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Retraction or consolidation? The follow-up phase in Dilma Rousseff's foreign policy (2011-2016)

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Abstract

This article aspires to evaluate the foreign policy strategy and agenda pursued during President Dilma Rousseff's administration. Thus, the authors aim to describe the events of the article aspires to evaluate the foreign policy strategy pursued during President Dilma Rousseff' administration. In order to do so, the article addresses not only general aspects from a theoretical approach to foreign policy analysis, but also the presidential diplomacy concepts in Rousseff's administration, as well as thematic, multilateral and regional aspects of Brazilian external action. By organizing Brazil's diplomatic trajectory during almost six years, we propose an interpretation, based on foreign policy analysis literature. According to this analysis, we perceive the retraction vis-à-vis Lula's foreign policy as a result of the consolidation of previously established initiatives, through a follow-up phase.

Keywords: Dilma; Foreign policy; Follow-up; Presidential diplomacy; Public debate.

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Introduction

Dilma Rousseff took over the presidency amid expectations of continuity in regard to Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's agenda. After eight years of economic growth, broadening of social policies and strong international insertion, Brazil had acquired greater optimism about its international capabilities, and that project was extended. In terms of foreign policy, some reorientation was expected while maintaining the basic guidelines. However, if Lula's foreign policy sparked a strong intellectual debate, generating articles, books and seminars, Dilma's was not met with the same academic repercussions. As domestic politics deteriorated, Dilma's attention to foreign policy diminished further, resulting

in cancellations of international trips. In April 2016, the House of Representatives voted for the admission of the impeachment process and ended her government, leading to a self-styled reorientation of Brazilian foreign policy.

While Dilma's foreign policy analyses in major Brazilian media outlets showed common variations, mostly critical of Lula and Minister Celso Amorim's "active and haughty" foreign policy, there were few academic papers devoted exclusively to it (Cervo and Lessa 2014; Cornetet 2014; Jesus 2014; Pecequilo 2014; Saraiva 2014; Saraiva and Gomes 2016; Souza and Santos 2014). In the media, there was an initial communion of interpretations about a new direction that Brazilian diplomacy would take in 2011, supposedly signaled by the president's interview to *The Washington Post* (Weymouth 2010), with divergences to some of her predecessor's positions, particularly regarding human rights, the change was received with some euphoria by critics of Lula.

Opponents' initial expectations focused on Dilma's first decisions in human rights discussions and on the supposed return of Itamaraty's dominance in foreign policy formulation (Engstrom 2012). However, the expectation of major changes in diplomacy and betting on a rapprochement with the United States, proposed by advocates of an insertion anchored in the North, did not materialize. Thus, the "consensus" soon pointed to the simple continuity of Dilma's foreign policy in regard to Lula's, criticizing what was called "ideological and partisan tendencies" (Barbosa 2014).

Gradually a new interpretation of Dilma's diplomacy gained strength in the media, being partly reproduced in scholarly articles: a diplomatic retreat or withdrawal. Both Lula's critics and supporters pointed to the president's low interest in the subject and to a concentration of the area's decisions on the presidency and on her special advisor for foreign affairs, alienating Itamaraty (Stuenkel 2014). Reflections on the new international economic and political conjuncture were scarce, but they shared the perception of an unfavorable environment, although the attribution of causality to domestic factors and to the personality of the president were prioritized. Furthermore, a strong normative and prescriptive bias can be identified in the set of analyses, certainly arising from the perplexity generated by some international policy options.

This paper seeks to work in another direction, trying to unravel the foundations of foreign policy formulation in a system of explanatory causalities. Aiming to promote a theoretically supported debate, we seek to analyze the constraints and explain the rationality behind Brazilian foreign policy under Dilma. To this goal, the article draws on diverse sources, such as reports and press releases from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other official bodies, as well as media reports to bring together the facts of Dilma's foreign policy and to propose a narrative that coherently connects events. Thus, its general objective is to analyze the fundamental characteristics of the foreign policy of the period. Its specific goals are to identify the different lines of interpretation of Dilma's diplomacy; to discuss the intensity and causes of changes; and to compare changes and continuities with the previous government at the regional, bilateral and multilateral levels, as well as those regarding South-South relations.

The hypothesis that guides the work is that Dilma's foreign policy faced the political-diplomatic challenges of a follow-up moment (Danese 1999), after eight years of intense diplomatic activity

and the creation of several initiatives and action fronts. Added to the peculiarities of this moment of consolidation, new domestic constraints and systemic conditioning led to the pursuit of a lower profile foreign policy by Rousseff. There would have been, therefore, what Hermann (1990) described as an adjustment change in Brazilian foreign policy, due to an external shock associated with domestic restructuring.

Theoretical elements for analysis

The analysis of Brazilian foreign policy requires two-fold considerations. On the one hand, the structural/systemic character, which considers Brazil's intermediate/emerging position in the international system, imposes limits on its international action. Therefore, its performance is multifaceted (Lima 1994). On the other hand, domestic determinants – political regime, institutions, level of political cohesion and the action of social forces – matter for its formulation and implementation.

According to Lima (1994), three approaches are possible in foreign policy analysis: classic, political-social and interactive. Rose (1998), when analyzing the theoretical possibilities for evaluating foreign policy, presents the realist and *Innenpolitik* theories, which privilege the domestic sphere. Lima's political-social approach involves Marxist and pluralist perspectives, while Rose's *Innenpolitik* privileges liberal perspectives and domestic explanations in the field of foreign policy analysis (FPA). Lima (1994) explains the advantages of the interactive approach, which intersects international and domestic politics, combining analytical possibilities of classic/realist and political-social theories/*Innenpolitik*.

In this work, in the classic/realist field, analytical tools identified with neoclassical realism, such as Schweller's, will be used, and in the political-social field, the critical contributions of Cox, as well as some FPA factors identified with *Innenpolitik* will be applied. This combination is necessary for a broader explanation of Brazilian foreign policy. It is therefore crucial to keep in mind Putnam's (1988) two-tiered approach, which recognizes that decision makers seek to reconcile domestic and international imperatives.

Cox (1981), from a neogramscian perspective, argues that a country's place in the international system does not fixedly determine its external positioning. Thus, concerns with the systemic sphere cannot underestimate state action, nor ignore national and transnational social forces. Criticizing neorealism, Cox postulates that one must consider the role not only of military capabilities but also of institutions and ideas in determining the international action of states.

Narlikar (2013) differentiates the pattern of action of emerging and established powers. She argues that the former, like Brazil, are generally associated with a revisionism in their motivations, favoring distributive negotiating strategies with the latter and integrative strategies with smaller and emerging allies. It is, therefore, from the Brazilian revisionist behavior (Schweller 2011), associated with domestic constraints, that one should seek to understand the motivations

of Dilma's foreign policy. Revisionism is based on the defense of the transformation of the international order and of multipolarity through greater participation in institutions and negotiation processes restricted to the great powers and through diversification of partnerships (especially in the South).

Domestically, Dilma's election occurred amid the accommodation of different social forces – with a less solid parliamentary base than her predecessor – and in a more difficult macroeconomic context. Such a context would be managed with often contradictory economic policies due to diffuse social pressures. Thus, new domestic constraints and systemic conditioning eventually led to a lower profile foreign policy under Dilma Rousseff.

Thereby, even though Brazil's systemic position had remained the same as the one of the Lula administration, there were international changes, as a relative weakening of multilateralism (Cervo and Lessa 2014) and slower global growth, and the intensification of internal constraints. Hagan (1995) states that when domestic pressures threaten the ruler's leadership, foreign policy can be adjusted to impose less internal costs and attrition.

In this sense, Dilma faced more difficulty in building coalitions to support her initiatives than Lula. Thus, the strategy of accommodation (bargaining and controversy reduction), preferred to mobilization (legitimation of political regime and policies) and isolation (deviation/suppression of opposition), led to many compromise solutions in diplomacy. Thus, the policies implemented during the period were, above all, a choice between the original preferences of the proposers and those of the opponents to their implementation (Hagan 1995).

The concepts of change and reorientation of foreign policy employed in his article correspond to Hermann's definition (1990), which establishes four levels of change: adjustment, program, problem/objective, and international orientation. For Hermann, the last three can be considered redirects, that is, changes in means, ends or general orientation. The first level, which we identify in this case, corresponds to quantitative changes, that is, alterations in the level of effort.

Therefore, in order to understand Dilma's foreign policy, it is necessary to take into account both the maintenance of revisionist incentives towards the international order arising from the country's intermediate position, as well as the domestic constraints posed by the reinforcement of the opposition to the president's political project and the deterioration of the Brazilian economic situation. These would ultimately be responsible for the removal of the president amidst the loss of parliamentary support. In general, however, Dilma's foreign policy can be considered as operating under the same matrix as Lula's.

Challenges posed by the domestic and international situation

Facing a new international environment, Dilma soon encountered important challenges. The 2008 international financial crisis and its backlash, which had initially diminished effects in Brazil, began to seriously affect the country when protectionism in central countries increased.

In addition, the outbreak of the Arab Spring changed the conjuncture, and multilateral initiatives made little progress, despite proposals to resume trade and environmental dialogues. Understanding Rousseff's foreign policy requires greater attention to various aspects, as well as specific reflection on her areas of expertise.

The president had to focus her political efforts on the domestic sphere, where she faced major crises, such as the 2013 mass protests, allegations of corruption and ultimately impeachment. The heterogeneous coalition that supported her during her first term more explicitly showed its contradictions. The governance of coalition presidentialism (Abranches 1988) presented difficulties, especially when PMDB left the government. Despite the model's success in passing legislation in previous administrations (Figueiredo and Limongi 1999), the divergences of agenda between Executive and Legislative became more explicit.

The domestic economic strategy to combat the international crisis changed significantly since 2010, with negative repercussions. After the initial successful expansionist strategy, the government adopted a more restrictive approach, believing it had overcome the worst part of the crisis. However, its unfolding across the world generated new pressures, which, coupled with internal contractionary policies, led to a decrease in growth, rising inflation, and difficulty maintaining low interest rates (Barbosa 2013). This diagnosis is shared by the International Monetary Fund, that attributed Dilma's difficult economic situation to a combination of contractionary measures and the deterioration of the external economic environment (International Monetary Fund 2012).

Brazil had to deal with economic fragility, diversion of domestic demand abroad, pressure on competitiveness and profitability of exporters due to exchange rate volatility, difficulties in implementing the Growth Acceleration Program, low effectiveness of economic policy to resume growth, inflation, and oscillation and reversal of monetary policy to a restrictive one (via interest rate increase). This process led to discontinuity in the circuit that links income, consumption, production and investment, to a decrease in the level of production and to lack of private investment aimed at expanding production capacity (Grupo de Economia 2014).

From the perspective of Boito Jr. and Berringer (2013), if we approach FPA in terms of "power blocs", it can be inferred that the completion of the National Bank for Economic and Social Development competitiveness promotion agenda (started under Lula) contributed to weaken part of Dilma's support base. While some "national champions" were able to expand and internationalize, others faced difficulties to remain competitive. Cervo and Lessa (2014) point to an interruption in public support for internationalization, a pillar of what they called the "logistic state", but minimize the model's limits, the efficiency of the Brazilian business community and how their support (or lack thereof) to the government can affect the international insertion program and decision making.

In March 2014, the "Car Wash operation", originally aimed at investigating money laundering crimes, was launched. A year later, the task force of prosecutors and police authorities received authorization from the Attorney General's Office to investigate politicians and businessmen who

could have benefited from corruption schemes involving the national oil company Petrobras. The investigations quickly reached a number of high-ranking politicians and owners of some of the “national champions” spearheading the internationalization of the Brazilian economy (Svartman and Silva 2016). The political crisis that ensued would later deepen and ultimately, combined with economic variables, lead to the president’s impeachment.

Despite devoting special attention to the domestic agenda, in 2012 Dilma called on the government’s first echelon for international affairs to readjust foreign policy to the international environment marked by the post-Arab Spring and the European economic crisis. Dilma’s team met to discuss how to seize the moment of transformation and expand Brazil’s international influence and voice on the main issues of the external agenda, seeking to identify opportunities (Oliveira and Celestino 2012).

Dilma’s presidential diplomacy

The concept of presidential diplomacy was explored by Sérgio Danese (1999). According to the author, the phenomenon did not originate during the Cardoso administration, but it has received more media attention in Brazil since then. Given the Executive’s primacy in foreign policy formulation, the role of the presidency in its design is critical. Its active participation, in addition to protocol functions, in the design and execution process, in addition to traditional diplomacy, is called presidential diplomacy.

Intensified since the 1990s, presidential diplomacy correlates with summit diplomacy. Both involve intense relations with public opinion and have relevant implications for negotiations. By personally attending summits, the head of state makes commitments that may require agreement to be reached. Moreover, the continuation of diplomatic initiatives, or follow-up, is presented as a component with little attention and visibility (Danese 1999).

Lula’s foreign policy has set a new standard for presidential participation in Brazilian diplomacy, with intense synergy between president and foreign minister. Summit diplomacy has been an important instrument for increasing ties with Latin Americans, Africans, Arabs and other major emerging nations (Visentini and Silva 2010).

Dilma’s election marked the continuation of the discourse on multipolarity and democratization of multilateralism, maintaining Lula’s initiatives, including the president’s participation in several summit meetings. When comparing the travel history of the first terms of Cardoso, Lula and Dilma, it is clear that the number of bilateral visits made by president Rousseff, although lower than Lula’s standard, is higher than Cardoso’s (Silva 2009).

Presidential trips are commonly used as indicators of the intensity of presidential diplomacy, although they cannot synthesize all the possibilities of presidential action in foreign policy (Ribas and Faria 2011). Comparing the last five presidential terms, it is possible to notice that president Dilma’s travel profile is just below the average of 85 trips per term.

Table 1. Presidents' International Trips (1995-2016)

	FHC I	FHC II	FHC	Lula I	Lula II	Lula	Dilma I	Dilma II	Dilma
Days abroad	167	183	350	193	278	471	136	43	179
Countries	25	24	33	49	61	80	28	11	40
Trips (bilateral + multilateral)	54	62	116	109	165	274	75	22	97
<u>Multilateral meetings</u>	20	18	38	40	58	98	34	10	44
<u>Bilateral visits</u>	34	44	78	69	107	176	41	12	53
Africa	2	0	2	17	15	32	7	0	7
Central America and the Caribbean	1	1	2	4	15	19	3	0	3
North America	3	4	7	3	3	6	1	2	3
South America	12	16	28	25	36	61	13	7	20
Asia	3	4	7	5	10	15	3	0	3
Europe	13	19	32	11	20	31	12	3	15
Middle East	0	0	0	4	7	11	2	0	2
Antarctica	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0

Source: Brazil (2015b, 2015c, 2017b).

The president's interest in foreign policy issues has been the subject of various interpretations. While Marco Aurélio Garcia and Antônio Patriota argued that Dilma paid attention to foreign policy issues, being more "thorough" than Lula, who was said to be more "intuitive" (Marreiro 2014; Menezes 2011), Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães states that there was less interest and presidential activity during her administration in comparison to Lula (Barrocal 2015).

Ricupero (2017) views Dilma's administration as a period of misguided economic and foreign policies, defining them as a sort of "anticlimax" of Lula's prior achievements. According to the author, foreign policy under Rousseff was marked by "routine diplomacy". The notorious budgetary difficulties faced by Itamaraty and what he sees as the devaluation of diplomatic activity and demoralization of Foreign Service officials during Dilma's administration are also the target of severe criticism by the author. Furthermore, he deems Rousseff's foreign policy as reactive to international inputs or, at best, marked by the poor management of crises such as the withdrawal of Paraguay from Mercosur and the consequent admission of Venezuela, whose entry had been vetoed by the Paraguayan parliament, as well as the handling of the case of Bolivian senator Roger Molina.

Even though she spent fewer days abroad than her predecessors, Dilma's number of trips seems to counter her alleged lower interest in international issues. Furthermore, it is important to note that Brazilian foreign policy was then going through a moment of continuation and consolidation of the initiatives that had been created during the Lula administration (Bachega

2014). As stated by Danese (1999), the follow-up period faces important challenges and receives less media attention.

The number of foreign authorities from different countries that visited Brazil is similar between Lula and Dilma's first terms, while the total number of visits presents considerable differences. The main difference can be observed in the number of visits by heads of state or government. The phenomenon may have been a response to the lower presence of Dilma abroad, configuring a reciprocal decrease in visits, which, however, is not evident by the average of presidential visits in Brazil over the last twenty years. Dilma's domestic difficulties before the impeachment led her to cancel trips in 2015 and avoid leaving Brazil in 2016. These factors may also explain the low number of foreign visits in those two years.

Furthermore, it is important remark a "Discreet vice-presidential diplomacy" of vice-president Michel Temer, who conducted 40 international travels, trying to remedy relations with Rome after the Cesare Battisti affair, strengthening contact with the Arab world, and spearheading diplomatic dialogue with Russia and China (Spektor 2013). Thus, the vice president worked in summit meetings and bilateral visits, maintaining a discreet profile, less reported in the media, but effectively collaborating with Itamaraty.

Table 2. Visits by foreign authorities (2003-2016)

	Lula I	Lula II	Lula	Dilma I	Dilma II	Dilma
Countries	95	118	139	97	33	106
Total visits	259	269	528	186	46	232
Heads of State/Government	136	101	237	44	13	57
Africa	58	56	114	27	3	30
Central America and the Caribbean	17	32	49	19	0	19
North America	10	14	24	10	2	12
South America	89	50	139	36	13	49
Asia	21	27	48	26	8	34
Oceania	2	5	7	2	1	3
Europe	45	38	83	46	17	63
Middle East	9	22	31	8	1	9

Sources: Brazil (2017a); Ministério das Relações Exteriores (2012a, 2012b, 2012c.); Napoleão (2011).

Amorim's successors

After analyzing the roles played by the president and vice-president, we must turn to the main executor of foreign policy: the foreign minister. With Dilma's attention focused on internal issues, it was left to the foreign ministers to carry out the government's international insertion

project. Here, an allusion to the succession of the Baron of Rio Branco comes to mind, in tune with Danese's (1999) characterization of follow-up. After the Amorim term, permeated by new initiatives and moments of Brazilian protagonism, his successors sought to maintain the established guidelines, but presented more discreet performance.

Dilma's first foreign minister, Antonio Patriota, worked for more than fifteen years with Amorim, held the three main ministry positions (secretary general, deputy secretary general and chief of staff) and was posted to Beijing, Geneva, Caracas and New York, having been appointed Ambassador to Washington. Luiz Alberto Figueiredo Machado, his successor, was chief negotiator at Rio + 20 and had a long history of participating in multilateral and bilateral environmental and energy negotiations, having acted as Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations (Giraldi 2013).

Finally, Mauro Vieira, nominated foreign minister during Dilma's second term, sought to focus on issues that would allow growth to resume. His "results diplomacy" drew on the signing of Investment Cooperation and Facilitation Agreements and the resumption of trade negotiations, but was interrupted by the change of president. Table 3 shows that the foreign ministers had a similar travel pattern to Amorim's during Dilma's first term but presented significantly lower numbers during the second. However, their activities focused on maintaining their predecessor's projects (Bachega 2014), leaving little space, or even creativity, to implement new diplomatic initiatives.

Amorim's greater participation in multilateral meetings can be interpreted as an indication of the intensity of multilateralism and Brazilian participation in various international discussions during the Lula administration. Moreover, there seems to be little reflection by those who highlight elements of Dilma's personality about the differences in profile between the foreign ministers of the two governments. Still, the strong communion of ideas between president and minister perceived between 2003 and 2010 – quite unusual in Brazilian diplomatic history – seems not to have been sustained between 2011 and 2016. The need for ministerial changes throughout the government may have been responsible for the difficulty in creating such a communion.

Table 3. Ministers of Foreign Affairs' International Trips (2003-2016)

	Amorim I	Amorim II	Amorim	Patriota	Figueiredo	Dilma I	Vieira	Dilma
Countries	73	88	106	69	31	72	49	84
Travels	235	264	499	157	50	208	77	285
<u>Multilateral meetings</u>	118	99	217	60	27	88	28	116
<u>Bilateral visits</u>	117	165	282	97	23	120	51	171
Africa	31	30	61	13	1	14	10	24
Central America and the Caribbean	8	15	23	8	3	11	3	14

Continue

Continuation								
North America	1	9	10	7	2	9	3	12
South America	37	26	63	29	8	37	18	55
Asia	10	13	23	8	1	9	4	13
Europe	13	42	55	23	6	29	6	35
Middle East	17	28	45	9	2	11	5	16
Oceania	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0

Sources: Brazil (2015d; 2015e; 2017c); Napoleão (2011).

Amorim (2015) himself perceives Dilma's foreign policy as a continuity of that developed during his term as Minister of Foreign Affairs. However, he distinguishes foreign policy – “the country's major orientations towards the world, the strategic objectives and (...) the way of achieving them” – from diplomacy – “the set of material and human resources available to the country in order to achieve the goals that the politics has elected”. Thus, he expressed concern about delays in Itamaraty's contribution payments, which could hinder the execution of foreign policy objectives.

Foreign policy under pressure

In addition to the exchange of visits by heads of state and government, the study of Dilma's foreign policy should incorporate key events that challenged the maintenance of Lula's foreign policy general guidelines. Thus, some specific challenges to Brazilian diplomacy under Dilma, identified by some analysts as crises, stand out. To name a few, the replacement of Patriota in 2013 and the difficulties faced by Itamaraty in keeping its accounts up to date, amid budget cuts, with delays in payments of transfers to foreign service and the quotas due by Brazil in intergovernmental organizations (Cantanhêde 2013).

The regional arena was also subject to delicate crises. In 2012, amid imposing sanctions on Paraguay, Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães resigned as High Representative General of Mercosur, complaining of receiving little political support (Estado de S. Paulo 2012). In 2013, upon admitting to ignoring the operation that brought Bolivian Senator Roger Pinto Molina to Brazil, articulated by diplomat Eduardo Saboia, Patriota left office (Cantanhêde 2013). Figueiredo, already enjoying the president's confidence, took the post and made some changes in the internal organization of the Ministry, replacing Patriota's secretariat for relations with civil society with the integrated effort of all areas.

In 2014, amid pressure for “decapsulation” and greater openness to the rest of the government and society (Faria 2012), as well as “democratization” of foreign policy (Milani and Pinheiro 2013), Itamaraty organized a series of debates entitled “Dialogues on Foreign Policy”. In addition

to deepening the debate with society, the series was aimed at providing inputs for the elaboration of a “White Paper on Brazilian Foreign Policy” (Machado 2014). Ramanzini Júnior and Farias (2014), however, correctly draw attention to the conceptual flaws that permeate the theses that argue that there has been a “horizontalization” of the foreign policy decision-making process.

Moreover, Itamaraty faced administrative and budgetary difficulties. Its share in the Executive’s budget fell by almost half in 2014 (0.27%) compared to 2003 (0.5%) (Mello 2015). However, in absolute terms, the budget, which had grown under Lula from R\$ 1.6 billion (2005) to 2.1 billion (2010), remained stable under Dilma, hitting 2.7 billion in 2014. On the other hand, personnel expenses grew faster than other current expenditures, such as maintaining overseas representations, increasing its relative weight in the total budget (Brasil 2015a).

According to Cornetet (2014), there was an increase of sixty-seven Brazilian representations from 2003 to 2010 and an additional ten by 2013. This increase of the “machine” began to exert additional pressure on the ministerial organization and its budget. Challenges to managing a larger workforce, dissatisfied with the prospect of slow career progression, have also produced moments of tension. The dissatisfaction amongst incoming and retired diplomats generated criticism not only of bureaucracy, but of the very content of Dilma’s foreign policy, a level of dissent only comparable to that of the Fernando Henrique Cardoso period (Silva 2009). Such dissent was, however, met by a different presidential response from that of the Cardoso period as a result of the growing internal politicization of Itamaraty.

Multilateralism

During Figueiredo’s inauguration ceremony, Dilma reiterated that “[Brazil] believes in multilateralism as the only efficient way to produce stable international consensus” (Brasil 2013). In addition, she strongly defended multilateralism in all her speeches at the UN General Assembly. According to Celso Amorim (2013), then Minister of Defense, multilateralism is the guarantor, that is, the “political-legal support” of multipolarity.

In 2011, Brazilian José Graziano was elected Director General of FAO and was then reelected in 2015. In 2012, Brazil was elected for the third time, with 184 votes, to occupy one of the 47 seats of the UN Human Rights Council. At the Security Council, Brazil was elected rotating member for the last time in the 2010-2011 biennium. In 2014, the country was invited to attend the International Conference on Syria (Geneva II) in Montreux, and Dilma received criticism for appointing the deputy Foreign Minister to attend (Mello 2014).

Despite maintaining its advocacy for Security Council reform, the Dilma administration faced an even less conducive environment for major changes in multilateralism in view of the 2008 crisis. Still occupying a rotating seat in 2011, Brazil advocated for multilateral solutions for conflict and only condoned the use of force to defend the UN mandate (Cervo and Lessa 2014), especially during discussions on the war in Libya. Thus, Germany, China, India and Russia were

united against armed intervention, abstaining from the creation of a no-fly zone, whose resolution would have its mandate extrapolated, leading to criticism on human rights violations.

In 2011, Dilma introduced the concept of responsibility while protecting (RwP), seeking to delimit the concept of responsibility to protect (R2P). In this sense, Brazil demonstrated its position regarding international interventions, emphasizing the idea – present among the UN principles – of not causing greater harm than that one seeks to combat. Such conceptual contribution to the debate was received with a mix of enthusiasm and skepticism, with qualifications of the concept as vague, which could also be the case for R2P according to Foley (2012). In any case, by stating the term, Brazil expressed its concern about the political motivations and possible harmful effects of humanitarian interventions, seeking to have a more active participation in the international security agenda (Foley 2012).

The proposal was a milestone in R2P normative production, which included intervention criteria, a monitoring and review mechanism for assessing Council mandates, and renewed attention to capacity-building to prevent crises. Two problems arose to threaten the relevance and effectiveness of RwP: resistance from some countries to take more responsibility for accountability, evaluation and prevention, and the low priority that the subject assumed in the Brazilian agenda, leading to a further elaboration on the concept by the international community (Welsh et al. 2013).

During the 2010 interview to *The Washington Post*, Dilma stated she was not comfortable keeping quiet about the possible stoning of an Iranian woman called Sakineh Ashtiani (Weymouth 2010), which was interpreted as a firmer position than her predecessor's in the fight against human rights violations. After being sworn in and receiving a letter from Iranian Congresswoman Zohreh Elahian, Dilma stated that she maintained “a willingness to continue to grant the issue of human rights a central place in our foreign policy, without selectivity or discriminatory treatment” (Aquino and Giraldi 2011).

In March 2011, Brazil supported a resolution by the Human Rights Council to establish a special rapporteur for Iran. According to Amorim (2011), the vote was misguided, as it negatively affected relations with Tehran, hampering Brazil's role as a reliable interlocutor in the eyes of Iran, and integrated – albeit unintentionally – the practice of selectivity in convictions. The Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations in Geneva Maria Nazareth Farani Azevêdo defended the vote, saying that there was no selectivity, and that the government would closely monitor the issue of human rights, starting with Brazil, and would combat the death penalty (Engstrom 2012).

The multilateral trade agenda suffered major setbacks under the Lula administration, and Amorim's commitment to the Doha Round met resistance in the 2008 QUAD (US, European Union, Brazil, India) talks (Amorim 2015), culminating in stalled negotiations. President Rousseff, however, still advocated for a multilateral solution to trade liberalization, perceiving the threats posed by asymmetrical bilateral agreements. In 2013, the ministerial meeting in Bali gave fresh impetus to the Round. The Trade Facilitation Agreement, part of the Bali Package, the first deal since 2008, paved the way for new agreements in Nairobi in 2015 and entered into force in 2017.

Attributing further importance to the WTO, Brazil promoted the candidacy of diplomat Roberto Azevêdo to the post of Director-General. He was elected in 2013, as a result of the recognition of the Brazilian trajectory in the organization. In addition, Brazilian trade policy has made recurring use of the WTO dispute settlement system, such as in appealing against unfair US measures against the export of orange juice (Ministério das Relações Exteriores 2012a). During the Rousseff administration the government maintained the denunciation of state cotton subsidies after the suspension of compensation payments by the US, until a solution was reached in 2014 (Pecequilo 2014).

In environmental discussions, the defense of interests of the global South was maintained against obstacles to development posed by certain decisions. Rio + 20, in 2012, was attended by 193 delegations, but major polluters such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany were not present. Brazil successfully included a mention to the issue of poverty in the final statement. Also, the BASIC coalition – Brazil, South Africa, India and China – held ministerial meetings, and issued important declarations of intent on reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (Cervo and Lessa 2014). In 2015, Brazil was an important articulator of the Paris Agreement, which gave a new direction to the fight against global warming.

Souza and Santos (2014) seek to identify defining traits of Dilma's diplomacy and their continuities and discontinuities in relation to Lula, analyzing their speeches at the annual General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly. They conclude that there is a maintenance of Lula's guidelines on economic and social issues and the adoption of innovations and slightly differentiated lines regarding gender and international security issues.

Dilma's positions in multilateralism kept the general lines outlined by Lula. Despite the small scope for action and scarce breakthroughs, it is clear that Rousseff sought to advance her predecessor's central ideas by adding new elements such as the RWP. In trade discussions, the fruits of previous action were reaped. Still, Brazil's election to UN organs was representative of the country's continued yearning for greater representation, even without progress in UN reform.

United States and South America on hold?

In 2012, during the foreign policy review process, Patriota stated that Dilma would maintain her "regional anchor", seeking to promote the preservation of peace and democracy on the continent. The foreign minister stressed the importance of Brazil's neighbors as business partners (Oliveira and Celestino 2012). Following the absence of Dilma (apart from Kirchner and Chavez) at the 2012 Unasur summit in Lima, however, criticism arose regarding what was interpreted as distancing from the region (Carmo 2012).

Juan Tokatlian (2014), while analyzing Unasur, despite recognizing its important achievements – especially its assertiveness in the face of political crises in member countries –, describes it as erratic and devoid of clear strategy and strong leadership. Among the factors causing this lack

of guidance, he points to the lesser relevance attributed to the organization by the Rousseff administration. Maria Regina Soares de Lima, in an interview, identified continuity, but lack of innovation in Dilma's diplomacy for South America. With the retraction of Brazilian external action in the midst of the domestic crisis, initiatives for Central America and the Caribbean lost their momentum, and the performance of Brazilian companies lost the support of the National Bank for Economic and Social Development amid corruption scandals (Saraiva and Gomes 2016).

The biggest change in Mercosur in the period was the accession of Venezuela in 2012, which depended on the approval of the Paraguayan Senate. During the Paraguayan suspension due to its institutional break, supported by the Mercosur democratic clause, Venezuela was admitted as a full member. In Brazil, it was reported that the Foreign Ministry was against the accession of Venezuela at that time. Bolivia requested membership, and Guyana and Suriname have associated themselves to the bloc (Saraiva and Gomes 2016). Venezuela's suspension in 2016 for not meeting MERCOSUR's parameters threatened the expansion of the bloc during the Dilma period.

Despite criticism of Mercosur, especially after the creation of the Pacific Alliance (2012) and during the electoral period (2014) for its alleged stagnation, Brazilian trade with the bloc remained important (Marreiro 2014). In addition, there was progress in investments from Mercosur's Structural Convergence Fund, particularly in Paraguay, which rejoined the bloc in 2013. Relations with Argentina and Uruguay, under the presidencies of Kirchner and Mujica, were vastly positive. Brazil remained Argentina's main trading partner (Jesus 2014), despite increasing Chinese competition, and established a new paradigm in relations with Montevideo, aiming to increase bilateral cooperation in several areas (Giraldi and Aquino 2012).

The first demonstrations of the Rousseff presidency were received by the media as the beginning of a rapprochement with the United States in the aftermath of the tensions that followed the Tehran Declaration. However, most differences in bilateral relations persisted in Dilma's first term. Pecequillo (2014) perceives continuity in Brazil's US policy and in bilateral relations based on mutual respect, following Lula's attainment of Washington's acceptance of an autonomous, and often discordant, Brazilian stance in regard to US foreign policy. Internal pressures for alignment, in favor of a foreign policy that resembled that of the 1990s, were frustrated by the maintenance of what Pecequillo (2014) calls a period of "diversification and accommodation". While promoting the institutionalization of the "global partnership dialogue" and trilateral cooperation initiatives, Dilma maintained the trade disputes with the US.

Pecequillo (2014) points to a second moment of bilateral relations during Dilma's administration: "distance, rethinking and stagnation" (2013-2014). The inflection between the two periods is marked by the discovery of US espionage operations directed at the Brazilian government, Brazilian companies, and the president herself. In response, Dilma canceled a scheduled trip to the United States and began a campaign, later supported by Germany, for the establishment of an international internet governance regime. In that context, the "Brazilian Civil Rights Framework for the Internet", which regulates privacy, inviolability, secrecy, and neutrality, among other conditions of use, was approved domestically (Jungmann 2014).

The president sought to strengthen her position by further diversifying partnerships, as shown by the first production sharing bidding round of the Libra pre-salt oil field and the purchase of Swedish Gripen fighters. Overall, the Dilma administration kept the tone set by Lula in Brasília's relations with Washington: she demanded respect for Brazilian autonomy and there were some tensions over trade and security issues. This position seems to be supported by US efforts to promote a rapprochement, as Vice President Joe Biden's visit in 2014 demonstrated.

IBSA, BRICS and South-South Cooperation

In the framework of diplomatic initiatives with other major emerging countries, the Dilma administration maintained the two concertation groups created under Lula: IBSA and BRICS. IBSA faced major challenges: there have been no presidential summits since 2011, after president Rousseff canceled her participation in the 2013 summit, and the South African government chose not to hold a meeting right before the 2014 BRICS summit. IBSA, however, maintained their ministerial meetings, thematic forums and IBSA Fund activities. One of the possible explanations for the forum's lower profile under Dilma is that IBSA's and BRICS' agendas started overlapping, mainly after the inclusion of South Africa as a BRICS member in 2011.

In fact, participation in the BRICS was one of the most important instruments in Dilma's diplomacy. It can be said that she maintained and deepened Lula's soft balancing strategy via BRICS (Flemes 2010). Maintaining the critical tone toward the international system's configuration and institutional asymmetries, Dilma saw in the group an instrument to defend her agenda. In 2014, the BRICS approved the creation of two institutions: the New Development Bank (NBD) and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (ACR), demonstrating that the group's competencies could go beyond its original design (Lima 2015).

South-South Cooperation was one of the main ideas put forward in Lula's foreign policy, constituting the foundation of Brazil's international insertion during his terms. Dilma maintained the strategy of articulating the economic, political, and social dimensions, giving great importance to the social aspect in Brazil's foreign affairs. Thus, cooperation was kept a priority element in the international agenda, promoted since her inauguration. One can identify the continuity of initiatives for countries in South America, while in other regions, though still mentioned in the official discourse as priority partners – such as Africa and the Middle East – they were hit harder by budget cuts (Milani and Carvalho 2013).

Conclusion

The Dilma administration was marked by criticism of foreign policy by both critics and advocates of Lula's diplomacy. While critics of Lula stressed what they perceived as the ill-advised

role of continuity, his supporters pointed out discontinuities and criticized Rousseff's erratic stances. Most analyses of Dilma's foreign policy (in the media and academia) carried traces of prescriptivism and politicization and paid little attention to the causes and intensity of the changes observed.

In short, the analysis performed in this paper has shown that some actions of Dilma's diplomacy, considered by other authors as setbacks or withdrawals, actually integrate a process of consolidation and rationalization of Lula's multiple initiatives. Thus, there have undeniably been adjustments in the international strategy under Rousseff, motivated in particular by changes in the international and domestic scenarios. Given the erosion of domestic support for Dilma's government and the faltering state of the economy, foreign policy, despite the continuity of the basic concepts advocated by Lula, took on a lower profile.

As pointed out by Amorim (2015), Brazilian foreign policy during the almost fourteen years of Workers' Party governments, kept the same orientation. Thus, stances in multilateral arenas followed the same general guidelines, with adaptations to the new realities. Dilma continued carrying out the activities related to the regional and interregional diplomatic initiatives set forth by her predecessor, although several constraints led to the choice of certain projects over others. Thus, Dilma privileged certain initiatives' meetings, such as the BRICS's. The president also relied on the vice-president to follow up on summit commitments and foster relations with the Arab countries.

Therefore, with the initial goal of maintaining the general guidelines of the Lula administration, but faced with the country's fragile economic situation, due to both external and internal causes, and the growing loss of political support, Dilma's foreign policy became more modest both in scope and results. Thus, the external shock resulting from the 2008 financial crisis aftermath and the loss of dynamism of multilateralism combined with the internal political restructuring pushed for an adjustment change in foreign policy.

Finally, assuming the risk of normativism or prescriptivism, it could be said that the Rousseff administration's defining aspects were follow-up and continuity, through which she sought to consolidate existing initiatives facing new constraints. However, the internal political crisis eventually escalated and ultimately resulted in the removal of the president by the House of Representatives in April 2016 and in her subsequent impeachment by the Federal Senate. Following that process, foreign policy assumed an even lower profile when reformulated under Michel Temer and his first foreign minister, José Serra.

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