

A stylized world map composed of a grid of grey dots, with several dots highlighted in red to represent specific countries or regions.

Brazil as a Non-Permanent Member of the UN Security Council During the 2010–2011 Term

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- This paper analyses the foreign policy of Brazil via the decisions it made while serving on the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member during the 2010–2011 term. This was the tenth time that Brazil has held this role on the Security Council.
- Brazil's actions on the Security Council reflected traditional principles of Brazilian diplomacy, which include defence of multilateralism and peace, respect for sovereignty, and promotion of the development of people and of human rights.
- Due to these factors, its positions and votes on the Security Council are worth analysing, the most important of which are discussed in this paper: work on MINUSTAH, positions taken on the Israel-Palestine conflict, the Iranian nuclear issue, sanctions against Libya, and the reform of the Security Council, among others.
- Brazil's international alliances, such as the G-4, IBSA, and BRICS, have strengthened Brazil's international position, thereby making it better qualified to achieve a permanent seat on the Security Council.



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Brazil was elected by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly to occupy a seat on the Security Council (SC) as a non-permanent member from 2010 to 2011. This paper analyses Brazil's position during the two-year time frame. It highlights its priorities and provides a succinct list of central issues during the period, such as: the Iran accord, the Israel-Palestine conflict, Brazil's position on Libya, its role in the UN Stabilization Mission to Haiti (MINUSTAH), reform of the SC, and others. The G-4 alliance is also taken into consideration, keeping in mind Brazil's strategy for achieving a permanent seat on the UNSC.

1. The History of the Country on the Security Council and Its Recent Election

In 1945, Brazil took part in the San Francisco Conference and was among the 50 founders of the UN. The country had helped defeat the Axis powers and was even considered for a permanent membership on the SC by the United States. Since then, Brazil has been a steady supporter (despite the country's different political periods) of the UN, respecting the foundational principle of Brazilian diplomacy to respect and promote multilateralism.

The country has served a total of 10 terms on the SC as a non-permanent member, which has voting rights but holds no veto. The terms were: 1946–1947; 1951–1952; 1954–1955; 1963–1964; 1967–1968; 1988–1989; 1993–1994; 1998–1999; 2004–2005; and 2010–2011. Brazil has defended its traditional foreign policy principles: defending peace and security (including the peaceful solution of conflicts); respect for sovereign territorial integrity; defence of multilateralism and of international law.

Its most practical contribution has been its leading role in peace operations since the organisation's founding. It provided troops to the first UN peace mission in 1956 to the Suez Canal, and it has to date contributed a total of more than 17,000 people (troops as well as diplomatic and technical personnel) in 33 peace operations. Of the 16 operations currently being carried out by the organisation, Brazil is participating in a total of nine, with more than 2,200 Brazilian peacekeepers deployed in three continents, placing it 12th among the top troop-contributing countries.

The election of Brazil in 2009 to a non-permanent membership for the 2010–2011 term was particularly significant, as the country received 182 votes from 183 voting countries. This was the tenth time that Brazil occupied the seat – making it, along with Japan, one of the countries that has undertaken this responsibility most often. In addition, the country continues to make noteworthy progress in areas that range from sustainable economic growth and drastic reductions in social inequalities to international influence supported by strong leadership and broad recognition, as when *Foreign Policy* noted Minister Celso Amorim to be »the best foreign minister in the world« in 2009.

2. Priorities and Actions in the 2010–2011 Term

Brazil's priorities during the 2010–2011 term as articulated in statements and manifested in votes during that period were: stability in Haiti, the issue of peace in the Middle East, strengthening of peace operations, promotion of economic and human development, respect for sovereignty, and reform of the SC. Other subjects of debates and positions were the nuclear issue in Iran, with the Brazil-Turkey-Iran accord, and the conflict in Libya, all of which were important not only due to the international context but because of the specific role that Brazil played in their development.

Haiti and the Role of MINUSTAH

Brazil accepted leadership of the UN Stabilization Mission to Haiti, created by resolution 1542 and dated 30 April 2004 (RES/1542/2004), but its role has been controversial within the Brazilian government, insofar as the country's diplomatic tradition and interests are concerned. Although the aforementioned resolution mentions Chapter VII of the Charter – which contains provisions for »peace enforcement« – Brazil's foreign ministry understands that this mission remains a »peacekeeping« force and that the reference to Chapter VII is only restricted to security issues. For these and other reasons, there was considerable opposition in the Brazilian Congress to the country's engagement in the mission, as Brazil has traditionally been sceptical of such interventions. Vast sectors of the traditional and conservative media, along with some sectors of the left or extreme left, have continued their customary criticism of Brazilian action.

MINUSTAH was renewed and expanded – especially after the hurricanes in 2008 and the earthquake in January 2010 – and the priorities are to secure and rebuild the country. Brazil is responsible for the mission's Force Commander, making it the country with the largest troop contingent in Haiti (more than 2,000 troops). In addition to its contribution to the UN Mission, the country has been active in a variety of ways in Haiti aimed at international cooperation: the country donated 55 million US dollar to the World Bank's Haiti Reconstruction Fund; it maintains technical cooperation programmes in several areas; and it has allocated considerable resources (through supplementary funds) for various ministries to establish projects and initiatives with the country. Under the auspices of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), Brazil supported a series of decisions made after the earthquake, ranging from humanitarian aid to elimination of import tariffs, fostering investments that employ large amounts of manpower in the country, creation of a commission within the Defence Council to follow up on the decisions taken, and others.

From a realistic and institutionalist perspective, Brazil's leadership in MINUSTAH reinvigorated its candidature for a permanent seat on the SC, since the country began to get involved in SC actions based on – or in reference to – Chapter VII, thereby showing the international community that it is ready to take on responsibilities on a larger scale in situations that are oftentimes controversial. Brazil also projected itself regionally and globally by taking over the military command of an internationally important mission, in particular expanding its legitimacy in the Southern and Latin American regions.

Peace in the Middle East

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a recurring topic of debate at the council. The treaties between the two litigants have not shown the success hoped for in the process of reconciliation and peace. Therefore, Brazil supports a more proactive role by the Council (and has even proposed a SC mission to the region). Brazilian diplomacy emphasises the country's repudiation of human rights violations and maintains its impartiality by criticising both sides.

Regarding the legitimacy of the construction of a Palestinian State in SC debates, Brazil has taken a favourable position, arguing that this is about the founda-

tional need for human rights, dignity, liberty, and the development of the Palestinian people. Exercising one of its sovereign prerogatives, Brazil officially recognised the Palestinian state on 1 December 2010 in a letter sent to President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian National Authority. Brazil's recognition was given based on the territorial borders of 1967, prior to the Six-Day War, which deepened discontent among some Israeli leaders.

Brazil is not alone in recognising the country: all of the IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) and BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) have recognised Palestine. In the case of MERCOSUR, the bloc signed a free trade agreement with Palestine in December 2011, thereby showing its political support of the government.

Regarding other Middle East issues, Brazil abstained (along with the other IBSA countries and Lebanon) from a proposed resolution (S/2011/612) condemning Syria for human rights violations, which even could have subtly opened the door to future sanctions. Brazil argued that there was still time to promote dialogue and that a resolution of this kind was not timely. The proposed resolution was vetoed by China and Russia.

African Issues

Guinea-Bissau has suffered from historical political instability and is on the bottom of the list in the Human Development Index as one of the poorest countries in the world. The country held a significant place in Brazil's foreign policy agenda when the African continent began figuring more prominently at the start of the administration of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Both Minister Celso Amorim and President Lula visited the country in 2005. At the time of the Summit of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLC), in 2006, Brazil vehemently supported holding the summit in this country and, in December 2007, Brazil began to coordinate the UN Peacebuilding Commission's (PBC) Guinea-Bissau Configuration.

The Brazilian delegation on the SC reiterated that the UN should commit to the economic and institutional development of the country and to building and maintaining peace. Brazil was one of the countries that pre-

pared the unanimously passed proposal for the resolution (RES/2030/2011) prolonging the term of the United Nations Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) to February 2013. Moreover, the Brazilian foreign ministry made a point of reinforcing the role of the CPLP, the African Union, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to develop peace in the country.

In 2011 Brazil joined the other 14 SC members in supporting a recommendation to the General Assembly to recognise South Sudan (RES/1999/2011). The resolution was adopted without a vote on July 13, just a few days after South Sudan declared independence on July 9. On July 14, after approval by the UN General Assembly, the country became a new member of the UN.

Reform of the Security Council

In debates concerning the role and reform of the SC, which took up a substantial portion of the UN's agenda during Brazil's 2010–2011 term, Brazil defended a series of positions and principles such as the call for greater international representation on the Security Council. It argued that greater representation, which would include adding new permanent members, was needed since the current composition of the SC continues to reflect the outcome of the Second World War and does not serve the contemporary international order. Because such expansion would allow for enhanced representation of the international community, it would give the organisation more legitimacy.

In relation to the reformulation of SC working methods, the foreign ministry believes that more participatory and transparent management of the organisation is pertinent. Some measures proposed during this period were: the creation and strengthening of spaces for interlocution with other parts of the UN system and other organisations; the regular consultation of all SC members on agenda topics; the promotion of more dialogue with the countries that are the focus of SC debates and resolutions; holding SC sessions in public (if possible, all of them, without hindering consultations and closed meetings between members); and establishing mechanisms for monitoring actions to fulfil adopted resolutions (especially those authorising the use of force).

3. Two Controversial Votes: The Vote Against RES/1929/2010 (Iran) and Abstention from RES/1973/2011 (Libya)

The Iran-Brazil-Turkey Nuclear Accord

The nuclear issue in Iran was one of the most relevant topics in international relations in the 2010–2011 period. Brazil once again stood out as an emerging global player by promoting a deal signed by Iran, wherein Iran made a commitment to send some of its uranium abroad for enrichment. Signed on 17 May 2010 and promoted by Brazil and Turkey, the deal was rendered with consideration of an accord that had already been proposed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in October 2009.

The basic logic is that the international community demands an assurance from Iran that its nuclear programme is used solely and exclusively for peaceful means and therefore wants Iran to accept the transfer of most of its uranium stock for enrichment (at 20 per cent) to an outside country – preferably to Russia or France. Both demands made by the major nuclear powers (the United States, the United Kingdom, and France in particular) and safeguarded by the IAEA were met by Iran in this agreement. Nevertheless, the United States, France, and the United Kingdom were not content with the commitments undertaken by Iran and therefore successfully pressed for resolution 1929, which placed further sanctions on the country. It is worth noting that Brazil voted against the resolution, along with Turkey, explicitly stating that the agreement reached by the three countries overcame the political obstacles that had existed up to that point and therefore allowed the realization of the 2009 IAEA proposal.

An analysis of this process needs to take into account two aspects: Brazilian diplomacy could be considered successful in this case for the simple fact that it achieved its concrete objective: the promotion of an accord that would strengthen international security. Brazilian and Turkish diplomacy could not be judged based on the failure of the accord, since it does not deal with a matter under their sole jurisdiction. Therefore, it would not be prudent to agree with the shift in focus that is so common in analyses of the case, namely that, instead of repudiating the attitudes of the nuclear powers (especially of the three aforementioned countries) which clearly

chose to ignore an alternative agreement, the initiative by the Brazilian foreign ministry is condemned. A close reading of speeches from that time by France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, shows no objection to the concrete and technical details of the joint accord. Also, judging by speeches and interviews from Minister Amorim and President Lula, the accord had been previously discussed with the leaders of the major nuclear powers and established based on 2009 IAEA treaties.

The most plausible reading of the case is that Brazil, along with Turkey, has achieved an important accomplishment for the international community in relation to international security, thereby proving itself capable of exercising a leading role in global nuclear security matters. Nevertheless, these efforts and this achievement were not deemed satisfactory by the major powers. Therefore, Brazilian diplomacy needs to reflect on the case and derive its own »lessons learned« from that process.

It must be remembered that, since the 1960s, the nuclear issue in contemporary international relations has been dealt with using two scales and two standards. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which mostly represents the international nuclear regime, lacks legitimacy. The treaty legally established the division of states into two categories: nuclear states (those possessing nuclear bombs and technology for their manufacturing) and non-nuclear states. The latter should (and must) abstain from possessing the technology to manufacture nuclear weapons; the former should (and must) gradually diminish their arsenals over time. There is of course no one who – with a clear conscience – would put into question the need to forestall the emergence of new nuclear weapon states. But what is the justification for those states that hold nuclear weapons to continue to do so? Another controversial fact is that even though some countries abandoned their nuclear military projects (such as Libya in 2003), other countries only became nuclear weapon powers in the late 1990s, such as India and Pakistan.

Diplomatic Tradition, Human Rights and Sovereignty in the Case of Libya

During its 2010–2011 term, Brazil controversially abstained from resolution 1973, which authorised the use of force in Libya (through the no-fly zone), governed at that time by Colonel Muammar Kadhafi. The resolution

was based on what has been conventionally called Responsibility to Protect (RtoP or R2P), which calls upon the international community's duty to safeguard a civilian population when its basic human rights – especially those regarding respect for physical integrity – are being threatened by their own government.

There is no question that the Libyan regime commanded by the Colonel could not be considered a Western democratic regime and that the situation in Libya at that time was quite convoluted and bordered on civil war. Rebel combatants and political protestors suffered harsh repression from the regime, resulting in many deaths. The Arab League and the African Union publicly condemned the actions of the Libyan government, calling attention to human rights violations. The acute situation allowed the United States, the United Kingdom, and France to propose a more incisive resolution at the UN. Yet, it is important to at least mention that the interests of these countries in the Resolution were not merely humanitarian. It has already become common knowledge that there were and are various countries worldwide with calamitous situations regarding human rights where, interestingly, these powers have not shown a corresponding humanitarian interest. At the same time the economic and geopolitical interests of these powers in this particular region of Africa cannot be denied.

Brazil's vote did not deal with these aspects, but there was recognition and condemnation of the actions of Libyan authorities regarding human rights violations. However, Brazil concluded that dialogue was still needed and that there was a risk that the proposed measures – when adopted by the UN-SC – on balance could entail more harm than good for the civilian population. It was in this vein that the concept of a »Responsibility while Protecting« promoted by Brazil took shape, mentioning precisely the danger that with an intervention, the conflict could worsen and civilian casualties increase.

This new concept also serves to support and legitimise the traditional stance of Brazilian diplomacy to choose non-interference and non-intervention in such cases. Even when there are clear signs of human rights violations in a country, Brazil remains sceptical of military interventions. In weighing the principles regarding international law, Brazil is more inclined to respect sovereignty (non-interference and respect for territorial integrity) than to respect human rights when it concerns cases in which military intervention is an option.

Brazil abstained from voting along with four other countries, which were the countries that are part of some of the Brazil's new strategic alliances: Germany, India, China, and Russia.

4. Brazil's »Campaign« for a Permanent Seat on the SC – the G-4 Strategy

The Brazilian foreign ministry began indicating official interest in a permanent seat on the SC in 1994 at the 49th Ordinary Session of the UN General Assembly. In addition to the usual diplomatic credentials, Brazil alleges that it has continental dimensions, a relatively large population, and a large economy. Furthermore, Brazil would represent the Latin American region frequently in the official narrative.

Recent foreign policy (under Lula and Dilma Rousseff) is distinguished by leadership and action in both the Latin American context – especially in South America, keeping in mind efforts to build UNASUR and the strengthening of MERCOSUR – and on the global level. The participation in and diversification of actions and alliances is, without question, a unique feature of these administrations. At the international level, the country has acted innovatively: from its International Technical Cooperation to the formation of alliances such as the G-4, G-20, IBSA, and BRICS, among others. These initiatives are obviously not solely pursued with the intent of gaining a permanent seat on the SC but they help to project Brazil's international influence and strengthen its ambitions.

Of the international alliances mentioned, the one directly aligned with Brazil's interests on the SC is the G-4. The central focus of the Group – created in 2004 and comprised of Germany, Brazil, India, and Japan – is a push to reform the SC in such a way that its members may be considered for a permanent seat.

For Brazil, the alliance could be seen as favourable to its aspiration, since both Germany and Japan are widely accepted as candidates in the international community.

The aim of the G-4 is also considered to be modest, since it does not foresee any significant changes regarding the status quo: veto power would initially not be extended to the new permanent members. The main points of the proposal are: 1) the Security Council would consist of 25 members; 2) six new permanent seats would be created; 3) of these six seats, two would be for African countries, two for Asian countries, one for Western Europe, and one for Latin America and the Caribbean; 4) the proposal was unassertive (or realistic) regarding veto powers: 15 years after the reform, the chances of extending this right to the new members would be considered.

5. Future Outlook

Recent Brazilian foreign policy – marked by significant involvement of the Executive Branch (President of the Republic) yet supported by a traditional, solid, and influential foreign ministry – has affirmed Brazil as an emerging protagonist and responsible actor in international relations. Although criticised by some national conservative sectors, which control most of the country's major media outlets, most of its foreign initiatives are viewed positively by the international community and by a majority of the Brazilian population. *Fait accompli*, Brazil is a global player, and the actions and opinions of the country's top representatives are considered by global leaders and scholars dedicated to international policy.

This responsible leadership during the 2010–2011 term has contributed to the legitimacy and recognition of Brazil by its peers, making it more capable of holding a permanent seat on the SC. In a recent publication from the Ministry of Foreign Relations (Foreign Policy Balance Sheet, 2003–2010), the country is said to have achieved a significant base of support for gaining a permanent membership. At this time, of the 192 UN members, there are a total of 89 countries that have stated their support for Brazil, with two of them being permanent members on the SC (France and the United Kingdom).



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