

# Brazil's Africa Policy under Lula

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## ABSTRACT

This article is an analysis of Brazilian foreign policy largely since the coming to power of Luis Inácio “Lula” da Silva. It is an assessment of policy and implementation in Brazilian international organizations that speak to south-south issues. As a background to the study, I provide a historical overview of both south-south relations in general and Brazilian strategies in particular for those organizations and institutions that sprang up during the turbulent, yet hope-filled sixties. The bulk of the paper focuses on the current government in Brazil and its approach to south-south. Finally, the most specific location of this essay is Brazil's current interest in Africa. When Lula came to power in 2003, some questioned whether this leftist president would abruptly end policies of the previous administration and veer towards radical changes as Chávez did in Venezuela. Others fretted that the president would abandon his working class roots and followers by moving towards conservative policies. “Brazil's Africa Policy under Lula” pinpoints the particular policies that have been retained, discarded, or created so far during the six and one half years of the Lula administration. What are the specific goals of the administration with respect to south-south relations? What methods does the administration use to achieve those goals, especially through governmental organizations? What are some of the true motives for pursuing such policies? How long term might these policies be? How different are they from previous policies—both in the immediate past and during the first wave of south-south relations? How effective are the policies? Will they be in effect long after Lula's administration is gone? These are the questions that inform the article.

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## INTRODUCTION

Brazil's relationship with the African continent is at an important crossroads. This is particularly true of sub-Saharan Africa. Until the administration of Luis Inácio "Lula" da Silva, no Brazilian president had set foot on African soil, preferring to engage their European or United States counterparts and, to a lesser degree, their Latin American homologues. On some levels, this shows a dramatic shift in Brazil's foreign policy in general and in particular with regard to Africa. As of this submission, Lula has visited the continent ten times since he came to power in 2003. The sheer frequency of these trips places the current administration in a category of its own when it comes to the engagement of one country with the continent of Africa. However, when probing a little further, I find that the travel can have a significant impact not only for Brazil-Africa relations, but also for south-south relations. As such, one should not overlook the global implications of Brazil's engagement with the African continent beyond the developing world. Repeatedly declaring the twenty-first century as the century of Africa and Latin America, President Lula vocalizes the hopes of millions of people and a good portion of the world's citizens. Different from eager *mundonovista* (New World)<sup>1</sup> thinkers at the beginning of the twentieth century, Lula's projections include more than his own socio-economic group and incorporate an entirely different continent. In addition, there is some evidence that these pronouncements by the Brazilian leader might come to pass. (Silva, "Discurso"<sup>2</sup>) As Lula's administration comes to the end of its second term, one wonders what is in store for its foreign policy choices, especially as they relate to Africa.

Lula, the man, is but one person in his administration. Yet, his strong personal convictions, coupled with the very important will of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT or Workers' Party) that put him in office, ensure that foreign policies are a collective decision and not the personal whims of any individual. Therefore, it is not out of the question to stress his presence in foreign policy, particularly in this case, towards Africa. Lula is not of African descent, and in his many discussions of issues related to Africa and the Diaspora he stresses this point. He does so only to remind the public that race, as important as it is in the new Brazilian dialogue, is but one factor in the makeup of the country.

When Lula came to power in 2003, some questioned whether this leftist president would abruptly end policies of the previous administration and veer towards radical changes as Chávez did in Venezuela or as Zelaya attempted in Honduras. Others fretted that the president would abandon his working class roots and followers by moving towards conservative policies, aligning the country more with the powerful industrialized nations of the G8. This essay explores some of the particular foreign policy initiatives that have been retained or created so far during the six years of the Lula administration. At the

same time, the article shows how these initiatives affect the country's Africa strategy.

The methodology used in the analysis follows international organization theory while it simultaneously updates the theory to include more recent approaches that acknowledge the role of cultural input. Furthermore, this paper counts among international organizations those that develop from within one nation, such as Brazil, and expand their reach outwards to encompass other regions of the world.<sup>3</sup> In general, international organization theory is an underutilized tool for looking at south-south relations. It can reveal a wide range of dynamics—from motives to likelihood of success and a host of factors in between. In this case, the “organization” under consideration is the Brazilian government within the Lula administration itself, and the factors are those that find representation in these questions:

What are the specific goals of the administration with respect to Africa and within the framework of south-south relations? What methods does the administration use to achieve its goals—both within government organizations and without? Who are some of the key players in Brazil's Africa policy? What are some of the true motives for pursuing policies towards Africa? How different are current policies from previous policies—both in the immediate past and during the first wave of south-south relations? How effective are the policies? How long-term might these policies be? Will they be in effect long after Lula's administration is gone? These are the questions that inform this essay.

My definition of south-south is a broad one that includes all of the regions of the developing world, although my focus here is Brazil and the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. The definition includes so many nations that one of the best ways to define it is by noting which nations are not included: the United States, Russia, and the majority of the EU countries. These are the very nations whose political and economic leaders conceived the modern global institutions that stemmed from the 1944 Conference in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the predecessor for today's World Trade Organization—the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Many of the decisions they made at Bretton Woods, ostensibly to bring the world closer together by connecting world economies, often contributed to the lack of progress among developing nations while simultaneously benefitted multi-national corporations and developed countries. Another litmus test for defining south-south is a country's non-colonial power status in modern history. I choose not to include Russia because of its former status as a global hegemon during the decades of the Soviet Union. Therefore, my working definition alters the concept of the so-called BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) as up-and-coming economies to watch. Despite its growing economic clout, China retains some south-south “credentials.” Furthermore, given that the legacy of colonialism is

a powerful marker of the distinction between developed and developing nations, those countries whose citizens were colonial subjects over the last 500 years—since the discovery of the “New World”—typically fall within south-south status. Rather than always aiding in development, the institutions created by the developed nations often maintain underdevelopment in the south, revealing some of the negative aspects of globalization.<sup>4</sup> Thus, Latin American countries that received independence from Spain, Portugal and France dating mostly from 1791–1898 remain more or less in the same broad category as most African countries that ushered in independence mostly in the mid-twentieth century. South-south definitions, like all attempts to reify a subject area, are fraught with contradictions and polemics. Not the least of these is the ever-shifting status of nations and people within those nations. Nevertheless, the definitions above allow a degree of validity with which to examine Brazil’s foreign policy towards Africa.

In great part, Brazil’s new emphasis on Africa owes to the continuing dialogue among south-south nations. With the passage of years, it is easy to forget that the current practice of engaging fellow developing countries is not the beginning of relationships among nations of the Global South. Instead, the decade of the turbulent yet hope-filled 1960s saw an unprecedented willingness among countries of the Global South to coalesce under common causes and goals. Largely these were expressions of solidarity and actions against aggressor developed nations. In this sense, it is possible to trace the partial beginning of south-south cooperation even before the 1960s—to the first Bandung Conference in Indonesia in 1955. The conference included Asian countries and the few African nations, including those of the Maghreb, that existed before the majority of the African countries received independence. It also embraced emerging Ghana a few months before its independence. It was a successful conference in that the participant nations established ten basic principles, which, to this day, guide other developing world approaches to relationships. Some of those principles speak of fundamental human rights, the recognition of racial and ethnic groups, the right to self-defense, and the goal of non-interference in domestic affairs.<sup>5</sup> While seemingly altruistic, the Bandung conference clearly aimed to counter the negative aspects of globalization of economies, cultures, and peoples—even if the language of globalization was not used in their deliberations.

The success of the Bandung conference in 1955 led to the establishment of the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) which held its first conference in 1961, with the addition of some Latin American countries like Bolivia and Cuba, including Brazil and Ecuador as observers. “Non-Aligned” in this case was an effort to combat the aggression of developed nations, and the primary concerns of the participant countries at the conference were issues of colonialism. These developing nations banded together to seek ways around the glo-

balizing effects of economic assaults by institutions and world leaders who did not have their interests in mind. NAM continues to exist for these same reasons of non-aggression and the halting of economic encroachment. While not occurring as clockwork, future conferences saw the membership grow exponentially to the point where, even in the twenty-first century, there are numerous member states. NAM is not an organization, but rather multiple movements, as its member states often remind us. Thus, it is tough to measure its success in terms of concrete goals over a long period of time. Yet it continues to be a catalyst for south-south cooperation.

### **BRAZIL'S FOREIGN POLICY BEFORE THE LULA ADMINISTRATION**

Brazil has been a steady contributor to south-south dialogue, including NAM, but with differing strategies and sometimes different motives. Throughout twentieth-century geopolitical history, Brazil has remained very clear in its desire to be a major player on the world stage. Starting at home in Latin America, this lone Portuguese-speaking country works assertively to make its mark on issues affecting the region. Within the Global South, Brazil increasingly takes a leadership role on a number of fronts. In the broadest of global arenas and during the short-lived League of Nations at the beginning of the twentieth century, Brazil pushed to have its voice heard. Throughout the history of the United Nations, the country has sought to be a permanent member of the powerful UN Security Council. While, the country's aspirations are quite apparent, it is another matter whether these ambitious goals are closer to realization, even with world focus on Brazil in the second decade of the twenty-first century.

Historically, Brazil's foreign policy goals strived to join with the more industrialized nations, whatever the configuration of the ruling bodies—be it the League of Nations or the more recent World Trade Organization. A common sentiment among the country's ruling elite is expressed in the following:

President Collor (impeached for reasons of corruption less than two years into his term) is said to have declared that he preferred to see Brazil take the 'last place in the developed countries group' than as 'the first of the developing countries.' (Almeida 170)

With the election of the country's first working class president in modern history, there is a noticeable shift, not only in strategies, but also in some aspects of the general goals of leadership on the world stage. While the over-arching aim of world prominence remains intact, Brazil is broadening its scope of south-south impact, often seeing itself as the champion of this virtual region.

## FOREIGN POLICY UNDER LULA

The Lula administration's strategies for achieving its goals know no limits with regard to institutions. Instead, the administration is prepared to succeed by any and all means possible. The most salient of these strategies are on the trade, diplomatic, and, broadly speaking, cultural fronts—all of which are intertwined efforts.

### The Trade Front

Brazil is now an increasingly powerful presence when it comes to world trade. This was not always the case, but in the latter years of the twentieth century, its economic clout grew. Two major world organizations speak to the country's global presence on the trade front: the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Group of Twenty (G-20)<sup>6</sup> (Briger). Within the WTO, Brazil exercises growing and considerable influence when it comes to issues that relate to the developing world. A member since 1995, the country always fights against protectionism, specifically in the form of farm subsidies for industrialized nations. Brazil's vociferous objections in specific trade disputes like those for cotton and oranges are now a part of global trade history. In addition, it advocates for fewer restrictions against developing nations (Briger; WTO).

IBAS (India, Brazil and South Africa—or IBSA in the English acronym) is a different sort of organization in that it is trade-oriented while also rooted in development and other issues. In addition, it clearly targets south-south cooperation by limiting its participation to three developing countries on two continents and one subcontinent. IBAS is a Brazilian development, and the three-region strategy is one of its inherent strengths (IBSA). The choice of South Africa in this trilateral organization is an obvious one because of its parity on many levels with its sister middle-income economy that is Brazil. The fact that it is currently the lone star of sub-Saharan African middle-income economies renders the sub-Saharan nation a must for virtually any entity that claims to seek equal partnerships on the African continent. The pairing with India at first blush might appear to be whimsical. Yet, India serves as a counterbalance to China's already enormous sway on the African continent and, consequently, to the whole of the Global South (Alden). In addition, the Indian government and Indian companies already have a foothold in Africa, not to mention the long-standing presence of Indians who became African citizens or who otherwise have deep ties to Africa since the days of colonialism. The actions of this fledgling trilateral organization have already resulted in some tangible progress. For example, there is a joint project to improve agricultural output in Guinea Bissau that is aiding to move the country towards sustainable growth. If IBAS gets no further than this one venture, it will prove its worth. But, other areas of cooperation bespeak keen insight into cur-

rent and future needs. For example, travel and commercial shipping to sub-Saharan Africa from any parts of the Americas remains a tedious, expensive, and far-from-efficient experience. South African Airlines fills some of the void in the United States, but much more is necessary. Travel directly from Latin America to Africa is practically nil. Despite the fact that Latin America is geographically closer to Africa, travelers often must take a circuitous route to the shores of its eastern neighbor—either through the United States or through Europe. Recognizing that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, IBAS is in the forefront of remedying this situation. If it succeeds, it will alter significantly travel routes and hence world trade in this regard (IBSA). Although several world-class airlines in the past have experimented with direct flights back and forth from the Americas to Africa, one-by-one these routes disappeared to the point where today it is not uncommon to have to spend two days to travel between these regions.

On the regional trade front, Lula's administration moved to strengthen existing ties with countries and regional organizations and not diminish those ties, as some feared. This is obvious in the Mercado Común del Sur (Common Market of Southern Countries in South America) or MERCOSUR which expanded its reach, thanks in large part to Brazil's impetus. Initially an organization solely of Southern Cone countries, it is now more broadly inclusive of other Latin American nations (MERCOSUR). The Brazilian government played a key role in this expansion that now includes nations with which Brazil enjoys particular affinity like Venezuela. Some of the achievements so far of this group are evident in the breaking down of national frontiers in order to facilitate trade regionally. The more recent Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (Union of South American Nations or UNASUR) has yet to render many measurable results. However, one notable development is the establishment of the Banco del Sur (Bank of the South), which has the potential to achieve the long-standing goal of Latin American economic integration and independence from financial entities outside of the region.

### **The Diplomatic Front**

With regard to diplomacy, the current Brazilian government shows equal prowess. On the official level, there is a revitalization of Itamaraty, the country's ministry of foreign affairs. A key signal in the Lula administration's strategy for realizing its leadership potential was the choice of Carlos Amorim as Minister for Foreign Relations. The minister's lengthy background in international policy making and strong leadership skills reveal bold stances on issues that are important to the administration in power (Sennes, Onuk, and de Oliveira; Spektor). Through the Organization of American States (OAS), Brazil is even more outspoken in this hemisphere's affairs. The administration continues its efforts at multilateral discussions, not just for the sake of including all voices

in discussions, but also to offset the impact of U. S. decision-making, including that from the new Obama administration. As many analysts see the decline of U.S. influence in hemispheric geo-politics, Brazil, among other nations, is gearing up to fill in the void. Globally, the administration has increased its support for governments and causes that those within NAM consider to be of vital importance.

### **The Cultural Front**

In some of the same ways that non-Brazilians think of that country—through music, soccer, and film—there is now more global visibility for these cultural “products.” The increasing incidences of exposure of entertainment on the international stage are not haphazard dalliances, but rather a well-thought-out strategy that places Brazil in the forefront of Global South initiatives (Ministerio da Cultura). Below is more detail of culture’s role in the country’s foreign affairs.

### **BRAZIL’S CURRENT AFRICA POLICY**

Analysts as well as critics repeatedly stress that Lula continues many policies instituted during the administration of his immediate predecessor, Cardoso. This is clearly the case with some policies and with the overall international goals of the country. Moreover, the longstanding multilateral approach to the realization of these goals is a feather in Brazil’s cap. Yet, Lula often points out that his administration constitutes a break with the past, stating that the people voted for and received what he promised in his campaign mantra of *mudança* (change) (“Discurso Pronunciamento;” “Discurso perante”). Logically, there is both continuity and rupture in the foreign policy of the Lula administration. In many areas, the policies remain constant, but the approach is often different. With regard to policies towards the African continent, one notes not only significant change, but also considerable advances.

In President Lula’s Inaugural Address to congress at the beginning of his second term in office in 2007, he made a point to speak of Africa as one of the cradles of Brazilian civilization (“Discurso perante”). The diplomat Marcus Vinicius Moreira Marinho states that one way to look at the relationship between Africa and Brazil is to see Africa as the eastern part of Brazil, stressing his country’s close historical ties, particularly with West and Southern Africa.<sup>7</sup> While it has long been common knowledge to historians and cultural activists in that country, the fact of Brazil’s cultural, intellectual, and overall debt to Africa was not a common utterance for presidents and top officials. It now is. Furthermore, the dialogue changed from one of the now-discredited concept of racial democracy<sup>8</sup> to one of racial healing and strength through diversity. Given that Brazil boasts the largest population of people of African descent in the world—outside of the African country of Nigeria—and given that Brazil



is geographically one of the closest American countries to the continent of Africa, the new focus on Africa a logical and shrewd one.

Africa and the African Diaspora—especially in Brazil—are key components of a fresh approach to domestic issues, as it is with south-south relations in general. From the issue of land titling to controversial affirmative action policies, the country now places race relations in the forefront of its national and international agenda. One great symbol of the journey from ignoring existing issues of race to grappling with them head on is the current status of Quilombos in Brazil. Historically, these run-away slave communities existed in defiance of Portuguese colonial authorities and served as a threat to the idea of slaveholding society. Their success was such that the colonial administration chose to negotiate with them as they became semi-independent rather than continue to mount armed struggles against them.<sup>9</sup> Forever heroic in the eyes of Diaspora communities around the world, within the larger communities of Latin America, the very idea of a Quilombo grew to represent all that was chaotic, dirty, and negative about a situation or an organization. In nations as different as Paraguay and Peru, it is still common to hear a parent discipline a child: “¡Pero esto es un Quilombo, muchacho! Limpie esta habitación” (“This room is a Quilombo. Clean it up!”)<sup>10</sup> What was once a symbol of negativity for those outside of the Diaspora community, including within Brazil, is now one beacon of hope for Brazil’s future. While always relatively free, the Quilombos were poor communities ignored by government authorities. Education and, hence, progress remained out of the reach of these communities. Recently, the Quilombos went from being a laughing stock to becoming a cherished national treasure. They are a major showcase of what is possible in the country’s road towards development and self-sufficiency, not to mention racial healing. Among the initiatives is a push for greater education and strengthened ties with Africa. (Palmares Foundation; *Quilombo Country*; Revista *Afirmativa*).

The achievement of economic progress in the Quilombos is but one manifestation of Lula’s social policies. Of particular note is the sweeping Fome Zero (Zero Hunger) policy. Although unfavorable among its critics, the policy to eradicate hunger now encompasses the Bolsa Família (Family Fund) project that provides stipends to families in need, gradually moving them towards more self-sufficiency. (Haddad 188–203; Silva, “Discurso: Após”). The program is so successful that leaders in other Global South nations seek Brazil’s advice on how to do the same in their countries. These requests, coupled with Brazil’s own desire to solidify its leadership role in the Global South, show up in a number of international endeavors. Four government institutions that stand out are Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Industrial (SENAI National Service for Industrial Training); Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (Fiocruz, the Oswald Cruz Foundation); Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária (EMBRAPA, Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation); and the Africa-Brazil

Cooperation Program on Social Development. The latter program stems from the Ministry of Social Development which administers the Family Fund that is so instrumental in pulling Brazil's citizens out of poverty. It works with the UN as well as the African Union in order to carry out its goals in Africa. The partnerships of these government agencies with fellow Global South countries include a wide range of agreements, including technical training in human resources, professional development, better tourism strategies, and crop cultivation techniques.<sup>11</sup> The Portuguese-speaking countries of Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Mozambique, and Sao Tome and Principe receive a great deal of attention in these agreements. However, the whole of sub-Saharan Africa is on Brazil's radar. Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, and Togo show up frequently among the reports of Brazil's Africa policies, and these are coincidentally the countries visited by Lula in his ten trips to the continent. As with other entities in Brazil's quest for global recognition, the government institutions of SENAI, Fiocruz, EMBRAPA and Africa-Brazil work in tandem with the Ministry of Foreign Relation when implementing their practices. Initial assessments of the various partnerships are positive with particularly good reports about the Africa-Brazil program.<sup>12</sup>

Specific countries are beginning to enjoy bilateral attention on a number of fronts with Brazil. Trade is the most obvious of these exchanges, but not the only exchange. Brazil's partnering with South Africa exemplifies the most lucrative of agreements in that they are exchanges of two nations more or less on equal standing. As two states of middle income status, they are able to achieve goals of mutual benefit to both. For example, the Lula administration works in tandem with their South African counterparts in order to foster exchanges that lead to sustainable development in the whole of sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>13</sup>

As part of Brazil's new recognition of its African presence, and not just its past, the modern African countries with historic ties to Africa due to slavery have a prominent relationship with Brazil. Of particular note is the re-connection between former slave communities in Brazil that returned to Africa triumphantly in freedom. The Tabon<sup>14</sup> community of Ghana is such a group, and the Brazilian government actively cultivates ties with them. Originally seven slave families in Brazil, the Tabon became a distinct ethnic group upon their return to Africa and their negotiated land settlement with the Ga people in the early part of the nineteenth century. To this day, they retain a great deal of the Brazilian-African attributes, including chosen leadership and family kinships. So far, the partnership between Brazil, through its embassy in Ghana, has resulted in the restoration of the oldest remaining dwelling among the Tabon which often receives the name of Brazil House. One other concrete result of this relationship is the establishment of a language instructorship at the University of Ghana which will re-institute the teaching of the Portuguese language in the country. Brazil House in Ghana is but one of a few historic

and cultural designations, often with the same name of Brazil House, that Brazil now proudly showcases. Benin, Nigeria, and Togo have traceable Brazilian-African communities that are under serious research on both sides of the Atlantic (Amos; Schaumloeffel; “Discurso”).

Gilberto Gil, award winning and immensely influential musician and activist, became Minister of Culture once Lula rose to power and remained in that position until 2008. Many south-south developments were evident in the ministry of this Afro-Brazilian activist-musician. Among them, but not limited to them, are the more frequent exchanges with Africa and the entire African Diaspora. Filmmaking constitutes one example of these expanded ties. The Brazilian government has a stake hold in the film industry, as is the case in many countries, with the obvious exception of the United States. Part of the benefits of direct government involvement through the Agência Nacional do Cinema (ANCINE, the National Film Agency) is the material support for projects, including international ones. An economic and cultural powerhouse since the inception of Latin American filmmaking at the end of the nineteenth century, Brazil branched out from its own shores and is now taking on a leadership role in the film industry worldwide. While Gil may not be the sole or primary reason for every initiative having to do with the cultivation of south-south relationships, projects flourished under his helm that have African and African Diaspora ties.

One project that greatly exemplifies the spirit of Brazil’s goal of south-south leadership on all levels is the film *O Dia em Que o Brasil Esteve Aqui* (“The Day Brazil Came Here”). This 2005 documentary of a soccer match between Brazil’s team and the Haitian team was about more than kicking a ball. It served as backdrop to a more powerful achievement through a means that superpowers like the United States or Russia too often forget: Soft power, public diplomacy, or even “samba power” can repeatedly bring about change more readily than military might. The movie is more than a “feel-good” moment in south-south relations. With no military might to boast of, the country moved forward with this film and peacekeeping mission in troubled Haiti. In turn, this act concretely helped to solidify respect for Brazil in the developing world. In a related sense, yet another film project that bolsters Brazil’s south-south clout is the country’s leadership role in the matter of film restoration and preservation. Lusophone Angola on the African continent and Colombia on the South American continent are two beneficiaries of this Brazilian initiative (Ministerio da Cultura).

With further regard to cultural ties with the African continent, one notes a flurry of conference-level engagements since the advent of the Lula administration. These broad-based conferences alternate their venues between several African capitals and many Brazilian cities with high populations of Afro-Brazilians like Salvador da Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, or Sao Paulo. One of

the latest topics is “O que fazer nos próximos quatro anos para fortalecer a relação África- Brasil?” (“What to Do in the Next Four Years in Order to Strengthen Ties between Africa and Brazil?”). The cultural exchanges apparently generate a great deal of fervor for the general topic of Africa-Brazil relations. However, it is premature to measure the success of these encounters as they do not appear to have gone beyond the initial stages of discussion.<sup>15</sup>

There are many reasons for Brazil’s greater dialogue with Africa, but two overarching factors stand out: the renewed dialogue among south-south nations and the domestic issue within Brazil concerning long-overdue racial equality for Afro-Brazilians. While seemingly separate, the two issues intertwine in ways that never occurred before in this Latin American nation. The Lula administration’s push for equality at home took a logical step when it renewed the country’s ties to Africa, acknowledging not only the past, but also the present and future of the country’s ties to Africa, including but not limited to Afro-Brazilians. The current exchanges with African countries are largely bi-lateral agreements between two countries, but the scope of projects easily involve more than one African nation as Lula makes clear in his many speeches related to Africa.<sup>16</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Several constants are apparent in Brazil’s vocalization of its foreign policy, and these constants in turn point to one overarching goal: its desire to be a leader in international issues. While the goal remains unwavering, the strategies for achieving the goals vary. Depending just as much on the issues as on the administration in power, the country’s approach to issues can differ. Brazil either supports more openly south-south causes in place since the middle of the twentieth century or it focuses more on its relationships with the more powerful geo-political nations of the G-8. With the administration of Luis Inácio Lula da Silva, the country leans undoubtedly towards championing south-south issues while at the same time keeping other avenues of negotiation open with high-income economies. Nevertheless, it is clear that its approach often combines bottom-to-top policies while previous administrations remained mostly top-to-bottom in their approaches to governing the country. Supply side or “trickle down” economic and social policies seem less attractive to the administration of this working class president who rose to power through his Workers Party. Within Latin America, it is a radical approach that often topples governments. Yet, because of the pragmatism with which the government decides on and administers the policies, the opposition to the bottom-to-top approach is far less stringent than in some other left-leaning or even centrist governments in the region.

Historically, the top-to-bottom approach finds its supporters on the right

and with an embarrassingly small ruling elite. It is an approach as old as the presence of Portuguese and Spanish-speaking people in the region. The best advocate for this manner of thinking is found in the work of the end-of-the-nineteenth century Uruguayan and *mundonovista* thinker José Enrique Rodó and his work *Ariel*. Unfortunately, more than one hundred years after his treatise, attitudes about leadership capabilities solely among an elite ruling class are still in place in much of Latin America—as they are in many developing regions of the world. Yet, countries like Brazil are beginning to break this mold. Lula’s administration does so by retaining what it considers to be the best of the top-down method with bold and often new methods of tackling long-standing problems. He has managed to get broad support for his policies. As a result, there is less vociferous opposition from those to the right of his political stance. This is true even with the business community that historically sides with the political right. While not in perfect harmony and agreement, there is a less violent reaction to Lula’s approach than one sees in countries such as Guatemala, Honduras, or Venezuela, where coups and rumors of coups are never far from the news headlines.

Since the inception of south-south ideals, Brazil has counted itself among the voices arguing for larger inclusion of developing nations in the say of global affairs. Brazil does so through strategic implementation of its priorities. Africa is central to its goal of south-south cooperation and to its leadership aspirations in general. As such, it is not out of the question to refer to its involvement on the African continent as part of a strategy for global leadership. At the same time, Brazil’s south-south credentials point to sincerity in this focus. Until very recently, Brazil boasted no Africa policy to speak of. Instead, the African continent was a distant notion in part of an overall south-south determination. That approach changed dramatically when Lula came to power. Furthermore, just as Africa is now central to its global efforts, Afro-Brazilian equality is central to its domestic *and* international efforts. Far from the attitudes and policies of racial democracy or cosmic race declarations of early and mid twentieth century Latin American ideas, Brazil is now grappling as never before with its racial inequalities. Words like “multiculturalism” and “pluralism” populate much of the dialogue related to Brazilian society. This dialogue includes but is not limited to people of African descent.

One can now speak of a “Brazilian Way” to conduct foreign policy. This western culture with credentials in the developing world pushes for global leadership, wisely not limiting itself to south-south interactions, instead pushing on all fronts, but with the same, consistent message of inclusion. What was previously top-to-bottom focus on its citizens and on its global partners is currently bottom—and middle—to-top. The Lula government is asking what is good for the majority of its citizens as opposed to what filters down to the majority from supply-side leftovers. In this Brazilian way, the government tackles foreign

policy issues with all the weapons in its arsenal—from soft power like soccer and samba to tough negotiating as with the WTO trade talks. All the while it negotiates through multilateralism, rarely going it alone. Furthermore, the institutions that carry out the administration's agenda are not solely those that sprang up with the election of Lula. Instead, one sees a combination of long-standing institutions—some dating back to the beginning of the twentieth century—and some institutions created when Lula came to power. The success of the administration depends on how well the entities work in tandem.

Brazil has clearly turned a corner, not only in its perennial quest for recognition but also in tandem with new developments in south-south cooperation that ensure a more multi-polar world order. Developing countries look to its achievements in drastically reducing hunger and in lifting so many of its citizens out of poverty and on the road to economic and social betterment. In world bodies such as the UN and the WTO, there is great appreciation for its stance against the protectionist actions of developed countries, particularly the U.S. Whether or not this appreciation and applause translates into support for such concrete achievements as a permanent seat on the UN Security Council remains a difficult question to answer. Despite Brazil's efforts to unify Latin America, it is the lone Portuguese-speaking country in a region dominated by Spanish-speaking nations. For all its positive efforts on the African continent, the African Union will undoubtedly throw its weight towards one of its own, more than likely South Africa. Nevertheless, one cannot deny the measurable successes of Brazil's foreign policies, particularly its policies towards Africa.

Lula's second term ends in 2010, and the Brazilian constitution does not permit him to be re-elected, despite his overall popularity. Will the immediate future see a continuation of his policies towards Africa? For the October elections there already is indication that there will be some continuation of both his administration's policies and the method of achieving them. It may be that Brazil is making a long term mark in south-south relations, and in doing so, is altering global forms of interaction—not just for the developing world, but for all the world's citizens.

## Notes

1. *Mundonovismo* or "New Worldism" is a concept that came about as the twentieth century dawned. Latin American writers and thinkers took to heart predictions about the waning of European civilization and envisioned the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the period of Latin America's prominence in every dimension—political, cultural, and economic. The new century meant, for them, new world leadership in which Latin America would play a major role.

2. Throughout this article, I will make references to the many speeches of President Lula, mostly in regard to Africa. Some of those speeches are mere courteous welcoming remarks while others reveal

significant policy formations with regard to his country's approach to Africa. It is possible to read these speeches at this website: (<http://www.info.planalto.gov.br/>)

3. In classic international organization (IO) theory, an international organization is one that springs from multi-national, or at least, trans-national sources.

4. For further discussion of the idea of underdevelopment in southern nations that is partly caused by developed nations, Walter Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1981) continues to be current. In addition, the Banco del Sur came into existence precisely because of the perceived failure of the Bretton Woods institutions to serve the needs of developing nations. Finally, the IMF and the World Bank themselves acknowledge that some of their own efforts at globalization did not achieve positive results for developing nations (see their respective websites).

5. For a complete list of the principles as well as greater detail on the Bandung Conference, see the latest website for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). There is no stationary website for the movement. Instead the host country for each round of discussions posts both the history and current events. See also Rémy Herrera's "Fifty Years after the Bandung Conference: Towards a Revival of the Solidarity between the Peoples of the South? Interview with Samir Amin" in *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 6:4 (2005): 546–56.

6. This group of twenty top major economies is not the same as the G-20 within the WTO, whose composition is solely that of developing nations.

7. See also his interview remarks in the *Revista Afirmativa Plural* (Junho/Julho 2009).

8 See Gilberto Freyre's *The Masters and the Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization* (1987).

9. See both the fictional film *Quilombo* (1984) by Carlos Diegues and the documentary by Abrams as well as Mark Anderson's "Race and Ethnicity, Indigenous and Black Identities in Hemispheric Perspective"(2009).

10. I owe continuing confirmation of these cultural observations to personal experiences, to my students, and to my colleague Professor Indacochea at George Washington University.

11. See Allyón and Costa Leite's "O Brasil e a Cooperação Sul-Sul: Contribuições e Desafios" (mundorama.net) as well as the websites for SENAI, Fiocruz, EMBRAPA, and Africa-Brazil for details on individual projects.

12. See particularly the evaluation of the Brazil-Ghana Program as it appears on the Africa-Brazil Program website.

13. See IBAS above.

14. The community is alternately referred to as the Tabom.

15. See the Ministry of Culture website for further information.

16. His November 11, 2009 speech on the occasion of the day in solidarity with black awareness is a revealing pronouncement, despite its brevity. In that speech, President Lula evidenced a keen understanding of racial problems and a commitment to resolving them. Clearly aware of the publicity-making moment, he accomplished all of this by delivering the speech in Bahia, which has a majority black population, and before President Abbas of the Palestinian Authority.

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