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# Managing Security in a Zone of Peace: Brazil´s Soft Approach to Regional Governance

## Abstract

Given Brazil's regional prevalence, its low, late and soft investment in regional security governance appears puzzling. We approach the puzzle through an analysis of contextual features, institutional overlap and policy networks, especially regarding nuclear energy and the environment. Our findings show that Brazil's behavior is explained by a combination of low regional risks, scarce domestic resources, a legalistic regional culture of dispute settlement, and transgovernmental networks that substitute for formal interstate cooperation and deep regional institutions.

**Keywords**: Brazilian foreign policy; Latin American regionalism; Regional Security Governance; Regional Powers; Policy Networks.

## Introduction

Brazil is the largest Latin American country and represents half of South America, whether regarding area, population, the economy or overall national capabilities. Its rise has led many to expect it to become a regional leader, as both its defensive and offensive foreign interests spill over onto its neighbors (Arnson and Sotero 2009; Bethell 2010; Stuenkel 2013a; Trinkunas 2014). Yet, this expectation has not come to pass (Malamud 2011; Schirm 2010). Neither has Brazil shown the ambition or capacity to impose itself, nor have its neighbors felt the need to balance its power (Gardini and Almeida 2016; Schenoni 2015). Still, regional exchanges have increased substantially over the last three decades. In this article, we focus on the most crucial dimension of these interactions, namely security, in order to understand Brazil's role in building regional governance.

Brazil's home region has two central peculiarities: first, its boundaries are fuzzy, second, its inner core has been characterized

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by a long period of interstate peace. The region's boundaries are fuzzy because Brazil has moved them over time: from encompassing all of the Western Hemisphere, to just Latin America, and finally at present to simply comprise of the South American subcontinent (Malamud and Gardini 2012; Spektor 2010). More significantly, its inner core – namely South America – has been peaceful, given the absence of interstate war between major powers since 1883, and altogether since 1942 (Kacowicz 2005; Mares 2001). The enduring peace of the region has led to high politics being conducted through diplomatic rather than military means; its fuzziness means that region-building remains an instrument at the service of national strategies rather than a regional goal *per se*, as no intrinsic region exists.

Given the historically low level of intra-regional exchanges, regional public goods have usually been negatively defined, mostly as the avoidance of harmful externalities. No country in the region has been capable of either forcing or buying off its neighbors, so potential hegemons have traditionally been external. The balance of power among the major powers, mainly Argentina and Brazil, was even until the 1980s. Mutual distrust, as well as a dearth of common external threats, prevented them from building a joint security architecture. In recent decades, however, the balance of power has tilted towards Brazil, and by the 2000s it became evident that bipolarity was no longer an apt description of the regional state of affairs (Martin 2006; Schenoni 2012). Only then did Brazil start to invest in the creation of a governance framework to stabilize the region and keep extra-regional powers away. Yet, structural limitations and instrumental constraints have circumscribed its efforts. South America is still a peaceful but increasingly divergent sub-region.

To analyze the tension between the buildup of governance structures and Brazil's foreign policy goals, the remainder of this article is divided into five sections. The first introduces the region and depicts risks and threats as perceived by Brazil's government and foreign policy elites. The second delves into the sources of Brazil's foreign power, showing that domestic constraints impose a high toll on its capacity to act abroad. The third analyzes Brazilian foreign strategies, regional institution-building and policy networks in the areas of nuclear energy and the environment to pinpoint Brazil's role in the developing of security governance. The fourth assesses the results and impact of security governance policies, demonstrating that current achievements are rooted in historic traditions. The last section offers a summary, arguing that Brazil's low, late and soft investment in regional security governance can be explained by a combination of low regional risks, scarce resources, a legalistic culture of dispute settlement, and transgovernmental networks that substitute for, or subtly underpin, interstate cooperation and regional institutions.

## Brazil's Perceptions of Security Risks and Threats in the Region

Brazil defines itself as a "peaceful country" and asserts that the peaceful resolution of conflicts is an essential component of its foreign policy (Brasil 2008, 2012). However, in the

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nineteenth century, the country conquered vast territories and engaged in two major wars, first against Argentina over what is now Uruguay and then, jointly with Argentina and Uruguay, against Paraguay. In the twentieth century, it made peace within the region only to become the lone Latin American country to take part in both World Wars, alongside the United States. The fact that Argentina only battled Great Britain in the twentieth century means that the two main South American powers have not been engaged in a regional war for the last 140 years, and have not fought each other for more than 180 years. Brazil's reconciliation with the *neighborhood* was a consequence of having demarcated all its borders at the beginning of the twentieth century, therefore no longer making or receiving territorial claims. A satisfied country facing no irredentist threats, it could afford to build a security tradition based on the absence of strategic enemies. Brazil's commitment to non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other countries was born out of its security perceptions in this context (Proença Júnior and Diniz 2009).

However, the regional scenario was far from idyllic. Until 1979, Argentina was seen as a major security threat, and the possibility of a military confrontation shaped the mission of the Brazilian armed forces. This perception only began to change when the military government of the two countries signed an agreement regarding the shared Paraná river basin (Resende-Santos 2002). Under the new democratic regimes of the 1980s, this cooperative path was deepened with the signing of several agreements covering nuclear energy and trade. In 1991, the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) was established, and the historic rivalry between Argentina and Brazil was turned into full-fledged regional cooperation. As Argentina no longer represented a threat, the Amazonian region became the new main security concern. The 1996 publication of the National Defense Policy (Battaglino 2013) signaled this shift. The new mission assigned to the Brazilian military was based on a scenario of asymmetric resistance against the intervention of an extra-regional power in the Amazon, as expressed in the 2005 update of the National Defense Policy and in the National Defense Strategy issued in 2008. Extra-regional powers are never named, but off-the-record statements point to the United States as the greatest source of concern. The national strategy focuses on the Amazon as well as on the so-called Blue Amazon, Brazil's immense sea shelf and its oil reserves, the recent discovery of which has influenced the country's strategic orientation. The national strategy involves not only the army but also the navy and air force, that should have conventional capabilities to deny hostile forces the use of the sea and to secure local air superiority (Brasil 2008). Two goals appear throughout all official documents: maintaining the balance between the three branches of the armed forces, and fostering the modernization of the military arsenal, often with an eye towards developing original homegrown technology.

The absence of enemies in the region and the nonexistence of nuclear weapons have created a relatively secure environment, in which transnational crime is oftentimes more pressing than military threats. Indeed, trans-border issues such as drug-trafficking and arms-smuggling are increasingly salient. Other non-military troubles have sporadically emerged in the *neighborhood*, such as the negative externalities associated with the domestic instability in neighboring states,

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or the unfriendly nationalization of Brazilian state utilities. The White Book on National Defense, issued for the first time in 2012, reflects the country's overlapping defense, security, and development concerns (Brasil 2012). A significant factor behind this amalgamation is the (neo)developmental ideology of the Workers' Party, in power until 2016, which benefitted from the perception of low level threats to promote the inclusion of the defense area into a national development strategy.

The amalgamation of sectoral interests and policy areas has blurred the priorities of the defense agenda. Hence, the White Book lists four key areas: the (*Green*) Amazon, the *Blue Amazon*, the South Atlantic Ocean, and the west shore of Africa. Besides the precedence of responsibility over differentiated geographic areas, each military force has been assigned functional responsibilities: the Air Force is in charge of air control over Green Amazon and space projects; the Army is responsible for border control and localized intervention in the hinterlands as well as cyberspace; and the Navy remains in command of Blue Amazon and its pre-salt resources, but also of the country's nuclear development including its crown jewel, the projected nuclear-powered submarine. As it turns out, organizational politics and developmental goals have influenced defense planning no less than strategic priorities.

Besides economic development, another constant in Brazil's foreign policy has been the quest for autonomy, albeit its contours have adapted to changing times. While the country's stance during the Cold War was labeled as "autonomy through distance" vis-à-vis foreign powers and regional rivals, in the first decade after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the country's diplomacy promoted, "autonomy through participation" in international institutions and regional organizations (Fonseca Jr. 2004). When Lula came to power in 2003, Brazil's foreign policy acquired a moderately revisionist tone that was dubbed, "autonomy through diversification" of partners and arenas (Vigevani and Cepaluni 2009). "Autonomy through distance" was the diplomatic expression of Brazil's *developmentalism*, under which the country accepted the demand for alignment with the United States, while trying to use it as bargaining chip for economic advantages. Likewise, "autonomy through participation" implied the adherence to international regimes in order to leverage, not impair, the country's foreign policy leeway. "Autonomy through diversification" sought the adherence to international norms by means of South-South and regional alliances, in order to reduce asymmetries with the developed countries, thus always wedding the quest for autonomy with the goal of economic development. Unlike most other world regions, security issues were downplayed or combined with other priorities. This calls for attention to context and history, as, "where wars have been rare, power has perhaps a softer meaning than elsewhere, and policy options may thus be framed differently" (Malamud 2011, 4). As Hurrell (1998, 260) argues, South America, "provides important grounds for doubting that regional 'anarchies' are everywhere alike."

In the current Brazilian view, South America is not just a geographical region (different from Latin America as a whole) but also an autonomous political-economic area, given that U.S. influence recedes as distance from Washington increases. Brazil's elites consider this subregion to

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be within the country's natural sphere of influence (Cebri-Cindes 2007; Souza 2009), although this perception has slightly changed its value load in the last years, when the region has been regarded increasingly as a burden rather than an asset (Malamud 2011).

Following Merke (2011), Latin America can be characterized by features that are accentuated in South America. First, for almost two centuries no state has disappeared and only one has been born. Second, the principle of *Uti Possidetis* (as you possess, you may possess) was agreed upon even before the independence from Portugal and Spain and allowed state borders to be delimited much more peacefully than in Europe. Third, Latin America is the world region that contains most bilateral and multilateral agreements related to the peaceful settlement of conflicts (Holsti 1996; Kacowicz 2005) as well as the, "world record of adjudication and arbitration" (Kacowicz 2004, 199). International comparison is stunning: while, "there have been some twenty-two instances of legally binding third-party arbitrations or adjudications with respect to sovereignty over territory in Latin America…, similar rulings apply to only one small case in continental Europe…; two among independent states in Africa; two in the Middle East; and three in Asia, the Far East, and the Pacific" (Simmons 1999, 6-7). Fourth, as mentioned above, Latin America is a nuclear-weapon free zone. In summary, state survival has been virtually guaranteed, wars have been rare, and legalization of disputes has been the norm. This does not mean that political violence has been eradicated, but either, "there has been a limited conception of force within a strong diplomatic culture," (Hurrell 1998, 532; also Mares 2001) or it has been confined within – as opposed to beyond – borders (Martin 2006). Therefore, security has acquired a domestic, rather than international, connotation. Brazil is a product of this historical and geographical environment. As such it is closer to its neighbors than to the traditional European states or the new emerging powers.

## Sources of Power

Social power, or the capacity to make others do something they would not otherwise do, rests on three types of resources: coercive or political, material or economic, and persuasive or symbolic (Poggi 1990; Baldwin 2013). In international relations, the first two are often paired, giving rise to a twofold classification: "hard power" is based on the utilization of structural (that is military or economic) means to influence the behavior or interests of others, while "soft power" refers to the ability to achieve one's goals through co-optation and attraction rather than coercion or payment (Nye 1990). Ideas, institutions, and exemplary behavior or performance are the main instruments of the latter kind of power. As impressive as Brazil may look to the untrained eye, its hard power is often overestimated and most of its international achievements are based on the soft power deployed by its resourceful diplomacy (Burges 2008).

Despite its vast territory, relatively large armed forces and considerable defense budget, the highest in Latin America (Figure 1), Brazil is not – and has no intention of becoming – a

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military power. Instead, it describes itself as a peace-loving, law-abiding, and benign power (Lafer 2001; Brasil 2008); on a global scale it is a military lightweight. Brazil does not have, – nor would its Constitution allowed it – to have nuclear weapons, which sets it apart from both the established and emerging powers.

**Figure 1. Military expenditure in current dollars, selected South American countries, 1991-2012**
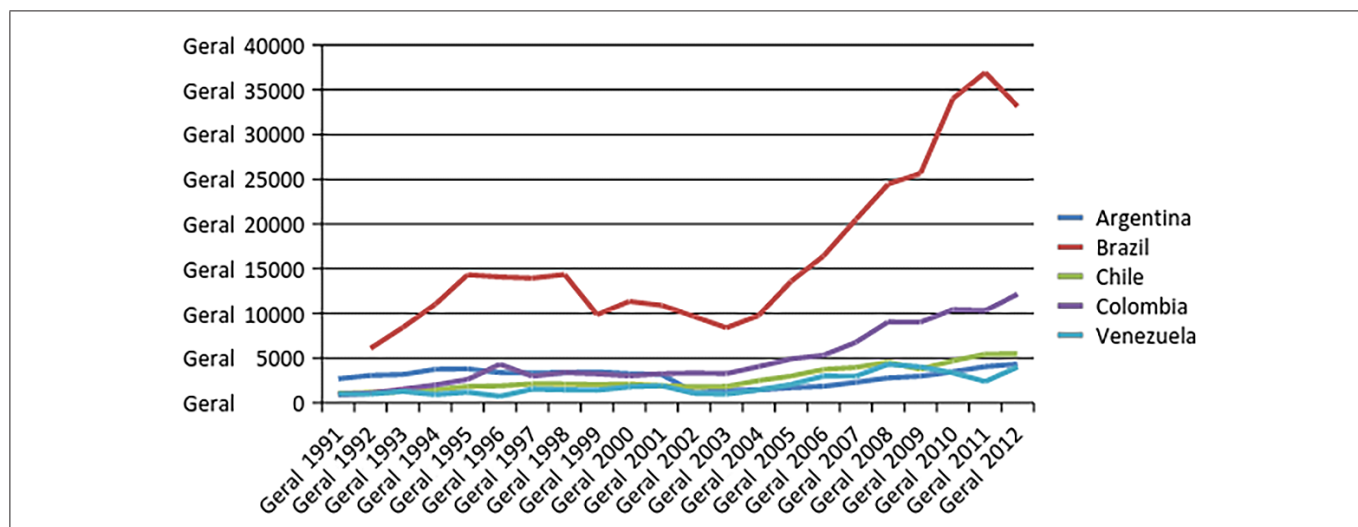


Source: own elaboration from data of SIPRI 2013.

Despite being the fifth largest country in the world by area and population, and the seventh largest by the size of its economy, it is not ranked among the top-10 states when it comes to military personnel, military expenditure, arms exports or imports, or participation in peace operations (SIPRI 2012). Moreover, when measured as a proportion of GDP, its military spending is considerably lower than other South American states, such as Chile and Colombia (Figure 2). Furthermore, 83% of Brazil's military budget is spent on salaries and pensions (FIESP 2011).

**Figure 2. Military expenditure as % of GDP, selected South American countries, 1991-2012**



Source: own elaboration from data of SIPRI 2013.

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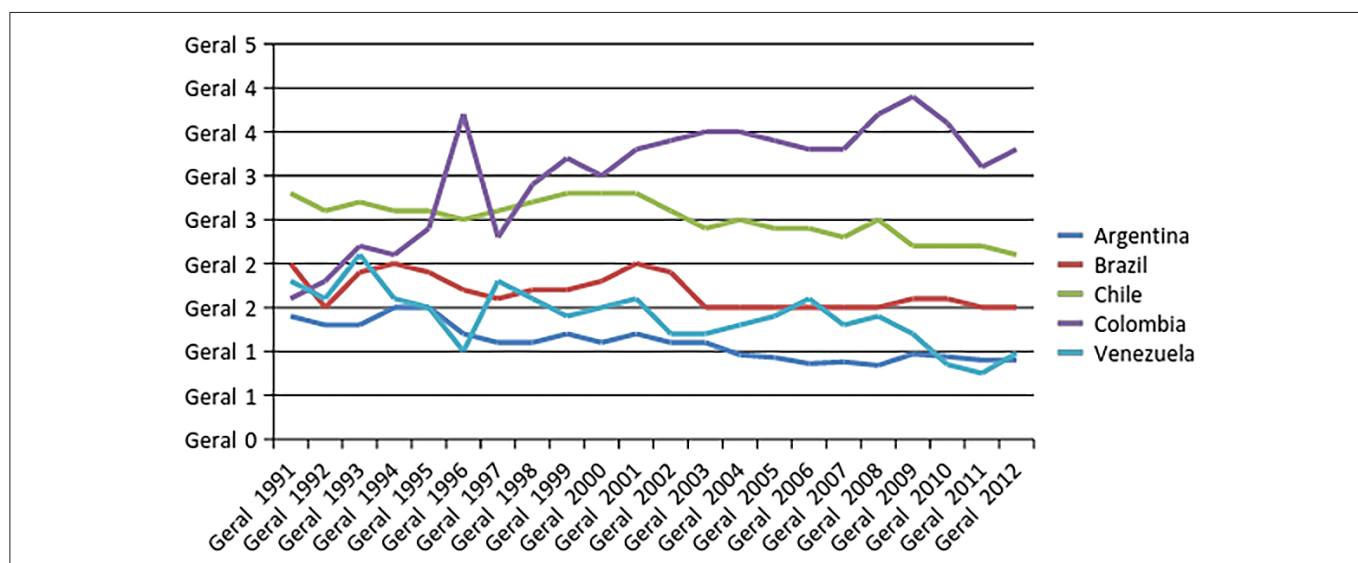
Brazil also lacks the economic leverage to buy its way into regional or global leadership. Economic growth has been somewhat low and inconsistent, even during Lula's much-praised decade (Figure 3), and it ranks at the bottom amongst the emerging markets. Participation in global trade is much smaller than the country's world share of GDP: it stands slightly above 1%, vis-à-vis 3%, a figure lower than fifty years ago, which positions the country at 22nd in world rankings (WTO 2012). Physical infrastructure is scant and aging (The Economist 2013), risking to become a bottleneck for development and a drainage of national resources. Furthermore, the country's position in education, innovation and competitiveness rankings is gloomy. This has raised recurring fears of, "the curse of the hen's flight" which describes, "the centuries-old succession of brief periods of strong economic growth followed by phases of stagnation and depression" (Valladão 2013: 89).

**Figure 3. Brazil GDP Growth Rate – Percent Change in Gross Domestic Product**
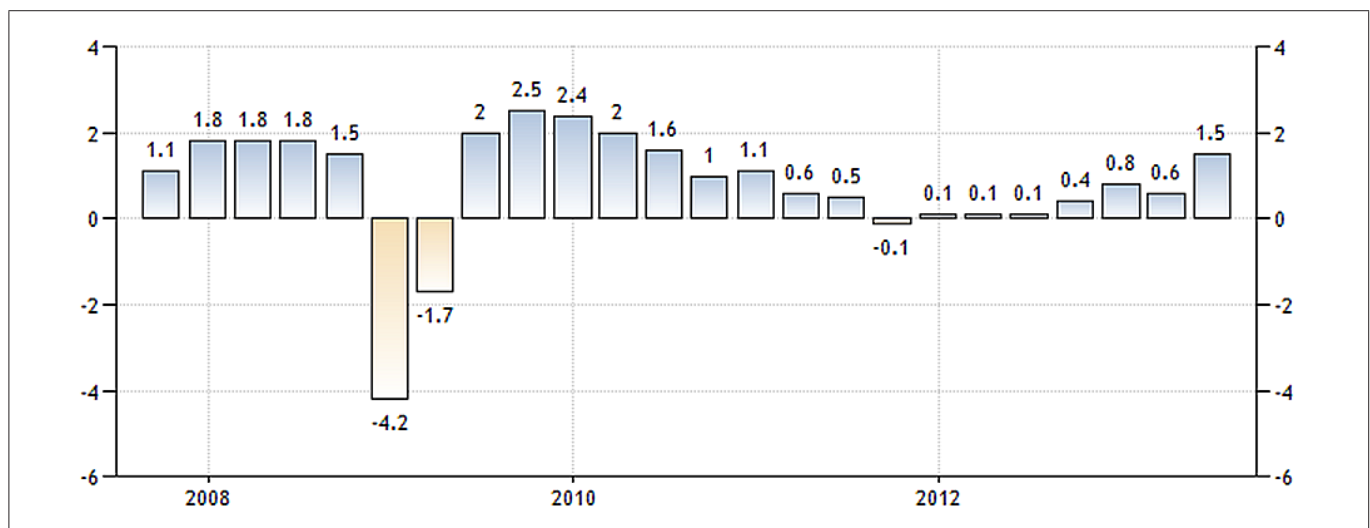


Source: www.tradingeconomics.com – Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE)

Unlike Germany's position in Europe, Brazil is the largest Latin American economy but not the richest. Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay rank consistently higher in terms of GDP per capita and human development, and Mexico and Venezuela do so intermittently, depending on oil prices. As a consequence, Brazilian politicians have found it extremely hard to domestically sell the importance of money transfers to neighboring countries, as this would entail sacrificing poor Brazilians to the benefit of wealthier foreigners.

Given the shortage of hard power resources, Brazil is one of the few emerging countries to have staked its future on soft power (Burges 2008; Sotero and Armijo 2007). This is based primarily on diplomacy, on the wise use of its cultural charm, and on its growing role as a facilitator and cooperation supplier. Successive administrations have put diplomacy to profitable use, managing to translate scale into influence. They have brought Brazil at every negotiation table to address issues as diverse as climate change, world trade, nonproliferation or cooperation for development. In the region, Brazilian envoys have often mediated in third party conflicts through the least intrusive means available. As it is proudly said in *Itamaraty*, the foreign ministry

palace, Brazil has a "diplomatic GDP" that exceeds its economic one: in other words, it can punch above its weight because of the high quality of its professional diplomacy. To be sure, presidential diplomacy has also been decisive in fostering the country's international reputation (Malamud 2005; Cason and Power 2009).

## Security Governance Policies

Regional security governance, meaning region-based regulations of security issues, performs two functions – institution-building and conflict resolution – and employs two sets of instruments – the persuasive (political and diplomatic) and the coercive (military interventions and internal policing), with economic means alternating between them. The combination of these dimensions produces a four-fold typology: assurance, prevention, protection and compellence (Kirchner and Sperling 2007).

### Assurance: Promotion of democracy and regional integration

Assurance policies identify the efforts aimed at post-conflict reconstruction and confidence building measures. Given that South America has not had destructive conflicts or wars lately, re-construction solidarity has been limited to cooperation after natural catastrophes and is not related to security issues. In contrast, democracy promotion and regional integration rank atop collective endeavors – though with several caveats.

Historically, there have been two major institutional mechanisms to resolve inter-state security disputes in the region, both of which include non-Latin American countries. The Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR), signed in the city of Rio in 1947, commits signatories to mutual defense in case of an outside attack. The Organization of American States (OAS), the sponsoring institution of the TIAR, was created in 1948 to promote cooperation in the Western Hemisphere. While both the Rio Treaty and the OAS are presently in effect, their relevance in high stakes politics in the region is arguable. The refusal of the United States to uphold the TIAR during the Malvinas/Falkland War, siding instead with its historic European ally, was an eye-opener for some of Latin America's political elites. Henceforth, the membership of the United States in the OAS (and its location in Washington DC) has left many Latin American administrations unconvinced of the neutrality of the organization in resolving regional disputes. This skepticism intensified in the 2000s with the election of center-left governments across South America.

The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), established in May 2008, can be seen as the blueprint for an autonomous South American governance structure, with defense and security issues grouped under the supervision of its South American Defense Council (SDC). The SDC project was launched by then Brazilian president Lula da Silva and his minister of defense, Nelson Jobim, during a state visit to Argentina in February 2008. The proposal

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gained impetus after the Colombian attack on a FARC guerrilla camp in Ecuador in March. Minister Jobim visited several South American countries to garner support, and the SDC was finally established in December 2008 (Weiffen, Wehner and Nolte 2013). Its founding treaty subordinates the organization to the principles and objectives established by the UN charter, the OAS charter, and UNASUR's decisions. Its main goals are to consolidate South America as a zone of peace, to create a common identity on defense matters, and to strengthen regional defense cooperation. It should be emphasized that, ideological rhetoric notwithstanding, this does not entail a common defense policy, even less a military alliance (Amorim 2013). UNASUR was also part of Brazil's strategy to use regional integration as a springboard to increase its global influence. However, the Brazilian perception of the region has gradually changed from viewing it as an asset towards becoming a burden in the last decade, as potential synergies lose steam and negative externalities raise. Currently, the major threat is the escalation of neighbors' domestic conflicts that could result in the intervention of external actors – that is, the United States. Thus, by institutionalizing security relations, Brazil intends to forestall ad hoc regional responses to crisis and extra-regional interventions (Spektor 2010).

Both MERCOSUR and UNASUR include democratic clauses through which member governments may intervene, if a member state reverts back to authoritarianism. Intervention mechanisms range from partial and total suspension from the organization to the imposition of diplomatic sanctions. Procedurally, the two organizations allow high level consultations and direct presidential diplomacy among members. This became evident in 2012, when the then President of Paraguay Fernando Lugo was removed from office in a contentious move by the national congress. MERCOSUR and UNASUR served as fora within which President Dilma Rousseff could debate with her counterparts on how to proceed. Finally, the decision was to invoke the democratic clauses, resulting in the temporary suspension of Paraguay from the two organizations. As Stuenkel (2013b) remarks, this collective approach, "is less likely to stir up anti-Brazilian sentiment at home or abroad. Only when preventive measures fail, do Brazilian policy makers contemplate more invasive interventions." Indeed, in 2009, an attempt to reinstate ousted Honduran president Manuel Zelaya had ended in failure without bringing Brazil significant gains in reputation.

South American organizations are virtually costless, as their headquarters are funded by the host country, each member state pays for its own travel expenses, and common budgets are nonexistent (as in UNASUR) or negligible (as in MERCOSUR). However useful these organizations may be to Brazil's power ambitions, they are fully intergovernmental. They lack supranational procedures because national sovereignty remains the utmost principle and organizing rule. Regional integration thus remains shallow, and it would be more accurate to call it regional cooperation. Intergovernmental institutions offer a different set of incentives and resources for member states seeking to influence neighbors' policies, among which presidential diplomacy stands out. Informal involvement, or shuttle diplomacy, has also been used by successive Brazilian governments, whether in the frame of regional organizations or through bilateral or multilateral operations. In the last decade, the special presidential advisor for international affairs, Marco

Aurelio Garcia, carried out a discreet but nonetheless public role in contributing to restore domestic stability in troubled neighbors – especially Bolivia and Venezuela – and to prevent the escalation of third party inter-state conflicts.

## Prevention: Elimination of root causes of conflict, arms control, and nuclear non-proliferation

Policies of prevention capture the efforts to prevent conflict by building or sustaining domestic, regional, and international institutions. Hegemonic stability theory contends that prevention policies are the mark of any state with significant leadership ambitions, as a key feature of a hegemon is that it subordinates its short term interests to the long term interests of the inter-state system it helps support, be it regional or global (Griffiths 2002). In order to achieve this, the hegemon needs to minimize or altogether avoid potential crises. Pivotal states with regional and global ambitions, like Brazil, are best served by devoting resources to threat prevention at home and abroad. Over time, Brazil has increased its investment especially in two areas; environmental activism and nuclear nonproliferation, where the government most likely sees the greatest potential for international recognition.

Since the 1990s, Brazil has become a modest provider of development cooperation. This is due to both growing financial capacity – higher per capita income – and increasing ambition, – "as a means of seeking recognition and support for its global position and for initiatives like its lobbying efforts for United Nations reform and a permanent seat in the UN Security Council" (John de Sousa 2010). Cooperation partnerships include South American as well as Caribbean and African countries, showing how Brazil stretches its region wide enough in order to include the Caribbean and South Atlantic coastline states.

However, there is one policy area – the environment – where Brazil's vulnerability and salience among natural resource-rich countries has made it one of the largest world recipients of foreign aid. In particular, Brazil's Amazon rainforest has made the country a focal point for environmental NGOs, local governments, and international donors alike (Hochstetler and Keck 2007). In fact, during the 1980s, Brazil was the top recipient of foreign environmental aid, and the following decade the country was surpassed only by China and India (Hicks, Parks, Roberts and Tierney 2008). Its main donors were the World Bank, the IADB, and OECD countries, especially West Germany, Japan, and Canada. More recently, Brazil increased its participation in the Global Environment Facility (GEF) grant program. The GEF partially funds environmental projects at the national, regional, and global level. Brazil is the Latin American country that has been awarded the highest number of GEF grants, 88, followed by Mexico with 79.[1]

Since the approval of its first GEF-funded project in 1991, Brazil has participated in 21 global projects, making it one of the countries with the greatest inter-regional projection in the GEF project network. Figures 4 and 5 reveal the prominence of Brazil, not only in the Latin American green network, but also in the Asian and African ones. Countries are represented

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1    See all projects at http://www.thegef.org, accessed online on July 24, 2016.

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by the network nodes, and the ties between them (whether they participated together in an environmental project) are represented by the edges. Figure 4 uses a force-directed algorithm to map the proximity of countries by their level of collaboration in GEF projects. Figure 5 shows how Brazil is strategically located at the intersection of all environmental regional networks, which confirms our expectation that it uses these international networks as a soft power strategy. It is striking to observe the low priority conceded to the region in this policy area. More interestingly, the four MERCOSUR members do not appear closer to Brazil than other Latin American and several extra-regional countries. This might be explained by a dual strategy: on the one hand, Brazil seeks to have greater international presence, and thus go beyond its natural area of influence. On the other, Brazilian bureaucrats attempt to leverage their ties with foreign peers to access international resources (technology, best practices, and know-how), in order to compensate for deficits at home. Below, we will see that this strategy also is carried out in other policy areas of prevention and protection, such as nuclear energy, science and technology, and HIV/AIDS.

**Figure 4. Collaboration Network, Thinned by High (Frequent) Collaborators in Global Environment Facility Projects**

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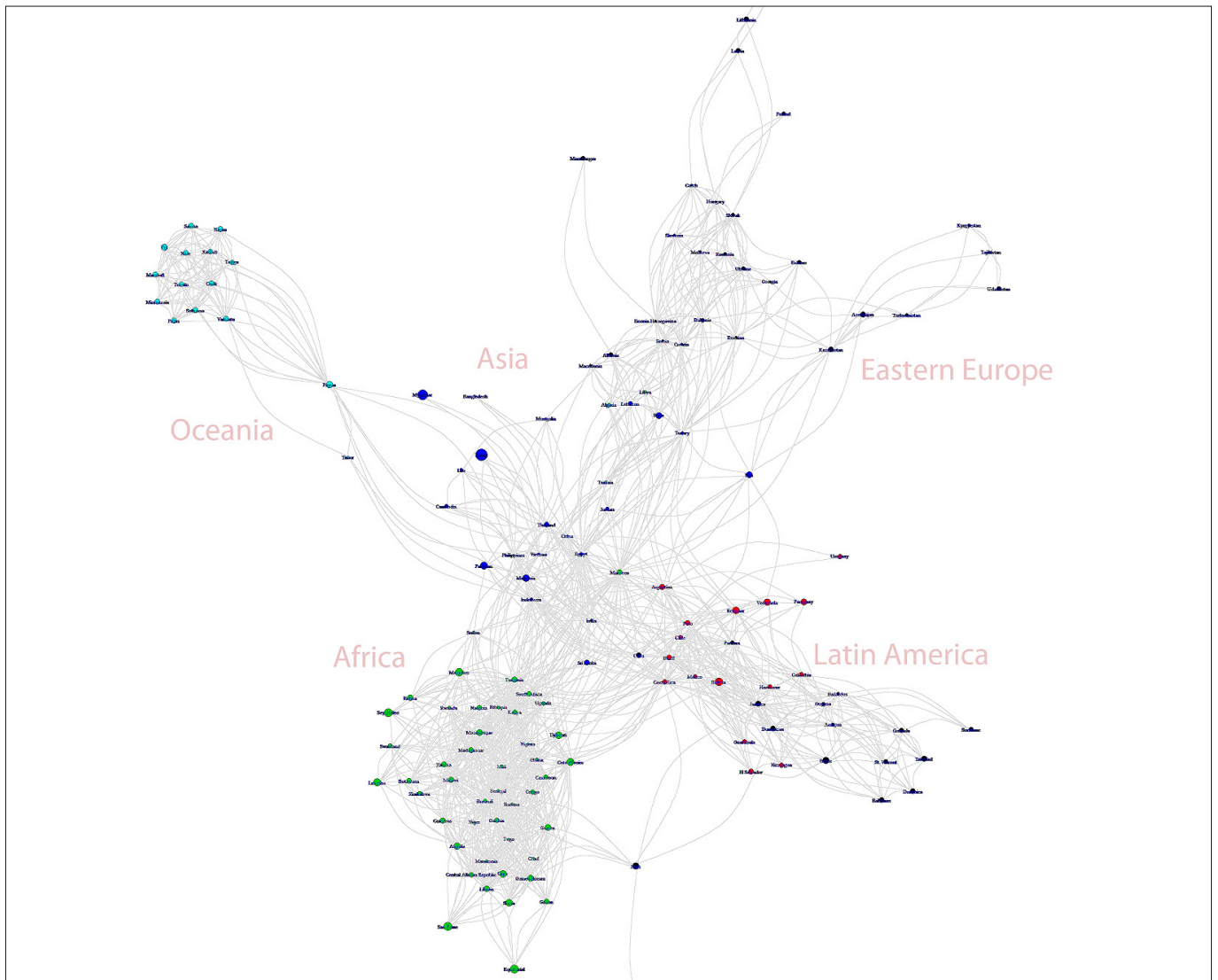
Network of collaboration of GEF projects. Fruchterman-Reingold layout on a thinned affiliation matrix with threshold $\frac{n-ties}{3}$. Size of the node describes level of dependency on GEF funding to implement the environmental proposal. These networks graphs are created by using all regional and global project data from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) from 1991 to the present. See http://www.thegef.org/gef/gef_projects_funding

**Figure 5. Zoom in of Brazil (from Figure 1)**
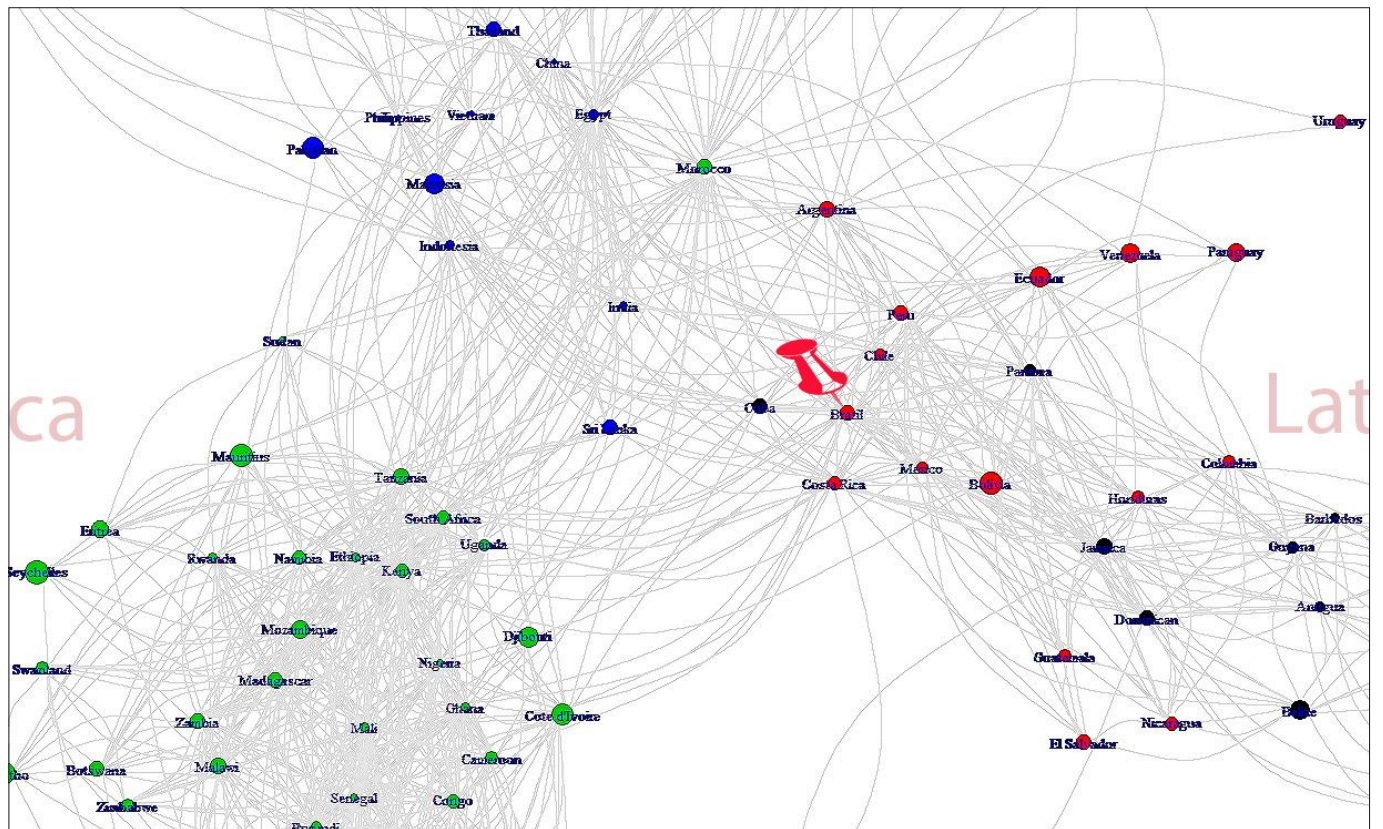


   Regarding arms (conventional and non-conventional) control initiatives, Brazil – as an advanced nuclear energy state – has had a significant presence in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime (NPR) since its origin in the late 1950s. When the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was created in 1957, Brazil secured a coveted seat at its Board of Governors by striking a deal with Argentina to alternate the position on a yearly basis – even though the governorship was limited to one state per (developing) region (Alcañiz 2000). In the 1960s, when the United Nations created the Committee on Disarmament in order to draft an international agreement to curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons, Brazil was one of its eighteen members. During the 1970s, Brazil made considerable advances in nuclear energy development, aided by a major commercial partnership with West Germany. Despite its high profile in nonproliferation affairs, the country maintained a strained relationship with the Western leaders of the NPR (the United States and its European allies) due to its rejection of the double standard in the 1970 Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), whereby states already in possession of nuclear weapons remained armed, and only the non-nuclear weapons states committed to disarmament. Until the late 1980s, Brazil maintained

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a "parallel" nuclear program that was not under international safeguards. Within this program, Brazilian scientists worked on achieving uranium enrichment technology – finally realized in 1987 (Alcañiz 2016) – and developing a nuclear submarine, which still is an unfulfilled goal.

Again in this policy area, we see Brazil leveraging international ties and access in order to make up for domestic deficits as well as trying to deploy soft power in Latin America. If environmental networks locate Brazil as an inter-regional rather than a regional node, nuclear networks relocate it at the center of Latin America (Alcañiz 2010). The country is an essential player in a regional network forged by cross-national research and development projects with diverse applications of nuclear science and technology, sponsored by IAEA.[2] Figure 6 shows this clearly. The network graph, made using project data from IAEA, represents the cooperation patterns of twenty Latin American countries in nonmilitary nuclear power over a twenty-year period. Similar to the environmental projects in Figures 4 and 5, these projects are initiated, adopted, and implemented by participating countries. However, the two networks offer some contrasts as well. In the environmental networks, Brazil appears more globally-oriented and less focused on building regional partnerships. In addition, the country's status, given by its centrality coefficient, is much higher than all other Latin American countries (including the larger ones). On the other hand, its participation in nonmilitary nuclear cooperation is clearly regionally-oriented but not as prominent, as Brazil shares its high status with Argentina and Mexico.

**Figure 6. Network of Nuclear Collaboration of Latin American Countries, 1984-2004 (Multidimensional Scaling Estimates)**
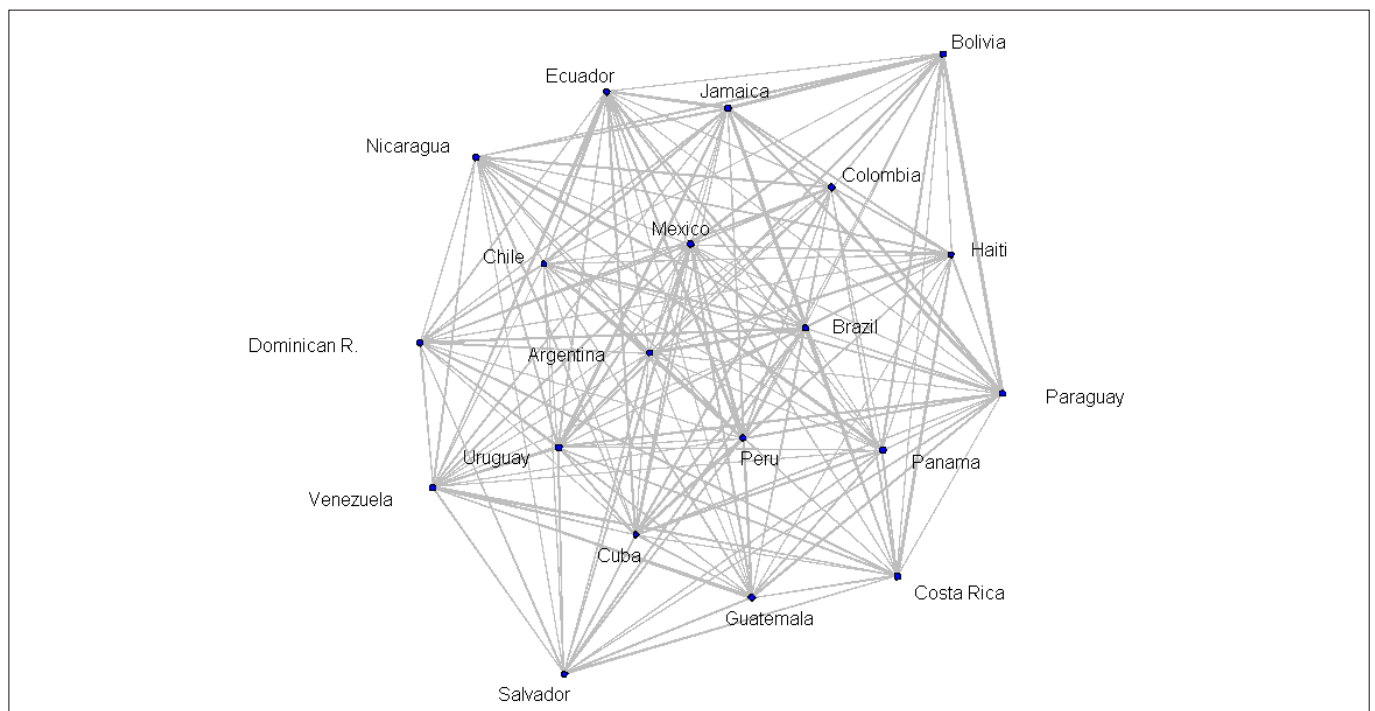


Note: Network plot using multidimensional scaling with probabilities drawn from the affiliation matrix. The figure was plotted using the SNA package in R 2.6, with a matrix of probabilities and distances estimated via multidimensional scaling (MDS). The MDS option takes as input a matrix of similarities and finds a "set of points in k-dimensional space such that the Euclidean distances among these points corresponds as closely as possible to the input proximities" (Borgatti, Everett and Freeman 2002).

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2   See http://www.iaea.org/technicalcooperation/Regions/Latin-America/ARCAL/index.html, accessed online on July 24, 2016.

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## Protection: Terrorism, organized crime and pandemics

Policies of protection describe traditional functions to protect society from external threats. Given its geopolitical location, Brazil has faced few terrorist challenges as from the early 1980s. The biggest international security concern for the country and its MERCOSUR partners is the triple frontier between Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay. This area has been identified by the United States as a possible point of entry of international terrorism, given its lax security and the suspicion (combined with muddled evidence) of activity by some Islamic groups (Cunha 2010). However, Brasilia has remained somewhat unpersuaded that the country has a potential terrorist problem, expressing serious reservations and criticisms toward the Bush Administration´s (2002-2008) "War on Terror" program, as revealed by diplomatic cables uncovered by WikiLeaks (Smith 2015).

Brazil's investment in anti-crime policies, on the other hand, is much greater given that public safety is a growing priority, especially in light of the two major international events that the country hosted in 2014 – the World Cup – and 2016 – the Summer Olympics. Mainly, the Ministry of Justice, the Police, and the National Secretariat of Public Safety are in charge of fighting crime with the logistical support of the armed forces. In recent years, spending on public safety (including both discretionary and mandatory funds) has gone up significantly. In 2012 it was approximately R$ 8 billion (=US$ 3.3 billion) when only five years earlier, in 2007, total expenditures for public safety were R$ 4.5 billion (=US$ 2.69). The greatest increase of the budget is driven by the hiring of personnel, about R$ 1.5 billion between 2007 and 2012. In addition, a special agency created in 2011 for planning and managing great public events (the *Secretaria Extraordinária de Segurança para Grandes Eventos* or SESGE) was given a yearly budget of R$ 717 (=US$ 301 million).[3]

It is precisely in dealing with violent crime that the Brazilian state gets the worst marks on human rights and civil liberties. The 2013 World Report by Human Rights Watch stated, "Torture is a chronic problem throughout Brazil's detention centers and police stations. The United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment visited penitentiary and police institutions in the states of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Espírito Santo, and Goiás in September 2011 and reported receiving 'repeated and consistent' accounts from inmates of beatings and other allegations of ill-treatment during police custody, such as the obligation to sleep in unsanitary cells without proper access to water and food."

Regarding pandemic protection, a recent report on the country by the World Health Organization states that, "Brazil participates actively in South-South Cooperation initiatives with several of its bordering countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Guyana, Peru, Paraguay and Venezuela) for the control of endemic diseases such as malaria, schistosomiasis, leishmaniasis, tuberculosis, Hansen's disease, and AIDS. There is also an intense exchange with MERCOSUR countries to

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3    All data from http://www.planejamento.gov.br, accessed online on July 24, 2016.

establish common sanitary regulations as well as with the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) in different areas" (PAHO 2007). Similar to the country's strategy for the environment and nuclear power, Brazil seeks to increase its international presence, especially in the region and among other emerging economies, by participating in transgovernmental cooperative networks. Transgovernmentalism allows coordination and the sharing of information, which are crucial activities in strengthening prevention against a possible pandemic.

Brazil is a global leader in the fight against the AIDS pandemic.[4] With the largest number of HIV/AIDS patients in the region, the country was forced to deal with the disease early on, but it was around the mid-1990s that the government adopted a national AIDS policy. Its central pillar is the free and universal distribution of antiretroviral treatment to HIV/AIDS patients (Galvão 2002). The supply of treatment and care accounts for approximately 70% of Brazil's billion-dollar budget for HIV/AIDS. Domestically, Brazil has implemented a gradual Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) strategy in the manufacturing of antiretroviral drugs (Galvão 2002). That is, to lower costs and dependence on multinational pharmaceuticals, the country produces anti-AIDS medicine at home.

Because of its domestic production, Brazil has challenged the patent claims of foreign pharmaceuticals. A high-profile dispute with the United States on the matter was resolved in part by Brazil's appeal to the compulsory licensing clause in the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement (TRIP) (Nunn, Fonseca and Gruskin 2009). The country has also pushed for a radical change in how governments conceive of protecting their citizens against AIDS. The Brazilian government has taken up the cause of patient advocacy organizations and argued that the problem of access to treatment should be framed as a human rights issue. In 2001, Brazil's position was crystallized by the United Nations Human Rights Committee, "establishing access to medical drugs during pandemics – such as HIV/AIDS – as a basic human right" (Galvão 2002, 1864). To succeed in its international strategy, which in this policy area entails going beyond Latin America, Brazil once more has forged key transgovernmental ties based on commercial opportunity and like-mindedness.

## Compellence: Display of military force to manage regional conflicts

Policies of compellence refer to the task of conflict resolution, particularly peacekeeping and peace enforcement. Since Brazil's quest for regional influence and global protagonism has traditionally been conducted through diplomatic methods, this type of intervention has been rare. Although the country sometimes has deployed tougher means to pursue its goals, since 1870 it has always stopped short of military action. Its commitment to non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other countries has only recently undergone a slight revision, when Brazil needed to legitimize its acceptance to head the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH)

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4    See http://www.unaids.org, accessed online on July 24, 2016.

that was established in 2004. The administration wittingly engaged in wordplay, claiming that its traditional doctrine of non-interference was not incompatible with a strategy of non-indifference (Hirst 2007, 7). Brazil's leading role in the MINUSTAH displayed its capacity to project power and signaled its will of adopting a more muscular foreign policy while working together with its regional partners. However, the setbacks produced by the 2010 earthquake, and the ensuing reentrance of the United States as an effective manager of the relief and reconstruction operations, tarnished the success of the Brazilian-led mission. This should come as no surprise when considering the country's financial contribution: from 2004 through June 2012, Brazil's disbursements to MINUSTAH amounted to R$ 1,670 million (around US$ 700 million), short of 0.1% of the country´s annual GDP (Brasil 2012, 163), and not much for a would-be regional power.

The Haitian drawback was compounded by Brazil's retraction from intervening in the Colombian conflict with narco-terrorist organizations.[5] As the United States maintained its economic and military assistance to the Colombian government, which ranks among the top five recipients of US foreign aid, Brazil's reluctance to get involved in anything but low-risk scenarios raised further doubts about its capacity and commitment to enforce regional security.

To date, Brazil ranks 21 among all countries that contribute uniformed personnel to the United Nations peace-keeping missions. In 2013, Brasilia committed 1,509 units, of which virtually all went to MINUSTAH. The size of the contribution, rather small for a country as large as Brazil, can be explained by the absence of conflicts that require international peace enforcing mechanisms in its area of influence. In fact, many of the larger contributors ranking above Brazil happen to be much smaller countries that have regional conflict at their borders.[6] A second, but equally important reason for Brazil's virtual irrelevance in missions that involve troop-deployment is its deep-rooted diplomatic tradition of non-interference and its attachment to the negotiated resolution of conflicts (Alsina Júnior 2009). With 2,166 units deployed abroad (mostly in Congo), tiny Uruguay outnumbers its giant neighbor and ranks 14 in the UN ranking.

Brazil's rare participation in the MINUSTAH testifies not only to its risk aversion but also to the fuzziness of its home region. Indeed, Haiti was not a member of any of the regional organizations that Brasilia's official documents acknowledged as crucial to its national strategy. To bridge this gap, the preamble to the National Defense Policy, first enacted in 2005, was amended after 2012 to include the Caribbean and Antarctica as part of Brazil's strategic environment (Vaz 2013).

5   See "Divisão na Colômbia pós-acordo com Farc é paradoxo, diz negociador-chefe", *Folha de São Paulo*, September 26, 2016, accessed online on October 16, 2016,

6   See http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml, accessed online on July 24, 2016.

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## Assessment

As discussed above, Brazil often struggles to meet the necessary capabilities and steady strategy to project its power within the region and beyond. The government oscillates between investing in region-building and pursuing global strategies, depending on the policy area and variable domestic preferences. Where possible, Brazil seeks to participate in established networks – either regional or global – in order to access resources and new markets. Multilateralism has traditionally been the preferred option, with *minilateralism* lately becoming a close second – and regionalism standing as one subset thereof. While bilateralism is seen as an exception or last resort, unilateralism is officially abhorred.

We have shown that Brazil's behavior varies across the four dimensions of regional security governance. It is proactive in regards to assurance and prevention, mostly reactive in regards to protection, and rather inactive – with a few marginal exceptions – in regards to compellence. In all four dimensions, though, it has been a rather stingy contributor, whether its investment is measured by comparison with other contributors' or as a proportion of national GDP. Brazil's dominant strategies depend on two factors: risk and cost. As these factors grow, the country's propensity to intervene abroad recedes. The redefinition of its home region – from the Americas through Latin America to South America – has pursued the goal of reducing both the risks and costs of Brazilian regional activism, while providing a platform from which to launch its more muscled – but still low-cost – international activism.

Brasilia's preference for non-coercive means, which is based on its soft power structure and non-interventionist traditions, has biased the country's role in regional security governance. It no longer supports US co-responsibility in South America, but it is not ready to assume the US previous role if hard power is required. On the contrary, Brazil sustains the legitimacy of its regional role by contrasting it with historical American interventionism. Burden-sharing is thus asserted as more "democratic" and respectful of national sovereignty, although the burden Brazil is prepared to share is lower than what its neighbors might deem necessary. Brazil can afford to be a reluctant regional power because its rise, with all its tensions and dilemmas, does not take place in a regional system, but in a regional society (Merke 2015), where *concertación* is accepted as the prevailing diplomatic practice. A midway institution between diplomacy and great power management, *concertación* is defined as a loose form of regional organization, "based on consensus-seeking and peaceful settlement of disputes" (Merke 2015, 185). Since Brazil's rise has been accompanied by a parallel emergence of other South American countries, its stance in the region has not changed as much as it has on the global scene. The regional distribution of power has not varied greatly, so neither have the mechanisms that determine inter-state relations.

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## Conclusions

As we have shown, Brazil's reluctance to a full-fledged commitment with its region is not new. Paraphrasing Andrew Hurrell, Spektor (2010, 192) argues that,

> Looking at Brazilian foreign policy and Brazilian power in international relations from the perspective of the region remains 'a study in ambivalence' [...] Brazil is not your typical regional power [...] It has sought to anchor and embed its power in a new network of regional institutions, and it has become the major institution builder in the region, but the institutional architecture that results is thin and weak [...] For all its power, Brazil has not pushed smaller neighbours into complying with the new, increasingly institutionalized rules of the regional game.

Brazil's definition of its home region has been adjustable: it is "South America" when it needs to secure a manageable area beyond the US economic and security perimeter; but it may turn to "Latin America" when bidding for a position at an international organization. Such Janus-like strategy has placed the country simultaneously on several stages and obliges it to articulate diverse, sometimes even opposing views and interests. This qualifies Brazil as a cusp state, that is, one that lies on the edge of and in an ambivalent relationship with regions that are seen to function as an international relations sub-system (Herzog and Robbins 2014) – only that, in this case, it straddles a fuzzy region and the global stage.

The fuzziness of the region stems not from any objective nebulosity regarding the contiguous area, but from Brazil's deliberate decision to redraw boundaries according to its varying interests. Remarkably, Brazil's additional source of international identity does not stem from another regional grouping, but from its self-identity as a global power (Malamud and Rodriguez 2013). From this perspective, as the region became increasingly burdensome, foreign policy adapted in order not to let the neighbors drain resources that the country needs for national development and global projection. Autonomy and development rather than security have been the Brazilian foreign policy priorities over the twentieth century, and they still are in the twenty first. Yet, with the appropriate adaptations, this strategy does not reveal, "a Brazil-style exceptionalism [but] a long standing diplomatic culture that has so much characterized South America" (Merke 2015, 189).

In sum, Brazil's low, late and soft investment in regional security governance is explained by a combination of low regional threats, insufficient national capabilities, a legalistic culture of dispute settlement, and the participation in transgovernmental networks that substitute for, or subtly underpin, interstate cooperation and regional institutions. If the region continues to neither pose a threat, nor stand as an asset, it should not be expected that Brazil upgrades its investment in regional security governance – diplomatic rhetoric and official treaties notwithstanding.

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