Expanding the Limits of Brazilian Foreign Policy: The Role of Domestic Institutions in International Cooperation

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Abstract
The limits of the Brazilian investment in foreign policy and international cooperation are recognized and targeted by internal and external criticism. Even with the expansion of the diplomatic corps, intensified during President Lula’s government, the resources for cooperation, especially with African and Asian countries that mirror Brazil as a model of development, remain below the needs. One alternative to address these limitations is to give domestic institutions (state owned or private) some assignments in technical and financial framework of international cooperation. Given the increasing demands for greater involvement of Brazil on cooperation issues, this article aims to analyze the performance of EMBRAPA (Brazilian Enterprise for Agricultural Research) and SENAI (National Service for Industrial Training) under Lula (2003 - 2010) as organs for technical cooperation in Cape Verde, Sao Tome and Principe and Timor-Leste, identifying their similarities and drawing a parallel between the Brazilian domestic actors and their potential as instruments of foreign policy.

Introduction
The international operations in Brazil, despite the continuity line that marks the tradition of our foreign policy has undergone significant changes in the transition from Cardoso to Lula. International constraints and the need to recover the prestige and credibility of the country at the global level (shaken since the ’80s with the debt crisis, moratorium, the institutional crisis and the impeachment of President Collor), forced Cardoso to structure its foreign policy replacing the logic of autonomy through distance for a more intense performance, linked to the values of the international system, its institutions and prominent forces in what is defined as autonomy through participation.

There was a recognition by decision-makers that Brazil's capabilities are limited and the best way to maximize them would be with the consent of global powers, following its dictates. The rise of Lula mark a rereading this sense, addressing that in Cardoso’s term Brazil sought to be the last among the first, while under the leadership of Lula's Brazil aims to be the first among the latter.

In fact, the foreign policy of the Lula government intensifies the actions that Cardoso had adopted in relation to the so called Global South, especially in relation to continental integration. However, the search for closer relations with other regions, which can be seen with the significant increase in official visits, opening of diplomatic missions, trade
missions and establishing cooperative agreements, reinforces the view that the emphasis on multilateralism started in Cardoso is used by Lula not to bind up the powers, but without effective rupture, question them and claim a space for a greater role for Brazil in the international system (CEPALUNI; VIGEVANI, 2007).

The Brazilian search for greater visibility, assuming a leadership role among States that aims to better development conditions or disagree with the power structure that underpins the functioning of the international system, can be understood as an attempt to revise the international political structure from reviewing its capacity to act. Insofar as the ordering principles are not altered, the remaining space in Brazil to alter the structure is asserting its greater capacity and seek a position of greater prominence.

To do so, Lula's foreign policy prioritizes multilateral action, endorsing the assignments of existing and recognized those institutions as legitimate trustees to operate sensitive topics institutions, or seeking the reform of international organizations on behalf of the interests of Brazil and its partners and name of maintaining the credibility of the institutions and the need for democratization in the international arena, or seeking multilateral alternatives to act on controversial issues that remain blocked by lack of consensus among the powers or their disinterest. The formation of the G-20 as a bargaining tool to unlock the Doha Round of the WTO, the tripartite proposal to the Iranian nuclear crisis and the advancement of the BASIC group in climate negotiations attest to the priority of multilateral action and mechanism of action of Brazil in their quest for leadership.

Deepening the dimensions of cooperation and integration, Brazil retains the historical priority of the regional level. Mercosur found himself hampered by bouts of asymmetry that led to questioning by especially the smaller partners. In parallel, domestic difficulties in the political and economic fields in Argentina also demanded from Brazil a greater capacity to reduce dissatisfaction of partners and broaden the horizons of integration. Despite the crisis, Mercosur has expanded strategically to the north with Venezuela's entry. Accession, despite the controversy with Paraguay, widen representation of the block and plays directly into the priorities of our foreign policy, the South American integration.

Even more emblematic of the multilateral dimension of integration initiatives are the forums for cooperation with other regions of the planet. Unlike the path taken by partners such as China and India, the instrument of institutional dialogue of Brazil in Africa is the
The African-South American Forum (ASA) and as well as with the Arab countries the Arab-South American Forum (ASPA). The Brazilian perception is that integration with other regions operates a relevant way in promoting the international projection of the country.

In this sense, multilateralism is also important part in cooperative initiatives with focus directed to the development. The intensification of relations with African and Asian countries was accompanied by the rise in trade and supply of cooperation initiatives. In the logic of autonomy through diversification, the Lula government intensified the actions of international cooperation provided by Brazil, from the transference of agricultural technologies disseminated by EMBRAPA, through professional training provided by CAPES and SENAI, to exchange experiences in the Ministry of Health combating HIV in different regions.

The Global South, especially Africa, as a priority in international actions in Brazil is an innovative element in fact as the focus of Brazil’s foreign policy was linked to the U.S. and Europe at least ten years prior to the arrival Lula to the Presidency.

This does not mean that his predecessors ignored the developing countries in their actions. Integration initiatives adopted in the 90s, with the creation and strengthening of Mercosur, the critical stance to create a Free Trade Area of the Americas (ALCA) and the creation of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) in 1996 are examples Brazilian interaction with countries of the South (CEPALUNI; VIGEVANI, 2007).

Initially composed of seven members, five of whom are African, with the subsequent accession of Timor-Leste after the restoration of independence, the CPLP is an organization that aims to act in the political and diplomatic coordination between its members in order to build common positions and strengthen its position in the international arena (LIMA, 2005).

The organization is also involved in the planning and implementation of measures for the promotion and dissemination of the Portuguese language. But the most significant point in terms of practical actions taken by its members is cooperation in various areas of interest such as education, health, science and technology, defense, agriculture, public administration, justice, public safety, culture, sport and communication social.

Likewise, the pattern of more intense action of President Lula in international affairs is also not exactly new. The so-called Presidential Diplomacy was an important tool used by Cardoso on your journey through reconstruction of the Brazilian international
credibility. Both have relied on personal prestige to sell to the world the image of a country that was changing gradually, stabilizing its economy, facing poverty and inequality, holding the flag of democracy as an element capable of conferring greater stability to the international system. What's new in Lula is not the tools, but the intensity and the greatest ambition in the goals set for Brazil as a global actor (CASON; POWER, 2009).

**South-South Cooperation**

The South-South technical cooperation is the horizontal exchange of knowledge and experiences of countries resulting in cooperative development. The goal is to share lessons learned and successful practices available in Brazil, formulated and tested to cope with similar socio-economic development issues.

The basis of the interaction between developing countries date back to 1978, with the meeting of 138 countries for the Conference of Buenos Aires. The outcome of the discussions was the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), whose purpose was to promote and implement technical cooperation among developing countries.

The conference in Buenos Aires represented the first collective effort of identification and systematization of the forms, methods and possibilities of cooperation between developing countries. The Plan of Action established cooperation among developing countries, which amounted arrangements for programs and bilateral and multilateral agreements already practiced. The intent was to leverage the capabilities of each country in order to overcome the dependency relationships that existed in North-South cooperation (MILANI, 2012).

After the progress made by South-South cooperation in the 1970s, the crisis of the 1980s initiated a period of stagnation from a lack of resources. Hostages of rising international interest rates and the exponential growth of its debt, developing countries no longer had the capacity for financing cooperation projects. At the same time, by imposition of international financial institutions, the period after the "lost decade" was accompanied by the implementation of orthodox economic adjustment programs, with cuts in public spending, causing the resources to finance development initiatives were drastically reduced.
From the 1990s, with the acceleration of globalization, new challenges were posed to South-South cooperation, and began to demand, especially from developing countries that seek new forms of integration in the international arena. Visentini points out that globalization has generated spaces for the projection of regional powers, leaders of economic blocs, which helps to strengthen the possibility of formation of a multipolar world system, rather than a North American neo-hegemony (VISENTINI, 2008).

The turn of the twenty-first century marks the intensification of cooperation initiatives among developing countries, with the completion of the meeting in Havana, the First Summit of the South, bringing together the G-77 in 2000. Another important document is the Marrakesh Declaration, which will link to South-South cooperation as a mechanism to support the implementation of the MDGs. This parallel path will be stated in the Second Summit of the South, in Doha in 2005. Likewise, the High Level Meeting of the South, held in Nairobi, will discuss the trilateral cooperation and the need to strengthen cooperation amid economic crisis international.

Amid the production of agreements at the global level over the first two decades of the century, the foundations of South-South technical cooperation were identified and traced back to the planning of initiatives, the technical implementation and the collective management of projects and actions, from the direct and active involvement of the cooperating institutions in Brazil and partner countries from preparation, through monitoring and measuring results (AYLLÓN, 2007).

Through this joint effort, we seek to identify and systematize the knowledge and skills of the beneficiaries of cooperation in the countries that established partnerships with the Brazilian government to then such skills are applied in the generation of innovative local solutions.

For expanding the capabilities be sustained over time, it is necessary that the actors involved maintain their commitment to the partnership in all its stages, from identification of opportunity for cooperation to the evaluation of results, to the effective participation and ownership of initiatives by cooperating institutions in the partner country (MILANI, 2012).

From the receiving institutions, this commitment can be demonstrated from the supply of offsets, as the designation of institutional and technical representatives for the projects and, when possible, logistical support and infrastructure for the development of activities,
like physical space, transport relief supplies, materials and equipment. Counterparts in the partner country are voluntary and in no event shall represent a condition for the partnership to be effective (AYLLÓN, 2007).

It is precisely the absence of conditionalities that makes a difference in the pattern of cooperation established between the Global South when comparing the offers of developed countries. The horizontality is one of the elements highlighted and reinforces the premise of sovereign equality, one of the foundations of the international system.

According to Brazilian diplomacy, South-South cooperation is not intended to replicate the mechanisms of North-South cooperation, but to find solutions to common problems, the experiences of the developing countries, further strengthening their critical areas such as health, education and the consolidation of democracy (IPEA; ABC, 2010).

Brazil's participation in development cooperation has grown year after year and tends to qualify increasingly in that country set priorities for the implementation of its policies, confront the misperception that investments in international cooperation competes with domestic problems. At the same time, it is unthinkable in the short term, a significant increase in the volume of resources. In this sense, they remain scarce and insufficient to meet the demand of the partners, which implies careful set conditions to determine its best application (AYLLÓN, 2007).

**Brazil and its relations with island countries of the CPLP**

Since 1975, diplomatic relations between Brazil and the Republics of Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe were established. The rapprochement between the countries stems from the success in the fight for independence after years of resistance and marks an inflection in the Brazilian position on the former African colonies. In the first ten years of the military regime, the historical links with Portugal distanced Brazil from Portuguese speaking Africans, with the country systematically voting against or abstaining on resolutions on decolonization of the Portuguese colonies.

With the Cravos Revolution in Portugal and the rise of President Geisel in Brazil, Brazilian foreign policy adopts a course correction, adopting the Responsible Pragmatism, which sought to diversify economic and diplomatic partner of Brazil, the Brazilian position strengthened in Africa, culminating with recognition of the independence of the former Portuguese colonies.
From there, the intensification of diplomatic, economic, trade and international cooperation relations will give naturally strengthened by shared colonial history, beyond the cultural ties arising from the African diaspora into Brazil and challenges in terms of shared development by those companies.

Regarding bilateral cooperation, in 1977 the Basic Agreement on Scientific and Technical Cooperation was signed with Cape Verde. Likewise, in 1984 it established cooperation mechanism with the government of Sao Tome and Principe. The cooperation agreement was signed with East Timor on the restoration of the country, on May 20, 2002 (ABC, 2010).

Although they are countries with small economies, territories and populations, the three archipelagos received attention from President Lula during his tenure. Observing the highest level of bilateral relations, two presidential visits were made to Cape Verde in 2004 and 2010. Likewise, the Brazilian leader was Sao Tome and Principe on two occasions, in 2003 and 2004, the CPLP meeting. In Timor-Leste, Lula was once performing an official visit in 2008. Likewise, presidents and prime ministers of these countries were in Brazil discussing bilateral agendas, especially in the area of cooperation (VISENTINI, 2008).

The result is the gradual expansion of relations between the four countries, with the growing Brazilian presence. Among the institutional actors to support this action, SENAI and EMBRAPA are important presences whose historical and performances will be addressed below.

**SENAI as international cooperation agent**

The role of SENAI as international cooperation as agent began in 1948 with an agreement signed with Argentina. According to the document, it would be the SENAI provide the methodology, teaching materials, and provide technical advice and training to the Argentine instructors in Brazil. International cooperation is an important element in the activities of SENAI and the body established a formal structure and a team to carry out the activities of international technical cooperation.

International cooperation held by SENAI also reflects the Brazilian foreign policy and aims to support projects that have the potential of continuity, which are economically consistent and to bring new knowledge and experiences to SENAI through the exchange
of experiences with various international institutions, focusing in the areas of professional education, technology and management (SENAI, 2010).

The partnership between the ABC and the SENAI vocational training projects has intensified since the establishment of vocational training centers in Angola and Paraguay. Already at the turn of the twenty-first century, similar projects were initiated in Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Mozambique and Timor-Leste. In 2014, the latest center was installed in Sao Tome and Principe, concluding the presence of parastatal body in all Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa and Asia (PALOPs). (SENAI, 2010).

SENAI receives annually about 1100 technicians from developing countries for training and education, and provides hundreds of consultancies. Currently the most important initiatives of the body are related to the fourth phase of the capacity building project in Timor-Leste and the inauguration of the vocational training center in São Tomé. In the Timorese case, the performance of SENAI is subsidiary and is through consultancies and training of multipliers since the transfer of the training center for the local government.

**EMBRAPA as international cooperation agent**

The Lula government marks the consolidation of the proposed horizontal cooperation, aimed at developing partners. In this sense, EMBRAPA acts as an executing body. The role of Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) is to coordinate the development and implementation of technical cooperation programs between Brazil and other countries or international organizations, responsible for the coordination of projects of South-South cooperation.

Having its performance is tied to the guidelines of Brazilian foreign policy, the agency seeks to focus efforts in sectors prioritized by the partners involved in the cooperation, opening positive prospects for the political, economic and commercial relationship (EMBRAPA, 2009).

EMBRAPA, with its expertise in agricultural technology, aims at promoting technical cooperation. One example of South-South cooperation is EMBRAPA-Africa, aimed at assisting, promoting and fostering social development and economic growth through technology transfer and knowledge and experience in the field of agricultural research sharing (IDEM).
Emphasizing the development of agricultural production and the use of technologies that lead to economic growth, preservation and development of environmental quality, reducing social inequalities and the integration of African producers in the global market.

EMBRAPA Africa coordinates and monitors the activities and projects of cooperation with African countries, interacting with governments and local authorities to determine priorities and needs, and articulates with the head office in Brasilia and its research centers planning and implementing projects and technical assistance activities

**Brazilian initiatives in island partners executed by EMBRAPA and SENAI**

**Cape Verde**

EMBRAPA has three initiatives for joint implementation with the National Institute for Agricultural Research and Development (INIDA) of Cape Verde. The first deals with the development of the Sheep-Goat, a project that aims at consolidating the political expansion of cattle ranching in Cape Verde, aimed at rural development and generation of employment and income in the country (EMBRAPA, 2009).

The project will train approximately 20 INIDA technicians in ovine and caprine animal production systems for beef and milk. The initiative also involves the transfer of genetic material from animal origin for Cape Verde, as well as implementation of a demonstration unit for reproducing goats and a demonstration unit of reproduction of sheep cutting system. Its implementation involves running ten missions to perform training activities, deployment of demonstration units and evaluation, as well as knowledge of the goat and sheep breeding system in operation in Brazil.

The second action of EMBRAPA is acting for the institutional strengthening of INIDA. Its main goal is to consolidate the policy of expansion of the Cape Verdean agriculture, enabling technicians and managers of INIDA for strategic planning of agricultural research and the preparation of the master plan of the institution and other management tools (EMBRAPA, 2009).

The other initiative of EMBRAPA in Cape Verde is the Horticulture Development Project, whose main purpose is to support the consolidation of the expansion of horticulture in Cape Verde, aimed at rural development and generation of employment and income in the country. The project’s goal is to empower about 20 INIDA technicians
in production of vegetables and tropical fruits systems. The project also provides five Brazilian missions to Cape Verde, with the participation of experts from EMBRAPA, and six Cape Verdean missions to Brazil, in which eight Cape Verdean technicians receive training.

Regarding the SENAI, there is a project for the vocational training system in Cape Verde. The initiative built the Praia Training Centre (CFPP), equipping workshops to offer technical courses, training over 1000 students in the areas of blacksmithing, food, electricity, hydraulics, construction and information technology and administrative management (SENAI, 2010).

**Sao Tome and Principe**

In the smaller of the CPLP countries, there is no presence of EMBRAPA in cooperation projects. SENAI, however, began operations with the construction of a Training Centre. The project, completed in its structural phase in May 2014, focuses attention on economic and social development of Sao Tome and Principe, from vocational education, in line with the demands of the country for skilled labor.

From July 2014, the Training Centre will offer courses in the areas of construction, electricity, sewing, mechanics and computer records. The proposal for Sao Tome also involves developing a strategic plan for vocational training, the training of local instructors to develop training courses, the training of managers to manage the center (SENAI, 2010).

**Timor-Leste**

The presence of SENAI in Timor-Leste dates back to 2002, being one of the first initiatives of cooperation, with the construction of a Training Center in Becora, near Dili. The objective is to support the socioeconomic development of Timor-Leste through the technical-pedagogical improvement of teachers and administrators, vocational training and social promotion.

From 2002 to 2010, approximately 2,500 students completed various training courses in traditional areas of international operations of SENAI. Starting a new phase, the project aims to expand the training center, introducing three new areas of learning in line with
the new requirements of the labor market in the country: cooling, computer maintenance, and motorcycle mechanics (SENAI, 2010).

Regarding EMBRAPA, there is great interest in strengthening the partnership with Timor-Leste, especially due to the skilled coffee producing and its significant levels of malnutrition, especially among children. With the discussion about Brazil's support on the issue of coffee still in progress, the project implementation in the Asian country is the strengthening of the milk chain.

Milk production is still below the needs of the country and insufficient to meet the school feeding program in that country, still under implementation. The project aims to develop the supply chain and improve domestic production of milk. Milk production at pasture in tropical areas of Timor-Leste with the cultivation of fodder adapted to country technology will be introduced (EMBRAPA, 2009).

**Final Remarks**

The Brazilian presence in developing countries, especially in Africa, is marked by alternating since the 60s. After a more engaged period in foreign policy, Brazil has adopted a more retracted position in military regimes until the Geisel government. After the return of democracy, Brazil maintained a position of closeness to underdeveloped until the late '80s, when the rise of President Collor indicated a resumption of prioritization developed countries as target of Brazilian international action. Until the end of the Cardoso’s term, this policy was maintained, with occasional insertions in the direction of developing countries.

Enhancing capacities of Brazil from the stabilization and economic growth in the late 90s will converge with the political reconstruction of the country's international credibility. But it will be from the Lula government that underdeveloped partners will regain the status of priority. Manifestations of the Brazilian leader in the direction of Africa reinforce the role of the continent as a privileged protagonist of Brazilian international initiatives.

International cooperation is an important element in the statement of the priorities of Lula and it was possible to accomplish this type of policy with the improvement of economic conditions in Brazil. Policies to support and encourage the development of Portuguese-speaking partners in Africa and Asia meet the aim to disseminate Brazilian knowledge
and technologies, besides projecting the country as protagonist and representative of developing countries.

In this sense, even countries with which the economic and trade relations are not as intense and significant were target of expanding investments by Brazilian diplomacy. Nevertheless, as the state's resources are limited, it is necessary to seek alternatives that cost less and are more effective in technical terms. The result is the increased participation of domestic actors, whether state-owned or parastatal.

The presence of EMBRAPA and SENAI as actors of international cooperation strengthened the role of Brazil. Recognized as bodies that dominate knowledge in their fields and that are willing to extend them through the exchange in other regions, the presence of both institutions reinforce the Brazilian international position in terms of projection and recognition.

References


