

Brazil, South American Regionalism and Re-defining the 'Atlantic Space'

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INTRODUCTION

Brazil's economic rise over the past two decades has caused the country's foreign policy-making elite to seek a more prominent role for Brazil in the international community. On a global scale, it has sought to assume more responsibility and engage in international institutions, often criticising established powers for not providing it with the status it deserves. Brazil's newfound status has also caused Brazilian governments to reassess its regional role, although Brazil remains ambivalent about which strategy to adopt in South America. There is clearly a gap between Brazil's global ambitions and its reluctance to adopt a more assertive role in its region. The country's strategy in the region remains indecisive, combining restrained support for Mercosur, the creation of the Union of South American States (UNASUR) and the South American Defense Council (CSD) with a growing notion that a clearer vision is necessary to mitigate neighbour's fears of a rising Brazil. Brazilian policy makers disagree on how they should characterise and understand their region – some see it as a source of problems, some as a shield against globalisation and some as a launching pad for global power.² Brazil's self-perception as a 'BRICS country' has fuelled worries that it will pay little attention to regional matters (given that its trade interdependence with the region is far lower, percentage-wise, than that of its neighbours), causing critics of Brazil's global focus to call it a 'leader without followers'.

While Brazil has kept UNASUR relatively toothless, its decision to exclude Central America and Mexico from this institution is a clear sign that policy makers in Brasilia have defined South America as Brazil's immediate sphere of influence. With the majority of the continent's landmass, population and economic output, and Venezuela's faltering attempts to turn into a second pole, it is largely up to Brazil to define and design 'South American

Regionalism'. Brazil thus in theory holds a key coordinating role regarding important regional challenges, ranging from China's growing economic importance, poverty, inequality, integrating the economy and security threats such as drug trafficking and smuggling.

Analogous to Brazil's growing role on the continent, it is bound to play a larger role in the South Atlantic (at times called 'Blue Amazon' in Brazil), and it has resisted attempts made by Europe and the United States (US) to create one single Atlantic Space. Both Brazil's and South Africa's rise and also West Africa's and Angola's increasingly prominent role as energy providers will increase the South Atlantic's strategic significance. Conscious of this shift, Brazil is interested in defining a separate South Atlantic Security Space. It has chosen Africa as a strategic priority, and it is developing a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines. As ever-larger ships can no longer pass through the Suez Canal, one can expect to see a revival of the Cape of Good Hope route, which could be controlled by Brazil and South Africa, but they still lack the capacity to control the area. At the same time, piracy has turned into a global problem that requires a concerted effort. As a consequence, security has emerged as a topic during IBSA summits, largely in the context of large-scale oil findings off the Brazilian coast, thus causing Brazil to increasingly regard control and defence of the South Atlantic Space as its national interest.

This chapter will elaborate on how Brazil thinks about South America and the South Atlantic Space, how it will seek to shape the creation of a South American and a South Atlantic identity and how this may affect the geopolitical dynamics in the region.

BRAZIL, REGIONAL HEGEMON?

Given its dominant role, it is no exaggeration to argue that Brazil seems destined to lead South America. The truth, however, is more complex. Brazil paid little attention to its neighbours during most of the Cold War, and severe domestic problems kept the country from adopting a more assertive international role. In the 1980s, Brazilian foreign policy makers perceived the necessity to engage with its neighbours, principally its rival Argentina, a trend that continued and strengthened throughout the 1990s. At the beginning of Fernando Henrique Cardoso's first term, the president began to articulate a vision that fundamentally diverged from Brazil's traditional perspective – a vision that identified 'South America' as a top priority.³ This trend has continued ever since, and was intensified under Cardoso's successor, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Over the past years, as Brazil's economic rise caught the world's attention, the region has firmly stood at the centre of

Brazil's foreign policy strategy.⁴ This trend continues under Brazil's current administration: President Rousseff's first international trip as president, in 2011, was to Argentina. The last fifteen years thus stand in stark contrast to Brazilian foreign policy tradition. Until 1981, no Brazilian president had ever visited Peru or Colombia. What further facilitated Brazil's growing presence in the region was a power vacuum as the United States largely lost interest in South America as its strategic focus shifted to the Middle East and Central Asia in the so-called 'War on Terror'.

Yet despite a growing capacity to engage in the global discourse, Brazil's regional leadership remains restrained and ambivalent. As a consequence, Brazil lacks 'endorsement from the region', as Vieira and Alden put it.⁵ As Spektor points out, Brazil is reluctant to promote regional institutions that profoundly limit national sovereignty, as is the case in the European Union.⁶

In order to better grasp Brazil's regional strategy, it is useful to distinguish three different ways in which Brazil interprets the region: As an opportunity, as a source of problems and as a launch pad for global power.⁷

THE REGION AS AN OPPORTUNITY

As political and economic stability has led to unknown levels of prosperity and reduced levels of inequality and poverty, Brazil's economic ties with the region have grown considerably. Brazil's relative economic growth vis-à-vis its neighbours has created significant structural incentives for Brasília to design more assertive strategies to boost regional cooperation. This implies the necessity to offer credit to large Brazilian companies that were in search for opportunities in largely untapped markets, and as a consequence to establish clear rules and guidelines to make these countries more predictable and navigable for Brazilian companies.⁸ Brazilian investment in South America has increased significantly over the past years. In a similar vein, Matias Spektor has argued that Brazil may see the region as a shield – for example against potentially dangerous competition through globalisation (e.g., the rise of China). The region can, according to this view, protect Brazil's economy from external shocks.⁹

In order to further integrate the region economically, Brazil has taken the lead in creating regional institutions such as Mercosur and UNASUR, but they remain superficial and do not reduce their members' sovereignty.¹⁰ For example, neither UNASUR nor Mercosur meaningfully intervenes in its members' domestic affairs, such as when elaborating the national budget.

THE REGION AS A SOURCE OF PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS

As the classic geopolitical discourse about the menace of communist subversion and capitalist imperialism has vanished, other threats such as environmental degradation, drug trafficking and the violence and crime it brings with it have emerged.¹¹ Rather than merely the strength of other states, the weakness of others is now a threat, as weak nations may not be able to provide basic levels of public order. For example, the violence and chaos that ensues in Bolivia could spill into Brazilian territory, and it may scare away investors who contemplate engaging in Brazil. Brazil is strong and getting stronger – but its neighbours are weak and some appear to be getting weaker. It is within this context that Brazil faces its biggest security challenges.¹² While Brazil has solved all its border disputes, there remains a threat for interstate conflict in South America, as all countries in South America except Brazil have some sort of border dispute with at least one neighbour. While the Southern Cone has resolved most of its security issues, in the northern region of the continent it is still difficult to talk about anything resembling a security community, and old mistrust persists.¹³

As a consequence, South America's largest country has been forced to assume more responsibility and develop a more consistent regional strategy. In 1996 Brazil successfully avoided a military coup in Paraguay, and in 2002 it actively engaged to preserve democracy in Venezuela after a coup d'état against President Hugo Chavez. In addition, Brazil intervened in humanitarian and political crises involving Bolivia, Ecuador, Haiti and Honduras. In 2000 Brazil organised the first regional summit in history. In 2004, Brazil took over from US and French forces the command of the UN Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and it has played a key leadership role in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake.¹⁴ In the same year, it developed the first doctrinal expression of regional leadership: 'non-indifference', a concept that, in a subtle fashion, indicated that Brazil would take a more flexible approach to respecting sovereignty if regional stability was at stake. In 2012, Brazil strongly objected to the impeachment of Paraguay's President Fernando Lugo and led efforts to suspend Paraguay's UNASUR and Mercosur membership.¹⁵ This increased willingness to intervene in other countries' affairs must also be understood as a means of reducing the probability of US intervention on the continent – thus implying a timid claim towards controlling the region and assuring stability.

An additional step in this direction occurred in 2008 with Brazil's proposal for a South American Defense Council, an agency of UNASUR. While Brazil was traditionally reluctant to assume the role of manager of regional security challenges (a role that the US wanted Brazil to assume decades ago),¹⁶ it slowly seems to become more comfortable with this position. As

Brazil's economy is ever more connected internationally, it can no longer afford instability next door. Contrary to general expectations, the Defense Council has indeed strengthened military-to-military contacts in the region, and helped armies deal with common threats – such as drug trafficking – more effectively.¹⁷ Recently, some member governments took the important step of submitting reports that exposed their defence spending, seeking to reduce mutual suspicion.¹⁸ In addition, one of the council's stated objectives is transparency about each army's military exercises. Such moves, however, are unlikely to have an immediate impact. As Alex Sánchez points out, it would still be difficult 'to conceive that a Chilean colonel could take orders from a Peruvian General within a South American Council of Defense chain of command.'¹⁹ The Santiago de Chile Declaration in 2009 introduced several initiatives, expressing the hope of becoming a dialogue platform for conflicts between its members, to coordinate every nation's external security, to foster cooperation in defence issues and to overcome differences in military expenditure. The Declaration's Action Plan focused on defence policies and military cooperation; humanitarian actions and peace operations; defence industry and technology; and military education and training – several of these ideas are already stated in UNASUR's statutes.²⁰

While obvious to Argentines or Uruguayans, the potentially negative effects of Brazil's economic growth on its reputation in the regions are only slowly emerging topics in Brazil's public discussion. Only recently, some of Brazil's leading policy analysts have warned that growing economic asymmetry and fear of economic dependence in neighbouring countries could lead to a backlash that could seriously hurt Brazil. This engagement in the region is thus a direct response to the problems and challenges Brazil faces in South America. Seen from this perspective, the region is largely a source of problems for Brazil that need to be addressed.

THE REGION AS A LAUNCH PAD FOR GLOBAL POWER

Due to Brazil's half-hearted regional leadership at times, as well as the emergence of regional challenges, Brazil has rarely used its dominant role in South America as the basis for its claim to global leadership, for example the permanent seat in the UN Security Council.²¹ This indicates that Brazil has not identified its regional dominance as an asset in its quest for a more visible global position. This considers the fundamental problem Brasília faces in obtaining its neighbours' support in multi-lateral negotiations.²² When Brazil sought to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council in 2005 as part of the so-called G4 Colombia and Argentina openly rejected Brazil's claim and formed an opposition group.²³ In the same way, Brazil's arguments for being given a place at the high table on other

occasions – such as the San Francisco Conference or the Bretton Woods conference – were always based on its size, its democracy or its diversity – but almost never on its capacity to represent its region. Even its current participation in forums such as IBSA or BRICS is largely justified by its growing power rather than its regional leadership – although foreign observers continuously attribute this capacity to Brazil.

However, Brazil's decision in the 1990s to define its region as 'South America' rather than 'Latin America' and itself as a 'South American country' does show that its conception of its neighbourhood had changed significantly. Mexico's orientation towards the North (in the context of NAFTA) was seen as proof that 'Latin America' as a concept had lost its meaning. In addition, Argentina's financial crisis seemed to have given the term a negative connotation; whereas South America was more neutral. Focusing on South America also removed the only credible competitor to Brazil in the region, thus strengthening Brazil's position as the dominant actor.

THE SOUTH AMERICAN DEFENCE COUNCIL

The South American Defense Council (CSD, in its Spanish and Portuguese acronym), an agency of UNASUR, formally came into being in 2008, but already in 2007 the Brazilian government had begun to articulate the necessity of creating such a regional body that would help it reduce tensions between its neighbours and build confidence through increased and institutionalised interaction.²⁴ This strategy was underscored by a tour through South America by Brazil's then Minister of Defense, Nelson Jobim.²⁵ In an extraordinary session on 16 December 2008 the heads of state of the member countries created the Defense Council as a consultative entity designed to facilitate cooperation.²⁶ After Colombia's initial decision not to join the council due to political tensions between Colombia,²⁷ Venezuela and Ecuador, it later decided to join.²⁸ The council is today composed of the region's Ministers of Defence. Its per-tempore presidency is guided by the same rotational principle as UNASUR. The first meeting took place in January 2009 in Santiago de Chile, in which the so-called 'Action Plan' was drawn up.²⁹ This resolution called for greater cooperation on all levels, ranging from military technology, best practices, transparency on military expenditures, exchange of military students, humanitarian aid and the creation of a single South American defence market.³⁰

While tangible results since then have been relatively few, the council did succeed in creating a regular platform for discussion between the defence establishments of all countries, thus achieving Brazil's main goal. For example, these regular meetings have helped each country's ministries of defence coordinate the measured retreat of troops who participated in the

MINUSTAH peacekeeping mission in Haiti.³¹ At the same time, several of the propositions in the plan have been followed up upon very slowly. For example, the plan's mention of military cooperation in the field of humanitarian aid did not generate any joint action until 2010, when UNASUR member states did in fact cooperate in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in Haiti.³² Regarding defence industry cooperation and military technology transfer, progress has yet to occur.³³ Considering however that it is the first time ministries of defence in the region have been in constant communication, several analysts regard even these initial steps as meaningful progress.³⁴ Indeed, it is perhaps the symbolism of cooperation that was at the heart of Brazil's strategy, thus seeking to mitigate some neighbours' worries about growing Brazilian regional hegemony.³⁵

However, contrary to NATO or any other military alliance, the main purpose of the council is to consolidate internal relations rather than challenge outside powers.³⁶ Security implications are thus kept to the region itself and do not extend to extra-regional issues.³⁷ Brazil thus keeps the tradition of creating regional institutions that do not curtail its sovereignty, as would an institution similar to NATO. Contrary to NATO, the council has no operational capacity and no permanent physical headquarters, and its creation is not the result of the common identification of an enemy as was the case with NATO.³⁸ As Antônio Jorge Ramalho points out, any structure similar to that of NATO, implying collective security principles, would take 'generations to build.'³⁹ This is not only due to a lack of mutual trust but also due to a lack of military capacity to project power outside of the region. Yet this has not kept the council from developing novel ideas. In 2012, the council's new Action Plan for the first time articulated the idea of the creation of a South American Space Agency, which may jointly finance the development of unmanned aircraft to secure border regions against drugs and arms trafficking.⁴⁰ This idea is closely connected to Brazil's growing interest in the regional defence market: Several of its neighbours are likely to soon modernise their armed forces, a demand in which the Brazilian defence industry is interested. At the same time, the council does have the secondary aim of fostering the creation of a South American identity, which does not yet exist given that the usage of the term is relatively recent.⁴¹

Still, Brazil's initiative to create the South American Council of Defense can be seen as a growing willingness to assume leadership and, at the same time, a step towards reducing US influence in the region.⁴² In fact, when the US expressed interest in contributing to the council, Brazil rejected any US participation.⁴³ In the same way, former Minister of Defense Nelson Jobim has argued against joining the North Atlantic and South Atlantic Security Space, arguing that the particular strategic interests in the South justify the creation of an autonomous security space.⁴⁴ However, its stance is far

from anti-American, and stands in contrast to Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, who argued for the creation of 'SATO', NATO's equivalent for the South Atlantic.⁴⁵

BRAZIL AND THE ATLANTIC SPACE

Brazil's relationship with the Atlantic is intimately tied to its complex relationship to Africa. After Brazil and the African continent were separated from each other millions of years ago, it was the slave trade from the 16th century until the late 19th century that marked Brazil–Africa relations.⁴⁶ More African slaves were brought to Brazil than to other any country in the hemisphere, including the United States, creating irreversible and profound cultural ties between the two. Yet in the first half of the 20th century 'silence reigned over the South Atlantic', as José Flávio Saraiva puts it, for both Africa and Brazil looked north towards Europe and the United States respectively.

As the struggle for decolonisation intensified after World War II, Brazil (under President Juscelino Kubitschek) refrained from actively supporting independence movements, principally because Brazil sought the help of industrialised nations to develop economically, and because it was reluctant to offend Portugal, a colonial power in Africa.⁴⁷

Nevertheless, after many African nations gained independence in the late 1950s and early 60s, Brazil's President Jânio Quadros took the first steps towards establishing stronger ties with them – thus implicitly giving more importance to the South Atlantic. In the early 1970s, Brazil–Africa relations again received a boost, Brazilian investments surged in countries such as Angola, and the number of Brazilian embassies across Africa reached sixteen.

Yet the activism proved unsustainable, and Brazil–Africa relations went into hibernation in the 1990s. While trade with Africa had made up 10 per cent in the 1980s, it came down to 2 per cent of Brazil's overall trade in the 1990s. It was President Lula who early on in his first term identified Africa as a priority in Brazil's effort to diversify its partnerships. Notably, his motivations had both idealist and realist elements. Lula pointed to Brazil's 'historic debt' to Africa, saw cultural ties and sought to strengthen South-South relations in general to balance what he saw as overly powerful established powers. At the same time, he recognised that Africa's markets offered great potential for Brazilian companies.

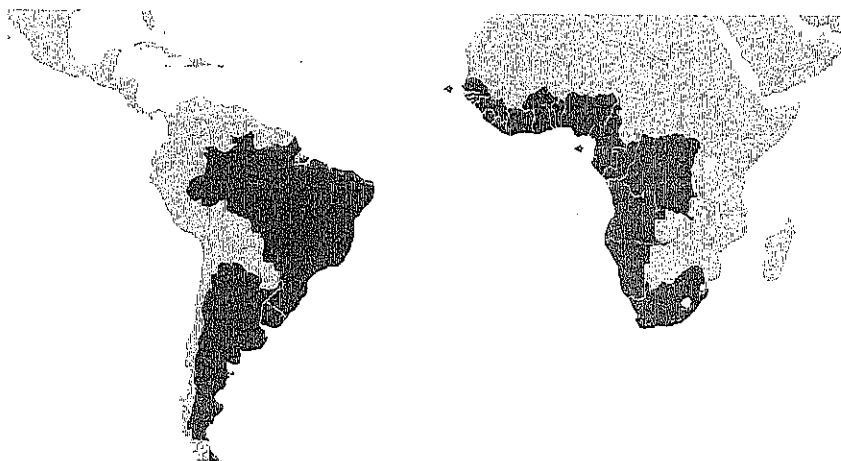
BRAZIL AND THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

The South Atlantic used to be an important passage from Europe to both the Pacific and the Indian Ocean, yet the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the Panama Canal in 1914 contributed to the significant waning of the South Atlantic's strategic importance. Except for a brief period in the 1970s, when traffic through the Suez Canal was temporarily blocked, and again in the Falkland War between Argentina and Great Britain (1982), the South Atlantic Ocean remained insignificant from a strategic point of view.⁴⁸ The consequence is that, as Francis Kornegay puts it, 'far from having the level of multi-lateral cooperation that is emerging in the Indian Ocean, the South Atlantic has no real multi-lateral architecture to speak of.'

Historically, the South Atlantic has not figured as a priority for Brazilian policy makers, even though the Brazilian Navy is responsible for the protection of some 7 400 km of coastline. Most analysts identify drug-trafficking, arms smuggling and guerrilla activity in a lawless frontier region in the Amazon as the most potent security threats Brazil faces from abroad.⁴⁹ The ocean that separates Brazil from the African continent was thus neither a source of threats nor of opportunity, but rather seen as a powerful protection against potential threats coming from the East.

At the same time, Brazil had temporarily assumed regional leadership towards the end of the Cold War, when Brazil was in the midst of democratic transition. In 1986, Brazil initiated the creation of the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone (ZPCAS), which sought to promote economic cooperation in the region and maintain peace and security – with a particular focus on the prevention of nuclear proliferation.

Map 1: Member Countries of the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone (ZPACS)



The Declaration on the Denuclearisation of the South Atlantic was adopted at a summit of member states of the zone held at Brasilia in September 1994, articulating a set of ideas about promoting security in the South Atlantic. The actual strategic significance of the body during the last decades, however, should not be overstated. When ZPCAS' foreign ministers met in 2007 for the summit in Luanda, no meeting had been held since 1999.⁵⁰ Still, the Luanda Final Declaration promised to revive the idea.⁵¹ Since it also called on Great Britain to end its 'occupation' of the Falkland Islands, located in the South Atlantic, the British government rejected the declaration.⁵² Angola's activism points to its growing economic weight and strategic interests in the region. Angola's oil exports have grown substantially over the past years, and Angola's membership of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) does, in theory, facilitate the establishment of better maritime coordination with Brazil.

Three years after the meeting in Luanda, however, little progress had been made, and the Brazilian government organised a Round Table in Brasília aiming at discussing the revitalisation of ZPCAS in December 2010. Yet at the meeting, a series of potentially interesting areas were identified that would provide a framework for cooperation, including sea bottom mapping and exploration, marine resources protection and preservation, marine and air transportation, port security, defence cooperation, marine security and the fight against trans-national crime.⁵³

Is the ZPCAS a basis for a complementary approach to the southern sea lanes as the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) or the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium?⁵⁴ Could Brazil assume the leadership and create a South Atlantic naval symposium? As Brazil's strategic and economic interest in the African continent grows, the government may regard ZPCAS as a useful vehicle that serves to promote regional integration. Better coordination in the South Atlantic would be particularly useful as the African continent lacks a coherent security system of control over its coastal waters. Strengthening the ZPCAS could help improve that situation.

Yet, given severely limited naval capacity on both sides of the South Atlantic, progress over the coming years is most likely to remain limited. As Eduardo Pesce points out, the countries that border the South Atlantic have no knowledge of each other's naval capacity, making serious cooperation difficult. He points out that even the cooperation between Brazil and Uruguay, its direct neighbour, is not ideal due to technical shortcomings.⁵⁵

In this context, one must also keep in consideration the growing strategic importance of the South Atlantic. As ever-larger ships can no longer pass the Suez Canal, Brazil expects to see a revival of the Cape of Good Hope route. At the same time, piracy has turned into a problem, particularly as

drug trafficking along the African coast is set to increase.⁵⁶ Guinea Bissau runs the risk of becoming a narco-state, and other failed states similar to Somalia may arise. Security has emerged as a topic during IBSA summits (in the context of large-scale oil findings in the South Atlantic), but given the BRICS' global reach this may be a better forum to develop a viable framework.

In early 2012, Brazil's Minister of Defense travelled to Cape Verde to express Brazil's interest in strengthening military cooperation with the island state, which is located 300 kilometres off the coast of Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, which is increasingly seen as a source of instability and haven for pirates and drug-traffickers. Brazil also indicated it would donate two aircraft to the military of Cape Verde to increase its surveillance capacity.⁵⁷

While Brazil may have the long-term ambition to play a role similar to that of India in the Indian Ocean, one must keep in mind that India's naval capacity is far greater. As Saurav Jha argues:

[T]he Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, which India leads, is facilitating Indian military deployments in the region. India today provides maritime oversight to the Seychelles, the Maldives and Mauritius. It also patrols the Mozambique coast and has listening facilities in Madagascar and berthing rights in Oman, Qatar and Djibouti. The Indian navy is set to emerge as the chief provider of hydrographical data to Kenya, Tanzania and even Saudi Arabia. In the eastern Indian Ocean, India's Andaman and Nicobar Command has the assets to surveillance seed all the key chokepoints in the Indonesian archipelago.⁵⁸

In comparison, Brazil's capacities are far more limited.

In some areas, the Brazilian Navy is undergoing a process of modernisation. Submarines provide an interesting example. The Navy currently operates a flotilla of four Tupi-class (modified German Type 209) submarines, which are based near Rio de Janeiro. In the near future, Brazil plans to begin constructing a new class of five diesel submarines.⁵⁹ These submarines are to be a further step in the eventual creation of a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines, which will use the same hull as the new diesel boats.

The Brazilian government has made it clear that, despite being a pacifist country, it is important to have the capacity to 'disincentivise aggressions'. One of the key arguments being made by the government is that Brazil needs to protect its oil located far off shore; yet specialists are unsure how nuclear submarines are useful in this context. Rather, the development of nuclear submarines can be seen as a long-term project to eventually gain the capacity to control the South Atlantic strategically.⁶⁰ In addition, the domination of nuclear technology is seen as a national symbol of pride and proof that Brazil is no longer a developing country. Finally, the construction

of these submarines can be seen as an effort to generate jobs (the government recently calculated that 9 000 jobs would be created directly, and 20 000 indirectly.⁶¹ According to the navy, the plant will be inaugurated in November 2012 and will be operational in 2014, ready to begin production in 2015. The first conventional submarines will be produced in 2017 and the nuclear submarines will be operational in 2023.⁶² It is particularly in this context that the usefulness of a South American Defense Council is visible. Brazil's military modernisation could, if not communicated clearly and frequently to its neighbours, generate considerable anxiety and anti-Brazilian feelings in the region. In the worst-case scenario, this could lead to an arms race as Argentina may feel pressured to develop similar technologies.

IBSAMAR

IBSAMAR I took place between 5 and 16 May 2008 off South African waters. An Initial Planning Conference (IPC) for Exercise IBSAMAR II was held in Mumbai, India from 12 to 16 October 2009.⁶³ IBSAMAR is steered by the Joint Work Group for Defense, which is one of 16 Joint Working Groups of the three nations looking into various cooperation initiatives. The Indian Navy participated in India-Brazil-South Africa Maritime (IBSAMAR 2010) exercises conducted in the Indian Ocean region off Durban. IBSAMAR II had 11 ships taking part from the navies of India, Brazil and South Africa. As the *Times of India* commented then, 'The trilateral naval war games, IBSAMAR, will be part of the strategic initiative launched under the IBSA framework to bring together the maritime forces of three dynamic democracies and economies from three continents under one umbrella.'⁶⁴ During the IBSAMAR exercise in 2010, the three navies conducted anti-air and anti-submarine warfare, as well as visit-board-search-seizure operations and anti-piracy drills. India was to be the 'lead planner' for this edition of IBSAMAR, while Brazil is thought to be organising the third edition in 2013.

CONCLUSION

After decades of hesitation, Brazil is finally beginning to use the potential of its dominant role on the South American continent. While the regional institutions Brazil has created are still relatively superficial, they are still meaningful on a continent with virtually no history of regional cooperation. UNASUR and the South American Defense Council, both designed by Brazil, are clear indicators that Brazil is aware of its capacity to engage with its neighbours and promote regional integration. While tangible progress may be years away, the creation of 'South American Regionalism' and

a 'South American identity' is ever more clearly articulated by Brazilian foreign policy makers. At the same time, Brazil is beginning to regard the South Atlantic as its sphere of influence. As it lacks the naval capacity to control the area on its own, Brazil may resuscitate structures such as the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone (ZPCAS) and strengthen IBSA to jointly provide security in the area. As the strategic importance of the South Atlantic is bound to increase so will Brazil's willingness to strengthen its presence there, possibly in cooperation with other leading actors of the 'Global South'.

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