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger (IBSA Fund); some endeavors that reflects the internationalization of Brazil's food security public policies; the cotton discussions at the World Trade Organization (WTO); and a trilateral enterprise the South American emerging power integrates along with Japan and Mozambique.

IBSA is a South-South coalition and a cooperative arrangement that embodies the main goals of Brazil's diplomacy, especially when it comes to granting greater international projection to emerging powers towards a less asymmetric world order. The dialogue forum has its roots on the signing by the three countries, in 2001, of the declaration on the TRIPS<sup>36</sup> accord and public health of the WTO. This document allowed the compulsory licensing of pharmaceutical drugs that integrate public health policies, namely the ones of the least developed countries. HIV/AIDS treatment has advanced by this measure taken by the grouping.

Following the Brazilian lead, the reunion that has convened the IBSA happened in Brasília, in 2003. The more immediate reason for the gathering was instrumental: converge positions among the three emerging powers for guaranteeing them more bargain power during the Cancún ministerial round of the WTO, to be held subsequently. The first IBSA meeting led to the creation of the commercial G20, which represented a response of the developing world against the proposal of the United States and the European Union to limit their concessions on agriculture trade.

IBSA relies on four primordial axes: (a) political-diplomatic concertation; (b) intersectoral cooperation; (c) dialogue along civil societies and non-governmental actors of

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<sup>36</sup> Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

the three countries; and (d) IBSA Fund, which was created in 2004, under the umbrella of the UNDP. As it occurs with other South-South coalitions integrated by Brazil, IBSA does not have an institutional façade or a physical office, which allows some strategic character to the grouping, for it being flexible and adaptable to the geopolitical circumstances in course.

Each of the three IBSA states designate, annually, US\$ 1 million for the Fund, such resources being administrated by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) and destined to the receiving nations. The diplomacies of Brazil, India and South Africa are responsible for approving the projects the fund comprises. Until July 2012, IBSA Fund has concluded enterprises in five countries: Burundi, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti and Palestine. Seven other initiatives, again in Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Palestine, but also in Cambodia, Laos, Sierra Leone and Vietnam, are to be implemented. It is not a coincidence that the countries chosen to receive the resources of the fund are those that present severe passives to their socioeconomic development and high levels of poverty and famine, so as they are of considerable importance for the foreign policies of the three IBSA members. For this reason, we argument there is a convergence of pragmatism and solidarity in the operationalization of this IBSA pillar<sup>37</sup>.

The IBSA Fund is an example of how Brazil engenders efforts in the direction of universalizing good governance practices, an empirical illustration on how the country tries to be differentiated from the great powers.<sup>38</sup> Brazilian rhetorical defense of human security and human development, which underlines a liberal preoccupation with the individual, but also remark that states should grant more than minimal socioeconomic conditions to its citizens, is a component of the cooperation on food security promoted by the country with its international partners.

Beyond the IBSA Fund, there can be mentioned the cooperation between the

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<sup>37</sup> A list of all IBSA fund projects can be accessed through this link: <http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/temas-mais-informacoes/saiba-mais-ibas/fundo-ibas>, accessed on: 05/04/2014.

<sup>38</sup> Woods (2008) offers useful insights in this matter, by saying emerging donors defend sovereignty and non-intervention in the politics of recipients of their aid. However, in several cases there is a “geopolitical conditionality” that goes along with their assistance, such as requiring support for an emerging donor’s foreign policy. “Alongside their aid they offer technology, advice and professional assistance that many aid-receiving countries find more useful and more appropriate to their needs than that offered by established donors. It is no surprise, then, that emerging donors are stepping into relations with the ‘development partners’ of established donors. This is a silent revolution because emerging donors are not overtly attempting to overturn rules or replace them. Rather, by quietly offering alternatives to aid-receiving countries, they are introducing competitive pressures into the existing system” (WOODS, 2008: 1221).

regional FAO office in Latin America and the Brazilian Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MSD) to develop food security programs in Latin America and the Caribbean through the International Cooperation Fund Brazil-FAO. This complements the initial framework posed by the FAO's partnership with the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). These programs expect to supply the region with sufficient conditions for it to accomplish the MDG, by means of actions such as the Hunger Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative. The purpose of the agreement Brazil participates is to adapt the country's national policies to others, redrawing them in accordance with particular necessities of each partner. This posture is the one commonly addressed in the technical cooperation projects supervised by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC).

Among these projects there is the More Food with Africa Program<sup>39</sup> ("Programa Mais Alimentos África"), a credit line of the Brazilian government, created in 2001, that has the objective to promote South-South cooperation activities in the African continent. Through the effort, Brazil provides a credit line of US\$ 640 million for the interested African states to finance the import of Brazilian-made machinery and equipment intended to contribute to African agriculture.

More Food with Africa Program is under progress in countries such as Kenya, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Senegal, in the African Continent, and, operating under a similar fashion, in Cuba, in Latin America. The cooperative initiative has a sensitive weight for these African countries, since expressive portions of their populations are concentrated in rural areas, not to mention they have endemic problems in their territories generated by food insecurity and lack of agriculture expertise. The signings of the accords, which comes from the partners' demands, is an indicator that there is considerable international interest in some Brazilian domestic policies.

This legitimates Brazil's stance as a country that does not act to surpass remaining pockets of poverty, misery and misdistribution of income only in the internal front, but also internationally, by means of cooperation projects. "The internationalization of the state guides to new and broader bonds with the international community, which enrich and resize the external projection of the country" (Pinheiro; Milani, 2012: 10). Accordingly, in

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<sup>39</sup> The More Food with Africa Program can be seen as the internalization of the More Food Brazil, created in 2008 and involving a credit line of the National Program of Family Agriculture (Pronaf) to promote the modernization of domestic structures of agriculture production in Brazil's territory. From 2008 to 2010, the program developed domestically gathered a financing of more than R\$ 4 billion. Available at: [http://www.mda.gov.br/portal/noticias/item?item\\_id=9078585](http://www.mda.gov.br/portal/noticias/item?item_id=9078585), accessed on 05/04/2014.

reason of this crescent interaction between internal and external spheres, the diplomatic agency of Brazil was diversified during the period this article is focused on.

Also, Brazil performs technical cooperation with more than 60 countries, many of them located in Africa, executing projects on rural extension, tropical and temperate orcharding, livestock implementing, fishing and viniculture, just to mention some. The Brazil-Africa Dialogue on Food Security, Fight against Hunger and Rural Development, for example, reunited 45 authorities of the African continent's countries in Brasília, in 2010. Among the actions it fostered, there is the promotion of irrigated rice farming in Senegal, so as of cotton production in Mali.

Both partnerships help in capacitating Brazilian and local researchers, also helping to transfer seed technologies whenever required. African technicians execute the work, coordinated by Brazilians. Such projects contribute to allow technical support for local agriculture, which promotes some competitiveness to these productions and amplifies the scope of the national farming politics of the Lula da Silva's period beyond Brazil's borders.

Brasília's own interests in eliminating the cotton subsidies given by some developed nations at the WTO negotiations is intertwined with the political and diplomatic efforts to promote farming in African areas like Mali, which are harmed by the measures taken namely by the US and the European Common Agricultural Policy. Brazil's argument is that these strategies put in motion by the centers of the international system lower global cotton prices and impair the development possibilities some least developed countries have, such as the ones of the C-4 (Cotton Four: Mali, Benin, Burkina Faso and Chad). Brazilian cooperation with the four nations aims at augmenting their farming expertise.

When it comes to analyzing the transferring of these technologies merely in practical terms, one can describe it as being a South-South exchange based on solidarity. It is true. But it is also accurate to sustain countries like Brazil does it because they, in the end, get benefits from it. First, the South American nation is one of the biggest agriculture producers and net exporters; second, it is highly competitive in the international cotton market; third, every time Brazil helps least developed countries in a framework of promoting development, it garners legitimacy for its credentials. For this last reason, it becomes harder for the great powers to halt Brazilian agricultural interests in stances such

as the WTO.<sup>40</sup> Halt

Besides that, we can mention, also in the food security and agriculture field, the Pro-Savannah, a trilateral project that involves Brazil's ABC and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and is carried on in Mozambique. This is the greatest technical cooperation initiative being performed by EMBRAPA outside Brazil. In Mozambique, the Brazilian institution conducts several tests to adapt seeds of cotton, soybeans, maize, sorghum and beans, commonly seen in the Brazilian Cerrado Vegetation, to the African Savannah. Following EMBRAPA's move, the government of Mozambique has offered an area of 6 million hectares, in the North of the country and amounting to an area three times bigger than the Brazilian state of Sergipe, for Brazilian farmers to plan soybeans, cotton and maize.

In the context of these several endeavors being executed, the election of José Graziano da Silva, former Extraordinary Minister of Food Security and Fight against Hunger of Brazil, to the FAO's presidency, is a clear sign of how much interlaced are three Brazilian policy dynamics: (1) there is clear validity of some domestic public policies, in our case, the ones referring to food security; (2) in this reason, these internal successful examples are internationalized in cooperative practices that generate visibility and legitimacy to Brazil for it to be considered a necessary interlocutor; (3) hence, this promotes the consequently ascendance of the country to decision-making instances in multilateral forums, as the election of Mr. Graziano to the UN agency with the biggest budget proves.

The electing of Mr. Graziano, with 92 votes (obtaining the pivotal support of the African Union) against the 88 votes his Spanish rival received has shown a polarization between an emerging country candidate and an adversary more identified with the remaining international order. Even though the choice of a director-general coming from an emerging country is not a surprise – the former head of the FAO comes from Senegal, for instance – the electing of a Brazilian in such competitive voting was considered a

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<sup>40</sup> Food security is mentioned in the preamble to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture, so as in several other articles in the same agreement. Multilateral talks in the early days of the Doha Round focused primarily on the issue of how trade-distorting subsidies in certain developed countries might undermine food security in other parts of the world, namely in developing nations, and on the question of exceptions from trade liberalization commitments on food security and related grounds to developing countries. More recently, the issue of food security has gained the top of the agenda of the WTO, being subject to intense debate through the 2013 ministerial reunion of the Doha Round in Singapore. During the meeting, organized to promote an agreement on trade facilitation, India brought it to a standstill. New Delhi argued it wouldn't sign the accord unless a major decision on food security was reached (MATTHEWS, 2014).



triumph by Brazil's diplomatic corps, which has fiercely invested in diplomatic contacts and bargains to promote José Graziano da Silva's winning in 2011.

Brazil's ministry of External Relations in the occasion, Antônio de Aguiar Patriota, was twice in Rome, at the FAO's headquarters, to discuss the candidacy of the Brazilian proponent. The European Union, which has initiated the dispute with two names, the European Union's Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries, Austrian-born Franz Fischler, and the former chancellor of Spain, Miguel Ángel Moratinos Cuyaubé, has decided to support the latter. Although the dispute was intense and marked by the anachronism that aroused from the candidacy of a name coming from the region that still maintains a Common Agricultural Policy with its billionaire subsidies, the candidate from the "South", won.

One of the mentors of the Zero Hunger Program, which operates assuring conditional distribution of income and encompasses the domestic agendas of education, labor and food security, Mr. Graziano is the responsible for helping implementing a multidisciplinary public policy and one of the electoral foundations of the Workers' Party presidencies. The socioeconomic gains of these national practices and the considerable success of their execution, which in fact assisted the lifting of millions of families from extreme poverty, have awakened international interest. Cooperation projects that involve the dynamics of the Zero Hunger Program were replicated, by external request and with Brazil's participation, in countries like Haiti, Bolivia, and Paraguay, not to mention in Portuguese speaking nations, in many partners of the African continent and even in Iran.

Therefore, there has occurred the internationalization of this originally domestic policy, which makes clear the fact that there exist interdependence and that it is used strategically by Brazil's foreign policymakers. Consequently, we can argue that the theoretical arguments still in favor on a pretense divide between internal and external arenas are to be weakened.

The choice of a Brazilian for the maximum position of the FAO opens room for a greater role of the country in cooperation projects underpinned by the FAO in diverse regions and emphasizing several issues related with agriculture, social development and hunger alleviation. This can amplify the pretense credentials Brazilian diplomatic corps sustain the country has, namely, that Brazil is an actor whose acts are of reference and whose differentials are to be shared with other states by the use of bilateral or trilateral cooperation programs.

The achieving of multilateral leverage can play a part in the universalization of good practices destined to solve collective problems, as well as it can establish an order based on what Hurrell (2007) conceptualized as more societal and stable. With the election of Mr. Graziano, Brazil had its domestic politics propelled by the most important agency of the UN system when it comes to food security, agriculture and rural development.

### **Brief considerations on solidarity and interests in Brazil's food security cooperation**

The instrumentalization of food security cooperation takes place by interweaving two notions, one closely related to solidarity aspects and the other to the states' interests. Even though one may find they dissociated from each other, we reaffirm this is not our position. Hence, this dynamics requests some brief analysis.

Although the official discourse of the Brazilian diplomacy aims at justifying its cooperation policies – especially the ones related to food security – to be under the idea of international solidarity, there lie apparent interests in Brazil's cooperation for development, as would happen if the observer investigates any other country. This does not necessarily maculates or makes current cooperation patterns less effective; however, it proves that the subject deserves a more complex approach, one that can go further than mere interpretations based solely on interests or - in an exclusivist basis - on utopian solidarism.

To begin with, when Brazil cooperates in many agendas connected to the theme of food security, it is possible to discern a strong component of solidarity, at least a rhetorical and discursive one, which ratifies Hurrell's vision that it helps to promote a less asymmetric international order since shared interests are highlighted. In this sense, by affirming its actions to be based on solidarity, the country attempts to be seen as an actor who is not driven solely towards egoistic goals. Therefore, through this component of solidarity, Brazil endeavors to influence the establishing of new norms and the reforming of the current ones that may lead to inequality. This is mainly a position driven to portray the country as a reference to the global South.

Notwithstanding, there are subjacent interests too, most of them hiding behind the image of solidarity. Besides the already mentioned concern to be considered a legitimate actor in order to participate actively in this singular moment the international system faces, Brazil tries to differ from other emerging powers in its cooperation efforts. For this to happen, the country normally presents itself as a player who acts dissociated from

conditionalities and driven mainly to external demands.<sup>41</sup> Such choice reinforces Brazil's role as a provider of public goods that aid in controlling anarchy and moving towards a more plural society. That rhetoric is accompanied by other motivations, such as permitting domestic stakeholders to gain more possibilities of action and chances to show their expertise, as it currently happens with EMBRAPA.

Clearly, since EMBRAPA is internationally acknowledged – due to its expertise in converting unproductive areas to productive ones and to its knowledge in the production of seeds and training technical personnel – Brazil can interrelate the public company initiatives with its cooperative and diplomatic practices. Besides that, when acting externally, EMBRAPA requests the participation of other national stakeholders. An example is the More Food with Africa Program, which aggregates the private sector.

The exiguity of the space available in this article halts us from developing a more detailed explanation on how EMBRAPA operates. Regardless of that, this public company has a strong presence in many African countries, not only to create new agricultural areas guided to exportation, but also to promote advances in family farming, endogenous consumption and hunger fighting.

Furthermore, Brazil's biofuels agenda is part of the dynamics of food security and international development cooperation since the country sustains its sugarcane ethanol, used for the production of fuel and being distinct from the US maize-based ethanol, covers many positive outcomes: (a) it helps preventing the emission of greenhouse gases; (b) it does not rely on maize, a cereal that is the used for human nutrition almost everywhere; (c) and it can foster the partners' economic development. More complete studies on this sense will perceive the privileged locus for the promotion of these initiatives is the African continent. It also, as we pretend in discussing the component of interest in the Brazilian cooperation, derives real economic and political gains for the South American state.

According to an author, as it happens in the cooperation on food security, one of the many strategies Brazil performs at international forums and regimes “is to collectivize its position on a particular international issue, allowing its diplomats to claim with reasonable legitimacy that they are bringing a larger agglomeration of interests to the table and acting as a positive international policy entrepreneur” (Burges, 2012: 354).

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<sup>41</sup> Lengyel and Malacalza (2011) affirm cooperation occurs due to national, humanitarian, commercial, financial, and strategic interests, or even by domestic pressure. However, they argue one cannot deny the cooperation conducted by emerging powers, among them Brazil, has a broad solidarity mechanism. This cooperation would have, thus, a philosophy based on the creation, adaptation and transferring of knowledge and experience to human development.

Lengyel and Malacalza (2011) agree, showing that the profile of the Brazilian cooperation is mainly economic and social, in the sense the discourse of solidarity is indeed present, but accompanied by underlining goals. When analyzing some of these objectives, they typify the model of cooperation the country performs as being composed by “political conditionalities”, saying that Brazil interrelates development cooperation with more immediate material interests of its foreign policy<sup>42</sup>. These can appear, for example, in the form of voting supports at multilateral institutions as the election of Mr. Graziano to the position of director-general of the FAO shows. Besides that, there lay other motives, immaterial ones, such is the preoccupation Brazil’s diplomatic corps and foreign policymakers have with legitimacy.

### **Final remarks**

Policies developed domestically in Brazil have considerable systemic impact, as we can see by the amplitude and number of cooperation projects that involve the internationalization of these policies, as in the case of specific actions related to food security, agriculture development and hunger fighting. If we correlate both internal and external spheres – and this has conducted our choices to be closer to liberal and Grotian International Relations theoretical frameworks – it is possible to say the country searches a more representative position in a changing order that currently provides more possibilities of action for the emerging countries.

Brazil portrays itself as an actor with differentiated demands, for they aim at surpassing or diminishing existing inequalities of the current distribution of power. The country, for trying to garner more responsibilities in agendas that previously were considered restricted to low politics themes such as trade, human security and development, endeavors to assume a singular position to better adapt the current order to the changing aspects of the states’ domestic and international environments. As long as this interrelation is not better comprehended, gaps on understanding these ongoing processes will prevail.

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<sup>42</sup> These authors also argue the cooperation promoted by Brazil – in general terms and not specifically on food security – is, mostly, bilaterally and regionally driven, both in the direction of the geopolitical South, especially to the MERCOSUR and the CPLP. This cooperation occurs, when we talk about technical, scientific and technological cooperation, mainly towards Africa (52%), Latin American and the Caribbean (34,6%) and Asia (10%), through bilateral means. Among the countries that receive the most number of Brazilian initiatives, there are Haiti, Cape Verde, East Timor and Guinea-Bissau. With them, Brazil promotes projects to capacitate farmers, to offer credit lines to by machinery, to develop sugarcane biofuels enterprises, etc.



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