“Policy Roundtable

CHALLENGES TO PEACE AND SECURITY:

A Discussion on Brazil’s Potential Contributions”

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Introduction

The policy roundtable “Challenges to Peace and Security” was a high level debate on the potential contributions Brazil could provide to major peace and security challenges affecting populations worldwide. This roundtable was organised as a part of FGV’s multi-year and ongoing program studying and debating international norms about mass atrocity crimes, humanitarian intervention and the responsibility to protect. It has involved an in-depth and long term engagement with scholars and policy-makers working on these issues on various levels.

This particular event sought to initiate a broad but structured discussion about what specific contributions Brazil could offer to address the major peace and security challenges of our time. After the country’s important but short-lived activism with the idea of a “responsibility while protecting” and as a difficult second administration of President Dilma Rousseff was just starting, the roundtable analysed what was Brazil’s best possible contribution at that particular time. The small meeting was held with a diverse group of influential participants, including high level members of academia, think tanks, policy makers, major newspapers and civil society activists.

This brief report summarizes the debates and highlights some of the most important contributions during that day. Due to the sensitive nature of the issues discussed, especially in the presence of government officials and media representatives, the meeting was held under ‘Chatham House rules’. For this reason, there will be no direct attribution to the arguments made in this summary report.
This policy roundtable was made possible by the generous support of Humanity United and was co-organised by the Centre for International Relations of the Fundação Getulio Vargas in cooperation with the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi), Berlin.

The Event

This policy roundtable had two primary objectives: (1) to diagnose the main peace and security challenges in which Brazil could have a major role or contribution in the present context; and (2) to analyse how the country could contribute to manage such challenges, with a particular focus on issues involving the protection of civilians. These elements would serve as a blueprint for the development of new ideas and specific policies for a stronger Brazilian participation in addressing these global challenges.

The roundtable was structured around three panels and each of them discussed the central theme from a different set of perspectives. The first panel addressed the broader context of Brazil in the world, and what are the limits and possibilities of Brazil’s engagement in major world crises. The second panel focused on the management of international peace and security based on a multilateral perspective. It discussed the Brazilian experiences and perspectives on the multilateral security system, particularly about those institutions that may serve as a basis for a more active participation in international fora. The third panel debated specifically the Brazilian experience with South-South cooperation, the security-development nexus and how that domain might be a useful avenue to address global peace and security challenges.
Session I – Brazil in the world today: is activism possible?

*Moderated by Marcos Tourinho*

Discussions began with an assessment of the general context, internal and external, that frames the possibilities of Brazil’s broader participation in international affairs, notably on security issues. This session discussed questions such as if Brazil *should*, in its current situation, return to a more robust and activist international presence and how such foreign policy could possibly be established in a situation of such limited resources.

The policy-oriented discussion touched upon cases of Brazilian leadership in the past years – such as Lula’s 2010 attempt to negotiate a nuclear deal with Iran or Brazil’s Responsibility While Protecting (RwP) concept, proposed in 2011. What motivated Brazil to assume leadership, how did outside factors help or hinder the country’s strategy, and what are the lessons learned from past engagements? Can Brazil continue to play an active role considering its stagnating economy, uninterested president, political crisis and a Foreign Ministry hamstrung by budget cuts?

Despite all these constraints, participants pointed out that Brazil currently makes some contribution to dealing with international challenges associated with the protection of civilians: the UN Peacebuilding Commission was chaired by Antonio Patriota, and MINUSTAH in Haiti is led by Brazil. Brazil’s General Carlos Alberto Santos Cruz is the incumbent force commander of the MONUSCO mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, perhaps the most challenging mission in the history of the United Nations. Brazil is one of the few developing countries with a global network of embassies, capable of providing a unique perspective. Still, several speakers voiced frustration at Brazil’s passive stance when it comes to key international security challenges –
including the crisis in Ukraine, Ebola or ISIS. Interestingly enough, there was no consensus among participants about whether Brazil should or could assume a more prominent role vis-à-vis international security challenges. One participant questioned the wisdom of Brazil seeking to play a more prominent role in international security issues, saying the country’s national interests did not demand a global role at this point.

Similar disagreement emerged regarding what Brazilian foreign policy could achieve in the next four years, considering the toxic combination of a disinterested president and brutal budget cuts that greatly limit Itamaraty’s scope for action. While some argued that the budget cuts forbade any meaningful initiatives over the next four years, others pointed out that austerity measures alone cannot justify inaction: after all, the decisions to stay away from key debates around Syria, the Munich Security Conference, or the 10th anniversary of the IBSA grouping in 2013 had little to do with financial constraints. In the same way, key initiatives such as Lula’s decision to negotiate with Iran, the RwP proposal or the 2014 NetMundial conference barely cost anything and could, from a budget perspective, be easily repeated or continued today.

**Session II:**

*Moderated by Oliver Stuenkel*

The second session sought to consider what potential contributions Brazil could provide through the multilateral system in support of addressing major security challenges affecting populations worldwide. It was argued that Brazil has a long history of articulating broad principles for the organisation of world order (e.g. as based on international law, an egalitarian form of multilateralism), but often failed to transform these normative concerns into
more concrete proposals or institutional solutions for the problems of international peace and security. In a similar spirit, another discussant bemoaned Brazil's failure to specify concepts such as "benign multipolarity" further, saying they contributed little to understanding the challenges and opportunities Brazil faced in times of crises.

Yet, Brazil has in the institutional structures of its armed forces a reservoir of expertise and military human resources for substantive contributions to peace operations. Among them, one participant highlighted: (I) the quality of Brazilian officers who participate in peace missions; (II) the institutional incentives in the military value high performance in peacekeeping missions; (III) the versatility of the Brazilian military personnel in the conduct of missions; (IV) the commitment to development as a fundamental aspect to political stabilization of the countries under a peace mission. It is argued, therefore, that there is the possibility of Brazil’s contribution of a review of UN peacekeeping operations, either with respect to operational aspects (peacekeeping and peace enforcement) or to those related to building local governance (peace building). These attributes can also be valuable in other cases such as the strengthening of regional security institutions and other multilateral security efforts, such as the Brazilian involvement in the development of a Maritime Security Cooperation Centre in the Gulf of Guinea.

One participant argued that the involvement of Brazilian armed forces with problems of development in the countries in which it operates is a historical fact with both positive and negative results. It marks a recognition of the importance of economic development as a key element of the social stability of a country. Because of it, Brazil has deep knowledge accumulated and preserved regarding peace building related tasks. This is a fundamental
difference in relation to other armed forces, which often discard or neglect tasks not related to “direct combat”.

The proposal of a ‘responsibility while protecting’ (RwP) was extensively debated as an example of relevant, low-cost normative activism on global issues. It proposed an advancement of principles of human protection through the strengthening of the capacity of multilateral institutions to uphold international law. Yet, it was pointed out that such initiatives often take more time and demand more commitment than the political cycles can provide. While the idea was resisted at first, it is now widely accepted among those scholars and policy makers debating the responsibility to protect. It was argued that other opportunities of normative and institutional reform exist in the multilateral system, and that those are relatively low-cost possibilities for greater policy engagement and activism with these issues.

Session III: South-South Relations and the Security-Development Nexus

*Moderated by Matias Spektor*

This session explored Brazil’s experience with South-South cooperation and what lessons could be learned to consider improved Brazilian contributions in the realm of the security-development nexus. It was pointed out that Brazil traditionally encourages solutions that address the root causes of conflict - not just the symptoms - and is very wary of approaches focused on purely military engagement. The country supports building initiatives for peace and development cooperation, focusing on the link between peace, security and development. This was expressed, for example, in the country’s interest in leading the Peacebuilding Commission between 2013 and 2014.
The Post-2015 Development Agenda, as a set of guidelines that will guide the UN’s actions and its Member States to promote development, was a central topic of discussion. The priority points on the Post-2015 Development Agenda advocated by Brazil were the fight against inequality, primarily through stimuli that generate inclusion; the need for national ownership of the strategic implementation plans and the implementation of appropriate mechanisms to measure the gains. Brazil is reluctant to fully endorse the link among peace, security and development in the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, largely for fears of securitising poverty and the entire development sector. The fact that the ‘Peace and Justice’ pillar of the Development Agenda was not endorsed by Brazil was criticised by participants, especially given the problems with “peace and justice” in Brazil’s own domestic context.

In this context, participants also emphasised how much Brazil could in its own domestic regulation enhance the protection of individuals globally. It was pointed out that Brazil is the fourth largest exporter of small arms in the world (estimates from 2013: over US$ 330 million in arms and ammunition), and the irresponsible transfer of conventional weapons is the main fuel for the intensification of armed conflicts throughout the world. Latin America and the Caribbean have the highest homicide rates in the world and countries of the region have had major role in the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty. Brazil signed the ATT at the earliest opportunity on June 3rd, 2013. However, the Executive took 17 months to forward the text to Congress. At the time of the roundtable, the text was in the Foreign Relations and National Defence Committee of the Chamber of Deputies waiting for the opinion of the rapporteur.
Participants emphasised the extent to which ‘structural’ conflicts may create major instances of destabilisation with grave consequences. Brazil should, therefore, have as a priority the stabilisation of major areas in which it could have a significant political leverage, such as in South America, the South Atlantic and some areas in sub-Saharan Africa. This involves the creation and support of major international regimes such as, as mentioned above, the Post-2015 Agenda. Economic difficulties have been creating challenges for Brazil’s participation in some of these regimes. The country has not contributed to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) for the last five years. Brazil also lost its rights in the International Criminal Court after accumulating 6 million USD in debt.
Roundtable Programme

09:30 | Welcome coffee

09:45 | Welcome
Oliver Stuenkel, FGV/CPDOC
Philipp Rotmann, GPPI

10:00 | Panel 1: Política Externa Brasileira: Desafios de Segurança Internacional
Alcides Costa Vaz, University of Brasília (UnB)
Antônio Jorge Ramalho, Ministry of Defense / University of Brasília (UnB)
Matias Spektor, School of Social Sciences, Fundação Getulio Vargas
Sérgio Leo, Valor Econômico

12:30 | Lunch – Museu de Arte de São Paulo

14:00 | Painel 2: Paz e Segurança Internacional: Contribuições Brasileiras
Érico Duarte, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul
Maurício Carvalho Lyrio, Foreign Ministry (Itamaraty)
Marcos Tourinho, School of Social Sciences, Fundação Getulio Vargas
Monica Herz, BRICS Policy Center / PUC Rio

16:15 | Painel 3: Política Externa para o Sul Global: Aprendizados e Oportunidades
Camila Asano, Conectas Human Rights
Marco Cepik, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul
Oliver Stuenkel, School of Social Sciences, Fundação Getulio Vargas
Patricia Campos Mello, Folha de São Paulo

18:00 | Encerramento
Matias Spektor e Oliver Stuenkel, FGV/CPDOC

19:30 | Jantar (Restaurante Jiquitaia)
List of Participants

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