

Brazil in Regional and Global Governance: Foreign Policy, Leadership and UNASUR¹

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This article examines the role of Brazil as a source of international governance innovation in the period of the Lula da Silva and early Rousseff presidencies (2003–2014). The analysis details some of Brazil’s main contributions to regional and global governance, and how these contributions are rooted in ideational and normative innovation, and Brazil’s imaginative, non-conformist, status quo—altering foreign policy of the period. The main argument is that Brazil was not, and is not, a “new actor” per se in global governance, although it took unprecedented and dramatic strides from 2003 to 2014 to redefine the multilateral agenda and reshape institutional arrangements for international cooperation and conflict management in South America. At the global level, Brazil has launched new platforms for international cooperation, including with the other BRICS countries of Russia, India, China and South Africa. The regional trends are examined in the case of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), and the innovations that Brazil spearheaded and supported in international security and health cooperation. However, Brazil’s contributions gain greater salience in the context of the broader processes of global change, where international power is becoming increasingly diffused and decentralized.²

Key words: Brazil; global governance; international norms; multilateralism; institutional innovation

This article examines the role of Brazil as a source of innovation in global governance during the presidency of Luis Inácio Lula da Silva (2003–2010) and at the start of Dilma Rousseff’s first term as president (2010–14). The analysis details some of the main contributions in international cooperation of South America’s largest country, and the region’s most globally impactful state and society. The main argument is that Brazil was not, and is not, a new actor per se in global governance. However, it took unprecedented and dramatic strides between 2003 and 2014 to redefine the multilateral agenda and reshape institutional arrangements for international cooperation and conflict management in South America, which had repercussions beyond the region. Even those who criticize the actual results of “Lula’s grand diplomacy,” calling it grandiose and pointing out that Brazil was basically pushing a highly partisan foreign policy (of the Workers Party), or who see Brazil as a “leader without followers,” would likely nonetheless agree that Brazil pursued an aspirational agenda with some dramatic initiatives during the period in question [Almeida, 2010; Malamud, 2011]. Moreover, during the Lula/early Rousseff period, Brazil went beyond the rhetoric of leadership to provide concrete resources for new initiatives of international cooperation, and achieved some substantive and sustained achievements including the launch of some innovative international governance arrangements.³ These

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³ In an insightful short essay published in 2008, Andrew Hurrell [2008] suggested otherwise. Many of the institutional developments detailed in this article emerged after 2008.

trends are examined in more detail below in the case of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), particularly in the areas of international security and health cooperation. Although UNASUR originated in the preceding era of the Cardoso presidency, it was during the presidency of Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff's first term and in the contemporary context of major global structural change that Brazil made its mark by initiating its "imaginative non-conformist" foreign policy. In so doing, it transferred its "can-do" leadership into a more sustained process of regional institution building.

During this period, Brasilia also dedicated substantial political capital and national resources to strengthening existing regional arrangements (such as Mercosur). Suffice it to say here that Brasilia showed an increasing preference to address security, political-diplomatic and cultural issues, and some elements of economic cooperation (for example, some of the infrastructure cooperation) in UNASUR. It left trade negotiations to the already-existing Mercosur and the World Trade Organization (WTO), and it left crisis liquidity to the Inter-American Development Bank and the newly created Banco do Sul (Bank of the South), or to its own national institutions, National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES), Embrapa, and to resurrected bilateral arrangements, such as Convenio de Pagos y Creditos Recipocos (CCR) with Argentina.⁴

With the current downturn in the Brazilian economy and turmoil at the top of the Brazilian political system, plus the withdrawal from the global multilateral arena (in particular, the United Nations and Group of 20 (G20)) that Dilma Rousseff appears to have implemented in her second term, it is fashionable now to question the endurance or sustainability of Brazil as a so-called emerging economy, to question its international leadership capacities. Some commentators have stopped researching "Brazil's rise" [Simon, 2016; CNN Money, 2015; Barnes, 2015; Sharma, 2012]. As mentioned, others have questioned Brazil's leadership capacity prior to the recent downturn [Malamud, 2011; Burges, 2005]. However, neither the current problems nor the fact that some of Brazil's partners (inside and beyond the region) did not align with all its main goals, and some may have even challenged its international influence, negate the reality that Brazil made significant contributions to rethinking and reshaping regional and global governance during the Lula/early Rousseff period. Diana Tussie [2014, p. 111] has described the policy shift that Brazil and others in South America championed in terms of a positive "re-politicization" of international politics, that is "giving birth" to "new polities and international projects," in which states, social movements and (charismatic) leaders interact, and "construct new understandings of what (regional) space might offer."

Here, it is also significant that Brazil has advanced its imaginative non-conformist international governance initiatives amid the current juncture when power in the world is becoming increasingly diffused and decentralized, in comparison to the long post-World War II period. It is premature hubris to declare, at this stage, that the world has already entered into a "post-American world order." However, it is equally short-sighted to remain captured intellectually by the illusion of permanence, and to discount research on the two main trends in global order: continuity and change.⁵ This is especially so, as the current period is one where a range of new institutional arrangements is being promoted simultaneously across different regions of the world by the current rising powers. China is supporting the new Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), of which Brazil is a member and its new "One Belt, One Road" initiative [Chin, 2015, 2016]. Moscow has its ongoing efforts to forge a Eurasian Economic Community, and the

⁴ For the details of Brazil's support via these national and bilateral mechanisms, and Brasilia's preferences during this period see Gregory Chin [2010].

⁵ For analysis of these two main trends of continuity and change, but with different conclusions about outcomes and future research agenda, see Michael Cox [2012], and Gregory Chin and Ramesh Thakur [2010].

BRICS countries have their collective New Development Bank, to which Brazil is a main contributor [Abdenur, 2014a; Chin, 2014; Griffith-Jones, 2014]. The cumulative impact of these new initiatives, including Brazil's multiple contributions to regional and global governance have set in motion newly institutionalized dynamics, as discussed below. These institutional developments, including those supported by Brazil's neighbours, have the potential to transcend the temporal or the transitory, despite Rousseff's later downgrading of global diplomatic ambition. At the same time, it is important, in a comparative sense (with the other BRICS members), to appreciate Brazil's distinct national interests and its particular motivations, and how these factors – as well as intra-BRICS rivalries and tensions – also shape the new contours of global governance.⁶ Although the new institutional arrangements and cooperation programmes are still embryonic, they are part of a complex process where new ideas, motivations and material capabilities, affecting politics and politics, are emerging across the global landscape [Chin and Thakur, 2010; see also Cooper, 2016; Hochstetler and Milkoreit, 2015; Reisen, 2015; Abdenur, 2014b; Inoue and Vaz, 2012; for a critical perspective, see Ramos, 2013].

Imaginative Foreign Policy

“Brazil is an important enough country, but many times we were not seen as important because we did not see ourselves as important. That is about to change.”

Lula da Silva, 2003

Scholars have rightly scrutinized the degree to which Brazil actually broke dramatically from its past foreign policy approach under Lula, or whether it was more a return of sorts. Among those who argued that the “new” foreign policies of the Lula administration was a return, the most perceptive also acknowledged that the Lula administration took a more muscular, “assertively nationalist foreign policy approach” than its predecessors (“nationalist worldview”), and its “politicization” of foreign policy with its regionalist reorientation, relations with Washington, and its southern strategy [Hurrell, 2008, pp. 51, 53–57]. Paulo Roberto Almeida [2005, p. 49] and Andres Malamud [2011] each critique the outcomes of Lula's foreign policy, but acknowledge that he emphasized regional diplomacy (especially in the early Lula period) and attempted to re-energize regional integration in South America. The quotation above indicates that, from the start of the Lula's presidency, Brazilian authorities tried to set a new, more ambitious, bold tone, with a foreign policy posture distinct from the preceding periods. To quote Lula further:

The government has made the decision ... to insert Brazil in the world as a major country, a country that likes to respect others but at the same time wants to be respected. We no longer accept to participate in international politics as if we were ... a “little country” of the Third World that has street children, knows only how to play football and to dance at carnival. This country does have street children, has carnival and football. But this country has much more. This country has greatness ... This country has everything to become an equal of any other country in the world. And we will not give up on this goal [Lula da Silva 2003].

An early indication of the new activist foreign policy was when the Lula administration opposed the second Iraq War to remove Saddam Hussein. Within its own region, Brazilian officials promoted security initiatives to transform South America into a “Zone of Peace.”

⁶ On corporate rivalry between Brazil and China in the energy and telecommunication sectors, see Danielly Silva Ramos Becard and Bruno Vieira de Macedo [2014].

Brazil's leadership of an international coalition of regional neighbours (2003–05) to derail the efforts of the most powerful actor in the hemisphere, the United States, to establish the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) certainly caught the attention of the traditional powers. It further signalled important shifts for Brazil in the trade arena. The Lula administration pursued what is best described as a “less conformist” position in the global and regional trade arenas during the first half of the 2000s, both in the Doha Development Round of WTO negotiations, and also in the negotiations on the proposed FTAA. As the co-chair for the FTAA negotiations with the United States, the preceding Cardoso government had long indicated its willingness to negotiate a comprehensive free trade agreement for the Americas, motivated by its desire to gain greater access to the U.S. market for Brazilian sugar, beef, citrus and soy exports. With Brazil hammered (again) by a financial and economic crisis in 1999, the Cardoso administration hoped to repay its sizeable foreign debt with revenue generated from increased agricultural exports to the United States and Europe. However, agricultural imports to the United States are limited by substantial agricultural subsidies. Brazilian officials, similarly, saw the proposed agricultural treaty at the WTO's Cancun ministerial in 2003 as sanctioning large subsidies for European and U.S. farmers. The ensuing negotiations showed that neither Brussels nor Washington was willing to reform its subsidy programmes. In the FTAA negotiations, as the United States showed itself unwilling to reform the agricultural subsidies, the Brazilian government began to manoeuvre in subtle ways to obstruct in a non-overt manner, seeking to redefine the terms of the agreement and demanding more autonomy for Brazil and the other potential signatories.

Led by the first Worker's Party government in the country's history, Brasilia returned to Mercosur in 2003, emphasizing the need to strengthen regional economic solidarity in a world where Brazil was facing many challenges, including national competitiveness challenges stemming from global economic integration (i.e., globalization). Not by accident, the Brazilian negotiating position for the FTAA and the Doha Round shifted toward pursuing the country's neo-developmental interests, especially securing its agribusiness interests and promoting its industrial exporters in trade negotiations. Brasilia pressed more heavily for the rights of the region's developing countries to define their own development path [Amorim, 2011]. This shift in negotiating objectives was described by the Lula administration as consistent with Brazil's traditional foreign policy principles of non-intervention and maintaining national developmental control. At the 2003 WTO Doha Development Round negotiations, Brazilian trade officials worked proactively with other developing countries to form a diplomatic coalition to avert a protectionist treaty, which they suggested, if passed, would disadvantage farmers in Brazil and across the developing world. Brazil was the leading force, along with India, in what became the “G20 trade” group [Narlikar and Tussie, 2004]. By 2005, the FTAA negotiations had also ground to a halt. Having already initiated the shift back to Mercosur, Brasilia doubled down on rebuilding and breathing new life – or what Marcel Biato [2008, 2009] describes as “reinjecting confidence and momentum – into this regional economic platform for the Southern cone. Again, it was not accidental that 2005, the year that the FTAA proposal was shelved, was also the year that Mercosur members voted to make Venezuela a full member of the regional trade pact.⁷

Brasilia's repositioning in the trade talks should be also understood in relation to the broad shifts in economic policy that were introduced during the same period. Riding the wave of the “return of the state in development” in the emerging economies, the Lula administration reoriented Brazil's economic policy to what some call a neo-developmental approach, strengthening the levers of the state to support national economic development, and to support

⁷ The authors thank Kathryn Hochstetler for highlighting this point.

the trade and investment competitiveness of Brazilian companies [Hochstetler and Montero, 2013].⁸ Neo-developmentalism can be understood as entailing a new form of state activism to guide the upward transition of developing countries, where the main goals are to achieve full employment, conditions of price and financial stability; in terms of foreign economic policy, it involves an economic nationalist strategy that supports the efforts of national firms to strive for global competitiveness and achieve global economies of scale, technological upgrading and business innovation, as well as an activist trade policy that secures intellectual property and investment opportunities for Brazilian firms [Hochstetler and Montero, 2013, pp. 1484–88; Ban, 2013, pp. 3–5]. Despite sharing some of the economic openness and pro-integration principles of the Washington Consensus, neo-developmentalism is understood by its proponents as a departure from the predominant model for the past three decades, especially in the emphasis given to industrial policy, to increasing medium- to high-value-added products and services, and to the role of the state in picking and supporting champions. The Brazilian authorities marshalled policy tools such as BNDES to support Brazilian companies inside the domestic economy and within regional markets in South America [Hochstetler and Montero, 2013]. It gave targeted support to Brazil's leading corporations such as Petrobras, Vale, Embraer, Odebrecht, Gerdaul and high-flyers such as LLX Logistics to become global contenders. Andrew Hurrell [2008, p. 52] interprets Brazil's reduced enthusiasm for the FTAA under the Lula administration was due to the new leadership's perception that the agreement threatened its efforts to build up the technical capacities of Brazil's national industries, and that it downplayed and diluted the negotiations in order to protect the country's industrial base.

In addition to promoting regional solidarity and common cause with developing countries in the global trade talks, under Lula and Amorim's lead Brazilian authorities also pursued new extra-regional platforms for diplomatic caucusing between the so-called emerging economies, initially with the IBSA Dialogue Forum – a mechanism for encouraging cooperation and diplomatic consultation among India, Brazil and South Africa – and a sort of precursor to the more influential BRICS grouping [Alden and Vieira, 2005].⁹ IBSA, which was launched in Brasilia in 2003, was to provide a platform for the three largest southern democracies to try to coordinate some elements of their foreign policy. The spirit behind it was for the three countries to work toward a coordinated voice in key international forums, especially on advocating reforms in global institutions; encourage deeper trade and economic relations among the three economies; and to coordinate their actions in development assistance [Biato, 2008, p. 10]. The governments of the three countries established an IBSA fund under UN management, to finance education and health projects in the developing world [Biato, 2009]. Proponents of IBSA, such as Biato, sought to use multilateralism to bring about positive changes: “The way is open to bring to life a widely spread networking platform – a truly global axis of good – that helps bring together around a reformed multilateral system, the different actors and forces driving globalization” [Biato, 2008, p. 17]. IBSA tried to build on the previous work the three countries had undertaken together for the common good, such as the 2001 WTO negotiations on the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, when Brazil, South Africa and India together advocated that private patent rights and the profits of pharmaceutical companies should not trump public health care and access to affordable generic drugs. Their collective advocacy was rooted in the shared concern about the AIDS crisis in Brazil and South Africa. Although the U.S. authorities supported its pharmaceutical corporations, the WTO eventually ruled in

⁸ The term “neo-developmentalism” was reportedly first used by Brazilian economist and former policy-maker Luiz Carlos Bresser-Pereira [Ban, 2013].

⁹ For a critical appraisal of the IBSA see Philip Nel and Ian Taylor [2013].

the favour of what the southern advocates suggested was the greater good [Biato, 2008; Gomes Saraiva, 2008].

Besides IBSA, Brazil also established a new summit process between South American and Arab countries, and another for South American and African countries. Not to be forgotten, under Lula's lead, Brasilia worked with Berlin, Tokyo and New Delhi to advance the so-called "Group of Four" (G4) proposal to reform the membership of the UN Security Council (UNSC). The plan called for expanding the great-power council from 15 to 25 member states, adding six permanent members (including Brazil, Germany, India and Japan and two African countries) without veto power and four non-permanent seats, to be elected for two-year terms. However, the proposal did not gain support from a group of traditional rival states within the regions of the G4. This group, eventually called "Uniting for Consensus," included Argentina, Mexico, Italy, Korea and Pakistan and actively opposed the reforms [Arraes, 2007, pp. 27–40]. Within the UNSC, the United Kingdom and France purportedly supported the G4 proposal, but China and the United States did not (nor was Russia eager to support the plan). The proposal did not make it to a vote. Even though the proposal was defeated in 2005, commentators noticed how proactive Brazil was in championing the cause.

Further indication of Brazil's more activist foreign policy, and some of Brazil's most innovative contributions as an international leader, continue to be in relation to the biosphere. Brazil, home of much of the Amazon rainforest, has positioned itself, strategically, as the national steward of what other countries call the lungs of the world. Over the last decade and a half, Brazil has also been very active in developing, and then promoting, its expertise and know-how on alternative energy. Climate-related technical cooperation agreements form a significant part of Brazil's development assistance. Brazil's Development Cooperation Agency (ABC) and public sector institutions such as the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa) have signed and implemented technical cooperation agreements in the areas of bioenergy and biofuels with Argentina, Nicaragua, Suriname, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia and eight countries that constitute the Economic Community of West African States.¹⁰ Embrapa is also researching biofuels in Panama, as part of more than 70 projects in agricultural cooperation in South America [Hochstetler, 2012; Pinheiro and Gaio, 2016, p. 82]. Brasilia also signed a memorandum of understanding with the U.S. government to disseminate biofuels technology.

Starting around 2005, Brazil and the so-called BASIC countries (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) were singled out by the governments of the developed countries for special attention in the climate negotiations, both at the global get-togethers and smaller meetings of major emitters, such as the Group of Eight and the Group of Five, G20 and the U.S.-led 17 member Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate. In November 2009, the representatives of the four BASIC countries met before the Copenhagen meeting on climate change to coordinate their negotiating positions, and the BASIC countries played a central role in determining the final outcome of the conference (famously brokering the agreement with U.S. president Barack Obama sitting across the table from the four). Since Copenhagen, the environment ministers of the BASIC coalition have met quarterly to continue coordinating their positions in the ongoing climate negotiations; they issued joint statements at the close of each meeting. They have used these caucus-type meetings to work out their shared positions, including pushing back against the smaller special forums, and insisting that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change must be the primary venue for brokering a global agreement. Kathleen Hochstetler [2012] has observed that, among the four BASIC countries, Brazil was the most explicit in promising climate assistance at the Copenhagen meeting. On the website

¹⁰ This information is from ABC, and listed in Hochstetler [2012].

of the Brazilian foreign ministry, one can read Lula's speeches at Copenhagen (released December 2009), in which he pledged at the high-level segment of the meeting to take action to mitigate Brazil's climate emissions, and that Brazil would not need the world's resources to do so. At an informal plenary, Lula reportedly went further, offering that Brazil would give climate assistance to other countries if that would help to break the diplomatic impasse. (This offer was not officially tabled until 2012 when Dilma Rousseff promised \$10 million in climate finance at the UN's Rio+20 Conference in Rio de Janeiro.¹¹) Brasilia appears to have followed up, more substantially, via Brazil's bilateral development assistance programmes, which, as stated above, include a large amount of assistance on climate issues. Researchers of the Brazilian government estimated the total spending in this area to be about \$362 million in 2009, and a five-year total of \$1.6 billion for 2005–09 [Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada and Agência Brasileira de Cooperação, 2010, p. 21; cited in Hochstetler, 2012].

Can-Do Leadership

What are the origins of Brazil's foreign policy shift, its more ambitious and imaginative interventions in regional and global governance? The shift appears to be the result of a conjuncture of objective structural economic factors, national institutional strengths, and endogenous politico-cultural and societal changes. The objective, structural factors were Brazil's dramatic and sustained growth of the 1990s and 2000s, which put Brazil onto the world map as a major emerging economy. Credit must also go to Brazil's foreign ministry – Itamaraty – and trade ministry for cultivating a cadre of high-calibre and worldly foreign affairs strategists and diplomats, and their capabilities in representing the country and in advancing the new conception of Brazil's national interests, articulated by the Lula administration and the government's new international cooperation agenda.

On the politico-cultural front, former foreign minister Celso Amorim [2011] observed that Brazil had "suffered" historically from a lack of self-esteem, and a foreign policy culture that was hamstrung by excessive caution and self-reinforced inhibitions. One suspects that he was thinking about long-time diplomats in Itamaraty and the trade ministry, and some officials in the finance ministry, who were rather dismissive about the attempts of the Lula administration to lift Brazil's global profile, seemed somewhat fixated on debating why Brazil should not be considered a great power and tended to exhibit an acute awareness of (sensitivity to) the obstacles standing in the way of Brazil attaining such status. For example, Almeida [2010, pp. 160–61], a former career diplomat and a prominent scholar at Uniceub-Brasilia and critic of the Lula administration, emphasized throughout the Lula period that Brazil lacked the key preconditions of great power status, especially the "financial and military capabilities." Moreover, he added that Brazil is not acknowledged as a "natural leader" within its own region, let alone as a great power by the "world community." He writes that it is "probably an exaggeration" to consider Brazil as a "natural leader" for South America, other than its own sense of "grandeur"; that Brazil lacks the "'subjective' criteria" linked to great power status, meaning "willing acceptance by the neighboring countries of such a role," ranging from the mid-level actors (Argentina and Colombia) to the smaller countries [Almeida, 2010]. According to him, the countries of the region are "not yet ready to accept Brazil as their regional representative or want it to act as a kind of unelected speaker on their behalf." He suggests that historical factors, insoluble cultural obstacles, and historical political and diplomatic differences stand in the way: "the fact that Brazil is the sole Portuguese-speaking country within a Spanish environment"; Brazil is the outlier in

¹¹ The authors thank Kathryn Hochstetler for this updated information.

the region as it emerged as a monarchy in the 19th century while the rest of the continent went republican; and that Brazil's long history of maintaining ties with the developed countries of Europe and the United States at the expense of its interactions with South American neighbours has bred deep-seated mistrust for Brazil on the part of its immediate neighbours. Researchers also heard about tensions between the Lula administration and long-time officials in the trade ministry, who raised concerns about the concessions offered by the Lula government to forge common cause in the South, and with the other emerging economies.¹²

According to Amorim, the aforementioned traditional mindset and the practice that it reinforced had constrained "bolder-than-usual" diplomacy and more ambitious foreign policy, during the period of "independent foreign policy" of Jânio Quadros and João Goulart (1961–64), and into the "responsible pragmatism" foreign policy of General Ernesto Geisel and the activist foreign minister Antonio Azeredo da Silveira (1974–79) [Pinheiro, 2013]. Hurrell [2008] suggests that, during the 1990s, Brazil also largely accepted the global order as given, and did not choose to oppose the global economic openness and integration agenda. Amorim suggests that "we had a preconceived notion of our place in the world and our ability to influence international events," and he observed that this disposition also re-emerged periodically during the Lula period. However, a more profound adjustment did take place during Lula's administration with Brazilian officials and diplomats advancing a bolder, more "imaginative," non-conformist foreign policy and challenging some of the predominant norms and arrangements in the global system. These initiatives, and Brazil's proactive diplomacy to promote new regional and global arrangements, served to elevate Brazil's regional and global influence.

Leading officials, including Lula and his foreign minister Amorim, suggested that the shift in diplomacy and foreign policy did not happen overnight. As Gregory Chin [2013] has written, this shift was preconditioned by subterranean changes in Brazilian society and culture, entailing a lengthy process of democratic struggle to overcome military authoritarian rule, democratic maturation and the rising self-confidence of the Brazilian people. In brief, the more ambitious non-conformist foreign policy and can-do Brazilian leadership approach to global affairs emerged from, and was underpinned by, a political movement that started with the impeachment of President Fernando Collor in 1992, the taming of inflation in 1994 and the Brazilian people slowly coming to believe that the political system (i.e., the state) could be a vehicle for positive change. The demonstration of this potential with the reforms introduced by the Cardoso government (1995–2003) and then the Lula presidency (2003–2010) further bolstered the new mindset.

The trademark popular democratic international leadership approach and can-do spirit of the Lula administration was on full display during Lula's speech in Paris when he accepted an honorary doctorate at Sciences Po, France's elite university for political science and international politics. In his remarks, Lula emphasized the importance of lifting 28 million people out of poverty and 39 million joining the middle class in Brazil, the importance of investing in education to "change the country and people's destiny" and the importance of getting millions of ordinary people to participate in the political process, as the critical vector of change, such that "democracy is now our common idiom" [Global Horizons, 2011]. Lula urged political leaders around the world to listen more to voters: "Politicians shouldn't be afraid of exercising democracy ... They shouldn't be afraid of the people, even of those who protest." Lula urged the students to have faith in politics, and not to give up their belief and hope that change is possible, saying: "This is not the time to deny politics but to reinforce politics ... Never give up! If

¹² The authors thank an experienced participant-observer in Brazil's foreign economic policy for sharing this observation: August 2007.

there is one social category that exists, and that must not abandon hope – it's you! ... If I had given up, I would never be where I am.”

Hurrell [2008, pp. 52–53] writes that Brazilian officials have sought to portray foreign policy as the external face of the Lula government's domestic social commitments. Brazilian authorities and diplomats may have attempted to translate the popular mood then – the transformational democratic spirit and imaginative mindset of the Brazilian populace – into concrete action on the world stage, at both the regional and global levels. At the global level, this meant advancing common cause with major and smaller developing countries, and striving to give voice to the traditionally under-represented countries of the South. The great financial crisis of 2008–09 reconfirmed to the Brazilian authorities that they had made the correct decision to pursue the non-conformist foreign policy. The crisis appeared to shake the old order fundamentally, highlighting the structural weaknesses of the system. The global conditions seemed ripe, as Biato [2008, p. 17] put it, for Brazil to seek common cause with other rising states and developing economies to push to “tame the forces of neo-liberal globalization ... so as to account for the needs of the South.” In the process, Brazil (and the rest of the BRICS members) gained a seat at the negotiating table in, for example, the upgraded G20 summits and the Financial Stability Board, and Brazil's representatives voiced their suggestions and proposals in these burgeoning international governance platforms for global economic crisis management [Biato, 2009]. At the same time, Brazil directed its newfound economic and diplomatic resources and its political capital to fostering new international governance platforms for regional cooperation, among which, UNASUR is a leading example.

UNASUR

The Lula administration built on earlier plans from the Cardoso period, and the first summit of South American presidents that was hosted by Cardoso in September 2000, to expand and deepen the process of regional cooperation. This led next to the formation of the twelve-nation South American Community of Nations (SAC) at the Cuzco summit in December 2004. By May 2008, the summitry process culminated in the launch of a newly renamed, Union of South American Nations (UNASUR). The constitutive treaty was signed in Brasilia, with UNASUR spanning the length of the continent from Colombia to Argentina. As reflected in the sector focus of its permanent Councils, UNASUR's core international coordination work has been in the areas of defense, health, energy, science and technology, culture, social development, economy and finance, education, infrastructure and planning, combatting illegal drug problems, and safety, justice and action against transnational crime.¹³ The UNASUR process has also included a more responsive senior political leaders and ministers components to facilitate region-wide responses to ‘hot issues’, such as regional coordination in response to the 2008–09 great financial crisis, and its after-effects. Initially, UNASUR also gained notoriety for its international coordination in meeting human health needs such as HIV-AIDs vaccines. The Sauipe Summit in Bahia, Brazil, in March 2009, saw an expansion of the ‘spirit’ of regional cooperation to include all of Latin America *and* the Caribbean nations, which resulted in another new regional platform of 33 states, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC¹⁴). US diplomats reported, at the time, how the two-day multi-summit illustrated that the Brazilian government is “able and willing to exercise increasingly visible regional leader-

¹³ The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States has reportedly also taken on many of the broader regional macro-coordination functions, although the UNASUR Councils still exist.

¹⁴ The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). Available at: <http://www.celacinternational.org/> (accessed 03 November 2016).

ship, with an eye toward gaining legitimacy as the principal regional representative on the global stage.”¹⁵

Whereas Mercosur had been the cornerstone of Brazilian foreign policy in the region since its inception in 1998, the formation of UNASUR entailed enlarging Brazil’s regional strategy to encompass and unite the two zones of Mercosur in the Southern Cone and the Andean community in the northern half of the continent. Scholars of international relations have tended to see UNASUR as the “major platform” for Brazil’s “great power ambitions,” as Brasilia’s scheme to redefine Brazil’s influence over the entire area of South America. However, if one delves into the details of the health cooperation that Brazil has undertaken under UNASUR, then one can see a set of goals and motivations that go beyond maximizing power and are altruistic, that are about Brazil sharing its technical expertise and medical and healthcare know-how, and that are about the administration’s desire to support the development of its neighbours and others in the developing world, for example in Africa and beyond – what is euphemistically called “South-South cooperation” [Buss, 2011, p. 1,722]. is more going on in the new international governance arrangements related to UNASUR than merely great power rivalry, as can be seen in the goals and outcomes in international security and health cooperation.

International Security

Security and defence cooperation is a central component of UNASUR, and Brazilian leadership has been a key feature of international cooperation on this front. Lula formally proposed the creation of a South American Defense Council (CDS) to 11 countries, including Venezuela, Argentina and Chile, at the third South American Summit in Brasilia in May 2008. The CDS proposal was preceded by a Colombian military attack against FARC members on Ecuadorian soil that almost ignited armed intervention by Venezuela [Serbin, 2009]. Colombia, with its leanings toward Washington DC, initially opposed the proposal, and pushed instead for such regional security issues to be dealt with in the U.S.-led Organization of American States (OAS). Colombian president Álvaro Uribe pushed back against the Brazilian proposal saying, it was not the right moment because of problems with terrorism, which required great care about this type of decision making. Uribe and U.S. president George W. Bush accused Venezuela of supporting terrorism and drug trafficking, and proposed sanctions to isolate Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez.

Following strong advocacy led by Brasilia and its regional allies, Colombia eventually agreed to the arrangement, and the CDS prevailed [Sanahuja, 2012, p. 49]. The CDS was formally launched on 16 December 2008, in Salvador, Brazil. According to the official statement, it is “responsible for putting into action defense policies in military cooperation, humanitarian action, peace operations, industry and defense education and technology training” [UNASUR, undated-b]. The *Washington Times* reported that Brazil “is the driving force behind a proposed new South American defense grouping that threatens to exclude the United States from regional military planning at a time of growing tensions between Washington and leftist Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez” [Washington Times, 2008]. The consensus in the scholarly literature is also that the CDS initiative was foremost an expression of Brazilian regional leadership, although Chávez was also a driving force behind the new regional collective security agenda, and behind UNASUR more broadly. The CDS initiative also reflects Brazilian national concerns about effective control of its porous 17,000-kilometre border, and its fight against drug traffickers, other criminal elements and militias from neighbouring countries. It indicates Brasilia’s

¹⁵ Bahia summits. Available at: <http://wikileaks.cabledrum.net/cable/2008/12/08BRASILIA1636.html> (accessed 03 November 2016).

growing unease about the instability in the Andean region and the desire, under Lula, to exert more geopolitical influence in the region as a mediator in regional conflicts. Academic researchers have further noted that the Lula administration saw the role of the United States and U.S. intervention in regional conflicts as causing, on balance, more instability and uncertainty in South America than stability. Brasilia knew that many states in the region, especially the new wave of left-wing governments, questioned Washington's legitimacy as an honest broker, and Brasilia saw itself as better positioned to act as arbitrator.

From the inception of the proposal, Brasilia demonstrated its international leadership in the CDS initiative by acting as a moderating force between Chávez and the United States. Chavez said, "If there exists a North Atlantic Treaty Organization, why shouldn't there be a South Atlantic Treaty Organization?" [Washington Times, 2008]. Brazilian defence and foreign affairs officials were able to convince their U.S. counterparts that, considering the alternative leaders in the region, the U.S. ought to prefer to support the new defence council, especially under Brazil's leadership. U.S. strategists were aware that Chávez and other leftist leaders in the region could try to push the regional security initiative in an overtly anti-U.S. direction, and that it was more in line with U.S. interests to have Brazil showing strong leadership. Brazilian representatives also reassured their U.S. counterparts that any UNASUR security cooperation would be for "purely" defensive reasons, and aimed at standardizing military procurement and training, which the United States could see as beneficial, amid growing concerns about a continental arms race [Washington Times, 2008]. Brazilian defence minister Nelson Jobim said: "We don't (seek) territorial expansion. But we should have the arms to protect our (deterrence) capacity" [Washington Times, 2008]. The Brazilian diplomacy worked. On a trip to Brazil in March 2008, with Brazilian foreign minister Celso Amorim at her side U.S. secretary of state Condoleezza Rice declared, "I not only have no problem with (a South American defense council), I trust Brazil's leadership and look forward to coordination with it" [Washington Times, 2008]. However, in April the Pentagon also announced plans to reactivate the U.S. Navy's 4th Fleet (based in Mayport, Florida) to patrol the waters off Central and South America – a move that was widely noted in South America. U.S. defence officials provided conflicting explanations for the move, with the *Washington Times* reporting that Rear Admiral James Stevenson, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command, said that the revival of the 4th Fleet "would send a message to the entire region, not just Venezuela, and that the focus would probably be on security" [Washington Times, 2008].

Shortly after the formation of the CDS, it was challenged from within by its reluctant member, Colombia. The response from Brasilia and others exemplified the new style of collaborative and flexible leadership, in the security realm, that Brazil was championing. In August 2009, Colombia and the United States announced their agreement to allow the U.S. to use military bases on Colombian soil. This was the first real test for the newly formed council. Its critics suggested that the bilateral agreement showed the limits of South American-led regional multilateralism, security cooperation and autonomy, and that the will of the UNASUR members to preserve the CDS and to rely on it was being challenged. Brasilia and the regional allies responded carefully. Bogota understood that this decision (made without consulting the UNASUR membership) was a legitimate concern for the members of UNASUR, and it appreciated that the UNASUR members chose not to challenge Colombia's decision openly. Colombia and UNASUR negotiated ground-breaking new agreements on transparency and measures for mutual trust. With the change in the Colombian presidency, the new president Juan Manuel Santos decided not to ratify the agreement with the United States, which represented a significant shift in Colombian foreign policy and the effectiveness of Brazil's quiet diplomacy.

Interestingly, Indian strategists and scholars have noticed that the CDS preserves and strengthens the statist principles of non-intervention, sovereignty and territoriality, while it seeks to promote new modes of political dialogue and cooperation in defence matters among members, including at its annual meetings of defence ministers [Pothuraju, 2012, p. 4]. They highlight that the CDS is not self-classified as either a military alliance or a defence organisation. Rather, the goal is to nurture consultation and cooperation in the security realm and to advance a new set of aspirational norms for international security cooperation, as can be seen in the self-stated objectives of the CDS:

1. Guarantee a South American zone of peace.
2. Shape a common vision on defense.
3. Discuss regional positions in multilateral forums on defense.
4. Cooperate regionally in matters of defense.
5. Support demining and provide prevention and relief assistance to victims of natural disasters” [UNASUR, undated-b].

The spirit of normative innovation in the security realm, originally championed by the Lula administration for Brazil, has been elevated to the regional level, and is reflected in the main objectives of the CDS.

Brazil has also shown international leadership in advancing concrete measures, and taking steps to provide the initial steps in institutionalizing its professed commitments. One Indian researcher has noted that Brazil played a vital role in pushing for greater transparency on military expenditures, and such transparency was implemented by CDS members from 2009 onwards with their new procedures for sharing information on expenditures in procurement and military training. These steps attempt to address the long-held suspicions that have existed within the region, and among CDS members, regarding their respective military intentions. Indeed, these efforts create the potential to overcome the limited history of collaboration in defence within the region. Brazil, which alone represents 43% of the region’s total military expenditures, took the lead in the disclosure process [Pothuraju, 2012]. Defence spending in the region is among the lowest in the world, making up an average of only 0.91% of gross domestic product, and the self-professed goal of the CDS is to keep it so. With regard to regional economic integration, the CDS has also facilitated new collaboration initiatives in defence-related industries, including international cooperation, and where Brazilian corporations and technical know-how are at the centre of the value chain. Examples include regional cooperation in building Brazilian Embraer C-390 military transport aircraft and the 2001 agreement to modernize Argentinian missiles with Brazilian technology.

Health Cooperation

Although health cooperation in UNASUR has not received as much attention or coverage as the initiatives in international security cooperation, health is one of the clearest examples of Brazil’s important contributions to regional cooperation and international governance innovation. Especially through its participation in the South American Health Council (CSS), or UNASUR-Health. This permanent council was launched on 16 December 2008 by the heads of state and government of UNASUR, in Salvador, Brazil, one year after UNASUR was launched. The CSS had a five-year plan that ran from 2010 to 2015. Its main objectives were, first, to “build integration in matters of health by mimicking the efforts and achievements of other regional integration mechanisms,” and second, to “promote common policies and coordinate activities among Member States of UNASUR in regards to health” [UNASUR, undated-a]. The CSS focuses on the following projects:

- The South American Network of Health Surveillance and Response;
- the development of universal health systems;
- Universal access to medication;
- Health promotion and action on the determinants of health; and

The development and management of human resources in health [UNASUR, undated-a].

The emphasis on universal health coverage and access is important, and relevant to the discussion of normative innovation in global governance below.

The timing of the formation of the CSS followed immediately on the 2007 Oslo Declaration drafted by the foreign ministers of Brazil, France, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand [2007], which identified global health as a “pressing foreign policy issue of our time,” and the 2008 report of the Commission on the Social Determinants of Health [which suggested that health was rising on the global policy radar. These processes suggest that global health diplomacy and global health governance were attracting increasing foreign policy attention from governments, and were a growing concern for civil society actors and multilateral institutions [Labonté and Gagnon, 2010]. Earlier, Brazil had shown leadership in the global negotiations at the World Health Organization that resulted in the Framework Convention for Tobacco Control. At the WTO trade talks in 2001, Brazil together with India and South Africa spearheaded the Doha Declaration on Intellectual Property and Public Health, to curtail the ability of pharmaceutical corporations to use patent rights to prevent access to essential medicines in the case of epidemics in the developing world. Paolo Buss, head of Fiocruz Foundation from 2001 to 2008 and a long-standing and prominent institution for medical human resources, research training and immunization affiliated with Brazil’s Ministry of Health and president of the World Federation of Public Health Associations, was a key policy champion, together with Lula, a former trade union leader and participant at the World Social Forum (Chávez also strongly supported this push-back) [Cepik and Sousa, 2011].

Academic researchers of regional cooperation in South America have observed that the health sector is one of the main examples of Brazil’s commitment to the region. Brazil played a central role in the creation and development of the CSS where health ministers of UNASUR members meet to find common ground on promoting health policies and programmes [Herrero and Tussie, 2015; Pinheiro and Gaio, 2016]. Leticia Pineiro and Gabrieli Gaio [2016] suggest that Brazil takes part in this council mainly through the Fiocruz Foundation. Maria Belen Herrero and Diana Tussie [2015] write that Brazil’s contributions to the formation of Instituto Sudamericano de Gobierno en Salud in Spanish (South American Institute of Governance in Health, or ISAGS) under UNASUR included hosting the organization in Rio de Janeiro and providing a start-up grant, and has allowed continued technical work beyond the intermittent meetings of the CSS and its technical groups [Herrero and Tussie, 2015]. The main objectives of ISAGS are to:

1. Identify needs; develop programs; and support education and training in human resources and leadership in health matters for Member Countries in joint institutions with national and international counterparts.
2. Organize existing knowledge and research on health politics and governance, human resources and other relevant issues that may be used by the South American Health Council in coordination with national and international institutions.
3. Systematize, organize, distribute, and transmit technical and scientific information on global and regional health matters in order to support decision-making centers. Provide support to society strengthening processes and report on government processes in health governance.

4. Provide support to the negotiation of issues related to global, international and regional agendas by providing advice on the formulation of common external policies of the UNASUR” [UNASUR, undated-c].

Academic researchers suggest that ISAGS, which has an annual budget of less than \$3 million, has proven itself to be a nimble organization, and has demonstrated its value as the convener of innovative networks of health ministers in the region, academics, health specialists and technicians who share a common goal (likemindedness) of supporting building national and sub-regional capacity to formulate, implement and evaluate policies, and long-term planning, related to training leaders in health policy, and professional training on managing national healthcare systems. According to Pia Riggiozzi [2014a, p. 14], health diplomacy has become one of the strategic drivers in redefining the terms of regional cooperation and integration in South America This redefinition is happening at three levels: institutionalization (regulatory actors), diplomatic (intra-regional and extra-regional relations) and project driven. ISAGS, under UNASUR, is seen as a “pioneering step” in creating an “institutional pillar” to address the shared challenges, across the region, of uneven distribution of resources, health research and the quality of management in health governance [Riggiozzi, 2014b].

Herrero and Tussie [2015, p. 271] further suggest that ISAGS activities (including its seminars, courses, internship programmes) aim not only to improve the management of health systems, but also, equally importantly, to support the emergence of a “more autonomous pharmaceutical industry” through its coordinated research initiatives. ISAGS, accordingly, seeks to identify industrial capacities in the region, to coordinate common policies for producing medicines and other health goods, and to create competitive advantages for local industry in providing regional health and in global negotiations. Highlighting the contribution to creating new norms, Herrero and Tussie [2015] suggest that the health institutions of UNASUR, including the CSS, its technical groups and their work with ISAGS, are “crucial mechanisms” for establishing new “normative frameworks.” In essence, the CSS is organizing new shared rules and procedures for health governance in its member countries, and ISAGS is acting as a regional think tank, aiming to “redefine the boundaries between public interests and private sector actors,” including brokering tensions amid the technical sharing [Herrero and Tussie, 2015]. Herrero and Tussie also propose that the UNASUR health institutions are also playing an advocacy role in global health talks, advancing what Tussie [2014] elsewhere calls “post-hegemonic” norms, such as institutionalizing a commitment to health for all.

Conclusion

The analysis highlights three main points. First, during the Lula/early Rousseff period, Brazil took unprecedented strides to redefine the multilateral agenda and reshape institutional arrangements for international cooperation and conflict management in South America. In this period, Brasilia pursued an imaginative non-conformist foreign policy and an ambitious diplomatic agenda aimed at transforming the structure of power and representation as well as the rules and institutional norms of multilateral cooperation in the global system.

Second, the Lula administration and Brazilian diplomats translated the popular mood in Brazilian society during the decade of Lula’s presidency into a concrete diplomatic programme on the world stage. In brief, Brazil’s imaginative non-conformist foreign policy and can-do leadership – which has distinguished Brazil’s unique contributions to regional and global governance – were preconditioned by subterranean changes in Brazilian society and culture that emerged from the lengthy process of the democratic struggle to overcome military authoritarian rule, democratic maturation and rising self-confidence of the Brazilian people. At the global

and regional levels, this has meant pursuing common cause with major and smaller developing countries, promoting new policy models and lessons learned, and striving to gain more voice to the traditionally under-represented countries of the South.

Third, Brasilia transferred its imaginative non-conformist foreign policy and can-do leadership into a more sustained process of regional institution building. In so doing, the Lula and Rousseff administrations went beyond the rhetoric of can-do leadership to provide resources to create new institutionalized initiatives of international cooperation. Brasilia maintained the commitment to international governance innovation into the first term of the Rousseff presidency. As a result of the new international cooperation arrangements, Brazil has been a key driver of substantive and sustained achievements in international governance innovation in the Latin American region, including the promotion of new organizational principles, institutional rules and operational norms in international security and health cooperation with regard to the CDS and the CSS.

Some commentators now question the endurance or sustainability of Brazil's international leadership capacities, given the current downturn in the Brazilian economy, the turmoil at the top of the Brazilian political system and Rousseff's apparent downgrading of global diplomatic ambition. Although the broader societal and macro conditions certainly changed under her leadership, and although recent developments constrain efforts to maintain the spirit of innovation and the momentum that Brasilia set in motion during the Lula period, the period examined for this analysis is nonetheless important. Contemporary developments do not detract from the fact that Brazil has made significant contributions to rethinking and reshaping global governance, and in a new era where power in the world is less centralized and more multi-layered. Brazil has made these contributions to global governance alongside its regional neighbours, and it has also done so as a member of the BRICS. The changes that Brazil has undergone in exercising international leadership, and in promoting institutional innovation during the Lula/early Rousseff period prepared it well to return to such a role when structural, societal and political conditions allow.

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