

Brazilian Cooperation is not a Free Lunch: An Analysis of the Interests Contained in the International Development Cooperation Strategy*

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ABSTRACT

This work challenges the Brazilian official discourse on international development cooperation with the role that the government and other actors, such as business and civil society, play in this policy. The research aims to identify the real interests of Brazil in its strategy of cooperation and examine whether the insertion of Brazilian reality is less self-interest, as it is officially stated by Brazilian Foreign Ministry.

Key words: Brazilian foreign policy; South-South cooperation; geopolitics of cooperation; international aid; non-DAC donors.

La cooperación brasileña no es gratis: un análisis de los intereses contenidos en la estrategia de Cooperación Internacional al Desarrollo

RESUMEN

Este trabajo cuestiona el discurso oficial de Brasil en la cooperación internacional para el desarrollo, con el papel que el gobierno y otros actores, como las empresas y la sociedad civil, desempeñan en esta política. La investigación tiene como objetivo identificar los verdaderos intereses de Brasil en su estrategia de cooperación y de examinar si la inserción brasileña es menos interesada en sus propios objetivos, ya que se afirma oficialmente por Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Brasil.

Palabras clave: política exterior de Brasil; cooperación Sur-Sur; geopolítica de la cooperación; ayuda internacional; nuevos donantes.

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A cooperação brasileira não é um almoço grátis: uma análise dos interesses na estratégia de cooperação internacional para o desenvolvimento

RESUMO

Este artigo questiona o discurso oficial brasileiro sobre a política de cooperação para o desenvolvimento, em relação com o papel desempenhado pelo governo e por outros atores, como empresas e a sociedade civil. A pesquisa busca identificar os reais interesses do Brasil na sua estratégia de cooperação e analisa se a inserção brasileira é, de fato, menos autointeressada, como defende o Ministério das Relações Exteriores.

Palavras-chave: Política externa brasileira; Cooperação Sul-Sul; geopolítica da cooperação; ajuda internacional para o desenvolvimento; novos doadores.

REFERENCIA NORMALIZADA

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SUMMARY: Introduction. 1. Brazilian aid: in pursuit of the development of its partners, devoid of commercial interests? 2. The political bias of cooperation. 3. Brazil's image abroad is a reflection of domestic politics. Final Considerations. References.

Introduction

Brazil's cooperation strategy wants to appear innovative, as evidenced by the content of the speeches of Brazilian leaders and the joint report done by the Brazilian Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA) and the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC)¹. Cooperation, as presented in Brazil's official discourse, claims to offer advantages due to being more sensitive to partners' interests, demand-driven, horizontal, free of commercial interests and not imposing any conditionality. It is important to emphasize that, when defining Brazilian cooperation, these institutions only take into account government agencies.² This can be counterbalanced through

¹ Agency under the Brazilian Ministry of External Relations (Ministério das Relações Exteriores - MRE), also known as Itamaraty.

² There is still doubt as to the real reason behind the report's stance. It may be stated that there was a political interest in confirming the content of the Brazilian discourse for cooperation, and it may also be stated that the reasons were practical ones. The report had to be developed in a short amount of time, which prevented Ipea and ABC from carrying out a more in depth research. Due to this, the report only considered data that were easier to access, the ones from government agencies. It is important to check whether this concept will be modified in the next report that is published in order to include other players or not.

a broader perspective of Brazil's insertion in the international sphere, where there is an understanding that other players —such as companies and civil society— play an important role internationally, which influences the way in which Brazil interacts with other countries. Thus, it is incoherent to exclude non-governmental players from the study, since Brazilian companies are in the midst of a progressive process of internationalization, where there is more debate and exchange of ideas between people, enterprises, NGOs and other players.

Also according to the official discourse, due to being an emerging nation³ and its history of being colonized by European powers, Brazil is more attuned to the aspirations of its partners. Being both a donor and recipient of international aid can contribute to Brazil's actions in the world showing greater concern for the desires of its partners. Furthermore, Brazilian foreign policy makers underscore Brazil's situation as an emerging country, in an effort to distance themselves from the tarnished image of the countries of the North, which are often perceived as imperialist and showing little concern for recipient countries. The historical background of this American nation and its current role as a broker in the global geometry of power gives Brazilian cooperation policy the appearance of being more concerned about global development, in addition to being more open to debate and a genuine exchange of ideas.⁴ Moreover, Brazilian leaders always say that their policy is demand-driven. This means that Brazil is not looking forward imposing any project or policy, but it just responds to partner's will.

These characteristics of Brazil's discourse have not proven to be accurate, nor have they produced concrete results that would justify the claim that South-South cooperation is more positive than the traditional type. For instance, it is unlikely to call Brazil-East Timor a horizontal relationship. Although Brazil is a developing country, the asymmetries between it and some of its partners, such as Mozambique, Angola and Haiti, are undeniable. Moreover, empirical studies are lacking which would demonstrate that this subjective characteristic translates into concrete gains for the countries involved.

³ There is no consensus as to the concept of emerging countries and their characteristics, which can be verified through the use of definitions such as "middle powers" (Lima, 2007), "emerging powers" (Hurrell, 2010), "new powers" (Narlikar, 2010) and "developing countries" (Alexandroff and Cooper, 2010). For practical purposes, although these are all distinct concepts, this paper will use the terms as synonyms when referring to the group of countries from the political South. Countries that have a relatively more comfortable economic situation and that operate in the architecture of international aid. Therefore, they are considered "new donors", in opposition to the "traditional" aid policy carried out by the countries of the North.

⁴ Because of this, Itamaraty avoids using the term "international aid", although the term is frequent in OCDE documents and literature when referring to cooperation. The preference for terms such as "partners" rather than "donors" and "receptors" highlights the concern with the discourse which seeks to reflect the search for a real exchange of ideas and experiences and avoiding the concept of hierarchy between the "ones who are aided" and the "ones who aid", which is present in North-South relationship, as we can infer by the Gift Theory (Mawdsley, 2012).

When studying the motivations for offering aid, Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen (2003) identify three main reasons why a country would have a policy of international cooperation: (1) related to moral and humanitarian principles; (2) guided by national security and political interests; and (3) stemming from economic and trade issues. On the basis of Brazil's official discourse, which is based on the principle of solidarity and non-indifference, national cooperation can be linked to the moral and humanitarian principle identified by the aforementioned authors. However, it should be noted that the assertion that "the ultimate goal is to promote sustainable structural changes in the social and economic development processes of the country's partner nations" (IPEA, 2010 p.10) does not mean that this is its exclusive purpose.

In a constructivist approach, the relations among the agents are responsible to create their identity. All relationship is based on social constructions which are shaped by how the agents act between themselves and with the structure. No doubt remains that if these identities, which are the root of the relationship, change, all the communication may also alter. Thus, a discourse of a state, its objectives, priorities and political behaviour is based on its relation with the structure and with the other agents. If one of these pillars change, so it will the state. Carlos Milani (2012a) argue that the growing figures of Brazilian economy and, consequently, the country's rising importance in global scenario have reformed Brazilian interests and behaviour. This is also true regarding Brazilian cooperation policy. The growing economy of the American country has deepened the gap among its partners, and this is very problematic for a state that claims to have a horizontal relationship with its partners. Still according to Milani, the more grow Brazilian capacities (material or immaterial), more its cooperation policy becomes closer to a traditional one.

Despite the fact that the constructivist approach will be fundamental for this paper, some premises of Realism may be useful. According to Realism, there is no room for altruism in international relations, but to the contrary, States act selfishly in pursuit of power (Kennan, 1971; Morgenthau, 1962). Proponents of this argument would quite naturally view international cooperation with suspicion, especially one without any benefits for the donor country. It should be asked, therefore, what Brazil's motives are for having an effective policy of international development cooperation. In this regard, there are two very important questions with respect to this point in Brazil's official discourse. First of all, the veracity of this affirmation should be challenged, and, secondly, even if Brazilian cooperation is confirmed to be non-commercial and nonprofit in nature, it should be investigated whether Brazil derives diffuse benefits from its cooperation policy.

However useful some premises of Realism are, it is important to stress that the pursuit for power may not be considered the only quest of a state. Brazil concerns about its security in an international level, but it has other interests such as the reform of international institutions. As an emerging power, Brazil wants to gain ground in international decision process, reforming some institutions, defending for

a more fair and plural global order. It is also clear that the Brazilian government wants to secure its emergence, and tries to foster international stability, trade and welfare. On the other hand, Brazil, as a middle country in international hierarchy, still has some challenges and concerns of a developing country. This leads for some controversial behavior, sometimes acting as a global power and in other opportunity acting as a fragile state.

For this paper concerns, foreign policy is the public policy in the international arena. Since the concept of public policy is the state acting promoting projects (Souza, 2003), foreign policy can only be headed by one key actor: the state. However, Brazilian foreign policy regarding international development cooperation is also influenced by the interests of national players. Official diplomatic discourse is shaped amid pressures from multiple internal stakeholders, who have diverse and often opposing interests. This section of the paper will focus on studying who the internal agents interested in the official discourse model are and whether they benefit from Brazil's diplomatic rhetoric. Although they have not been included in the IPEA concept of cooperation, there are other national players who contribute apart from the federal government.

For didactical purposes, there has been an assumption, especially since the 1980s, that Itamaraty is an agency of the federal government, which traditionally focuses on constructing foreign policy, but doesn't monopolize it. During the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, there was a movement in the direction of greater openness in the shaping of Brazil's foreign policy, by including the interests of different Brazilian players. Two main factors can be used to try to explain this new reality: democracy and globalization, according to Lima (2005).

The demise of the Brazilian dictatorship naturally enabled various players, who had been repressed in the past, to participate in the government's political decision-making process. In this sense, democratization encouraged dialogue between internal players and the Ministry of External Relations, which sought to adapt itself to this new reality and allow other players to have a greater influence on the formulation of foreign policy, while avoiding excessive decentralization. The other explanatory factor cited was globalization which allows other Brazilian players to act internationally, without interference from Itamaraty, which is also corroborated by the opinion of Celso Amorim:

People think that foreign policy is only formulated by Itamaraty, on instructions from the Presidential Palace. Itamaraty is obviously instrumental, since it helps the President implement overall guidelines. But nowadays, foreign policy is also made by other Ministries, private enterprises, and civil society." (2011: 340).

There is a basic consensus that technological advances and the end of the Cold War helped to create a global capitalist system and reduced the existing space-time concept, in addition to diversifying the themes on the international agenda. This

intensified dialogue expedited the activities of different internal players at the international level, who had interests in issues that became increasingly relevant with the end of the Cold War —also known as low-politics issues. Examples of this include the internationalization of different Brazilian companies, agreements between Brazilian Ministries and their international counterparts, activities of Brazilian Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) worldwide, the association of international NGOs with Brazil's civil society and agreements between United Nations agencies and Brazilian companies, etc. Nowadays, it is possible for a wide range of players to operate internationally, without any influence from Itamaraty, which intensifies the decentralization process in the shaping of Brazilian foreign policy. However, it is obvious that some players have a higher capacity to act abroad and to influence the foreign policy-making due to their financial relevance, capacity to finance their projects and lobby.

This trend is also observed in cooperation initiatives, which, although not studied in the IPEA report, shows that non-governmental players play an important role in the shaping and execution of foreign policy decisions (Milani, 2012b; Pinheiro, 2009). Greater participation on the part of other players results in the growth of interests linked to Brazilian cooperation. And, at the same time, there are an increased number of federal government institutions that are also interested in Brazilian foreign policy on cooperation. Itamaraty is aware of this new reality and seeks to maintain its role as the main formulator of the country's foreign policy, by coordinating these interests, which in turn makes the process of shaping Brazilian foreign policy more complex.⁵

In this regard, the research will focus on the study of Brazilian interests found in international cooperation. As stated, Brazilian cooperation affirms that it is based on 100% non-repayable loans, with the ultimate goal being that of generating sustainable development for all its partners, whether from the North or South. Therefore, the heads of Brazil's diplomatic core allege that Brazilian international aid is devoid of profit and business interests. The paper aims to study the real objectives of the Brazilian foreign policy for international cooperation. It can be said that Brazil is facing a new reality in domestic and international politics. The gain of capabilities has altered Brazilian identity and, therefore, its behavior and interests. Not only the government is interest in political and economic profits that cooperation can give, but also other domestic players. This feeds Brazilian ambition and encourages a pursuit of a broader set of goals. Many of those objectives are linked to the private sector and others to the government necessity to legitimate it domestically. Howev-

⁵ "This insulation, however, tends to be dysfunctional when the external agenda is modified with the introduction of new themes, new players, and the internalization of international deals politicize external politics. These transformations may modify this delegation/abdication picture which is a characteristic of its domestic political-institutional base." (Lima, 2005: 7-8)

er, Brazil discourse does not abandon the discourse forward a more egalitarian and democratic global order.

1. Brazilian aid: in pursuit of the development of its partners, devoid of commercial interests?

This part of the paper will focus on the influence of commercial interests that may be under the aegis of Brazilian foreign policy for cooperation. Not only the state is rising in international scenario, but also the enterprises and other domestic players, who start to aim more ambitious objectives, including those on international arena. Technical cooperation through knowledge transfer by the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa) can be beneficial for developing countries. The Embrapa office set up in Ghana, at the request of that African country's government, is a good example of the advantages that Brazilian cooperation can offer. Countries with a climate similar to Brazil's may be able to boost agricultural production through technology transfers. In this sense, generating sources of income and a means of subsistence are among Brazil's goals and serve to corroborate the country's official discourse.⁶

This contribution, albeit beneficial and desired by partner countries, could be camouflaging commercial objectives. Brazil is a major producer of agricultural inputs such as, fertilizers, chemicals and machinery, etc. Thus, the development of a strong agricultural base in partner countries could translate into a market for Brazilian products in the future. It is possible to quote Fátima Melo (2013) who remembers that the program ProSavana, which is similar to an existing program in Brazilian territory (the ProCerrado), is riddled with commercial interests. The technology transferred by Brazil is the same which is used in the handling of domestic products, which may imply the dominance of Brazilian agricultural techniques while at the same time ignoring congeneric technologies from other countries. Brazilian cooperation may unwittingly evolve into "tied foreign aid", since this type of aid forces recipient countries, albeit indirectly, to consume the products of the donor.

Also in the realm of agricultural cooperation, the development of programs to facilitate sugar cane production is something that stands out. Countries that have a

⁶ This point of view reinforces Ayllón Pino and Leite's (2009) perspective where the South-South Cooperation tends to be more effective than the traditional due to: (1) the similarities between the partners regarding their climate, economic and physical conditions; (2) the fact that the investments on research and development in the North are made by the private sector; and (3) the South-South Cooperation is usually devoid of conditionality. Therefore, the cooperation is more accessible since there is not conditionality and the agencies responsible for the investment in technology are less concerned with profit. Moreover, the similitude of the partners means that their needs and difficulties are the same which would result in a prior knowledge of ideas in order to elaborate a solution.

favorable climate for cultivating this type of plant, such as Mozambique and Haiti, have received investments from Brazil for financing this crop. The goal of promoting agricultural activity in recipient countries is to generate jobs, boost the economy and create a product that can balance trade payments. Cooperation in the biofuels area is strategic for Brazil, and it is seeking to disseminate the use and production of this type of energy worldwide. (Schutte & Barros, 2010)

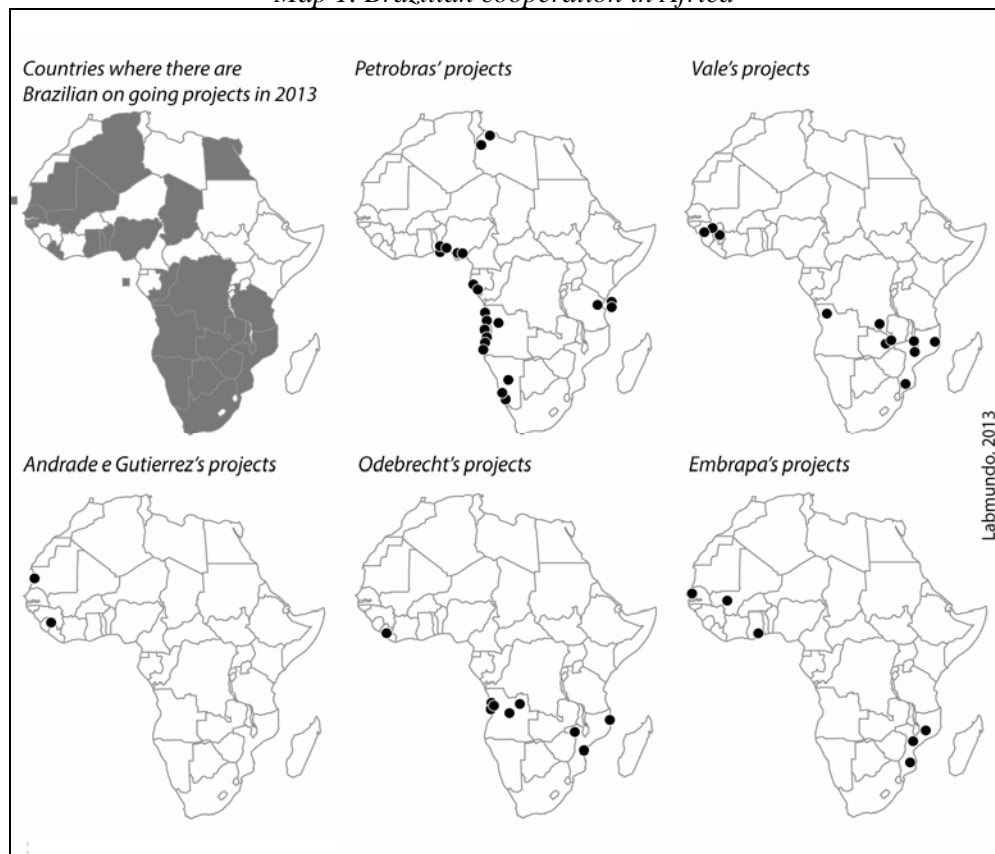
One of the reasons for the resistance to the use of ethanol is the fear that the production of this energy matrix will be concentrated in one or a few countries. It is in Brazil's interest to consolidate biofuels as an international commodity (Schutte & Barros, 2010). In the IPEA report (2010), the institute identifies the agents of Brazilian cooperation. Civil society organizations and private companies are not included in this document because the official definition of cooperation, as previously mentioned, excludes all other agents that are not part of the federal government. It is undeniable that other players are part of the Brazilian cooperation policy, even though not listed by IPEA. The National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES), which appears on this list, indicates the enormous complexity of Brazil's cooperation network. Due to being a national bank, its international role should be limited to promoting the development of Brazilian companies abroad. The building of road infrastructure in South America, for example, could be considered a type of Brazilian cooperation, since it is possible for the federal government to choose to build, with non-repayable loans, a road in a partner country. However, BNDES can only finance this type of hypothetical project if a Brazilian contractor is hired to carry out the work. Thus, this clearly is a way to constrain the credit offer to the hiring of Brazilian companies.

Therefore, although the federal government may not have commercial interests or even profit from cooperation, this does not mean there are no economic interests on the part of other Brazilian players. It is in the federal government's interest that Brazilian companies be contracted to execute works abroad, as it drives the economy, increases Gross National Income and promotes the globalization of Brazilian companies. In cases like this, the federal government would not have commercial interests or motivation for profit, but Brazil would nonetheless benefit economically from such cooperation, within the context of a country composed of many players, and not just the federal government.⁷ Two distinct, yet inter-related factors can be

⁷ "Programs and projects with a *structural* approach are characterized by actions that aim at developing individual and institutional skills with sustainable results in the beneficiary countries, as opposed to specific projects which have a more limited impact. Projects with a structural characteristic have a number of advantages: they have a higher economic and social impact on the target audience of cooperation; they are able to ensure the results of the programs/projects will have a greater sustainability, *they expedite the mobilization of Brazilian institutions in the implementation of different components of the programs/projects*, and open the path for the mobilization of triangular partnerships with other international players." (IPEA, 2010: 33) (Sentence highlighted by the author)

noted: South-South cooperation and the globalization of Brazilian companies, which is a goal of the domestic private sector as well as the government.

Map 1. Brazilian cooperation in Africa



SOURCE: ABC, companie's websites, 2013

The presence of Petrobras on the list of institutions that promote cooperation should also be examined. Naturally, the cooperation initiatives of this state-owned company are in accordance with the definition from IPEA. Petrobras has expertise in a series of technologies which arouse the interest of developing countries, such as, offshore oil extraction. Consequently, it is not surprising that, despite being a mixed capital company, Petrobras is cited in the IPEA report. It would be in the interest of partner countries to receive aid from the Brazilian oil company in order to develop

programs for technology transfer and personnel training. Several African countries, for example, are rich in hydrocarbons and would like to increase their production, which could be facilitated by Brazilian cooperation via this state-owned company.⁸ These initiatives are also in the interest of Petrobras, which can use its employee development program as a way to recruit personnel for their international ventures. It is clear that by promoting cooperation, even in the form of non-repayable loans, there may be self-serving interests behind the cooperation to create more favorable conditions for the country to operate on foreign soil.

This reality may be confirmed analyzing the speech of the Brazilian foreign policy of Mr. Lula government:

Our [Brazilian] trade with Africa has increased fivefold, our entrepreneurs today go to Africa spontaneously, sometimes needing a little push for some cases, but greatly increased their investments there. There are Brazilian buses in South Africa. There are Brazilian construction companies in Angola, where it had before, but now there was a greater diversification. And there also in Mozambique, where there was. There are mining companies. (Amorim, 2011: 482).

In this quote, the actual head of Dilma's Defense Minister makes clear the link between Brazilian foreign policy and the private sector interests. The government tries to pave the way for Brazilian companies to invest and trade abroad and the cooperation for development is an important tool in this aim. During the celebration of 50 years of African Union, the Brazilian President, who was invited to the event, announced the creation of a new Brazilian cooperation agency, which will focus on Brazil-Africa relationships. It is still unclear if this new bureau will replace the actual ABC, or will be linked with Itamaraty or other Ministry; yet, according to Dilma Rousseff, the main concerns this new agency will be cooperation, trade and investments.⁹ This announcement makes clear that Brazilian cooperation policy (in Africa, at least) is not free of commercial interests.

Sustainable development in partner countries can be commercially beneficial to Brazil, in the long run. Progress in these countries provides the opportunity to build potential markets for Brazilian products. Africa and Latin America are traditional importers of industrial products from Brazil, so it is in the country's best interests that those economies grow so that the trade flow may increase. This is neither inherently sinful nor virtuous. Partners' interests must be taken in account too.

⁸ According to Petrobrás' official site it is, apart from Brazil, present in 27 countries, 11 of those being in Latin America and 6 in Africa. See URL: <<http://www.petrobras.com/pt/quem-somos/presenca-global/>>, accessed on July 20, 2013.

⁹ See URL: <<http://www.valor.com.br/brasil/3138674/em-visita-dilma-anuncia-nova-agencia-de-cooperacao-para-africa#ixzz2Uc6tUyrQ>>, accessed on July 29, 2013.

Brazilian government and companies may go abroad looking for trade and investment, but the partner countries may also be looking forward this kind of relationship. It may be incorrect to assume that all kinds of trade and investment relationships are riddled with imperialist interests. Recipient countries also need to improve their infrastructure, have access to credit, buy goods and sell their products. Otherwise, their economy hardly will develop. For instance, accordingly to information published in a well know Brazilian newspaper, Mozambican government has offered Brazilian farmers 6 million hectares, paying \$ 21 per hectare per year, for the next 50 years, in order to foster soy agriculture.¹⁰ Commercial interests are not intrinsically condemned, even more so because all countries want to trade, not only the donor state. Moreover, when a recipient country has more options to deal with, this enhances competition among the donors, who will try to improve their policies, avoiding to be displaced in the aid architecture. This may have a positive consequence in the point of view of the recipient state, since it may choose which partnership is more advantageous for it.

Despite this, as argued before, the change in Brazilian stance may alter the Brazilian identity as well. On one hand, Brazil claims to offer a horizontal, demand-driven and less-interested cooperation policy; on the other, Brazilian government creates a new agency for “trade, cooperation and investment” and usher in companies in foreign soil. Brazilians partners may start (or already had) to identify this incoherence in the relationship, which may lead to a shift in Brazilian image among the recipients countries. This undercover aims of the cooperation policy may jeopardise the attempt to distinguish South-South from North-South cooperation policy. Brazil always tries to be seen as a good partner, concerned with partner’s will, if the partners start to rethink this image, Brazil loses is soft power and international leverage in order to demands reforms in global order.

2. The political bias of cooperation

Brazil can use cooperation as a means to amass political capital, not only on the regional level. It would be difficult to deny that a partnership between two countries, even if only for the transfer of technology or the quest to develop common goals would not ultimately strengthen political and economic relationships. It should be emphasized, as does Kennan (1971), that the results expected by donors are not always achieved, since it cannot be assumed that recipient countries will be grateful for past acts or that they will ally themselves with the countries which have provid-

¹⁰ “Mozambique offers the equivalent to three Sergipes to Brazilian soy”. *Folha de S. Paulo*, August 15, 2011[URL: <<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/fsp/mercado/me1408201102.htm>>, accessed on July 29, 2013].

ed aid. Nonetheless, in the political sphere, three objectives can be identified: internal, bilateral and multilateral / regional. The objective deriving from the internal dynamics of the Brazilian State will be studied in the next section of this paper, while the bilateral and multilateral will be analyzed in the following paragraphs. The Brazilian objectives may, sometimes, appear incoherent, but this is also due to the position of the country in the international power geometry. Since Brazil is an emerging power, it has mixed characteristics, sometimes it will have a political stance close to those expected from rich countries and sometimes it will be closer to poor ones. Brazil is still trying to grow and gain ground in international politics, thus its discourse tend to encourage a more egalitarian and fair international order, so Brazil can legitimate its role in international arena. However, Brazil also has reached a higher level of economic and geopolitical complexity, which entails different objectives, such as securing markets for its goods and companies.

The consolidation of political and economic relations between partner countries is one of the basic objectives of Brazil's cooperation policy (IPEA, 2010). Brazil, as well as its partners, can benefit from the building or strengthening of ties with foreign governments. This enhanced dialogue can result in greater political cooperation, as well as spike business opportunities for the governments and citizens of those countries.

The reduction of asymmetries and the development of the region can be used to show that Brazil, besides having economic interests, also benefits politically through cooperation. As South America's largest nation, in terms of territory and population, as well as economically, it is in the country's best interest that the region be developed.¹¹ An economically strong and politically united South America strengthens Brazil's political capital in order to participate in the international arena (Saraiva, 2007).

In the multilateral field, the architects of Brazilian foreign policy also hope to reap benefits, albeit less perceptible and quantifiable. For Brazil to insert itself more effectively in the global sphere, it must demonstrate that it is not a free rider. By contributing to global progress, through development cooperation, Brazil legitimizes its participation on the international stage. The benefits in this case are not direct: the country contributes to the stability and progress of the international system and, therefore, expects indirect gains in the form of recognition for the significant role it plays in the global political arena.

The country benefits politically in that the major role Brazil plays on the world stage is legitimized, and its agenda and political demands are strengthened. Differ-

¹¹ "The South American integration was definitely the main theme of the two first years of the [Lula] government. And why was that? Because it is very hard to think of Brazil's part in the world if we do not have a South America which is integrated, prosperous, peaceful and with its countries having a smooth relationship." (Amorim, 2011: 321)

ent examples can be used to show the country's willingness to align itself with developing countries in different international forums, but there is no direct or verifiable connection between Brazil's development cooperation policy and greater international support for its political positions. As previously stated, the political gains are often diffuse, making it impossible to assert that the country gives aid in exchange for support for its demands, such as a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. It can be said, however, that the increased dialogue among developing countries facilitates joint action on the part of these nations.

The presence of Fiocruz in Africa, as well as other Brazilian cooperation projects in the area of health, cannot be totally separated from the support of peripheral nations for the compulsory licensing of pharmaceuticals within the World Trade Organization (WTO). It is clear, therefore, that Brazilian cooperation confers greater legitimacy upon the country's participation in world decisions, even though it is not possible to demonstrate a direct cause and effect relationship (Saraiva, 2007).

The creation of the South-American Defense Council is a milestone in Brazilian foreign policy, but, mainly after the government of Dilma Rousseff, Brazil ushered in some initiatives of cooperation in the security arena. Rousseff has nominated the former Lula's foreign Minister for Defense Ministry. Amorim started an ambitious policy based in regional cooperation and the necessity of a "dissuasive capacity which is fundamental for the continuity of this scenario of peace and mutual respect".¹² Accordingly to Diniz (2006), cooperation in defense is a way to prevent misperceptions from the neighbors, which may fear Brazil as an imperialist regional power, and to create an area in South America free of external threats. Thus, Brazilian government encourages the creation of a regional defense industry and implements technology transfer programs. This plan became clearer with several treaties on defense trying to create a South-Atlantic area of cooperation. Considering that Brazil is not a nuclear power, these initiatives may be considered as an attempt to turn its soft power into something harder.

It would be important to highlight Fonseca's argument (2008) that there are three matrices that motivate Brazil in regard to international development cooperation: idealistic, structuralist and realistic. The principle of solidarity and non-indifference, constantly cited by Brazilian leaders, is present in Brazilian foreign policy, although it is not the sole or main motivator, as it would seem from the country's official discourse. There is a certain structuralist school of thought which influences South-South cooperation, in the sense that Brazil seeks solutions to economic and social problems in partnership with developing countries, due to the fact that dependence on western nations would result in the continuation of their

¹² Dilma Rousseff, in a speech for the Brazilian forces, in 08/05/2012, available at URL: <www2.planalto.gov.br/imprensa/discursos>, accessed on 10 November 2013.

exploitation. Thus, the political and economic interests of Brazil's international cooperation policy are unmistakable, as can be corroborated through an analysis of the realistic motivation, in that Brazil seeks to boost the flow of trade and rally support for its international recognition.

3. Brazil's image abroad is a reflection of domestic politics

This section of the paper will devote less attention to the interests of national companies, since these have already been examined. There is a consensus among the Brazilian elite, although there is no agreement as to how this should occur, that the country is destined to play a leading role in international relations, as argued by Lima (2005) and Saraiva (2007). This desire to exert global influence has a bearing on Brazil's actions at the international level, as well as within the realm of development cooperation. Nevertheless, there is an effort by the federal government to explain to the Brazilian people the importance international cooperation has for Brazil.¹³ As a developing country, the paradox of being a donor while at the same time having regions with poor human development indexes can be used as an argument against cooperation by domestic politic forces. As Abdenur (2009) points out, many governments need to justify the reasons behind investing scarce resources in other countries, when the country itself is lacking in similar programs.¹⁴ Despite this criticism, the pressure from civil society does not interfere in a decisive way in the affairs of Itamaraty, since generally speaking the former tends not to care so much about foreign policy and does not have privileged contact with high government officials, such as heads of private sector does.¹⁵

It is essential to highlight the role of a part of civil society, which is gradually expanding and organizing itself, and is politically active in Brazilian development cooperation. In Brazil, this movement expanded as a result of the re-democratization, but the participation of civil society is a phenomenon that can be

¹³ "Apart from that, the country faces internal criticism regarding the allocation of national resources in the cooperation with other countries from the South. If the solidarity argument is enough to raise the support from some sectors of the Brazilian society, then efforts should be made in the direction of divulging the gains obtained by Brazil with the South-South cooperation. When it comes to national development, it is of fundamental importance that civil society be informed about the relevance of the Brazilian participation in these initiatives. The Brazilian businesses seem to have already understood this and may help in this task." (Ayllón Pino and Leite, 2009:18).

¹⁴ "It means that some extreme left wing sectors have criticized, due to the connection that they have with Aristide, and other sectors that are quite insensitive that they have the guts to say: "Why are we spending there when there is so much poverty here in Brazil?" (Amorim, 2011: 495).

¹⁵ "Another factor that ensures great decision-making autonomy to the MRE is the relative lack of concern from the public in general for the external politics issues." (Lima, 2005: 7).

noted internationally, which resulted in the recognition of the importance of this player in Article 5, of the Busan Declaration.

Despite signing the declaration for effective development cooperation, Brazil does not have an institutionalized channel for dialogue between civil society organizations and Itamaraty. Nevertheless, this internal political player influences the formulation of foreign policy, through informal channels of communication with the Ministry of External Relations and its agencies. The position civil society organizations hold was made explicit in a document called the “Declaration of Brazilian Civil Society Organizations on International Cooperation and Development Effectiveness: Country Development Aid, Civil Society Development Aid”.¹⁶ This document, among other demands, proposes: the recognition of the role played by civil society; the establishment of commitments that can be monitored; the creation of permanent channels of communication between the government and civil society; support for the formation of a more inclusive Global Partnership for Development; and for the Brazilian government to contribute to overturning the traditional international aid model. Society does not have a structural power, so it needs to be always trying to create dialog with the government. On the other hand, other player’s will, such as companies’, are taken into account normally, since the government needs their support in other public policies (such as infrastructure projects and other investments in Brazil).

It can be said that, by signing the Busan Declaration, Brazil partially met the demands cited in the manifesto —at least in discourse— even though internally the institutionalized participation of the population is still not in fact reflected. By demonstrating transparency —one of the features that the official discourse claims to have in its cooperation policy— the actions of organized civil society legitimize the inclusion of Brazil in the realm of cooperation and render Brazilian programs effective. The knowledge and experience that different NGOs have in promoting public policies, combined with the fact that they tend to be more flexible and faster in executing projects, creates advantages for the federal government which cannot be overlooked. The government allows civil society to participate in Brazilian development cooperation, using it as a key player when determining the way in which cooperation should be carried out, when consolidating rules and, occasionally, when developing projects, but its influence on the formulation of official discourse is still small. (Milani, 2008).

The discourse of civil society, expressed in the aforementioned manifesto, does not oppose the interests of the federal government, but on the contrary, there is a

¹⁶ This declaration was signed by: Brazilian Non-Governmental Institutions Association (ABONG); Action-Aid Brazil; South Articulation; Feminist Studies and Assistance Center (CFEMEA); Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analysis (IBASE); Institute and Socioeconomic Studies (INESC); Institute for the Development of Cooperation and International Relations (IDECRI); and Pólis Institute.

confluence of opinions. The crises of the 1980s and 1990s, which Brazil also faced, marked the societies of the developing world in a profound way. The neoliberal measures imposed as conditionality for receiving aid from the North and from the Breton Woods institutions, as shown by Pereira (2009), caused recession, unemployment and other social problems in the countries of the South. Therefore, it is not surprising that the people of these countries view neoliberal programs with suspicion, or that civil society suggests, in the document cited above, that “the Busan Forum should foster discussion on new development models, which will be more compatible with the objectives of overcoming social disparities, decent work schedules and environmental sustainability”. This demand from civil society contributes to Brazil’s official discourse, which seeks to present itself as being different from the North-South cooperation.

As previously studied, the official discourse endeavors to legitimize Brazilian development cooperation and, in order to do so, distances itself from neoliberal measures, which is also a goal shared by beneficiary countries. Adriana Abdenur (2009: 58) states that new sources of legitimacy are arising in the contemporary world, which are based on the development model rather than on economic and political authority. Apart from legitimizing the national policy, the influence of the aforementioned structuralist school of thought can be noted, which could be considered as one of the motivators in Brazil’s international cooperation policy.

The demand for new development models which will be more effective in overcoming disparities and promoting sustainable development is included in official Brazilian discourse. It is noteworthy that, besides meeting Brazil’s foreign policy goal of distancing itself from the traditional cooperation models, these goals can also be noted in the country’s domestic agenda. With the electoral victory of the Workers Party in 2003, the federal government began to adopt a new economic development plan, which could be called “new developmentalism.” It is not the intention of this paper to study the characteristics of this development model in depth, but for the sake of a better understanding of this text, it should be noted that Brazil started engaging in strong state capital participation, robust investments in infrastructure and income distribution programs. These aspects are consistent with Brazil’s official discourse in regard to cooperation, which claims to pursue long-term sustainable growth, with measures that promote structural changes in the society and the economy of the partner country.

These common interests between civil society organizations and the federal government create an environment that is conducive to including these aspects in the official discourse. One of President Lula’s main election platforms in 2002 was the campaign against hunger, which led to the programs “*Fome Zero*” (Zero Hunger) and “*Bolsa Família*” (Family Allowance), which sought to distribute income and ensure financial support for the population. President Dilma Rousseff’s government is also in favor of income distribution, with the project “*Brasil sem Miséria*” (Brazil without Poverty). These two programs go hand in hand with “*Fome Zero Mundial*”

(Zero World Hunger).¹⁷ Another similarity between the domestic agenda and proposals at the international level is the support of structural changes aimed at promoting sustainable growth (Lima, 2005). In 2003, one of the economic team's main concerns was avoiding the “*efeito sanfona*” (rebound effect) as they called it.¹⁸ Brazilian growth would thus be achieved through vigorous investments in infrastructure, guided by the federal government – this plan was called the Growth Acceleration Program (*PAC – Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento*). A third factor that can be noted in official Brazilian discourse is the endorsement of growth as the solution for the 2008 financial crisis. Measures fostering economic growth, which in Brazil's case were based on the domestic consumer market as opposed to recessionary measures, which are normally suggested by western countries, can be found in the official discourse of Brazilian leaders. For example, in a press statement after the signing ceremony of the agreements from the 5th IBSA Summit of Heads of State and Government in Pretoria / South Africa, on October 18, 2011, President Dilma Rousseff stated:

I am convinced that the challenges presented by the crisis require replacing outdated theories from an old world with new formulas for this new world in which we now live. Our experience has shown us that the mere adoption of recessionary policies does not at all contribute to solving economic difficulties. To the contrary, in situations of fiscal instability, it is essential that governments adopt measures which promote financial stability and sound banking, in order to boost economic growth, combined with social policies for the generation of income and employment.¹⁹

It can be said that the federal government uses the discourse of international cooperation to legitimize domestic government policies, through the internationalization of government proposals. It should be stressed that this discourse is similar to that of other emerging countries and also has the purpose of consolidating Brazil as an indispensable player in the international arena (Duarte, 2011). However, it clearly demonstrates the direct link between the federal government's domestic policy and the elaboration of its foreign policy.

¹⁷ Proposed by the president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in the G-8 meeting, in Davos, on 26/01/2003.

¹⁸ President Lula in a speech on 31/05/2010: “We do not want to grow more because we do not want to become an ‘accordion’, going 10% and then back. We want sustainable development that will last 10, 15 years.” Available at URL: <<http://m.folha.uol.com.br/mercado/743331-lula-defende-crescimento-sustentavel-para-evitar-efeito-sanfona.html>>, accessed on 10 November 2013.

¹⁹ See URL: <<http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/sala-de-imprensa/discursos-artigos-entrevistas-e-outras-comunicacoes/presidente-da-republica-federativa-do-brasil/discurso-da-presidenta-da-republica-dilma-rousseff-durante-reuniao-plenaria-da-v-cupula-do-ibas-pretoria-africa-do-sul-18-10-2011/print-nota>>, accessed on 10 November 2013.

The insular nature of the Ministry of External Relations was mitigated through the formulation of Brazil's foreign policy. Globalization and the return to democracy rendered the process for formulating foreign policy more pluralistic, and likewise in the sphere of cooperation. The official discourse for international development aid attempts to serve not only the interests of the Brazilian state, but also the needs of different domestic players, who use foreign policy as a means to legitimize or strengthen their power internally. These players, of course, have similar interests, such as support for development, as well as others that differ, such as the greater participation of civil society —and it is up to Itamaraty to note these interests, in order to shape the official discourse. The power that the players have over the agenda is not uniform, which results in different levels of influence on foreign policy. The pressure from civil society organizations, despite having grown steadily, is still unable to affect foreign policy as strongly as the federal government. It is evident as well that the interests of internal players, such as the national business community, can be encompassed within the development cooperation policy, but they do not explicitly appear in official aid discourse.

Final Considerations

Throughout this study, it can be seen that Brazil's official discourse, like any other, is not devoid of interest. By attributing innovative and altruistic qualities to Brazilian cooperation for international development, Brazilian diplomacy seeks to seduce its partners. The rhetoric of national political leaders is more concerned with how it will be perceived abroad than with an accurate representation of the facts. There tends to be a conflict between altruism and foreign policy interests when states grant international aid. Brazil's official discourse contains opinions that are well received by numerous players, such as the suggestion for a new development model. Sustainable growth, that is broad and just in nature, is interesting not only to beneficiary countries, but also to the Brazilian federal government whose goal is to internally legitimize similar public policies.

The objectives of the Brazilian state walk hand-in-hand with other interests, since cooperation also occurs outside the confines of governments. This fact exposes a discrepancy between official discourse and reality, since the definition provided by IPEA does not take other players into account. The discourse is not imposed, but tailored according to the levels of power among various internal players, which does not go unnoticed in Brazilian diplomatic quarters.

Civil society with its divisions – the export sector, agricultural sector and Brazilian multinational companies – are examples of players who have specific foreign policy interests in relation to development cooperation; however, they are not included within the official Brazilian discourse, despite having interests that are included in Brazil's foreign policy. The disclosure of economic and political objec-

tives in official discourse runs counter to the interests of Brazilian diplomacy to distance itself from the image that the North-South cooperation portrays.

Brazil, based on the premise of identity, presents itself as a country willing to engage in more horizontal cooperation, and that is more concerned about the development of its partners. Including commercial interests in its official discourse could provoke a similar type of mistrust toward Brazil that beneficiary countries have toward North-South cooperation. It can be said, therefore, that Brazil's official discourse, only partially reflects the country's objectives with respect to international cooperation, in that it manifests a desire to elaborate a new development model, while concealing those features that resemble the approach traditionally adopted by the North.

There are still some pending issues which, despite having been stated in this paper, require a deeper and more thorough analysis, which could be the subject of future research. The Brazilian proposal is, in terms of discourse, innovative, but research is lacking and a longer time frame is needed to ascertain whether South-South cooperation, in practice, is in fact different from the traditional model, or if the new donors will operate under a new guise within the existing cooperation model. The fact that Brazilian cooperation has economic and political interests, camouflaged by the official discourse, is not inherently negative. As stated by Kharas (2010), coordinating the interests of private capital can optimize the results of international aid. Another factor that must be considered is that the desire to implement a new cooperation development model does not mean that it will be successful or viable. For example, Chinese cooperation, which also imposes no conditionality and is concerned about sustainable growth, has been challenged owing to its results and methods.

A third point that could be explored further down the line is whether the incorporation of new donor countries into the aid architecture for international development would benefit the recipients, even if the former do not fulfill the discourse corresponding to a new cooperation model. The strengthening of South-South cooperation could increase the flow of investments – or sustain it, due to the 2008 financial crisis – as well as create competition between the different cooperation models, which would tend to increase the bargaining capacity of beneficiary countries.

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