

THE BRAZILIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE HEMISPHERIC SECURITY

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Abstract

This article analyses the recent evolution of Brazilian Foreign Policy, mainly its security aspects. The security issues were repositioned within the Brazil's international agenda and have acquired new format during the 1990's, particularly related to the Brazil's strategy to build its South American leadership. Both, the September 11th attacks and Luis Inácio Lula Da Silva election in 2002, have strengthened the previous tendencies, and haven't produced significant changes. Two factors are crucial to this process: a) MERCOSUR impact on the regional geopolitical accommodation and b) the recent Brazil's policies toward Amazon region increasing its presence and political actions.

Key words: *Brazil, International Relations, Security, MERCOSUR.*

Considering the relevance that regionalism reached in the new international order, and the qualitative changes the concept of international security experienced in the post-Cold War, the countries with resources gained new significance to lead the region. With the depolarization of hegemony, the perspectives of cooperation got broaden thanks to the progress of the sub regional integration processes. In that context, the creation of a hemispheric security arrangement in the American continent depends on the discussion of Brazilian regional action, which has been characterized by its will of leadership affirmation in the subcontinent of South America.

This article focuses on the analysis of the evolution of Brazilian foreign policy, centered on the issue of hemispheric security by showing the new outlines the topic has reached in the diplomatic agenda of that country in the 90's, specially, the reinforcement of Brazilian regional leadership position. The terrorist attacks of September 11th in USA, as well as the election of president Luis Inácio Lula da Silva in Brazil, will intensify those tendencies, without causing significant modifications.

In the analysis of a hemispheric regime of security creation and the position adopted by Brazil in the last decade about this topic, there are two fundamental matters to consider: the first one, refers to MERCOSUR impact in the continental geopolitical equilibrium. The second one refers to the reinforcement of Brazilian presence within the Amazon geopolitical arena. Although this second aspect of Brazilian regional policy has not been totally affirmed yet, it is added to the role of this country in the South American cone order, and they jointly make Brazil to be a key actor in the building of hemispheric security arrangement.

This article's central hypothesis states that the advance of the Brazilian presence in the region, in the last years, as much political as institutional, reduces the possibilities of

creating an effective and understanding hemispheric security arrangement, producing scenery where that arrangement is scarcely defined in general terms and in compatible way with other sub regional agreements of differing densities.

The evolution of Brazilian international strategic options in the 90's, must be understood in the context of those transformations and they must be observed as much in the domestic scope as in its immediate regional environment. The Brazilian model of strategic insertion in the international arena reaches clearer profiles during the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, based on two fundamental axis: the demarcation of the South American region as area of influence (by the regional integration), and the multilateralism, in diverse areas of action.

The article is divided in three parts: The first one, develops an analysis of the "South Americanization" followed by Brazilian regional foreign policy and how it was modified, given the changes of paradigms in the security scope. The second part presents briefly two sources of Brazilian regional actions in South America, by indicating the current course of those: La Plata and the Andean-Amazon. The third part presents an evaluation of the evolution of Brazilian relation with the hemispheric security agreement and, specially, the relation with USA since the 80's. The fourth part indicates how the attacks of September 11th in USA and the election of Lula as President reinforced the already existent tendencies of Brazilian regional policy. Finally, the last part of the article presents the conclusions.

The "South Americanization" of Brazilian Regional Policy and New Security Agenda

The post-Cold War depolarization of hegemony caused changes not only in the world power reordering, but also it caused qualitative changes in the international security concept. In this regard, the international action of countries with the same profile of Brazil, without extra power to influence or decide the international order, but with capacity to organize the regional space, gains relevance. That is the case of Brazil that, by performing an outstanding regional role particularly in the conflicts intermediation and seeking regional stability, reached a more important role in the definitions of security agreements.

According to Hurrell¹, the post Cold War era imposed a new content for the regional security concept that began to include issues such as, drug traffic, criminality, migration, environment, and democracy. As a result, according to the author, the regional security came to be defined in different terms from those coined during the international system's polarization. On the one hand, the security notion came to prevail as "collective defense of democracy", which was established as guarantee mechanism of the regional stability and security. Likewise, the promotion of economic reforms and the regional integration are identified as catalyst factors of a more stable regional order. The presupposition is that one of the integration process' results entails the more vulnerable and unstable neighbors may be "involved" in the integration policies, by ascending interdependence levels.

In this regard, it is necessary to stress the integration role as a regional stability factor. Always, in keeping with Hurrell, the institutionalization of regionalism is important not only because the costs to begin a conflict are high, but also because the

¹ Hurrell, Andrew. 1998. "Security in Latin America". In *International Affairs*, June.

integration is capable of promote socialization processes including “the redefinition of interests and identities, and it alters the members’ values building a new rational action for the interpretation of costs and benefits ”.

In a similar argumentation outline, Whitehead² analyzes the regional security from the angle of "democracy effect" expansion. The basic argument, which agrees with the defense of Brazilian foreign policy in the post Cold War, was that the defense of democracy and the creation of basic mechanisms guaranteeing the regime were fundamental elements to ensure the countries’ security and to define which must be the form of participation in regional organisms. That is to say, with the end of the Cold War, we could observe a whole of convergent initiatives in order to revitalize the regional security concept, broadening its range by the incorporation of new topics of the agenda (democracy, drug traffic, migration, human rights, etc) and by adopting the cooperative security concept in which the countries get ready to cooperate in the security field, with preventive measures.

In respect to Brazilian objectives related to regional security policy, the Ex-Minister of foreign affairs, Luis Felipe Lampreia³, affirmed: “our concern must be focused on the fight against arms traffic; and Brazilian diplomacy has worked for that purpose within **OAS**, as well as in the dialogue with other countries of the region. Our country enjoys credibility and confidence, which are very valuable products in the international relations.”

In that sense, it is necessary to give more emphasis to the role of non-hegemonic nations (co-responsibility) in relation to regional regimes and institutions in the promotion process of regional security. Those changes induced Brazil to readdress its strategy into two directions, intended to both broaden the international credentials of the country: strong adhesion to international regimes in the security field, and give priority to the sub regional dimension of its foreign policy (MERCOSUR and South America). According to the definition of Brazilian Secretariat for Strategic Issues: “Scenery (*that*) is based on the superiority of free market as well as democratic regimes, at least in most "axis countries" in a “polyarchic” order. (...) The unipolar military hegemonic actor gradually retires to limit itself for composing an international system led by big regional or thematic blocks of countries that act in a emerging form, or as aspirant to globalization ”. In other words, this is the building of a “multipolar scenario with cooperative or selective integration.”⁴

The evolution of Brazilian international strategic options, after the end of the cold war, must be understood in the context of transformations, as much in the domestic scope as in its immediate regional environment. It is necessary to bring to mind that all conditions would converge in favor of a demilitarized international insertion. On the one hand, the South American region was considered as an area free of conventional international conflicts, with no justification for an armaments race.

² Whitehead, Lawrence. 1993. “Dimensiones internacionales de la democratización: Un levantamiento”. (International Dimensions of Democratization: Europe and The Americas) En: Sola, Lourdes (org.). *Estado, mercado y democracia*. SP: Paz y Tierra. pp. 35-37.

³ Lampreia, Luis Felipe. 1997. *Discurso do Ministro de Estado das Relações Exteriores*, na abertura da 52a. Sessão da Assembléia Geral das Nações Unidas: Nova York, 22 de setembro.

⁴ SAE – Secretaria de Assuntos Estratégicos da Presidência da República. 1997. *Escenarios Exploratorios de Brasil 2020*. Texto para Discussão. Brasília, septiembre. p. 23.

On the other, the North American hemispheric nuclear umbrella made unlikely an external threat that merited Brazil's concern. At last, on the domestic viewpoint, once the democratic regime set up, they registered the fact that the foreign and defense policy makers did not find support to a warlike foreign policy, neither in the population nor in the elites.

The difficulty always was to establish a unique security system in the region, given the big economic and social heterogeneity of the countries. Some efforts to establish an arrangement in the security field advanced during the 90's, in which the axis of regionalism was the great pusher, like the "commitment of Santiago with democracy and renovation of the Inter-American system" (1991) and the schedule of periodic meetings of defense ministers (1990) which revealed the "configuration of a regional agenda" in the security field⁵.

In that context, Brazil defined its International strategic insertion that became clearer during the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso based on two fundamental elements: 1. Demarcation of South American region as influence area (by the regional integration); 2. Multilateralism as much in the International security field as in economic and commercial topics, like element that works as counterpoint before the North American hemispheric hegemony.

At the same time, although in a gradual form, Brazil comes with constant steps toward the incorporation of wide security concept, including unusual dimensions, or the so-called new topics. Yet without the integral acceptance of the new agenda, the Brazilian position has been more selective than refractory. For instance, Brazil has advanced in the regional treatment of issues, such as drug traffic and it has tried to keep out of the way from topics such as terrorism.

Two Axis of Brazilian Regional Policy: La Plata and Amazon Basins

Historically, Brazil has defined its action strategy in the South American context on two fronts: La Plata and the Andean fronts. La Plata region was considered since the colonial period as the area of major potential conflict for Brazil. That reality became substantially altered in the last 2 decades. The south axis of the regional Brazilian action is today much more characterized by a geopolitical accommodation combined with the leadership condition of Brazil, while the Andean-Amazon axis gains strategic importance and an agenda that grows in complexity.

After more than a century of disputes for regional influence that culminated with a deep diplomatic crisis and the beginning of a nuclear race in the 70's, during the second half of the 80's, Brazil and Argentina began a decisive process of distension. Those countries came to implement confidence-building measures, with agreements even in the nuclear area in such a way that the geopolitical regional antagonism, which had taken roots at the beginning of the 90's, was surpassed. Given the history of conflicts between the main members of MERCOSUR, it is clear that the elimination of this focus of tension is one of the most relevant factors that will allow the articulation of the other countries in the integration project. The initial frame of the Brazil-Argentinean

⁵ The first meeting was held in USA in 1995, the second one in 1996 in Argentine and the third one in Colombia in 1998. See: Fauriol, Georges and Perry, William. 1999. *Thinking strategically about 2005. The United States and South America*. Washington, DC: CSIS, December.

proximity, was the signature, jointly with Paraguay, of the Tripartite Agreement of technical operative cooperation of Itaipú and Corpus in October 19th, 1979, that according to the ambassador, Francisco Thompson Flores Neto, it permitted the "gradual substitution of the logic of interest contradictions thanks to the favorable perception toward the political cooperation and economic integration"⁶. That permitted the Brazilian foreign policy, in the regional scope, were fundamentally supported in the regional integration process, which was consolidated in December 1994, with the creation of united customs and the application of the external common tax (TEC) by Ouro Preto Protocol.

Since that time and with the recovering of the democratic regimes in Argentina and Brazil in 1983 and 1985 respectively, the new governments demonstrated political will to continue the integration process and cooperation in the nuclear area, which reflects the qualitative progress of the relations. The progress in security initiatives continues in the nineties and it represents the first orientation to reach more stability in the region, from the Brazilian foreign policy formulation perspective, in order to reach international credibility, calling for the absence of conflicts and reinforcing the idea of a pacific subcontinent in a world in which instability has become a recurrent element.

In that context, Brazil adopted diverse initiatives as part of the new international action strategy (because it would give stability to the region and create confidence relations among the neighbor countries) and global stability as well (because it included the adherence to several international treaties in the security field and because it would modify the country's exterior image), that is to say, first, the cooperation with the neighbor countries and, afterward, cooperation in the scope of the hemispheric and global security, which could be considered as parts of the action strategy in keeping with a country that intended to be established as regional power.

In that sense, this resulted in the signature of the Declaration on Nuclear Policy of Foz do Iguacu by Brazil and Argentina, on November 1990, that would cause the signature of the Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on December 13th 1991, for the application of safeguards to all nuclear materials and the creation of the Brazilian-Argentine agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC).

The strategy of Brazil was divided in two stages: first, stabilizing the situation with Argentina and creating confident relations and, besides, as it was stressed in an interview with the ambassador Luiz Felipe de Seixas Corrêa, "the agreement of nuclear cooperation with Argentina permitted Brazil takes, little by little, all the safeguard preventions and adhesions to the instruments of non-proliferation"⁷.

In order to reinforce its role of regional power, Brazil used the agreements signed with Argentina in the nuclear field to show the world an effective pacific region and in that way, contribute with the non-proliferation objective. As it was stressed in the speech

⁶ Flores Neto, Francisco. 2000. "Integración y cooperación Brasil-Argentina". In: Guilhon Albuquerque, José Augusto (org.). *El desafío geoestratégico. Sesenta Años de Política Exterior Brasileña (1930-1990)*. Vol. III. São Paulo: Nupri/USP. pp. 137-158.

⁷ Interview, 12.04.99 for the Project "Fuentes Vivas de la Política Exterior Brasileña", coordinated by the Nucleon de Pesquisa em Relações Internacionais (Foreign Affairs Research Nucleon) of USP, with the support of FAPESP.

of the Minister of Foreign Affairs at that time, Luiz Felipe Lampreia, during the signature of adherence to the treaty of non-proliferation (NPT) in Washington, on September 18th, 1998: “Jointly with Argentina, Brazil took the initiative to offer its bilateral experience in the nuclear field as an example of how it is possible to cooperate successfully in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in an atmosphere of transparency, strengthening thus the international non-proliferation regime”.

Such initiatives obviously did not remain limited to the security field, but they were enlarged with political and economic agreements. These transformations would converge in broadening the importance of countries whose profile of regional power⁸, as the case of Brazil in South America, would allow to act as promoters for the stabilization of conflict areas; and the regional action of Brazil exhibits evidences in that sense.

On the other hand, the Andean-Amazon axis development of Brazilian foreign policy took quite different ways. Until the 70's, Brazilian action in the region took place much more oriented to avoid the political confinement than to increase the political presence of the country or to enlarge its direct influence area⁹. But along the eighties, the perception that the main security concern of Brazil was not Argentina, but the Amazon region, got rapidly consolidated. However, to broaden its presence in the region, Brazil had to eliminate the distrusts related to expansionism, sub imperialism of USA, its special ally, whose image was used to be linked up with. In this regards, the successive bilateral agreements of Brazil with Peru, Colombia, Venezuela and Suriname ended with the signature of the Amazon Pact in 1976, and a treaty of cooperation in 1978¹⁰.

In the government of Figueiredo, after his visit to almost all countries of the region, such general strategy of political proximity with all countries of South America was consolidated. Figueiredo was the first Brazilian acting president that visited Peru, Colombia and Venezuela, besides he had been the third president in this century that visited Argentina, which occurred after 45 years¹¹. The space was opened for the growing participation of Brazil in the matters of the region along the following decades, like its progressive participation in groups and regional forums such as Cartagena, Contadora, Grupo de Río among others.

In the mid eighties, Brazil announced an ambitious project for “occupation of frontiers” in the north of the country not only by military presence, but also by civilians through improvement of the communication media, transports and the economic activity.

⁸ The *Pivotal States definition* coincides with the definition of regional powers according to Neumann, Iver (Ed.).

1992. *Regional great powers in the international politics*. New York: St. Martin's Press, as long as it entails the capacity “ not only to determine its regional stability, but also to affect the international one” The two concepts serve as analytic parameter to understand the international action of Brazil.

⁹ Maybe an exception has been the major participation of Brazil with Suriname, in which they understood that there was a security problem him directly involved. Selcher, W. 1986. “Current Dynamics and Future Prospects of Brazil's Relations with Latin America: Toward a Pattern of Bilateral Cooperation”. *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* XXVIII, N° 2 (Summer). p. 40.

¹⁰ Montenegro emphasizes the idea that, according to its characteristics, the TCA can be considered as an international regime of cooperation. Montenegro, Manuel. 2000. “Política Exterior y Cooperación Amazónica: La negociación del Tratado de Cooperación Amazónica”. En: Guilhon Albuquerque, J.A. *El desafío geoestratégico. Sesenta Años de Política Exterior Brasileña (1930-1990)*. Vol. III, São Paulo: Nupri/USP.

¹¹ Mac Cann, F. D. 1981. “Brazilian Foreign Relations in the Twentieth Century”, in Selcher, W. (Ed.), *Brazil in the International System: The rise of a Middle Power*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado. p. 21.

That project remained known as "Calha Norte" ("North Canal"), in reference to the Amazon basin and "expects the more intensive and coordinated presence of the state in areas of low density" and "to develop and grow the frontier fringe"¹².

In the nineties, a new push was given to the presence of Brazil in the region by the project named Amazon Monitoring System (SIVAM). That system "was projected for the surveillance of 5.2 millions of squares kilometers belonging to Amazon region, using six satellites, 18 airplanes, 25 radars, a meteorological station and more than 200 platforms of data collection in rivers"¹³. This system supplies data to direct the fight against the drug traffic and deforestation, which are considered key issues for the security of the country in the region. The program is partially operating and caused wide domestic and international debate, so much for its double civil/military character as well as for the fact of producing sensible information for all countries in the region. Those same reasons turned the auction for that project in an international bitter dispute of interested among the countries interested in supplying the technology and equipments, especially USA and France, and indirectly, to keep the presence in the strategic development of the region.

As well, along the nineties, Brazil defined projects of quite significant commercial and energy integration with Venezuela, included in the wide regional agenda existing between Brazil and its neighbors. In that series of agreements, the supply of electric energy was granted to Venezuela by Brazilian border state, as well as the continuous use of Venezuelan gasoline and oil advanced; they also built gas pipelines and oil pipelines, in keeping with what Brazil already had defined with Bolivia and Argentina.

More recently, Brazil completed that Amazon agenda with commercial items in MERCOSUR meetings with the Andean community, in order to define a commercial liberalization between those blocks. At present, the *Andean front* represents the major challenge for Brazil concerning its regional foreign policy; basically, because the region became the major focus of continental instability. Significant elements of the new topics in the security scope make part of the regional current agenda: breaks in the constitutional order (for example President Fujimori's coup d'etat in Peru; the constitutional fall of President Pérez in Venezuela and more recently, the action of President Chávez in the same country); serious violation of the human rights (case of Colombia); intensification of drug traffic in many countries of the region (Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Brazil); environmental degradation; economic and political instability (Ecuador) and increase of corruption levels.

Since the end of the 70's, Brazil has shown an outstanding action in the regional security, which role would entail the creation of the Treaty of Amazon Cooperation (TCA), in 1979, that involved all Andean region's Amazon countries and it is exhibited as an international frame regime in the efforts of region stabilization. Since the 90's, Brazil truly managed to achieve sub regional more assertive position, as it will be explained hereinafter with more detail.

¹² Quintão, Geraldo. 2000. Discurso do Ministro da Defesa em Washington no Woodrow Wilson Center, 29 junho.

¹³ Ministério da Ciência e Tecnologia. 2002. *Nota da Assessoria de Imprensa do Ministério*. Brasília, 25 julho.

In the scope of the solution of conflicts in the Andean area, it is worthy to stress the case of the conflict of Peru-Ecuador in which Brazil acted as mediator and, in November 1997, took part of the "group of guarantor countries", together with Argentina, Chile and United States, whose peace commitment was explicit by the "Peace Declaration of Itamaraty " between Peru and Ecuador, on February 17th, 1995, in Brasilia.

Just to add an example that explicitly characterizes the objective of Brazil to lead the solution of still pending conflicts in the Andean region, by the diplomatic via so as to increase the international credibility, we can quote the official speech of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso during the signature ceremony of peace declaration: "Peru and Ecuador demonstrate to the whole world that the reason that differentiates South America is the fact that it is a region of peace"¹⁴.

Colombia still is the main tension focus for action of Brazil in the region, because the regional potential impact of a Colombian civil war worsening is significant. The arsenal and the FARC forces are comparable to those of a standard army. Immediate effects of that conflict can be felt in Venezuela and Peru, due to the traffic displacement and the movement of guerrillas groups. In Brazil, since the offensive taken by the Colombian government against the FARC by the end of 2002, some incidents that involved guerrilla's actions in the Amazon frontier were registered.

Brazil moves forward the fields where it disposes more skills: the political and the diplomatic. In principle, it is not a country's option to carry out an action of a purely military character, in which field the USA's capacity is disproportionate. As well, civil and military analysts tend to agree that the Colombian situation is serious, principally the connection between guerrilla and drugs traffic, and at the same time, they agree with the evaluation that Brazil does not have resources to participate in a direct way against the conflict.

Since that time, in that regional context, the role of Brazil has been constant to search major stability to solve the conflict by the diplomatic via and the incentive toward the regional integration. In that way, the 80's and 90's represented a fundamental change in the regional presence of Brazil in South America. In La Plata axis, in the history of the region, the agreements and institutions of economic and political integration reached an unusual influence, with strong performance in the field of the regional security stability. In the Andean/Amazon axis we could observe a rapid increase of the Brazil presence and projection by putting the security issues as a central point in the agenda, but also moving forward in topics of economic integration and substructure. Both movements clearly indicate the priority that the South American region -North and south axis- came to entail in the agenda of Brazilian foreign affairs.

Brasil, USA and the Hemispheric agreements

At hemispheric level, the low efficacy of multilateral institutions in the security scope, especially of Inter American Treaty for Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR), but also OAS, made the countries of Latin America to inquire about the possibility that in an

¹⁴ Cardoso, Fernando Henrique. 1998. Discurso na Cerimônia de Assinatura do Acordo entre Perú e Equador. Radiobrás: Brasilia. En <http://www.radiobras.gov.br/integras/>

environment of hegemonic polarization, United States would be ready to renounce to the efficacy of the unilateral actions pro a major institutional equilibrium.

During the 80's, the crisis of relations between Latin America and the United States (external debt crisis and North American interventionism in Central America) added to the North American interest for multilateralism declination, intensified the discouragement related to the possibility of cooperation in the security scope by hemispheric institutions¹⁵. Additionally, the deep weakening of hemispheric relations occurred due to the American support, without mediation, to the United Kingdom in the Malvinas war in 1982, which definitively turned TIAR in dead letter.

In relation to United States' role in the hemispheric post cold war relations, several authors seek to show that the bases of the relation between United States and Latin America were also modified. Lake and Morgan (1997), for example, argue that the North American interest to give local support and regulate the regional conflicts substantively declined in the period after the cold war. With that, the countries began to have space to create its own security regional outlines. In that sense, regarding the processes level of regional security promotion, Diamint shows that the promotion of conventional security loses ground for preventive and cooperative security outlines¹⁶.

Thanks to MERCOSUR, Brazil managed to coordinate, in the best way, its leadership role and regional power. The block political and geo strategic meaning of Brazil largely surpass its economic and commercial sense. Although the integration had weakened the commerce by catalysis among the blocks, and although it had functioned as market of scale and attraction for internationals direct inversions¹⁷, until the beginning of 1999 (when the devaluation of the real occurred) Brazil, suffered important trade deficits with respect to Argentina, yet never putting in danger the project as a whole.

In spite of those advances (strictly within strategic military field) there is not an arrangement of common defense among the block's participating countries. However, there were significant advances, as regards the defense related-issues (issues related to defense: democracy, drug traffic, immigration, control of arms). For example, the petition of the democratic clause¹⁸ represented an effective political instrument in the attempt of military coup in Paraguay on April 22nd 1996, when General Lino César Oviedo accused President Juan Carlos Wasmosy of corruption and threatened him to deprive him of power, in a totally antidemocratic action. The maintenance of democracy in Paraguay, in that MERCOSUR countries supported moment, based on the democratic clause.

¹⁵ Hirst, Mónica. 1995. "Obstáculo ao governo regional no hemisfério ocidental: velho regionalismo na nova ordem mundial". *Política Externa*, Vol. 4, Nº 2, pp. 94-122.

¹⁶ Diamint, Rut. 1996. "Un producto de la posguerra fría: la cooperación en seguridad. El caso argentino". In: Rojas, Francisco and Claudio Fuentes. *El Mercosur de la defensa*. FLACSOChile: Santiago.

¹⁷ In agreement with the informations of international trade published in *Balanza Comercial Brasileña-Mercosur*, of the Secretariat of Foreign Commerce (SECEX) Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, the four member countries of the MERCOSUR reached notable success in the increase of commerce among themselves after six years of existence. Data from Bacen, show that external direct investments for MERCOSUR grew from US\$1, 972 millions in 1992 to US\$29,996 millions in 1999.

¹⁸ From its creation on March 26th 1991, the main objective of MERCOSUR is 'to consolidate democracy as life modality and government system'. The treaty of Asunción includes, in its main articles states that basic requisite for participation and integration of third countries, is the condition of having democratic governments.

Although the treaty of *Asunción* does not make any special mention to coordination in the security field, there is not doubt that MERCOSUR facilitated the change in the regional security environment. The elimination of the potential conflict, instead of coordination of defense policies, has been the main reached objective¹⁹.

Moreover, we can register two important initiatives in the defense related-issues field: a) the elaboration of a general security plan for the triple frontier (Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina), on March 28th 1998, in which a unique system of control of money laundering, terrorism, immigration, vehicles commerce, drug traffic and smuggling was established, and b) creation of a common system of control and arms raking obtained in illicit operations, such as drug traffic.

The sub regional integration in the South Cone operated during the whole 90's decade, as the main assets that Brazil possesses to extend its influence area to the whole South American continent. In terms of international negotiations by Brazilian induction, negotiations with others international poles were carried out from a joint position among blocks.

In that regard, MERCOSUR became an effective instrument, from Brazilian foreign policy affirmation's viewpoint, regarding the establishment of a contraposition attitude to the United States regional influence and stability of the Andean region. It is worthy to quote Hurrell²⁰ again: "the institutionalization of the regionalism is important not only because the costs to begin a conflict are high, but also because the integration is capable to promote socialization processes, which builds a new rational action for the interpretation of costs and benefits".

Besides, with respect to the security field, regionalism would also bear the function to identify the possibilities of benefits extension into potentially unstable areas and the restriction to admit unstable countries to the block (as the already mentioned importance of the democratic clause). The cases of Colombia, Venezuela, Peru and Ecuador reinforce the thesis that domestic unstable states in an unstable neighbor's atmosphere are also potentially problematic for the regional security. This focus still achieves more projection at the beginning of 2000, when instability focal points became more problematic and Brazil faced a major pressure to take on a more firm position in relation to conflicts' resolution.

Some analysts, principally North American ones, have stressed the potential contraposition of Brazilian regional policies with respect to North American interests. According to Smith²¹, the consolidation of MERCOSUR and ALCSA can have historical important consequences for the region because, for the first time, there would be the possibility of a contraposition between USA and a united block of Latin American countries, in a specific confrontation with big strategic effects. Riordan Roett, in a letter addressed to the United States Trade Representative, responsible organism for the management of negotiations on the hemispheric integration in USA, was clear when affirming that "In the next 4 or 5 years (...) Brazil will require a sophisticated handling method by the USA" and "USA must not hope any special preference or treatment (by

¹⁹ Fauriol y Perry. 1999. op. cit.

²⁰ Hurrell. 1998. op. cit.

²¹ Smith, Peter H. (Eds.). 1996. *The challenge of integration: Europe and the Americas*, New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers.

Brazil)²². Months later, the USTR lady employee, who asked that consultation to Roett, was protagonist of a slight, but illustrative diplomatic incident with Brazil. Brazilian diplomatic officials considered the attitude as petulant, and according to the press, that lady official ratified a report on the negotiations of the Hemispheric Integration, whose general evaluation stated that the same had been harmed "by MERCOSUR intransigence and Brazilian obstructionism."²³

Additionally, we refer to the comments of Fauriol and Weintraub²⁴: "Brazil and the others member countries of MERCOSUR are developing a transformation, whose consequences will be able to alter significantly the way USA will follow a hemispheric policy by the next century", or even, "the superior capacity of Brazil and its latent aspiration to regional leadership, suggest a growing competition in some aspects with the USA policies for South America".

Other important aspect of regional policy that composes the emergent Brazilian foreign affairs' matrix in the last years is the great coincidence between economic and political interests and the strategies in the security field. The sub regional economic and commercial agreements have been accompanied, *pari passu*, by agreements in the area of military cooperation. The perspective of these agreements of South American achievements is shared jointly with ALCSA's proposals. In this sense, Brazil is taking on the "role of 'arbitration power' whose unquestionable subcontinent relevant position empowers it"²⁵, or even, according to Cavagnari²⁶, "for Brazil, the integration is necessary as long as it leads South America to the political-strategic stabilization. As long as Brazilian military compromises are reduced in the region, it permits to give priority to the development of the not military components of its strategic capacity".

Summarizing, we can say that since the second half of the eighties and mainly at the beginning of the nineties, Brazil managed to develop a regional policy with strongly strategic content and that progressively occupied a central place in its foreign affairs' matrix. Celso Amorim explained that in the following way: "It is essential to reinforce the regional base of our insertion in the world by consolidating MERCOSUR and firmly advancing in the project of a South American Commercial Free Area"²⁷.

At the same time, it is undeniable the increase of the North American presence in South America through Plan Colombia. It is the first time, from World War II that USA's troops settle in South American ground. Such initiative was developed and implemented even during Bill Clinton administration, managing to reach new contours with Bush specially, after September 11th. Initially, it was exclusively conceived to support the combat against drugs, but it became flexible to include among its goals the combat

²² Roett, Riordan, answering letter to the consultation of USTR about the possible strategies of Brazil for South America, mimeo, August 1995.

²³ Part of the report of the USA embassy in Bogotá, supported by USTR, with respect to the negotiations that took place in Cartagena, in March 1996. Silva, Carlos Eduardo Lins da. 1996. "Comércio Exterior é Foco de Tensão com os EUA", *Jornal Folha de São Paulo*, 29 de março. São Paulo.

²⁴ Fauriol, G. e Weintraub, S. 1995. "US Policy, Brazil and the Southern Cone" in *The Washington Quarterly*. Washington. p. 124.

²⁵ Coronel Gonsalves, I. C. 1995, *Segurança Hemisférica: posições e reflexões*, mimeo, *Inter-American Defense College* (Washington, D.C.). p. 9.

²⁶ Cavagnari, Geraldo L. 1992. "Proposições para Futura Concepção Estratégica", palestra no Seminário Estratégia para o Brasil do Século XXI, reproduzido em *Cadernos Premissas*, NEE-UNICAMP, Nº 1. p. 57.

²⁷ Amorim, Celso. 1994. "O Brasil, o Mercosul e o Comércio Internacional", *Jornal do Brasil*, January. Rio de Janeiro.

against the *guerrilla* and, more recently, against terrorism. Officially, USA has 400 military advisors in Colombia and it supplies aid of US\$1.4 thousand millions, besides it facilitates the purchase of armaments and cooperates in intelligence issues. Unofficially, the Brazilian government estimates about 1,400 North American militaries settled in Colombian land. In that episode, not only the direct presence of USA draws one's attention, but also the low capacity to coordinate actions by the countries of the region, obviously, including Brazil itself.

According to a very -close -to -Washington's establishment analyst, during Clinton's administration, multilateral solutions were tried to define support policies to help Colombia in order to involve Brazil in that process²⁸. However, Brazil systematically refused taking part in initiatives headed by USA. Thus, given the impossibility to act in a coordinated way with the countries of the region and due to the inactivity of TIAR and OAS agreements, the North American democratic government defined and implanted a bilateral policy.

This situation illustrates as much the traditional hesitation of Brazil to get involved in an effective way in regional political agreements under the USA leadership and agenda, as the limitation of Brazil itself to indicate feasible alternative policies. However, recent signs in Brazilian foreign policy management, after the election of Lula, indicate that it is possible to think in some changes. Besides, it is also possible that, as a consequence of the more deliberated acceptance of Brazilian regional leadership role, the country becomes more participative tending to get more involved in hard regional topics.

September 11th and the Election of Lula

The attacks in New York in 2001 and the election of a moderate left government in Brazil did not alter the dynamics of the hemispheric security relations. On the contrary, those events reinforced the already existent tendencies in that process.

The terrorist attacks of September 11th in 2001 placed again the topic of the international security in foreground, in the hemispheric agenda of USA, with evident impacts also for the Brazilian position. Initially, without any relation with Brazil, the attacks reached the international Brazilian agenda at least in two fields. Firstly, there was the hypothesis of illicit operations links existing in the triple frontier (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay) as a source of international terrorism financing. However, that topic did not prosper and was promptly refused as much by diplomacy as by Brazilian military and defense bureaucracies.

Secondly, the discussion rose with respect to the TIAR's role in the hemispheric system of defense remained active. One year before the attacks, Mexico had already made known its statements indicating the TIAR's decadence as regional peacekeeping instrument. The subjacent argument was that The Americas did not have external threats that justified the logic of the treaty and they had, on the other hand, the internal instabilities as main threats, which were not contemplated by the treaty vocation. Thus, Mexico scarcely expressed officially what was already worldwide known, particularly, after the war of Las Malvinas, when USA joined United Kingdom against Argentina.

²⁸ Interview granted in November 2002 in Washington DC.

After the attacks of September 11th, Brazil, given the pressures of USA to collaborate in its "antiterrorism war" decided to give a diplomatic solution to those demands. Instead of responding to the USA bilateral demands of commitment with its policy, Brazil chose for evoking TIAR as the more appropriate existent instrument to deal with the topic. Obviously, Brazil made use of the inactivity of that treaty to escape from any new commitment with USA; that action made Mexico to postpone the denunciation of the Treaty, which finally occurred by the end of 2002.

From the range of issues that directly involve South America in the USA policies against the terrorism, Brazil accepted to collaborate in few of them. For example, it agreed with the USA intelligence service reinforcement in the country, especially intended to monitor the triple frontier region. However, it did not accept to adopt a policy of severe surveillance in that same region and, until the moment, it refused for example, to classify the Colombian FARC as a terrorist organization.

That is to say that Brazil kept its position previous September 11th, by filtering the USA pressures to join its security agenda and diluting the USA attempt to obtain political support in the region by remitting the problem toward the not very-effective multilateral organizations. At the same time, Brazilian authorities manifested their concern related to North American policies of combat against the drug traffic and guerrilla in Colombia, produce instability effects in the Amazon region, as a result of a potential overflowing of those conflicts toward the adjacent regions and countries.

The pressures for Brazil to increase its level of commitment in the Colombian issue have been growing, specially under the argument that guerrilla groups, the arms and drugs dealers and agents of money laundering, hold strong connections with Brazilian organized crime. The country continues avoiding getting involved in that conflict, but must progressively accept some functions of mediation, support or even supplying information, either from SIVAM or from its information services.

The election of Lula also represented a strong push to the intensification of Brazilian South American commitment. As much La Plata as the Andean-Amazon axis, must be reinforced, like the speeches and the government program of the new president have stated. Already important signs have been pointed out regarding the institutional strengthening of MERCOSUR, as well as the economic agreements with the regional countries. Specially, before the Andean countries, the decisive commitment of the new Brazilian government in the mediation of the Venezuelan crisis, although with partial success, is a fact that must be repeated in other spheres of the country's regional action. It is possible that some measures related to the Colombian crisis may also be adopted, either to seek negotiation intermediation or to collaborate with the constitutional government.

Great part of Lula's speech when he took office was used to address international and, particularly, South American topics. Many times, he referred explicitly upon the Brazil desire to reach the South America leader condition. Although the new Brazilian President defended that state positions must be taken on by not politics-origin people, such as the position of chancellor, Lula appointed the diplomat, Celso Amorim, strongly related to a more assertive Brazilian position in the international system specially, in the South American region. At the same time, the standing role as advisor for international matters, Marco Aurélio García, with deep and tight relationships with people, groups

and neighbor countries' administrations, is an important sign of how Brazil must act in that field.

Final considerations

As we can observe, historically Brazil sought to play a role of counterbalance in the hemispheric multilateralism in the security field, opposing the hegemonic international system²⁹. In this regard, there were evident actions within OAS and TIAR, by more overwhelming and open criticism. The multilateralism commitment in the FHC government's security scope, known by filiation to several multilateral security regimes, did not have its correspondence in the hemispheric scope. The speech with respect to TIAR and the actions related to OAS, maintained the same standards of the previous proceedings.

Brazil advances with many hesitations to incorporate the new topics to its security agenda. It advances as long as the non-traditional problems, such as the drug traffic and terrorism, continue as priorities for the main hemispheric actors, mainly for USA.

The main instrument of Brazil regional action in the last two decades has been its growing participation in institutional integration agreements, from which MERCOSUR is the most important. But that initiative, as well as those of the infrastructure integration with Venezuela, Bolivia and Argentina, is a very important step, as well as the possible regional performance for the complete installation of the system of surveillance of Amazon (SIVAM). That is to say, in spite of that Brazil disposes of little capacity to directly practice a guarantor role in the regional order, the gradual but consistent policy of the last years, creation of regional cooperative net relations in the region, substantially altered the quality of its presence in the South American space, even in the security field. Although the regional Brazilian presence in La Plata axis shows a greater degree of maturity than its presence in the Andean-Amazon axis, there is a clear advance tendency in that direction. The economic negotiations of Brazil and MERCOSUR with the countries of the Andean community, jointly with the mediation initiatives for regional conflict resolutions and with SIVAM, indicate that.

In that way, it is likely that Brazilian participation in the hemispheric defense agreements under the USA leadership will be reduced. If that commitment had already been historically little explicit, when Brazil seeks to consolidate its regional leadership role with an active participation in the building of a South American cooperative order, thus that commitment should be even more limited. Additionally, Brazil's regional agenda, as well as the means used to accomplish it are quite different from the ones adopted by the USA.

The hemispheric security negotiations situation projected from that context indicate that, in the case there are new agreements in that field in order to substitute TIAR and other existent instruments, it is likely they will have a quite superficial character, without producing international significant commitments. Besides, for that arrangement to become possible, they must keep in mind the current cooperation net among South American countries, which direct or indirectly influence the security topics. Although those agreements are still limited and they experience a consolidation

²⁹ Oliveira, A. y Onuki, Janina. 2000. "Brasil, Mercosur y Seguridad Regional". In *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, Nº 43 (2), pp. 108-129.

phase, the sum of those experiences shapes a sub regional context quite different from which historically has been known in South America. Thus, a possible hemispheric security arrangement, though superficial in terms of commitment, must be compatible and capable to incorporate the different existent agreements, by having their own agendas as well as their own maturity degrees.

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