

President Lula's approach to fragile states

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In this article I will first establish that attention to fragile states is not on the agenda of the current Brazilian government. Then I will try to explain the major factors contributing to the exclusion of this issue from President Luis Inácio Lula da Silva's foreign policy, which essentially have to do with the difficulty for Lula, his government, and his party in dealing with their left of centre supporters.

Lula's Party, the PT (Worker's Party) is a large and heterogeneous coalition ranging from far-left to centre-left, and his government enlarged its support, attracting small right of the centre parties and even old nationalist groups on the far right. His term has been highlighted by a deep divide between a conservative monetary policy (often termed as neo-liberal), and a strong drive towards a state-led, market unfriendly sort of political economy (Albuquerque, 2002, p. 25). On the other hand, from the beginning, his foreign policy has been underscored by a predominance of leftist orientations.

The colliding agendas of Lula's pro-market advisors in charge of financial, trade-related and economic matters, as opposed to Lula's political friends and party comrades, have been taken for granted as a single consistent one. Moreover, on the external front, the most ideological aspects of this agenda have prevailed. As a consequence, Lula's foreign policy encouraged anti-globalization ideas and movements while discouraging international cooperation against terrorism, allegedly, because its deep causes

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are social injustice and economic inequalities, and are not political or ideological (Amorim, 2005, p. 53).

As a consequence, his foreign policy has often been criticized as erratic and inconsistent. In this article I will try to show that it is rather a matter of consistency with colliding goals than sheer inconsistency. My argument is that Lula's foreign policy, in his first term, pursues three different and diverging agendas (Albuquerque, 2005, p. 91, Almeida, 2006, p. 557).

Not in the Agenda

Surprising as it is, the most politicized foreign policy ever adopted by a Brazilian president, who is also considered the most committed to dealing with the issues of global poverty, endemic hunger and social injustice at large, does not explicitly include a policy designed to deal with fragile states. Even more surprising is the fact that the linkage between state weakness and social injustice, endemic hunger and poverty is often acknowledged by Brazilian foreign policy officials, as well as by President Lula himself. The same applies to the linkage between terrorism and social injustice¹, often evoked by the Brazilian diplomacy to advocate multilateral humanitarian programs as opposed to, and in clear disavowal of, the war on terrorism adopted by the Bush administration. Nevertheless, the conclusion that the theme of fragile states needs a specific policy is missing.

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Such expressions as “fragile and/or weak states”, “state building”, or “unstable states”, are absent in the Brazilian diplomatic vocabulary, even when President Lula addresses “... a legacy of social and economic stagnation, political violence and foreign interference” (Amorim, 2006). Instead, the preferred phrases are “the search for the peaceful settlement of disputes”, “being instrumental to restoring peace”, “restoration of democracy in a small country”, and so on. A survey of official statements by President Lula himself, his Foreign Minister Celso Amorim, and the Vice-minister Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães², shows a meaningful absence of this theme and other connected issues.

No statements, articles or interviews by foreign policy officials, such as presidential and ministerial aides and career diplomats, have been found dealing specifically with policies addressing the issue of fragile states in relevant ar-

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reas of the Brazilian foreign ministry, such as international cooperation or international organizations. As for political organizations and coalitions mentioned on the official website of Itamaraty³, the web page on the Group of Rio⁴, the political Latin American summit (considered as a sort of OAS without the United States and Canada) was not to be found in early March 2006. The web page on the Ibero-American summit⁵ is in the process of being updated. The G-15⁶ page was last updated in 2001 and the last statement posted is from Marco Maciel, former vice-President (1995-2003). No information at all on the subject is available in the Atlantic Zone of Peace’s web page⁷. A brief explanatory note is all that is found under OAS, UN Security Council, and UN Peace Missions.

Under “Foreign Policy” or in a general search of President Lula’s and high level officials’ pronouncements in 2003-2006, only a small number of statements, speeches and interviews have been found that might address the issue.

Surprisingly, the highly influential Vice-minister, Ambassador Guimarães, who, at one point, had been in the public eye, and even in the first years of the Lula presidency had been quoted as contributing to a number of academic and journalistic articles, seems to have been silenced; only his inaugural speech in January 2003 as Vice-minister is available. In some cases, the most recent statements are from Ambassador Lampreia and Professor Lafer, both of whom served with former President Cardoso (1995-2003) as foreign ministers. The web page on international organizations and political groups, which recently contained relevant and detailed information about the G3 (Brazil-India-South Africa), the G4 (Brazil-India-Japan-Germany) and other initiatives, was found to be very meager.

As a result, I was able to use only one speech of

President Lula and four of Celso Amorim, his Foreign Minister, which might contain explicit statements about Brazil’s policy towards fragile states, either because they dealt with related matters, or because they were supposed to address the entirety of the government’s foreign policy. These statements were: Lula’s speech in the Conference on “Fighting Terrorism in Favour of Humanity” (New York, 09-22-2003), Celso Amorim’s opening statements at the “Seminar Brazil-Norway: Peace, Reconciliation and Mediation – New Themes of Foreign Policy” (Brasília, 10-07-2003), his speech at the Ministerial Meeting of the UN Security Council (New York, 10-31-2005), his closing statements at the Meeting of Itamaraty’s Heads of Diplomatic Missions (01-05-2006) and that at the London Conference on Afghanistan (01-31-2006).

We will not find, as noted above, any explicit mention of state fragility or any clear proposals to deal with its international outcomes. However, these statements present a very clear sense of President Lula’s views about the causes and consequences of state weakness, in particular those related to the inability of weak states to provide a minimum share of general welfare to a part of their citizens. The following argument is very straightforward:

The lack of access to essential goods, including education and cultural goods tears down the social fabric and cause the individuals to be vulnerable. This situation may result in the proliferation of a variety of unlawful activities, including organized crime and terrorism (Lula, 2003).

Besides a limited or nonexistent access to essential goods, additional causes of individual vulnerability are the “... vulnerability of the youth to the dissemination of extremist ideals [and the] inequalities of empowerment deriving from foreign (military) occupation” (Lula, 2003).

A choice is made in Lula’s conception of the international outcomes of state weakness, such as domestic and international conflicts, emigration, terrorism or transnational crime⁸. Weakness, fragility or vulnerability does not disable the state, whose failure reduces its capacity to enforce the rule of law, causing the society and the state to be vulnerable to unlawful activities. In Lula’s perception, it is a vulnerability that affects individuals, who become unaffected by the rule of law and, in due course, vulnerable to extremist ideals.

In that sense there is not an international issue about weak, vulnerable states that could be the origin of peace and security threats. There is, rather, an international quandary with respect to vulnerable individuals who lack access to general welfare, and therefore are prone to unlawful activities, including terrorism. The conclusion is clear: the target of international cooperation is not the weak state and its institutions and political processes (or lack thereof), but individuals excluded from general welfare.

A similar idea is clear in Amorim’s opening speech in

the Brazil/Norway Seminar on 'Peace, Reconciliation and Mediation.' Again, the causes and consequences of state fragility are clearly stated:

Although poverty and inequalities cannot, in absolutely any event, entail an excuse for violence, it is unquestionably true that poverty and inequalities create an environment propitious to the dissemination of extreme ideas and actions (Amorim, 2003).

Due perhaps to the context of the seminar, which assumes the existence of contending states, this time the Brazilian diplomatic rhetoric introduces states, acting in bilateral or multilateral relations, as a key to the solution of terrorism – a direct result of vulnerable groups of individuals. However, international cooperation between states is called upon, not to provide aid and support to vulnerable individuals, but to address asymmetric relationships between states. In this surprising argument, "... the relevance of multilateralism, the relevance of International Law, and the relevance of the UN Security Council" are predictably underlined, but no elaboration is offered about their role in the approach to fragile states. (The mention of the Security Council, however, brings about the opportunity to underline once again the need to reform its membership.) Yet, some elaboration is given to the ubiquitous causal relation-

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ship between poverty and international threats related to state fragility. "It is impossible nowadays to speak about peace and reconciliation without mentioning also some economic issues," the minister states. He concludes: "It is the reason why we have to look after the international economic relations. It is up to us to search for more equitable rules, for negotiations under the rule of parity" (Amorim, 2003).

Amorim's implicit linkage between asymmetric trade relations and terrorism clarifies the above-mentioned Lula quotation about the causal relationship between asymmetries of power resulting from foreign occupation and terrorism. As a matter of fact, if individual vulnerability and the resulting propensity to unlawful activities are mainly affected by asymmetries of power among states, then the fight against asymmetry among states is the strongest remedy for the vulnerability of individuals and the ensuing propensity of vulnerable individuals to unlawful activities⁹.

The next document examined is the closing statement by Ambassador Amorim in the Meeting of Itamaraty's Heads of Diplomatic Missions, in a speech to present an informal account of the Lula administration's accomplish-

ments. After enumerating a long list of bonuses in the well-known commemorative rhetoric of Itamaraty, Amorim concludes by elaborating extensively¹⁰ on the UN Security Council (SC) and the alleged progresses made by Lula's Administration in its quest for a permanent SC seat for Brazil. No mention is made of the issue of fragile states and the role played by the UN, or by Brazil for that matter, in dealing with possible regional or global threats associated with the fragility of states, not even to acknowledge the Brazilian contribution to the UN mission in Haiti.

The last document, the Foreign Minister's speech to the January 2006 London Conference on Afghanistan, does not seem to fit with the landscape described. First, it only indirectly mentions the issue of weak states, which was the central purpose of the Conference on Afghanistan. In his speech, Ambassador Amorim salutes the "... international support for the building of a peaceful, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan" and acknowledges the roadmap "to overcome a legacy of social and economic stagnation, political violence and foreign interference" (Amorim, 2006b). He does not oppose, as Lula did in his New York statement, institutional building to economic and social development: they must go hand-in-hand. Additionally, Amorim lists Haiti, East Timor and "many countries in Africa" in the same context as Afghanistan as states in need of regional

and multilateral cooperation. He goes as far as including counter-narcotics strategies in economic rehabilitation, and suggests that economic rehabilitation "... presupposes helping the Afghan farmers to develop alternative

crops for which adequate market access should be provided" (Amorim, 2006b).

For Brazil's neighbours, deeply affected by state failure associated with drug trafficking, regional cooperation does not apply, or so Lula's Administration perceives. Brazil has consistently opposed any international cooperation to fight against drug trafficking; either military, as in the Plan Colombia, or the eradication of drug-related crops, because drug-trafficking is supposed to result from deep social causes.

Colliding Demands

My hypothesis to explain Lula's failure to address the issue of state vulnerability is his inability to solve the internal conflicts with his government, his congressional coalition, and his own party that result from colliding agendas. Lula's government adopted colliding foreign policy agendas as the outcome of diverse and often diverging demands originating both in Lula's Party and in Lula's Administration. The PT is a large coalition of social and political movements, ranging from the moderate to the far left. Lula's government coalition ranges from the far left to the right and is openly supported by far right nationalist interest groups.

At least three relevant coalitions, adopting diverging political-economic views, strive to influence the Party's decision-making. Though less influential than their counterparts, the most visible are those composed of grassroots movements such as the self-styled Movement of the Landless (MST) and groups supported by the Catholic Church.

The leadership of these social movements, including a significant part of the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB), share very primitive economic views. A recent document from the Brazilian bishops, conceived as guidelines for a referendum, called for a rejection of Brazilian participation in the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) talks, and goes as far as to condemn external trade as artificial, favouring instead a self-contained

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economy. The MST's most conspicuous leader, João Pedro Stedile, responding to a survey questionnaire, stated clearly that one of the reasons the MST opposes hemispheric integration is that it would foster the agricultural industry, while MST favours family-based subsistence agriculture.

The PT's grassroots members and leaders who share these views tend to support economic policies deemed to enhance the state's capability to protect and subsidize the natural side of economic processes as opposed to the artificial side: family-based agriculture vs. agribusiness; domestic market vs. trade; national vs. foreign firms; price and wage controls vs. market forces; social interests and values vs. commitment to contracts and to the rule of law.

Another political-economic view, probably the most widespread, is the Economics of National Populism. The political economy of their supporters is a legacy of the 1950s and 1970s *desarrollismo* (developmentalism). Supporters of National Populism are still nostalgic for the successes of import substitution industrialization (ISI), especially in Brazil. I do not have to elaborate on the well-known principles and policies of ISI. Suffice it to say that the notion of the superiority of growth-oriented policies, led by the government and based on protected and over-regulated domestic markets, have been the core of PT's national electoral program for the last thirteen years and were only swept under the carpet, during the 2002 presidential elections, to avoid the risk of defeat.

This part of the PT's program may have been swept under the carpet but was not disavowed. In the aftermath of Lula's electoral landslide, it was common among academics, including some who now share an office in the Planalto Palace¹¹, to predict a radical change from the economic policies adopted in previous governments. Such changes

would include a reversal of the privatization program, huge investments by the federal government to restart the economy, deep cuts in the interest rates and a reversal of the monetary policy favouring a controlled rate of inflation, in addition to some kind of wage and price policy. In addition, in the first PT Conference during the new Lula administration a number of policy statements were approved in direct opposition to the current monetary and fiscal policies, despite the efforts of the government to avoid them.

A significant part of Lula's administration, mainly in the area of social policy and the spending-regulatory ministries, was assigned to adherents of national populism. Be it housing, transportation, energy – including Petrobras, the state owned oil multinational company – communications, or the huge Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES), all the decision-making has been assigned to factions that share national populist economic views.

Still another vision is shared by an important component of PT's leadership. It is widely acknowledged that a significant number of former Marxist-oriented parties and militant groups, which were designated illegal by the military regime, joined PT at its origin. While reformed Marxists had joined centre-oriented parties, such as PMDB and later PSDB¹², most "Old Bolsheviks" who joined the PT maintained their economic views consistent with Lenin's theory of imperialism. Economic policies, they believe, directly reflect the interests of the dominant capitalist class and are a prerogative of state power. In order to reverse the hegemony of imperialist interests in peripheral countries, it is necessary to oppose, and if possible reverse, the hegemony of the major capitalist countries, especially the United States.

Historically Marxist parties and movements have been in a critical alliance¹³ with national populism in Brazil, but their views often overlap. In Lula's government they tend to support all policies, particularly foreign policy, favoured by the *neo-desarrollismo*. In this regard, foreign policy is the area where the old Bolshevik agenda is more at home. All of Itamaraty's relevant economic and political decision-making is centralized in the hands of a coalition group that shares this particular mix of Marxist and national populist economic views.

Aside from the above-mentioned families of economic ideas, Lula's governmental coalition adds a few more. The most relevant are those pragmatically adopted by Antonio Palocci, Minister of Economy and the team he assembled to obtain external credibility to reverse the crisis triggered by Lula's election. Neither Palocci himself nor any of his PT colleagues ever shared neo-liberal ideas or favoured monetary stability, privatization, integration with the US economy, or even the desirability of agreeing with IMF

conditions. As a matter of fact, it has proven impossible, or at least undesirable, to staff the high level Ministerial and Central Bank political appointments with PT affiliates.

Then again, the ideas of fiscal responsibility, monetary stability, market oriented deregulation, conservative interest rates and exchange rates policies are supported by a very heterogeneous coalition which includes politicians such as Palocci himself, banking and investment industry executives, businessmen and bureaucrats. Their main cement is the pragmatic goal of keeping an economic crisis at bay. No one knows what will happen if and when the external vulnerability is overcome and a policy of sustained growth, as opposed to sustained stability, is on the table. My view is that the only thing that keeps the reins of economic policy in Palocci's hands is the threat of external crisis. Every time the prospect of blossoming economic growth (to use the President's metaphor) is raised, Palocci's policies are relentlessly assailed by his fellow party and government members, not to mention a part of the business community.

The government includes still other pragmatic groups well represented by the Vice-President's party – the Liberal Party (Partido Liberal, PL) – which, like other small right-of-centre political parties supporting Lula's government, is well known as a league of special interests. Combining socially conservative populist views with the advocacy of state-led growth, these groups tend to support a combination of the above, provided that it concurs with their own *ad hoc* interests. They also tend to challenge Mr. Palocci's options.

To assert his options externally, President Lula and his government are acting differently in different arenas. The Treasury Ministry (*Fazenda*) and the Central Bank are allotted policy responsibility for areas that could have an impact on the perception of the country's economic sound-

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ness or the consistency of its monetary, fiscal and regulatory policies. Palocci, the Central Bank, and their team play by the rules and make this clear.

All the remaining international issues are dealt with by Itamaraty or the Presidency acting together or separately. Besides the formal diplomatic arenas involving international organizations and regimes, Itamaraty initiated several mini-lateral forums under Lula, and tends to pack the presidential agenda with as many meetings of international leaders as he can possibly attend.

While the arenas of monetary system and financial matters are under the exclusive jurisdiction of the *Fazenda* and

the Central Bank, and the prevailing goals are essentially consistent with ensuring an external environment favouring the country's stability and sustained growth, the rest is a battlefield for the remaining ideas and goals supported by different factions in the party and in the administration.

My hypothesis, however, is that it is possible to see some rationality in the present Brazilian foreign policy, provided we assume that the Lula Administration is striving to implement three separate agendas, which it perceives as a single one. While compatible in theory, these three agendas occasionally, and inevitably in the long term, aim at conflicting goals. The three agendas may be described as follows: a) the permanent agenda; b) Lula's personal agenda; and c) the ideological agenda.

Colliding Agendas

The permanent, or traditional, agenda may be defined by three major goals:

- to promote a friendly external environment for the growth of the Brazilian economy and for its financial stability;
- to avoid any resemblance of submission to US goals and interests; and
- to avoid or, at least postpone, further integration with the US economy. (Albuquerque, 2006, p. 502)

This agenda is universally acknowledged and needs no additional comment¹⁴. Lula's personal agenda aims at providing the President with a stage from which he can act as a protagonist on the world scene. Such a capacity of world leadership is believed to be instrumental for securing Lula's domestic leadership under eventual adverse conditions.

Despite his ability to calm the worst expectations of the markets regarding his cabinet's capacity to deal with macroeconomic issues, Lula proved unable to accomplish a minimum portion of his domestic campaign promises. In contrast, his closest aides and members of his inner cabinet soon realized that the President enjoyed an international audience far wider than his Brazilian public. Unlike the domestic front, his domestic limitations and weaknesses were irrelevant to the international audience and, which is even more helpful, it was prepared to take whatever Lula said or did at face value.

Lula's amazing talent for moving hearts and minds on a global scale had a great impact on his own domestic credibility. As a consequence, those closest aides and members of his inner cabinet were persuaded that the impact of the presidential performance on foreign audiences of all kinds represented a prime asset, ready to strengthen his fading domestic prominence.

The ideological agenda assumes that Lula's accession to

executive power in Brazil would be the basis for radical political and social changes domestically as well as internationally. If that premise were correct, his Administration's foreign policy would be instrumental in promoting the emergence of a new world order, deemed to transcend the current globalization process and its primary supporter, the global predominance of the United States.

The fact of the matter is that when we examine a significant sample of Lula's foreign policy actions, it appears clear that a convergence of ideological priorities with Lula's personal agenda has always taken the best of the traditional, rather pragmatic economic agenda. The ideological priorities are taken for granted as a valuable goal, and tend to overshadow any considerations of context, opportunity or cost (economic and political). Lula's expectations of global leadership have been clearly over-rated as a consequence of the President's astonishing international recognition.

As a result, Lula's foreign policy has been blamed for its erratic appearance, but under closer analysis, we can demonstrate that it is not the effect of sheer inconsistency, but rather suggests consistency with colliding goals. These separate actions are implemented as if they converged with

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at least one of the agendas pointed out before. It is theoretically possible that even conflicting interests could agree on a specific course of action, while pursuing colliding agendas. However, nothing can demand that every course of action should always be consistent with every remaining agenda.

The chief issue is to know how priorities are established that allow the approval of certain initiatives to the detriment or postponement of others. We can solve this problem by taking into consideration the following factors:

- Lula's well publicized vision of international affairs;
- the prevailing ideas among his chief advisors about both international relations and the domestic responses and motivations of public opinion; and
- the well known proclivities of the current Itamaraty decision-makers.

All things considered, the most probable is that in most issues, two different agendas could be reconciled in the same program or course of action. Inescapably though, the third goal is dismissed and, in that case, the most likely candidate for rejection is the traditional agenda, the one committed to the financial and economic credibility of the country.

Indeed, the permanent economic and financial agenda of Brazilian foreign policy is increasingly confined to

the cabinet areas of agriculture and foreign trade as well as to factions inside Itamaraty that continue to adhere to Cardoso's agenda. While still somewhat influential, these senior diplomats take no part in the most relevant decisions, however. In contrast, Lula's personal agenda is predominantly championed by his closest aides and by his hard-core cabinet members. Similarly, the ideological agenda is typically backed by a coalition of leading diplomats with inflexible nationalistic and leftist drives (the most conspicuous is certainly the vice-Minister, Mr. Pinheiro Guimarães), not to mention Lula's special advisor for International Affairs, Mr. Marco Aurélio Garcia.

As a matter of fact, both the policies adopted consonant with the ideological agenda and those tailor-made in order to inflate Lula's persona may be backed by the supporters of Itamaraty's traditional agenda. Itamaraty's support would be secured whenever such policies appear to be compatible with the attainment of traditional goals, given that such policies are kept inside the Itamaraty's rituals of cautious diplomatic handling. Additionally, for the Planalto inner circle, the ideological agenda tends to add up to one and the same as Lula's personal agenda, for it often implies some leading role in world affairs, as the Brazilian President is allegedly entitled to. The traditional agenda, however, often implies unpopular measures that are both costly and that downgrade the President's

domestic leadership.

What is more, when we consider the current Itamaraty's leadership, known for its nationalistic and leftist tendencies, the enhancement of Lula's domestic and international role is instrumental for the accomplishment of their political beliefs. As for the traditional foreign policy agenda, while suitable as subordinate goals, they are deemed irreconcilable with plans to change the country and the world system. Though it may appear surprising, Mr. Pinheiro Guimarães has recently affirmed, before undergraduate students at the University of Sao Paulo, that Brazil has indeed the power to change international rules according to its own national interests.

The traditional agenda is the most capable of stirring resistance from inside the government coalition, while at the same time it is the least likely to command wide support. In contrast, any combination of the ideological and personal agendas is destined to prevail over any resistance coming from the areas favouring the traditional agenda. The overall result of the differing abilities of diverse decision-makers to gather support or, quite reverse, to generate resistance to their initiatives, is that the apparent inconsistency of Lula's foreign policy is that it follows the path of least resistance. Its only asset is the presumed low cost of international action and the unlimited external credibility of Lula himself. Both beliefs are likely to prove unrealistic.

Notas

¹ In the present context, social injustice stands for social injustice, endemic hunger and poverty, so often associated with the Lula Presidency.

² A career diplomat, Ambassador Guimarães served the former administration as head of an important centre for academic and policy studies of the Brazilian Foreign Ministry, and was well known for his criticism and opposition to President Cardoso's foreign policy, especially concerning the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and Brazil's bilateral relations with the United States. Prior to the presidential election in 2002, Guimarães was discharged, after having publicly disagreed with the government policies, and played an important role during the 2002 elections, openly supporting the opposition's candidate, Lula. Guimarães was instrumental in the appointment of his personal friend, Ambassador Celso Amorim, as Foreign Minister and is reputed to be the most influential decision-maker regarding Lula's foreign agenda.

³ The Brazilian Foreign Ministry is known as Itamaraty, after the Palace Itamaraty, a former seat of the Brazilian government in Rio de Janeiro, later the traditional headquarters of its diplomacy. Itamaraty also applies collectively to the Brazilian diplomatic corps and to the specific ethos of Brazilian diplomacy.

⁴ The Group of Rio is the successor to the Contadora Group, an initiative of former Venezuelan President Andrés Pérez aimed at the pacification of Central American conflicts in the 1970s, and later turned into the Contadora Support Group. The Group of Rio comprises a number of major Latin-American countries, such as Brazil, México and Argentina, and a number of representatives of other Latin-American countries.

⁵ A political initiative of the Spanish government, then strongly supported by México, the Ibero-American Summit comprises all Latin-American countries plus Portugal and Spain and, unlike similar forums, includes Cuba as a member.

⁶ The G-15 is a group of leading developing countries engaged in the South-South dialogue.

⁷ A Brazilian initiative, together with fellow African and Latin-American countries, aimed at establishing a non-nuclear zone in the Southern Atlantic.

⁸ In the present context, the speech is only referring to terrorism and extremist ideals.

⁹ The relevance assigned to asymmetry among states may be the rationale behind the over-politicized foreign policy adopted by Lula's government.

¹⁰ About 800 words out of 3.000 for the entire speech.

¹¹ "Planalto Palace", or "Planalto" for short, is the Presidential Palace in Brasília.

¹² PMDB is the *Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro* (Brazilian Democratic Movement Party), and PSDB is the *Partido da Social-Democracia Brasileira* (Brazilian Social-Democracy Party).

¹³ Critical alliance means allied with Lula's party but still critical of it.

¹⁴ About the permanent agenda of Brazilian foreign policy see Albuquerque (2003, pp. 267-287).

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