

A harder edge: reframing Brazil's power relation with Africa¹

Uma delimitação: reestruturando a relação de poder do Brasil com a África

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Introduction

In the last decade, Brazil's foreign policy strategy in the world at large has attributed a considerable role to the evolving South-South relations, which implied the development of significant business and trade ties with African countries while dully accompanied by the political backing of both former-President Lula da Silva and President Dilma Rousseff's government. Brazil's refocus on Africa has thus come to attract sufficient attention, while primarily focused on traditional areas of interaction, such as high-level political dialogue, exponential economic and trade interactions, and disbursement of technical cooperation assistance.

If this overall relation were to be framed in terms of power, however, some problems seemingly surface. Indeed, if power is understood in a Dahlian-causal and relational fashion, as the ability of states to get others to do what they otherwise would not (through both tangible and intangible means), then it is possible to ascertain that Brazil vies for multiple favorable outcomes in terms of political, economic, and technical cooperation issues, when dealing with African countries.² In such interpretation, though, often enough permeated by a recurrent

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2 Regarding international relations, and despite ample debate over the years, the field "not only lacks a common conception of power, it also lacks a common framework in which to situate the various conceptions and their expressions" (Mattern 2008, 695). Barnett and Duvall, for example, deem power as "the production, in and through social relations, of effects that shape the capacities of actors to determine their circumstances and fate" (2005, 42). Dahl's classic take on the issue ("A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would otherwise not do"), however, continues to retain considerable appeal and is therefore at the center of this article's argument (1957, 202-203).

“soft power” thread, important thematic features would appear to be missing and different narratives to be excluded. More specifically, considerations of a more strategic and security-related nature would appear to not find echo in the full spectrum of current Brazilian-African interactions.

With such context in mind, and drawing from extensive field research undertaken in Brazil in mid-2013 as well as previously undisclosed data, this article seeks to complement the existing vectors of analysis by showing how Brazil has also put previously overlooked material resources to use in order to attain harder strategic goals towards the continent. By focusing on defense cooperation ties between 2003 and 2013, it highlights an important niche in Southern transatlantic relations that has equally grown exponentially over the last decade, with important consequences on how Brazil exerts power across the Atlantic.

In order to sustain the core reasoning driving the article, this analysis starts by highlighting not only the three major pillars of Brazil’s renewed engagement towards Africa, but also how they are effectively conveyed in terms of power predicaments. Afterwards, some theoretical considerations are developed with the purpose of distancing oneself from the overly debated dichotomy “soft power/hard power” and reach a more streamlined approach to the issue in question, based on a country’s material resources. The third section then addresses how such kind of resources have been growingly acknowledged in Brazil’s official guidelines and regional multilateral involvement towards Africa, followed by an accurate and updated depiction of the state of defense cooperation relations between Brazil and African countries between 2003 and 2013, with a specific focus on defense cooperation agreements, military training, equipment sale and joint exercises. Finally, it concludes with some closing remarks stressing the need for a more wholesome approach when addressing Brazilian-African relations.

Brazil and Africa: the standard arguments

Behind Brazil’s push for closer relations with African countries throughout the last decade, it is possible to find a customary emphasis on a number of driving reasons or goals, which end up leading, one way or the other, the two sides of the Atlantic towards each other. For his part, White proposes a working structure around the three main features, namely “political diplomacy, neo-mercantilism and development cooperation” (2010, 228). Similarly, Vizentini sees Brazil’s initiatives as falling within the categories of “political discourse/prestige diplomacy” and “economic interest/soft imperialism”, or a combination of both, aiming for “socio-economic development/southern solidarity” (2010, 80). In either case, and despite the varying degrees of applicability, the overall reasoning can be traditionally summed up into three sets of explanatory vectors.

Right from the start, current Brazilian-African relations have been framed within the wider political significance of South-South relations per se. Considered

an instrumental component of Brazilian foreign policy agenda during the Lula years, this particular approach was essentially connoted with the fulfillment of a larger international insertion agenda that implied Brazil taking its place among the world's elite as a consensually-recognized rising power. Even though it would be more accurate to speak of a revival of past traditions—some would opt to call it a “rebirth” of sorts instead (Saraiva 2010, 174)—than really a brand new foreign policy orientation, Lula da Silva's government clearly sought to bring it to the forefront of priorities, and that alone represented a contrast with previous administrations (Vigevani and Cepaluni 2009, 86–87).³

Lula's revamped foreign policy efforts thus involved brokering a number of alliances where African votes were fundamental for Brazil's external goals—like in the trade negotiations of 2003 in Cancun, Mexico, which gave birth to the original G-20 or even in the unsuccessful campaign for a Brazilian permanent seat in the UN Security Council—but also in promoting new multilateral forums that tried to accommodate new shifting patterns of power in the evolving international order, like the institutionalization of IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa) or the South American-African Heads of State and Government Summits. In that sense, recognition of “southern heterogeneity” (Lima and Hirst 2006, 36) clearly became pivotal for Brazilian policymakers, as evidenced, for example, by the opening of 19 new embassies in Africa between 2003 and 2013⁴ or the countless trips by Brazilian officials to Africa.⁵

But a second possible rationalization of Brazil's motives, which escapes the strictly political parameters, lies with acknowledging the trade and economic opportunities that have emerged since Brazil started “reconnecting” with Africa. A 417% and 433% increase in Brazilian exports and Brazilian imports to and from Africa, respectively, from 2002 to 2012, undoubtedly accounts for evidence of a rising trade pattern. But this trend is even better expressed by values of their common trade balance: during the same period of analysis, it witnessed an overall 426% increase, from US\$ 5 billion to US\$ 26.5 billion—including an all-time record of US\$ 27.7 billion in 2011 alone (Brasil, Ministério das Relações Exteriores 2013).

Moreover, Brazil also saw in Africa tremendous potential for the expansion of its own companies, with Brazilian conglomerates such as Vale, Petrobras, Odebrecht, Andrade Gutierrez, Queiroz Galvão, OAS or Camargo Corrêa making their way into the continent or reaffirming their position in some African

3 For an account of Brazil's previous overtures towards Africa see, for example, Saraiva (1996), Pimentel (2000) and Ribeiro (2008; 2009).

4 By 2011, the total of embassies on the ground amounted to 37, which provided Brazil with the 5th largest diplomatic network in Africa, only behind such countries as the US (49), China (48), France (46) and Russia (38).

5 Including former-President Lula's 28 visits to 23 African countries, former-Foreign Relations Minister Celso Amorim's 67 visits to 31 countries, President Dilma Rousseff's 3 visits to 7 countries, and former-Foreign Relations Minister Antonio Patriota's 20 visits to 13 countries.

countries where they were already present, with significant investments on local mining, oil exploration, civil construction and agriculture projects. In turn, these entry points were facilitated by the combined effect of the different stimuli and support provided by both the Brazilian Development Bank—*Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social* (BNDES)—and the Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency—*Agência Brasileira de Promoção de Exportações e Investimentos* (APEX-Brasil).

However, despite the continuing validity and recurring use of the aforementioned vectors, a third different factor has assumed a central role in the government's discourse, when addressing these specific relations, namely the common historical-cultural links that connects the Brazilian society to populations in Africa. Special emphasis was thus given to the notion of indebtedness between Brazil and Africa, in a departing from past “culturalist” interpretations of Brazil's African roots and its own views as a racial democracy role model for Africa.⁶

The subscription of that change in tone then led to “the replacement of a silent period in [Brazil's] relationship with Africa for a cycle of cooperation and common altruistic projects for the other side of the South Atlantic” (Saraiva 2010, 174). That, in turn, was reflected in the amount of cooperation projects developed throughout the last few years. In 2010 alone, for example, the Brazilian Cooperation Agency—*Agência Brasileira de Cooperação* (ABC)—was in charge of managing nearly 300 different cooperation projects, with varying degrees of execution, in 37 African countries, all the while Africa accounted for 57% of all Brazilian technical cooperation disbursed in that same year (Brasil, *Agência Brasileira de Cooperação* 2010; Cabral 2011, 21).

Brazil and Africa's power relation

After briefly reviewing the three main vectors of engagement with Africa, it is important to understand how they have been generally characterized in terms of exerted influence across the continent. Unsurprisingly, the “soft power/hard power” distinction, as theorized by Joseph Nye (1990), permeates such perceptions. The South-South political emphasis, for instance, succeeded in being constructed under an innocuous light, or at least one that did not seem to require the use of more forceful instruments, i.e. “hard power.” Eschewing the use of Brazilian material resources in the country's political interactions with African countries thus constituted a distinct trademark during this period of time. As Hurrell so accurately notes:

⁶ For an account of how the “culturalist” discourse influenced Brazilian foreign policy towards Africa until the early 1990s, see Saraiva (1993).

In keeping with both its perceived identity and its power-related interests, Brazil continues to forswear a hard-power strategy in favor of a heavy emphasis on multilateralism [...]. In part, Brazil's approach reflects its relative power position. Brazil is a threshold state that seeks entry into the ranks of the powerful, but for whom coalitions with other developing countries continue to make sense. (Hurrell 2008, 53, 57).

Likewise, Brazil's economic insertions were also consistently presented in a different optic from similar inroads made by external powers in Africa, as they were wrapped up in larger common development goals. In other words, "more than an exchange of products," South-South trade came to be considered an "exchange of knowledge and capabilities that [can] help [to] ensure the sustainable and competitive admittance of the least developed countries in the international market" (Biato 2010). Or as the minister of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade, Fernando Pimentel, puts it, "Brazil seeks a strategy of international insertion oriented towards universal welfare among all peoples" (2012). As a result, Brazilian investments and operations in Africa end up being casted as valid alternatives on the ground, and specially so, when compared with other international suitors (Romero 2012).

On the other hand, by acknowledging that power can also "be exerted through cooperative mechanisms" (Dauvergne and Farias 2012, 905), Brazil sought to place initiatives, such as the ones carried out by ABC, at the center of the country's foreign policy strategy. Particular emphasis was assigned to the fact that most of these same initiatives were developed while based on pre-established historical and cultural linkages and professing enough tact to assimilate African specific dynamics. Former- minister of External Relations Celso Amorim corroborated such preferential traits, when stating:

Beyond incidental political and economic gains, the search for closer relations with Africa [has been] guided by historic, demographic and cultural bonds. (Amorim 2010, 233).

These bonds, in return, incited further cooperative dynamics. As Guzzini exemplifies, when elaborating on general power relations, "if an event is understood as analogous to 'Munich', a collective memory is mobilized that authorizes some action and undermines the legitimacy of others" (2010, 5). A similar parallel with Brazil's historical connections with Africa can certainly be deducted in this case: by recalling a common past legacy, Brazil is able to insert itself in the African context as opposed to other external players, who do not possess such kind of linkages in the first place.

Overall, the ventures hereby mentioned thus reflect a continued perception of Brazil as a country above the fray in the larger African context, who does not

make tangible resources the core of its appeal when establishing or developing new partnerships across the Atlantic. Instead, shared understandings and experiences as well as the evocation of a common background are considered mostly responsible for empowering Brazil when reaching out to Africa, while allowing to secure a favorable outcome as one of the continent's leading new partners. This, however, has natural implications when it comes to assess Brazil's actual power relation with Africa nowadays for it puts the emphasis on a narrative that abstains itself from accounting farther tangible initiatives amidst such growing ties. The following section will therefore focus on exploring the usefulness of focusing on material resources when trying to tackle such kind of issues, amidst the ever-evolving debate over the composition of power.

A step back on power

Any attempt to address the concept of power in itself immediately hits a wall when coming across the overly amplified notions of soft and hard power. Without seeking to undercut the merits of such approach in expanding the debate and elaborating on the influence of intangible variables in any power relationship, it is equally important to recognize its shortcomings. Indeed, resorting to soft and hard power considerations not only brings with it a considerable level of conceptual confusion but also limits any potential exercise to a simplistic view of power relations. While appealing in some cases, it can prompt an overlook of other important factors as well.

Hence, concentrating on how power is actually designed and constructed can result more productive for the analysis of a specific power relation. Long overcome, though, is the consideration of power as a sole entity intrinsic to such factors as the military, wealth or geography, which indicated the strength of actors, and consequently the capacity to affect or control events. In that regard, Dahl's work proved instrumental for it opened the door to the recognition of, among many others, "fuzzier' variables, such as the scope and norms of states' relationships," as potential sources of power (Mattern 2008, 692). The multidimensionality of this relational approach, in which power came to represent an established relationship between two actors, rather than a single "element of national power," thus developed itself at the expenses of the previously-excessive focus on resources.

Still, over the years, a fact remained: "although resources should not be confounded with power, they can [still] be useful in measuring it" (Baldwin 2013, 275, 280). In that sense, revisiting or reaffirming their actual weight in a power relation cannot be deemed baseless, and more so if their ultimate purpose is equally re-interpreted. Military resources, for instance, need not to be considered solely in terms of force or threat of force. At its core lie instruments that are equally capable of exerting influence through less confrontational ways, i.e. that can be used in

alternative contexts, towards an equally successful outcome, without permanently forswearing its potential “forceful” traits.⁷

Defense cooperation ties between different countries are a case in point. They can take up multiple sub-forms, including the training of foreign militaries apparatus, international military education programs, regular joint exercises, or even humanitarian assistance and relief to disaster-stricken countries (Nye 2011, 47), all the while using the technical and logistical means that come with the possession and potential projection of military power. Admitting the current use of such kind of material means in any given relation is therefore to recognize that, even if continually framed by shared ideas, the pursuit of mutual trust, common beliefs, a single value system or any other constructivist trait—as relational power ultimately sees it—, they also play a part in increasing or decreasing a country's influence over a targeted partner in a determined issue.

Hence, taking a step back in this debate and envisioning the fundamental elements behind any power strategy as a point of reference for a specific analysis might just prove more useful. Developing this topic in its entirety, however, would require further length than what this article entitles. What suffices to bear in mind is that this proposed take does not imply returning to the primal focus on resources, as it happened in the early days of the debate over the concept of power, but rather merely adjusting the lens of focus used so far. Such methodological decision, however, can only be taken when faced with sufficient evidence of increased awareness to these issues in a given country. Indeed, as Baldwin points out, “the accuracy of one's estimate of whether an architect has adequate raw materials to complete his or her project is likely to improve if one first ascertains whether the architect plans to build a birdhouse or a cathedral” (2013, 277). Accordingly, Brazil's growing acknowledgment of the need to reinforce the use of such resources as well as its inclusion in the development of African-related multilateral platforms will be now explored.

Hardening Brazil's stance on Africa

Despite the early account in this article of how Brazil's power towards Africa is essentially constructed as a consensus-building, historically-based approach, more materialistic views on the subject have not been inexistent. Even if framed by soft power/hard power tenets, former minister of External Relations Celso Amorim's positions in recent years are a case in point. Already as Defense Minister of President Dilma Rousseff's cabinet, he stated:

⁷ This issue has already been tentatively explored in terms of Brazil's own military power (Alsina Jr. 2009, 175; Bertonha 2010, 114), but solely focused on how military capabilities can be considered in terms of direct force and indirect force/symbolism.

I do not believe in the possibility of separating power beyond the analytical field. In other words, soft power separated from hard power means a diminished power or a power that cannot be applied to its full potential. It is evident that the so-called hard power cannot be used indiscriminately. But, I should highlight that it is the hard power that prevails in extreme situations. Therefore, the Brazilian influence capacity at global scale is largely conditioned by the increase of its tout court power in relation to other nations. That includes, of course, military power. (Amorim 2011, 7–8).

Moreover, in an op-ed in 2013, he went further in his reasoning while reaffirming:

[...] no country can rely on soft power alone to defend its interests. Indeed, in an unpredictable world, where old threats are compounded by new challenges, policymakers cannot disregard hard power. By deterring threats to national sovereignty, military power supports peace; and, in Brazil's case, it underpins our country's constructive role in the pursuit of global stability. That role is more necessary than ever. (Amorim 2013).

With these declarations in mind, it is possible to acknowledge how harder resources of power figure high in Amorim's calculus. Especially when he goes as far as to provide the example of Brazil "pursuing increased bilateral defense cooperation with African partners," as a confirmation that they have indeed been used (Amorim 2013). But it is also important to situate Africa amidst Brazil's defense and strategic priorities in order to understand such alleged increased focus. A swift analysis of Brazil's strategic guidelines in recent years allows to pinpoint the level of priority attributed to the African continent, inevitably framed by the South Atlantic in-between.

The 2008 National Defense Strategy, for example, indicates that the most acute defense concerns for Brazil reside not only in the North and West regions but also in the South Atlantic, all the while considering a possible "threat of an armed conflict in the South Atlantic region" as a factor to take into consideration when developing the conditions for the future deployment of Brazilian Armed Forces and urging the increase of Brazil's military presence in that same area (Brasil, Ministério da Defesa 2008, 13, 48, 49). On the other hand, the National Defense Policy in its revised edition of 2012 states that while "seeking to deepen its ties of cooperation, [Brazil] envisions a strategic environment that exceeds the mass of the subcontinent and includes the projection along the limits of the South Atlantic and bordering countries in Africa." Moreover, "Brazil attaches priority to the countries of South America and Africa, especially the ones in West Africa and of Portuguese language" (Brasil, Ministério da Defesa 2012b, 4.1, 5.9). Following that same line of thought, the most recent version of Brazil's Defense White Book mentions that, "the protection of lines of communication and trade

routes with Africa has strategic significance for the country” (Brasil, Ministério da Defesa 2012a, 51).

The expression of such clear formalization of Brazil's interest in the stability and security of this area can also be found amidst the strong investment in several regional organizations and fora that provide additional multilateral coverage. At the top of the list stands the Zone of Peace and Cooperation in the South Atlantic—*Zona de Paz e Cooperação do Atlântico Sul* (ZOPACAS)—, brought back from institutional hibernation in 2007, during the VI Ministerial Meeting at Luanda, Angola, with strong Brazilian backing, and which has since then picked up the rhythm of activities. The latest meeting in Montevideo, Uruguay, on early 2013, for example, could not stress enough the “need to continue to preserve the South Atlantic region free from the scourge of war, the instability of conflict, drug trafficking, piracy,” while emphasizing linkages to Africa's own security context (Zona de Paz e Cooperação do Atlântico Sul 2013, 11). The same logic applies to trilateral defense cooperation through the IBSA Joint Defense Working Group (DJWG) since 2004 onwards.

The Community of Portuguese Language Countries—*Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* (CPLP)—, on the other hand, has also begun to increase its stake in defense matters, including the formulation of a common ocean strategy and the deepening of consultations on a ministerial level over defense and sea matters. During a gathering of this sort, Amorim himself admitted:

Since I assumed Brazil's Defense Ministry, I have made clear the priority I attach to cooperation with Africa and, in particular, with our Portuguese-speaking partners, in order to increment naval, land and air defense capabilities. The potential of cooperation extends from the lessons learned with joint exercises between our forces, to the formation, in practice and without artificiality, of a CPLP security and defense identity. (Amorim 2013, 5).

Whether through its strategic guidelines or by means of multilateral instruments with a vested interest in this area, it thus becomes clear how Brazil prioritizes these issues. More importantly, it is evident that the matter of using and building upon the country's own material resources are not entirely unconsidered, not the least of which by the country's own officials. It now remains to be seen how that translates itself in practice.

Brazilian defense cooperation with Africa

In the case of Brazil and Africa, previous attempts to cover the issue of transatlantic defense cooperation ties have either turned out solely focused on South Atlantic dynamics (Abdenur and Neto 2013) or incomplete (Aguilar 2013). Bearing in mind the central purpose of the article, this section will opt to cover

Brazilian efforts while regarding Africa as a whole so as to encompass the full spectrum of initiatives carried out during the period of analysis.⁸ It will therefore concentrate on a number of sub-areas, representative of the underlying intensity of overall cooperation in this domain, with a specific focus on defense cooperation agreements, training of military personnel, sale or donation of military equipment, and joint exercises/good-will visits.

Defense cooperation agreements

In terms of Brazil and Africa relations in defense cooperation, a considerable increase of formal instruments between Brazil and countries in the region was witnessed during the period in question. Between 2003 and 2013, a total of nine general defense cooperation agreements were signed with such partners as Angola (2010), Equatorial Guinea (2010), Guinea-Bissau (2006), Mozambique (2009), Namibia (2009), Nigeria (2010), São Tomé and Príncipe (2010), Senegal (2010), and South Africa (2003).⁹

The expressed rationale hardly ever differed for the main dispositions were also, often enough, virtually identical. High-level visits by the respective country's civil and military leaderships, contacts between military learning institutions, implementation and development of joint programs in defense technology and, specially, exchange of personnel for training purposes, frequently recurred in such agreements, as exhibited by the comparison in Table 1.

8 Brazil has defense attachés in Angola (with accreditation in São Tomé and Príncipe), Namibia, Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa, while attachés from Angola, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa are presently stationed in Brasília.

9 As of late 2013, and according to the Division of International Acts of Brazil's Ministry of External Relations, none of these agreements had gone through all the necessary formalities and could be considered fully ratified. Still, that delay has not hampered cooperation endeavors to begin on the ground.

Table 1. Comparison of defense agreements between Brazil and African countries (2003–2013).

Measures	Countries										
	ANG	EQGUI	GUI-B*	MOZ	NAM	NIG	STP	SEN	SA		
High-level visits by civil and military leaderships	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Meetings between defense institutions and respective staff	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Exchange of students and instructors	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Participation in courses, seminars, internships, etc.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Reciprocal visits by each country's Armed Forces, warships and aircrafts	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Cultural and sport events	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Implementation and development of defense technology programs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Promotion of trade initiatives in the defense area	X		X	X	X	X					
Cooperation/consultation in defense materials and services	X	X	X				X	X			
Military legislation							X				
Humanitarian, health-medical and search and rescue (S&R) assistance							X				
Joint exercises and instruction	X						X	X	X		
Joint research in military production	X								**		
Presence of observers in national exercises	X										
Supply, maintenance, and repair of military equipment	X										

* Also established the Brazilian Mission for Technical-Military Cooperation in Guinea-Bissau.

** The development of Brazil and South Africa's prime defense industrial endeavor, the A-Darter air-to-air missile, falls outside of this agreement. Source: data collected and systematized by the author.

Three exceptional cases concerning these formal bonds are worthy of greater mention. The first resides with Namibia, with whom Brazil has worked extensively on such matters since 1994, including through the establishment of a Naval Mission in Walvis Bay, thus effectively helping to build Namibia's Navy from scratch. Guinea-Bissau, on the other hand, received considerable Brazilian efforts towards the stabilization of its notorious unlawful security sector, with its height consisting of the Brazilian Mission for Technical-Military Cooperation—*Missão Brasileira de Cooperação Técnico-Militar* (MBCTM). However, disruption of internal order due to, yet again, another coup brought such project to a halt and the current suspension of its envisioned activities. Finally, the establishment of the core of a future Brazilian Naval Mission in Cape Verde, as formalized on August 2013, and in charge of assessing the conditions and needs of the country for the design and implementation of a full-fledged mission in a near future, heralds a new phase of engagement with this country.

Military training

Training opportunities for foreign military has consistently played a part in Brazil's outreach to neighbors and partners, and Africa has been no exception. As seen in Table 2, Brazilian Air Force institutions, such as *Escola de Comando e Estado Maior da Aeronáutica* (ECEMAR), *Academia da Força Aérea* (AFA) or *Centro de Instrução Especializada da Aeronáutica* (CIEAR) trained a total of 65 African officials during the 2003–2013 timeframe. Comparisons with previous years are interesting to make, as the opportunities available were then overall negligible. Hence, only after 2003 did such process gained any traction, albeit with constantly modest numbers.

Table 2. Military training of African officials in Brazilian Air Force institutions (2001–2013).

Years	Countries						
	Angola	Cape Verde	Guinea Bissau	Mozambique	Namibia	Nigeria	South Africa
2001	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
2002	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2003	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
2004	5	2	-	3	-	-	-
2005	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
2006	4	2	-	-	1	-	1
2007	5	-	5	-	-	-	-
2008	-	1	2	-	-	-	-
2009	3	-	-	4	-	-	-
2010	1	-	2	4	-	-	-
2011	-	-	-	6	-	-	-
2012	-	-	-	2	-	1	-
2013	4	-	-	2	-	-	-
Total	23	5	9	24	1	1	3

Source: data gathered under the Law for Information Access, no. 12527, October 18, 2011.

Data from Brazilian Army institutions, on the other hand, is far scarcer, as official numbers from 2008 onwards are still considered confidential and, therefore, have not yet been made available. Still, between 2005 and 2007, a total of 29 African officials were trained in such kind of specialized institutions, like the *Academia Militar das Agulhas Negras* (AMAN), *Escola de Comando e Estado-Maior do Exército* (ECEME), *Escola de Aperfeiçoamento de Oficiais* (EsAO) or *Escola de Instrução Especializada* (EsIE), as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Military training of African officials in Brazilian Army institutions (2005–2007).

Years	Countries				
	Angola	Cape Verde	Namibia	Nigeria	São Tomé and Príncipe
2005	6	2	-	1	2
2006	8	-	3	-	-
2007	6	-	-	1	-
Total	20	2	3	2	2

Source: data gathered under the Law for Information Access, no. 12527, October 18, 2011.

However, amongst the Armed Forces branches, the Brazilian Navy is unbeatable in this regard, as a total of 1,933 African officials received specialized training in institutions like *Escola Naval* (EN), *Escola de Guerra Naval* (EGN) or *Centro de Instrução Almirante Alexandrino* in the last decade. The weight of Namibia in these numbers is undeniable, as evidenced by Table 4. Between 2003 and 2013, over 1,897 Namibian Navy personnel benefited from these kinds of programs.

Table 4. Military training of African officials in Brazilian Navy institutions (2002–2013).

Years	Countries						Total
	Angola	Namibia	Nigeria	Mozambique	São Tomé and Príncipe	Senegal	
2003	-	57	-	4	-	-	61
2004	-	112	-	2	-	-	114
2005	-	49	-	-	-	-	49
2006	-	112	-	6	-	-	118
2007	-	80	-	-	-	-	80
2008	5	117	-	-	-	-	123
2009	-	315	-	-	-	-	315
2010	-	383	-	-	-	-	383
2011	-	221	-	-	-	-	221
2012	-	238	-	-	-	-	238
2013	13	213	1	6	2	2	237
Total	13	1,897	1	18	2	2	1,933

Source: data gathered under the Law for Information Access, no. 12527, October 18, 2011.

The abovementioned numbers, however, do not account for Brazilian instructors that provided or are currently providing training in Africa. In this case, Namibia comprises, yet again, another good example, as Brazil's Technical Support Group for Naval Marines—*Grupo de Apoio Técnico de Fuzileiros Navais* (GAT-FN)—proved instrumental in the creation of Namibia's Marine Corp first battalions. Meanwhile, in Benin, during the 2008–2012 period, the West African Training Center for Humanitarian Mine Action—*Centre de Perfectionnement aux Actions Post Conflictuelles de Déminage et de Dépollution* (CPADD)—in Uidá received four missions by seven Brazilian experts, in charge of providing specialized training to local personnel.

On the other hand, in light of growing African demand for such opportunities, since 2009, the Defense Ministry and the ABC have collaborated

in a new oversight of foreign military training programs, eventually formalized in 2010 between the latter and the Defense Ministry's Department of Internal Administration in a technical-cooperation agreement. Over US\$ 1.5 million was thus spent in the last five years, as evidenced by Table 5, with Mozambique (US\$ 803,010.65) comprising the greatest recipient of these programs, followed by Angola (US\$ 314,198.48). Even though the focus originally resided in African Lusophone countries, it is possible to observe that new partners, like Nigeria and Senegal, also became recipients of these opportunities in recent years.¹⁰

Table 5. Amounts budgeted and spent by ABC in military training programs with African countries (2009–2013).

Countries	US\$	Years					Total by country
		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Angola	Budgeted	-	181,200.00	434,400.00	150,000.00	30,000.00	795,600.00
	Spent	-	54,419.68	167,634.90	83,658.54	8,485.36	314,198.48
Cape Verde	Budgeted	-	242,000.00	55,600.00	25,800.00	9,000.00	332,400.00
	Spent	-	42,198.38	24,006.22	21,868.38	4,229.69	92,302.67
Guinea-Bissau	Budgeted	-	81,000.00	15,300.00	-	-	96,300.00
	Spent	-	32,169.26	10,157.85	-	-	42,327.11
Mozambique	Budgeted	48,166.65	371,264.00	347,500.00	410,897.20	168,950.00	1,346,777.85
	Spent	17,310.28	101,698.40	272,469.64	336,272.20	75,260.13	803,010.65
Nigeria	Budgeted	-	-	22,000.00	19,500.00	12,800.00	54,300.00
	Spent	-	-	-	5,658.28	6,122.96	11,781.24
São Tomé and Príncipe	Budgeted	-	70,800.00	55,600.00	51,600.00	260,280.00	438,280.00
	Spent	-	56,708.48	46,403.95	47,101.19	44,919.22	195,132.84
Senegal	Budgeted	-	-	66,000.00	19,500.00	57,680.00	143,180.00
	Spent	-	-	-	16,812.52	35,723.26	52,535.78
Total per year	Budgeted	48,166.65	946,264.00	996,400.00	677,297.20	538,710.00	3,206,837.85
	Spent	17,310.28	287,194.20	520,672.56	511,371.11	174,740.62	1,511,288.77

Source: data provided by ABC.

10 It should be noted that the numbers presented in Table 5 do not reflect the complete cost of these initiatives, given that they only cover airfare and accommodation in Brazil. As repeatedly underscored in interviews for this article, the total cost of formation is never accounted for, since it does not include the actual worth of the position made available at Brazilian military institutions. Moreover, previously established programs, like the one with Namibia, remain outside of ABC's scope.

Equipment sales and donations

Regarding the sale of Brazilian defense equipment, Embraer's flagship product, the A-29 Super Tucano aircraft comprises the number one item garnering the bulk of interest amongst African countries, as evidenced by the multiple deals in recent years: in 2011 Angola acquired six units, worth US\$ 91 million, while Mauritania and Burkina Faso also bought three each. The latest purchase occurred on May 2013, during the Latin America Aero and Defense (LAAD) exhibition in Rio de Janeiro, where Senegal formalized its own acquisition of three A-29 Super Tucano aircraft for US\$ 67 million, together with a program for local training of pilots and equipment maintenance. On the other hand, the donation of up to two Embraer EMB 110 Bandeirante patrol aircrafts and three Embraer Tucano-T27 training aircraft to Cape Verde and Mozambique, respectively, is only currently awaiting the requiring legislative authorizations.

But national maritime industry has also seen its fair share of work due to African markets alone. In 2004, Brazil donated to Namibian authorities the former Brazilian corvette *Purus*, later renamed NS Lt. General Dimo Hamaambo. Afterwards, Brazil built the 200-ton Naval Patrol ship, NS *Brendan Simbwaye* and two smaller patrol boats, the LP *Terrace Bay* and the LP *Möwe Bay*, both delivered to Namibia in 2009 and 2011, respectively.

A class-Barroso corvette as well as a Professional Qualification Program for Navy Personnel was agreed upon in 2010 with Guinea-Equatorial's authorities¹¹ and a similar deal was signed with Senegalese authorities in 2013 with a declaration of intent foreseeing the future acquisition of two patrol vessels (one of 500 t and the other of 200 t), together with a Professional Qualification Program for Navy Personnel, at the cost of US\$ 53 million.

Finally, donations of Brazilian hardware and equipment to smaller African countries have also been recurrent, with a special focus on Lusophone partners. São Tomé and Príncipe's Coast Guard, for example, received four small boats and a shipment of 200 uniforms while Guinea-Bissau received another 300 uniforms for its Armed Forces. Likewise, on March 2012, a Brazilian supply of uniforms worth US\$ 169,000 was provided to Cape Verdean Coastal Guard forces.

Exercises, observers and good-will visits

An alternative method of cooperating with Africa in the defense domain resided in good-will tours carried out by Brazilian Navy vessels in African shores, which have equally increased in the last decade. For instances, in the summer of 2010, the corvette *Barroso* visited Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Namibia, Nigeria and São Tomé and Príncipe. Afterwards, the newly constructed *Ocean*

¹¹ This particular purchase, however, never concretized after the initial agreement. The ill-fitting of the vessel to Equatorial Guinea Navy's actual needs is considered one of the reasons for the breakdown of the deal.

Patrol Vessel—Navio Patrulha Oceânico (NPaOc) Amazonas—spent August 2012 sailing between Benin, Cape Verde, Nigeria and São Tomé and Príncipe. The following NPaOc, Apa, undertook a similar track by visiting Mauritania, Senegal, Ghana, Angola, and Namibia, during its maiden trip on March–April 2013, while the Araguari visited Cape Verde, Liberia, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, Cameroon, and Equatorial Guinea on August–September of the same year, often engaging in bilateral exercises, maintenance formations, and anti-piracy demonstrations with officials and military personnel of the country visited.

Participation in regional exercises has also been constant. Since 1995, Brazil has joined South African, Argentinean and Uruguayan navies on a biannual basis in the ATLASUR operations.¹² Moreover, India, Brazil and South Africa have gathered routinely under the IBSAMAR banner with three editions until this point (2008, 2010, and 2012). Similar initiatives within the CPLP framework have also been pursued, with the FELINO exercise comprising the most visible example of Lusophone cooperation in this area. The last of this kind was even organized by the Brazilian Navy itself, on September 17–27, 2013, off the coast of Espírito Santo state. On the other hand, planning is already under way for a joint exercise between Angola, Brazil, the DRC, Namibia, and South Africa on African soil, titled ATLANTIC TIDINGS, and expected to start in 2014.

Finally, Brazil has also contributed, albeit discreetly, with a consistent number of observers in a multitude of operations in African shores, organized or led by other third parties. For example, from February 27 to March 1, 2012, for the first time ever, two Brazilian Navy officers attended the OBANGAME EXPRESS 2012 exercise, carried out under the US-led African Partnership Station (APS) program. This presence was replicated and augmented in the exercise's 2013 edition, with six Brazilian officers attending the maneuvers on February 19–28. Likewise, Brazilian observers have also been present in anti-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia, namely with an officer stationed in the General Staff of the European Naval Force (EU-NAVFOR), Operation Atalanta, throughout 2012, as well as with another officer in the command structure of the Combined Task Force-151 (CTF-151), in late 2013.¹³

Conclusion

Branding an emerging power's foreign policy initiatives as abiding to soft or hard power tenets can easily become an alluring exercise, and specially so when the former appears to increasingly trump the latter, as if somewhat confirming the predominantly benign or positive traits of a country's external insertion. But

12 Although ATLASUR exercises first originated in 1993 between South Africa and Argentina, only two years later did Brazil and Uruguay join in.

13 CTF-151 is a multinational force, in charge of fighting piracy in the Gulf of Aden and Somalia's coast under a UN mandate, in conjunction with the EU's Operation Atalanta and NATO's Operation Ocean Shield.

instead of exclusively sticking to such considerations, this article sought to take a step back in the present debate and highlight the continuing relevance of specific material resources amidst the composition of power.

As demonstrated, when it comes to the analysis of Brazilian-African relations, these resources have been overlooked in terms of defense cooperation ties. Whether we choose to call it hard, material, or tangible, the employment of resources originating in traditional military assets is real and, more importantly, fits into the larger context of strategic imperatives driving Brazil to increase its use towards Africa. The existence of a far more materialistic and strategically-driven agenda from Brazil towards Africa than what has been publically transmitted until this point, is therefore amply underscored. That does not mean, however, that shared past experiences and consensus-building strategies do not and will not continue to prevail throughout the bulk of the overall transatlantic power relation. But it does posit the question of whether the research focus is not too exclusively set on such traits, thus contributing to disregard different scopes of said relation.

Hence, in order to begin to understand Brazilian-African interactions in a more wholesome fashion, one must first acknowledge that Brazilian security and defense concerns match an active and increased cooperation with African partners, in terms of developing their local capabilities to adequately control and protect their own territories and resources so that Brazil's security is correspondingly assured. Reframing the discussion in a way as to include these variables and their evolution over recent years is to undoubtedly apprehend how Brazil has come to tentatively make good use of its own material resources so as to influence a wide array of outcomes in Africa.

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Abstract

Brazil's rapprochement with Africa during the last decade has been mostly explained as an attempt to improve political dialogue, raise economic interactions, and provide technical cooperation assistance. This article, however, argues that such framework does not sufficiently account for the use of Brazilian material resources in order to attain harder strategic goals towards the continent. By focusing on defense cooperation ties, it highlights an important niche in South-South relations that has also grown exponentially, with important consequences on how Brazil exerts power across the Atlantic.

Keywords: Africa; Brazil; defense cooperation; material resources.

Resumo

A reaproximação do Brasil com a África durante a última década tem sido explicada em grande parte como uma tentativa de melhorar o diálogo político, aumentar as interações econômicas e fornecer assistência de cooperação técnica. Este artigo, entretanto, argumenta que esse arcabouço não representa suficientemente o uso de recursos materiais para atingir metas estratégicas mais difíceis para o continente. Focando nos laços de cooperação em defesa, ressaltamos um importante nicho nas relações Sul-Sul que também cresceram exponencialmente, com importantes consequências sobre como o Brasil exerce poder através do Atlântico.

Palavras-chave: África; Brasil; cooperação em defesa; recursos materiais.