

Notes

EMERGING MIDDLE POWERS AND GLOBAL SECURITY CHALLENGES: THE CASE OF BRAZIL AND TURKEY – IMPLICATIONS FOR PORTUGAL

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Today's global order fundamentally differs from the one of classic multipolarity, Cold War bipolarity or post Cold War unipolarity. There are many emerging powers and many no nation-states entities with powers. Yet, the world seems to slowly adjusting to these new realities.

Two fast-growing countries, Turkey and Brazil, both non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, surprisingly reached a deal in May 2010 over Iran's nuclear programme. Traditionally, Brazil and Turkey were both countries within America's circle of influence but now they seem to question their reliance upon Western world pre-eminence. In both cases their ambitions are global.

This presentation portrays Brazil and Turkey especially in the context of the changing dynamics of international relations, the economic, the political and the security character of each country presently and the perspectives for each of them for the future, focusing mainly on the relation between the old (post WWII order) and the new world order (post Cold War, beginning of the 21st century).

Focusing on Portugal, the current communication defines the reasons behind Portugal's necessity to engage dynamically with both countries in the future, both bilaterally and multilaterally, without neglecting of course the values and interests connected to its alliances with both United States of America and European Union.

The theme of this presentation is "Emerging Middle Powers and Global Security Challenges: The case of Brazil and Turkey – Implications for Portugal". Given this title, two questions arise automatically: What is middle power and why Brazil and Turkey?



Middle power can be considered a key state that is able, in economic and political terms (with an active involvement in security issues too) and willing to project power and influence developments beyond its own borders¹.

Brazil is a "brother" nation to Portugal, with huge historical and cultural links, a strong commercial partner and a notable political ally. Turkey is a strong player, in political, strategic and economic terms, in Eurasia, a fact that cannot leave Portugal uninterested either.

Furthermore, Brazil and Turkey ("powers of the future", according to Iran's president), surprisingly, reached a deal in May 2010 over Iran's nuclear programme². During the cold war, Brazil and Turkey were unquestionable partners of the West but nowadays these rising powers seem to move away and in some cases even challenge the traditional global order, marked by Western world pre-eminence.

1. But how one ranks these states as emerging middle powers?
2. What will be the impact of their action to security and stability in the world playfield and how can old and new political structures reform to incorporate these new parameters?
3. How Portugal shall act to best ensure a global order congenial to its interests?

In order to best answer these questions, the current presentation firstly discusses the present global security challenges. It then moves to Brazil's and Turkey's strengths and weaknesses and their impact for the West (mainly, US and EU – thus Portugal), highlighting Portugal's best approaches to these new realities.

With the end of the Cold War, the scholars of international relations have been debating on how the new global order will emerge. Francis Fukuyama argued about the "End of History" and Samuel Huntington predicted the "clash of Civilizations". Realists insist that nothing has changed in the world playfield since Thucydides and Machiavelli. State remains the key determinant. Joseph Nye though saw international relations as a game played on three levels: power/military conflict, multilateral economic affairs and transnational relationships. Additionally, the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington brought about academic concerns over religious fundamentalism and the increasing domination of the American unilateralist approach toward international politics (Ikenberry, 2001; Kagan, 2008; Cooper, 2003). The academic analysis has placed little focus, comparatively, on the imperatives of new emerging, middle powers. Nevertheless, scholars' attention on these powers is rising gradually (Brzezinski, 1997; Mearsheimer, 2001; Haass, 2008; Khanna, 2008).

With the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the 21st century, the traditional international order began to undergo a significant transformation with the rise of new economic and regional powers. However, the world seems to slowly adjusting to the

¹ After the Second World War, Canadian leaders saw Canada as a middle power. For instance, Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent called Canada "a power of the middle rank".

² Under the deal, Iran would ship 1,200kg (2,645lb) of low-enriched uranium to Turkey, in return for fuel for a research reactor. The deal fell apart under political pressure in Iran as it would have required that Iran place disproportionate trust in the Western powers (by agreeing to give up its low-enriched uranium stockpile in one delivery, only to receive fuel rods for Iran's research reactor nine to 12 months later).



new realities, while the post cold war international structures (as UN, NATO, World Bank, IMF) have remained almost the same. Commonly, the proliferation of new actors on the world stage is causing concern in the Western capitals. Indeed, while, under the current severe economic crisis, US and EU stumble out of recession, Asia, Africa and Latin America are accelerating and contributing more than ever before to the world output.

Brazil, first of all, has long seen itself as a rising power. In fact, a prominent theme of the Lula years has been the search for recognition, by engagement and negotiation.

This country does have street children, has carnival and has football. But this country has much more. This country has greatness ...this country has everything to be the equal of any other country in the world. And we will not give up on this goal³.

Indeed, Brazil ranks eighth worldwide in the size of its economy (which has world-class agriculture, aerospace and bio fuels sectors, with huge foreign-exchange holdings too). Despite the economic crisis, Brazil grew 5 percent in 2010. Brazil also ranks fifth globally in area and population and top ten in proven oil and gas reserves. Brazil is a country with high environmental assets including massive mineral deposits, rich biodiversity and the largest renewable freshwater resources on earth.

In the last years, Brazil has been very active internationally, acting as a mediator for the interests of the South *vis-a-vis* the North and as a promoter of South-South alliances.

Indeed, Brazil is the main regional power in Latin America⁴ and a great emerging power forming part of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India China and South Africa). According to a Goldman Sachs, the economic potential of BRICS is such that they could become among the four most dominant economies by the year 2050⁵.

Based on the above mentioned set of strengths, Brazil's foreign policy strategic lines lay mainly on the following priorities:

- a) Economic growth (Oil wealth will propel Brazil to developed-country status)
- b) Increasing nuclear capacity⁶
- c) International status: Western World (USA/ UN) + South-South relations

As far as economic growth is concerned, Brazil was one of the G20 economies with fastest growth in 2010, surpassing some traditional developed nations. From an average of 1.7% annual growth between 1998 and 2002, the Brazilian economy began to grow around 4% from 2003 to 2010, and gathered the conditions to achieve an

³ Speech of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Itamaraty, Brasilia, 18th September 2003.

⁴ Brazilian Ministry of Finance, Brazilian Economic Outlook, Special Edition | Year of 2010.

⁵ Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. Official site: <http://www2.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/brics/index.html> last access: 11.11.2011.

⁶ Brazil has known resources of around 278,000 tonnes of uranium – 5% of world total. [All mined uranium is used domestically, after conversion and enrichment abroad.](#)



average growth above 5% between 2011 and 2014⁷. Thus Brazil's key asset will continue to be its flourishing economy, a decisive element for Brazilian diplomatic activity in the economic, trade and political fields.

As far as nuclear power is concerned, Brazil does not have a nuclear arsenal and defines itself as anti-hegemonic. Still, in the past years we have seen more interest in harder military power, including the development of a nuclear submarine. At the same time, Brazil's public embrace of Iran questions the country's determination to prevent nuclear proliferation.

However, Brazil remains a member in good standing of all major nuclear regimes, it is a party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco⁸, which prohibits nuclear weapons in Latin America, and it is prevented by its constitution from developing an atomic arsenal.

Concerning Brazil's global status and stance, the search for recognition is mainly based on a North-South relation (mainly with old allies as US & EU /+ Western international organisations) and a South-South cooperation activism.

Brazil is a founding member of the United Nations and a good partner to the West since WWII⁹, member of the post-1945 «liberal order» that linked the United States with its Cold War allies and partners. This American system consisted of the trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific alliance systems, involving an intense network of norms and institutions in the security, political and economic fields, together with a set of multilateral agreements and institutions (Bretton Woods institutions, OECD, WTO and the United Nations).

The promotion of South-South cooperation has also been top in the Brazilian foreign policy agenda¹⁰. Brazil secured a place in the G20, has flexed its muscles within the BRICS coalition, and into Middle East diplomacy.

Concerning the BRICS, a brief remark shall highlight the new dynamics in the world scene and the need for change: few days ago Reuters published the news that the BRICS are open to investing in the euro zone through the IMF. [Leading emerging economic powers called also for reform of international financial institutions to give developing countries more voice, saying their group was vital to achieving a new world order.](#)

⁷ Brazilian Ministry of Finance, Brazilian Economic Outlook, Special Edition | Year of 2010.

⁸ Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. Brazil has been a party to the Tlatelolco Treaty since 1967. Non proliferation Brazil is a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) since 1998.

⁹ Is interesting to note that Brazil is among the twenty top contributors to United Nations peacekeeping operations, and has participated in peacekeeping efforts in the Middle East, the former Belgian Congo, Cyprus, Mozambique, Angola, and more recently East Timor and Haiti. Between 2010 and 2011, Brazil occupies a non-permanent seat in the Security Council for a two-year mandate. Brazil and Japan has been elected more times to the Council than any other UN Member State.

¹⁰ Promotion of South-South cooperation, as reflected in initiatives like the Brazil-Africa Forum, regular meetings with Arab countries, increasing numbers of Brazilian embassies in African countries, and the launch of the dialogue forum IBSA, an alliance between the southern powers India, Brazil and South Africa. As far as the IBSA initiative is concerned, it was launched in June 2003 with the aim of increasing trilateral cooperation in key areas such as energy and trade, and achieving greater impact in the global arena. Recently the IBSA dialogue forum launched the IBSA Facility for Development cooperation in the context of the UNDP programme for South-South cooperation. The fund has the financial support of the UNDP and is currently realizing two main projects: waste collection in Port-au-Prince, Haiti; and agricultural assistance in Guinea Bissau. Further projects, for example in Palestinian territories are under discussion.



Another example of the changing dynamics in the world scene is the fact that due to the global financial crisis, bilateral trade balance between Brazil and US has become negative (*deficit*). Brazil offsets such negative result by increasing exports to the BRICS countries¹¹.

In regional terms, Brazil is a founding member of the Mercosul created in 1991, an economic community along with Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. Yet, Brazil is still not a Latin America's natural representative¹².

At the same time one goal still escapes: permanent membership in the UN Security Council. Last US National Security Strategy declares that "*International institutions must more effectively represent the world of the 21st century, with a broader voice—and greater responsibilities—for emerging powers*"¹³. Obama's reform agenda presumably includes enlarging the UN Security Council, the world's most important institution. And yet, US fears that new members will dilute American influence and weaken council enforcement. Indeed Brazil's unpredictable behavior suggests that emerging powers may not always follow Washington's wishes, even if they are democracies and their policies shall gradually influence the new security landscape¹⁴.

The power structure of the world now is such that several major countries that need to be in the centre aren't. Brazil deserves to be there based on the size of its population and the size of its economy, and not based on an outdated world order. Definitely, Brazil will pursue Brazil's national interest, just like any other country. It is expected, according to this interest, in some cases to represent a point of view consistent with other developing economies and in other cases to represent a point of view consistent with the developed world.

Given Brazil's own changing situation (internal and external), and the changed international context (including the diminished role of the US and EU and the growing importance of China and India) Brazilian policy will continue, broadly, raising its global profile¹⁵. And it is in the interest of the West to take this lesson on seriously as soon as possible – thus including not excluding such players.

Portugal, given its cultural and economic links with Brazil, including a common language and an elevated financial interaction (open market and investments) should act as a bridge, as facilitator in the dialogue between the old and the new world. Portugal does have a comparative advantage that must explore.

Similarly, the direction of Turkey's future foreign policy plans is of great importance for both US and EU and subsequently for Portugal.

¹¹ Brazilian Ministry of Finance, Brazilian Economic Outlook, Special Edition | Year of 2010.

¹² Some questions will be crucial for the future as is Brazil ready to assume the leadership role in an integrated continent and to provide economic aid to countries like Paraguay and Bolivia? Is it willing to mediate disputes among neighbouring countries (Bolivia and Chile, for example, or Argentina and Uruguay? Is it willing to use its security forces to assist neighbours suffering from crime and/or insurgency?

¹³ United States Government, "National Security Strategy 2010" White House site official, http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf last access: 11.11.2011.

¹⁴ Brazil and Iran good relations in the interests of both countries. Brazil gets a big share of the economic benefits and these may grow larger in the future. The relationship with Brazil is certainly helpful to Iran's international image.

¹⁵ President Dilma Rousseff's government will continue, broadly, along the course set by Lula.



Turkey's GDP expected to exceed \$1 trillion by 2015. Turkey ranks 15th by GDP and 14th by GDP-per-capita, among largest countries – has scale advantage. Turkey's growing and young population fuels the growth of its trade volume and the rise of the middle class. Turkey is strategically important acting as a natural link and bridge to markets in Caucasia, Central Asia, Balkan states and the Gulf. Turkey is a gateway to energy resources such as gas and oil pipelines in the region. Trade-wise Turkey is integrated into the EU/ Full EU-integration potentially. Thus, the direction of Turkey's future foreign policy plans is of great importance for both America and Europe and subsequently will have a strong weight in the new global security arrangements.¹⁶

Turkey is an old key US partner and member of leading international organisations: was a founding member of the United Nations in 1945; member of UN Security Council during 2009-2010; NATO (second military power after US) member since 1952; one of the Founding Members of OEEC in 1948, which became OECD in 1961; member of EU custom-union, since 1996; member of World Trade Organization; active in key organizations like Worldbank, IFC, Islamic Development Bank. Worldbank and IFC utilize Turkey as a hub to serve broader regions.

Turkey is also a Muslim state which has built a sophisticated financial and commercial system. Thus, it does enjoy many advantages when it comes to commerce with the vast markets in its neighborhood. Similarly, the energy resources of the Arab and Central Asian states are a powerful element for Turkish economy. Furthermore, Turkey has flirted with an east-facing policy in the last years. Indeed, by improving relations with Iran, Turkey highlights its value as a bridge with the West, it re-engages with the Arab world and promotes its economic interests.

More recently, Turkey did call early for change in Egypt. It endorsed NATO's intervention in Libya. It backed the opposition to the Assad regime in neighboring Syria.

However, Turkey's active foreign policy has attracted censure in parts of the West, especially America. Critics in Washington recall the Turkey's 2003 refusal to allow American troops to cross their territory to invade Iraq. Nowadays they accuse the Turkish government of turning its back on the European Union and NATO. There have been also some aggressive recent outbursts over Greek-Cypriot and Israeli gas exploration in the eastern Mediterranean. Critics point also to continuing harsh treatment of Turkey's Kurds and soft treatment of Iran, especially after the 2010 deal¹⁷. Above all, they blame Turkey for switching from being a firm friend of Israel, the only longstanding Western friend and an established democracy in the region, into a rival.

The Helsinki Summit of the EU Council granted Turkey candidate country status in 1999. But the EU in 2004 began discussions only on a "privileged partnership" rather than full membership for Turkey. At the same time, America's refusal to back Turkey's line towards the Kurds in northern Iraq significantly strained Turkey's relationship with America. The country thus was suddenly left without reassurance that either US or the

¹⁶ "Global Advantage of Turkey", DEIK, BCG, (Boston Consulting Group), September 2011

¹⁷ For Turkey, support for reform in Iran in the 1990s was guided by self-interest: among other things, improved economic relations, particularly in the energy sector, and bilateral cooperation in addressing the Kurdish issue. Turkey's relations with Iran presently are complicated by the difficulty of balancing trade interests – up from \$1 billion in 2000 to \$10 billion in 2009 – against its commitments as an ally of the West.



EU would secure Turkey's interests. This need coupled with the desire to remain strategically relevant will definitely determine Turkey's foreign policy in the future. ¹⁸

In fact, in the Middle East, US and EU are pursuing policies shaped to fit a cold war security environment that no longer exists. Saudi Arabia and Israel have been America's closest partners there for the last half-century. But alliances and partnerships produce stability when they reflect realities and interests. In the Middle East, the US should seek more partners. Turkey has been one choice. It is a longtime OTAN ally and a booming capitalist democracy, and has unique influence around the Islamic world. Turkey has been urging the US to change its approach to Iran by abandoning its policy of threats and sanctions. It suggests an approach that would recognize Iran's new role and give it a stake in regional security. India has recently made this same appeal to US. The Western world should definitely take under consideration these new calls.

The US and EU have to redefine their relations with Turkey, allowing it to play a more active role in the region. At the same time, it is indispensable that Turkey tries seriously to resolve its problems with its neighbor countries if it is to play a positive role in the region.

Turkey's growing international influence makes it a potentially interesting partner for Portugal. Hence, Portugal has to continue the path of business approach and productive political negotiations with Turkey.

In particular, Portugal could work with Turkey to reinforce this country's contribution to and participation in UN institutions and mechanisms, from peace building to climate change, and from non-proliferation to international justice. There is a real need to help Turkish NGOs develop their international outreach/ exchanges. This could be done by inviting representatives of Turkish NGOs to international meetings and helping establish programmes monitoring Turkey's foreign policy.

*The disposition to aggression is not intrinsic to states, but is instead the product of the constant search for survival in a world of uncertainty, offensive military capability, and a changing distribution of power*¹⁹.

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¹⁸ At present, this raises also the following question: how is instability in the Middle East likely to impact on Turkey's business interests? The tension between Turkey's business interests and regional aspirations was reflected in the reticence with which Turkey agreed on a NATO military intervention in Libya in the first half of 2011.

¹⁹ *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* John J. Mearsheimer New York: W. W. Norton, 2001



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