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Brazil's Maritime Strategy in the South Atlantic: The Nexus Between Security and Resources¹

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ABSTRACT

The recent discovery of significant deposits of oil and gas in the pre-salt layers off the Brazilian coast has triggered new interests and concerns within the South Atlantic geopolitical space. The prospect of tapping into those maritime resources on a commercial scale, combined with the rapidly changing complex of actors in the area (including a growing presence by other emerging powers from outside the immediate region), has prompted a re-framing of South Atlantic concerns within Brazil's new national defence strategy. Concrete efforts related to this strategy include a security build-up, military co-operation with Africa, legal initiatives, and the deepening of military co-operation, especially with African countries. Domestically, the government has launched efforts to promote a 'maritime mentality' among the Brazilian population, generating support for its new approach to the region. Brazil's new South Atlantic strategy has enhanced the relevance of African security issues for Brazil and is helping to reshape power dynamics in the South Atlantic.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CPLP	Community of Portuguese Language States (Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa)
IBSA	India-Brazil-South Africa
Ibsamar	India-Brazil-South Africa-Maritime
Leplac	Brazilian Continental Shelf Survey Plan (Plano de Levantamento da Plataforma Continental Brasileira)
SisGAAz	Blue Amazon Management System (Sistema de Gerenciamento da Amazônia Azul)
Unclos	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
Zopacas	South Atlantic Peace and Co-operation Zone (Zona de Paz e Cooperação do Atlântico Sul)

INTRODUCTION

Although the South Atlantic Ocean has long been of strategic importance to states along and beyond its perimeter, this geopolitical space has gained importance in Brazilian defence thinking over the past half-decade. Among the states positioned along the South Atlantic seaboard, Brazil possesses the longest (7 491 km) coastline. The discovery of significant deposits of oil and gas off the Brazilian coast has therefore generated new interests and concerns. The prospect of tapping into those maritime resources on a commercial scale, combined with the rapidly changing mix of actors on the regional stage (including a growing presence of other emerging powers from outside the region), has prompted a reframing of the South Atlantic within Brazil's new national defence strategy. Growing assertiveness towards the South Atlantic is reflected not only in recently issued military doctrine documents, such as the 2008 National Defence Strategy and the 2012 Defence White Paper, but also in concrete government initiatives at home and abroad.

First, Brazil has begun modernising and expanding its military capacity with special attention to maritime power in the South Atlantic, where priority is placed on enhancing surveillance and patrolling capacity as part of the country's deterrent power. This strategy has entailed a significant increase in arms acquisition and development, including not just the purchase of vessels but also co-operation with France on the development of a nuclear-propulsion attack submarine. Domestically, this modernisation project has been accompanied by 'Blue Amazon', a campaign aimed at mobilising popular support for the idea that Brazil has both vital resources and new security responsibilities in the South Atlantic. The new threats to national interests presented by this campaign centre on the notion that these new maritime resources attract the envious attention of other powers, and also help to inform the structure of key military exercises organised over the past few years. These include joint exercises such as the India-Brazil-South Africa-Maritime (Ibsamar) activities, which have been held off the South African coast, as well as initiatives that include South American partners. Examples are Brazil's participation in the naval exercise 'Atlasur' with forces from South Africa, Argentina and Uruguay, and in the annual *Unitas* multilateral naval exercise with forces from Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Peru, as well as the US and the UK. Some of these exercises simulate attacks targeting Brazilian offshore oil platforms in the South Atlantic.

Secondly, Brazil has filed a proposal with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos) authorities to expand its national waters based on a redefinition of its continental shelf. At the time of writing, Unclos had not issued a final decision on the proposal, but in the meantime Brazil has been investing heavily in scientific research programmes that not only allow it to chart its continental shelf with greater precision, but also to map maritime resources and maintain teams of researchers on its Atlantic islands, thereby boosting Brazil's presence in and claim to this part of the South Atlantic. Through this strategy, Brazil has been demarcating its space within the South Atlantic as a means of guaranteeing exclusive access to the new maritime resources.

Finally, Brazil has been investing heavily in international co-operation aimed at creating a common South Atlantic identity that allows it actively to pursue its own interests within the region. Brazil has diversified its bilateral defence co-operation with countries along the western coast of Africa. Most of these programmes involve training

of military staff, collaboration on continental shelf surveys, but in a growing number of cases also the provision of defence equipment and increased exports of Brazilian-made weaponry. At the same time, Brasilia works to boost multilateral organisations, for instance it is helping to revive the somewhat moribund South Atlantic Peace and Co-operation Zone (Zopacas). In this way Brazil seeks to emphasise the need to create a zone of peace and prosperity, while also stressing that primary responsibility for the area lies with the countries bordering the South Atlantic.

Brazil's growing attention to the South Atlantic represents an opportunity for it to assume a role of trans-regional leadership on matters of defence and security, precisely at a time when NATO's role in the South Atlantic is increasingly being questioned by the Brazilian government. In a recent speech at the UN Security Council, for instance, Brazil's foreign minister Antonio Patriota stated that:

We are still concerned that NATO may be seeking to establish partnerships outside of its defensive zone, far beyond the North Atlantic, including in regions of peace, democracy, and social inclusion that do not accept the existence within that space of weapons of mass destruction.²

At the same time, Brazil's naval build-up and South Atlantic strategy is sometimes perceived as being at odds with the country's historic discourse of peace and stability. If Brazil's approach comes to be viewed as excessively assertive, these strategies may eventually trigger new competitive dynamics in the South Atlantic.

BRAZIL AND THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

The South Atlantic has been important to Brazil throughout its history, not only contributing to defence thinking but also helping to shape Brazilian culture. Prior to colonisation, the Tupi and Tapuia indigenous groups fought for control of coastal areas. The South Atlantic served not only as the route for Portuguese colonisation and the slave trade from Africa, but also for French and Dutch incursions. During the Second World War, Brazil suffered more casualties in the South Atlantic than in any other theatre of war as a result of German U-boats torpedoing Brazilian merchant ships operating between Brazil and Europe. The Cold War transformed the South Atlantic into a space where NATO and the USSR vied for influence, and the 1980s brought renewed tensions with the 1982 Anglo-Argentine Malvinas (Falklands) war. Towards the end of the Cold War, the South Atlantic also became the focus of regional political initiatives, resulting in multilateral arrangements that included Zopacas. Launched at Brazil's initiative and approved by the UN in 1986, Zopacas brought together South American and African states along the South Atlantic, with the aim of keeping the area free of nuclear weapons and to minimise (and eventually, eliminate) the military presence of countries from outside the region.

For the Brazilian government and its armed forces, however, the South Atlantic was not among defence priorities. The major perceived threats to Brazilian sovereignty lay elsewhere, namely in the Amazon, where densely forested terrain makes borders porous and difficult to patrol, and the Plata river region, where historic rivalry with Argentina resulted in a brief nuclear arms race during the 1970s and 1980s. During the Falklands

War, Brazil voiced support for Argentina but largely kept out of the dispute. In the early 1990s, with the return from military to civilian government, Brazil's military expenditure as a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP) became one of the lowest in the world. By the 1990s, however, Brazilian Navy officers were complaining about the deteriorating condition of Brazil's warships and other equipment, the low capacity of the country's fleet, and inadequate funding for training and exercises. This discussion took place against the backdrop of a debate about what part the armed forces should play within a democratised Brazil. Although the military had assumed a greater role in civilian tasks since the political transition, including disaster relief and infrastructure construction, it had not yet adjusted itself to a post-Cold War strategic context.

Brazilian defence thinking about the South Atlantic began to change under the administration of President Luiz Inácio ('Lula') da Silva. The government worked to diversify Brazil's political partnerships with African countries, not only to boost transatlantic trade but also to garner support for its bid for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. The South Atlantic also gained economic importance, for two main reasons. First, the commodities boom of the 2000s meant that Brazil's foreign trade became a more important driver of its economic growth, and those commercial flows are overwhelmingly maritime in nature with nearly 95% of Brazil's foreign trade passing through South Atlantic sea routes. Second, in 2007 Brazil announced the discovery of large oil reserves in the pre-salt layers within and beyond Brazil's continental shelf. *Petróleo Brasileiro SA* (Petrobras) estimated reserves at over 50 billion barrels of oil – four times greater than the current national reserves of approximately 14 billion barrels. In addition to greatly expanding the Brazilian state's resources, the discovery has the clear potential of raising Brazil's profile within the international community.

From a defence perspective, the Brazilian government views these reserves as warranting greater deterrence capacity. In addition, Brasilia began to pay more attention to so-called non-traditional security threats emerging in the South Atlantic. The transatlantic drug trade had grown dramatically, with some West African countries having become key transshipment points for the distribution of drugs of Latin American origin to Europe and beyond. Moreover, instances of contemporary piracy, once confined to the coast of Somalia, began to occur in the Gulf of Guinea, which has become of global strategic importance owing to oil exploration and the transit of cargo ships. The Brazilian government began expressing concern that instability in the region could jeopardise its own interests in the South Atlantic³ and that piracy could eventually spread westwards across the ocean.

Brazil's broadening interests in the South Atlantic are taking place on a stage characterised by a rapidly changing cast of actors. Besides the Atlantic's coastal states, many of which have announced plans for or are currently undertaking their own seabed surveys in search of maritime resources, some countries from outside the area have a noticeable presence in or quick access to the South Atlantic. The UK has a string of island territories stretching from the English Channel almost down to Antarctica, including not only the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands but also Mid-Atlantic Ridge islands such as Ascension and St Helena, which provide it with a military presence in the region. In 2008 the US, which has access to the British string of islands through NATO, announced that it was reactivating its Fourth Fleet (which had been disbanded in 1950). It would be based in Florida and operate in the Caribbean and the Atlantic. Brazil's minister of defence called the expansion

of NATO forces in the South Atlantic ‘inappropriate’ and the administration of President Dilma Rousseff continues to reject a broader role for the alliance within the region (the US’s ‘pivot’ toward Asia and its growing concern with China’s rise and North Korean instability, however, suggest that its naval attention will now be more focused on the Pacific).

In addition, there is growing commercial investment interest in the South Atlantic by other countries, some centring on oil and involving a complex mix of state and non-state participants. Russia has been expanding its links to Latin America (investing dozens of billions of dollars in Venezuela alone), and China has extensive ties throughout the region that combine economic, political and military co-operation). Those, and other, countries have also been carrying out seabed research within the South Atlantic in search of minerals and other maritime resources. While these players are not all viewed by the Brazilian government as direct threats in the South Atlantic space (it is worth noting that, in addition to being Brazil’s biggest trading partner, China is participating in pre-salt prospection), Brazil’s defence strategy centres on the presumption that powers from outside the region will covet Brazilian maritime resources.

Over the past decade all these factors have contributed to significant quantitative and qualitative changes in Brazil’s defence strategy in general and its relationship to the South Atlantic in particular. These changes can be summed up along three main lines: security build-up, international legal strategies, and South–South military co-operation.

SECURITY BUILD-UP

Until recently Brazil’s military spending was relatively low in relation to its GDP,⁴ which for the navy translated into limitations on equipment and maintenance. Brazil’s current fleet, comprising some 100 ships under commission, includes a mix of British-built frigates, Brazilian-built corvettes, diesel-electric submarines and a number of smaller vessels together responsible for patrolling a long coastline and a vast maritime territory (3.7 million km²). Despite the acquisition in 2000 of the *São Paulo* – an aircraft carrier first commissioned in 1963 by the French Navy as the *Foch* and bought by Brazil to replace the Second World War-era *Minas Gerais* – and some fixed-wing aircraft, the navy argues that Brazilian naval capability otherwise remains rather limited in light of Brazil’s growing interests in the South Atlantic. Despite the length of the Brazilian coastline, its fleet historically has been concentrated in Rio de Janeiro. This poses a strategic vulnerability that the new defence strategy aims to reduce.

The navy’s ability to secure resources and equipment began to change as Brazil experienced economic growth and the South Atlantic assumed greater importance within Brazil’s strategic thinking. According to the government, the discovery of large oil and gas reserves demands new capacity to patrol the South Atlantic and deter potential enemies. Internally, the pre-salt oil discoveries also provide political justification for increased spending beyond simply upgrading equipment or improving maintenance. This shift is reflected in two key Brazilian defence documents. The National Defence Strategy, published in 2008, establishes (among other priorities) increases in military spending, with a renewed focus on protecting natural resources in the South Atlantic. The Defence White Paper, made public in 2012, lays out these plans in more detail, also stressing the need to diversify geographically Brazil’s naval capacity, an objective that may be

accomplished through the establishment of a second fleet, probably in Pará, at the mouth of the Amazon River, thus allowing Brazil to link protection of the South Atlantic with that of the Amazon.

As a result of these enhanced resources and changing defence priorities over the past few years the navy has embarked on a significant programme of modernisation, development, and acquisition of both nationally produced and foreign-made vessels. For instance, the navy has been acquiring several classes of surface vessels and expanding its submarine programme, which includes a recent purchase of four Scorpène diesel-electric attack submarines from France. Accordingly, total military spending, although beginning from a low base, has recently risen significantly. The minister of defence recently wrote that 'Brazil's soft power needs to be hardened'.⁵

Of all the armed force branches, it is the navy that has increased its spending the most.⁶ The centrepiece of this expansion programme is the development of a nuclear-propulsion attack submarine. Since the late 1970s the government has been considering the possibility of acquiring or developing a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines but high costs rendered the project economically unfeasible. With the transition to civilian rule, and especially during the 1990–1992 administration of President Fernando Collor de Mello, the federal government reduced the nuclear submarine programme budget. Under Lula, however, the project was revived. In March 2008, Brazil acquired the hull for a nuclear-propulsion attack submarine which it is currently developing in co-operation with France. The Brazilian company Odebrecht is the lead local partner in a joint venture with French shipbuilder DCNS SA, and President Rousseff recently inaugurated a new shipbuilding facility in Itaguaí, Rio de Janeiro, meant to expedite the project. According to the government, the first submarine is due to be commissioned in 2023.

In justification of this expenditure the government points to the nuclear submarine's speed and ability to patrol long distances without having to surface frequently, and its potential for technology and knowledge transfer. Some critics, including military officers, have questioned the wisdom of investing so heavily in this particular component of the deterrent strategy – potentially at the expense of other needs. Some have also suggested that, by joining the select number of countries that possess nuclear submarines (currently only five), Brazil could generate discomfort among its neighbours and create an uneasy power imbalance within the South Atlantic.⁷ Brazil's continued commitment to the project, however, is reflected by the fact that even as the 2013 defence budget is undergoing cuts due to the recent economic slowdown, the government has guaranteed financing for the nuclear submarine project and other strategic projects developed by the ministry of defence.⁸

In addition, Brazil has been working to develop a new satellite and radar-based surveillance system, the Blue Amazon Management System (SisGAAz). Apart from helping in sea rescues, the system is meant to enhance surveillance capability of the pre-salt oil fields in the South Atlantic. The system will integrate several different technologies and platforms, including software-defined radios, satellite communications, and long-range radar, and a submarine acoustic sensing system. The new vessels and other equipment are being used in military exercises that reflect the formulation of new threats related to the marine natural resources, for instance through simulations that involve a foreign-flag merchant ship hijacked by terrorists bent on attacking Brazilian oil platforms in the major oil fields of the Campos Basin, off the coast of Rio de Janeiro State.

One of the top defence priorities outlined in the new security strategy is the promotion of Brazil's defence industry, including the provision of subsidies for arms production and incentives for exports, with the goal of achieving greater military technological autonomy. However, key projects, including the nuclear submarine fleet, are due for completion only within a decade at the earliest; others, including plans to substitute another one or two aircraft carriers for the *São Paulo*, may not be implemented any time soon, especially given recent budgetary pressures. Some of the major initiatives to acquire and develop military technology (including the nuclear submarine) include a significant component of technological transfer. Despite its anti-NATO discourse, the Brazilian government still depends on partnerships with the US and European countries for developing key cutting-edge military technologies. Agreements signed over the past few years, including one with the UK, illustrate the combination of co-operation and distancing that have come to characterise Brazil's relations with NATO countries as they relate to the South Atlantic.

LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES

In addition to increased naval spending, Brazil has either put in place or stepped up older institutional strategies aimed at reinforcing its claims in the South Atlantic. Domestically, in the mid-2000s, the navy launched the 'Blue Amazon' campaign. This initiative, which draws its name from an analogy made with the resource-rich Amazon, is geared at fostering a maritime mentality by promoting the idea that South Atlantic resources are of vital interest to all Brazilians, hence demanding of new defence investments. Aspects of the initiative specifically target Brazilian youth with information and teaching materials such as textbooks, comic strips and exhibits highlighting the strategic importance of the sea. These materials, produced by an inter-ministerial committee and disseminated through the ministry of education, stress that Brazil's South Atlantic natural resources, particularly the oil reserves, demand closer attention and a stronger defence force.

The Blue Amazon project also seeks to clarify, and mobilise support for Brazil's continued attempts to extend its national waters by 900 000 km². The initial proposal was filed in June 2004 with Unclos, which allows coastal states to claim sovereign rights over the living and non-living resources of the sea and seabed in an exclusive economic zone extending up to 200 nautical miles from their coastal baselines, or from their continental shelves. Where the physical continental margin extends beyond 200 nautical miles, states have rights over the resources of the seabed to the outer limit of the continental shelf (subject to certain constraints defined in Article 76 of Unclos). Although the Brazilian government has scaled back its original proposal by roughly 20%, it has continued its efforts to refine the definition of the continental shelf. In this endeavour, Brazil has the advantage of having clearly defined maritime boundaries with its neighbours (in contrast to, for instance, Argentina, which has overlapping claims with the UK in the vicinity of the Malvinas/Falklands).

In the meantime Brazil continues a broad gamut of research programmes in the South Atlantic. Some of these, conducted through the navy's Brazilian Continental Shelf Survey Plan (Leplac), are high-technology surveys of the continental shelf, the geographic definition of which serves as the basis for the extension proposal. Other efforts aim to foster knowledge of the biodiversity within the maritime territory and coastal areas. Some

of these programmes require researchers to occupy continuously Brazilian islands within the South Atlantic, such as the São Pedro and São Paulo archipelago, which otherwise would be uninhabited. This constitutes another way of strengthening the Brazilian presence within the South Atlantic. A similar approach is seen in the drive to make some of these islands, such as Trindade, 1 200 km off Brazil's southeast coast, into World Heritage sites. In addition to boosting environmental conservation in those areas, such moves use international law and norms to further consolidate Brazilian sovereignty claims and its de facto presence in the South Atlantic.

The government has also worked to maintain its Antarctic research programme, which is run by the navy, and which the government deems vital to Brazil's participation in the Antarctic Treaty (to which it acceded in 1975), especially through meetings of the Scientific Committee for Antarctica Research. After a fire destroyed most of Estação Comandante Almirante Ferraz, the Brazilian Antarctic base in 2012, the government immediately began to build a new, improved base, reflecting the importance it accords Antarctica.⁹ These efforts are relevant to Brazil's maritime strategy because recent defence documents, and particularly the 2008 Defence White Paper, place the Antarctic continent within the South Atlantic zone of strategic importance for Brazil.¹⁰

DEFENCE CO-OPERATION

The third element in the developing Brazilian strategy for the South Atlantic involves stepped-up defence co-operation, not only with South American neighbours (particularly those along the South Atlantic seaboard, from the Guyana Shield states to the Patagonian nations) but also with countries along the west coast of Africa. Many of these are concerned that mining interests will lay exclusive claims to South Atlantic resources, perhaps forcing merchant ships to use costly roundabout routes. This diversification of ties entails redoubled efforts at bilateral and multilateral co-operation, both accompanied by a strong stress on South–South links.

Through bilateral co-operation programmes the Brazilian government has worked to construct a 'goodwill belt'¹¹ stretching all around the South Atlantic. The diversification of relations reaches far beyond the countries prioritised by Brazil's South–South development co-operation, which tends to focus on member states of the Community of Portuguese Language (Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa: CPLP). Military co-operation agreements signed by Brazil over the past ten years with countries in the region encompass a far wider range of nations, including many without Portuguese as one of their official languages. One of Brazil's key defence partners, for instance, is Namibia, with which Brazil first signed an agreement in 1994. Over the past decade it has greatly expanded co-operation efforts aimed at building up the Namibian navy through officer and cadet training, the provision of vessels, and logistics support. The agreements with Namibia have served as a model of sorts for more recent ties with other African countries along the Atlantic coast. Brazil has also intensified military co-operation with strategic partners such as South Africa, with which it is developing (through the India-Brazil-South Africa: IBSA dialogue forum) the Agile Darter (A-Darter), infra-red guided short-range air-to-air missile. More recently, the two countries have also discussed collaboration on a surveillance system for the South Atlantic.¹² In Guinea-Bissau, which has suffered recurrent political instability,

Brazil has assumed the leadership of the UN Peacebuilding Committee's Country-Specific Configuration, implementing technical co-operation as well as security reform projects, including the creation of the country's first police training centre.

Brazil has also deepened defence co-operation with Angola and Nigeria. Both countries are increasingly important economic and political partners for Brazil and are also significant purchasers of Brazilian defence equipment. The military division of Embraer SA, Brazil's state-owned aviation company, has recently sold EMB 314 light combat Super Tucano jet aircraft to Angola, Burkina Faso and Mauritania. Nigeria recently signed new military co-operation agreements with Brazil, expressing interest in acquiring vessels produced by Brazilian Navy contractor Empresa Gerencial de Projetos Navais (Engepron). Deepening ties with the Nigerian Navy will also include collaboration in prospecting for minerals in the South Atlantic. In addition to these states, Brazil has begun or intensified defence co-operation with nearly all countries along Africa's west coast. Programmes focus heavily on naval issues and typically cover officer training, which is often carried out in Portuguese even in non-CPLP countries. Training can take place either in the partner country or in Brazil, and many South Atlantic countries on the South American and African coasts, including Senegal and Angola, have begun sending soldiers to the Jungle Warfare Instruction Centre, commonly called CIGS, in the Brazilian Amazon. Other co-operation components include donations of equipment, including patrol vessels and logistical support. Finally, Brazil helps many of the African countries to conduct surveys of their side of the Atlantic continental shelf, disseminating its model of research and its discourse of national sovereignty over maritime resources.

On the multilateral side, Brazil has stepped up efforts to revive Zopacas as part of its broader effort to construct a South Atlantic identity. Although the initiative dates to the late 1980s, when coastal countries in the region were concerned with nuclear armaments proliferation, in the post-Cold War geostrategic context there is more focus on taking joint responsibility regarding the problems within the common maritime area, so as to avert interventions by outside powers. A Zopacas meeting in Montevideo in January 2013, at which defence ministers were present, placed strong emphasis on sharing Brazil's knowledge in search and rescue operations, maritime surveillance and continental shelf surveys (a separate statement referring to instability in Guinea-Bissau and the Democratic Republic of the Congo was also issued during the meeting).

Aside from Zopacas, Brazil is also part of other multilateral initiatives relevant to the South Atlantic, including the South America-Africa Summit mechanism of 49 African and 12 Latin American nations, and IBSA. (Through the latter, Brazil has been participating in the Ibsamar naval exercises.) Within the CPLP, an organisation developed in the mid-1990s, initially to promote cultural ties, Brazil has supported defence co-operation (including multilateral exercises held off the Brazilian coast in 2013) and strengthened state institutions in Guinea-Bissau. Although the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) grouping does not yet have a concrete co-operation programme for defence and security, security discussions are under way that might hold relevance to the South Atlantic. For example, a January 2013 meeting of high-level security representatives from the BRICS covered topics in non-traditional security, such as terrorism, piracy and cyber-security, including the BRICS cable project.¹³ All these efforts may signal a growing geostrategic importance of the South Atlantic within regional, trans-regional and other multilateral entities.

CONCLUSION

Brazil's growing interest in the South Atlantic is reflected not only in the government's official discourse, which highlights the need to protect Brazilian maritime resources, but also in its practices (particularly with respect to domestic efforts to promote a maritime mentality), international legal and institutional strategies and rapidly expanding defence co-operation along the perimeter of the South Atlantic. All these initiatives represent a concerted effort not only to strengthen Brazilian sovereignty over a portion of the South Atlantic and disseminate the idea that its maritime resources are a new target of potential threats, but also to promote this perspective throughout the region in a bid to keep out states not considered as belonging within the region.

These efforts are novel in at least three respects. First, they are trans-regional, involving a clear focus not only on South America, where Brazil has a long history of military ties, but also West Africa, where its involvement was, until recently, far more episodic. Second, Brazil's initiatives in the South Atlantic highlight not only currently exploited, known natural resources, but also (perhaps, even more) the area's potential resources, particularly those of the marine subsoil. More specifically, the possibility of rapid technological developments that will permit exploration of the pre-salt oil on a commercial scale, and the assumption that tapping into these reserves will generate substantial government revenues for Brazil, have prompted a more precautionary stance by the government. Third, although those efforts reflect a new degree of intensity in Brazil's defence relations in the South Atlantic, the ties are not entirely new in that they include reviving historic links between South America and Africa, and the South Atlantic and Antarctica (although until its emergence within Brazilian maritime strategy, the latter was never cited as one of Brazil's security priorities). Hence Brazil's growing South Atlantic interests may have consequences beyond its national territory or legal waters. For example, the co-operation that forms part of this strategy suggests Brazil's growing relevance to security in Africa.

These multiple strategies have so far allowed Brazil to proceed with its naval modernisation programme and greatly to expand its defence co-operation programmes with partners all along the South Atlantic perimeters. At some point, however, the renewed nationalism suggested by the country's approach in the South Atlantic may generate tensions, particularly if states that have previously contested Brazilian leadership in Latin America come to view Brasilia's approach with suspicion. Even with recent budget cuts imposed on the armed forces, key components of Brazil's South Atlantic strategy are likely to move forward and these will no doubt alter, if not radically transform, power dynamics within the region.

ENDNOTES

- 1 The authors wish to thank the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Rio de Janeiro (Faperj) for supporting the research for this paper, and Chris Alden for his thoughtful comments on an earlier draft of the text.
- 2 Speech by Foreign Minister Antonio de Aguiar Patriota at the UN Security Council on 6 August 2013. Authors' translation. Available in Portuguese at <http://diplomaciapublica.itamaraty.gov.br>.

- gov.br/11-onu/35-organisacoes-regionais-e-a-onu-trabalhando-pela-paz-e-pela-seguranca-internacionais, accessed 16 August 2013.
- 3 Interview with minister of defence Celso Amorim, Brasília, 6 August 2013.
 - 4 According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Sipri), in 2012 Brazil's military expenditure was only 1.5% of GDP; however, Brazil remains Latin America's largest military spender and one of the world's 15 highest, ranking 11th in 2011 and 10th in 2012. See Sipri Fact Sheet 2013, *Trends in world military expenditure 2012*, <http://books.sipri.org/files/FS/SIPRIFS1304.pdf>, accessed 16 August 2013.
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 - 8 Beck M & C Jungblut, 'Passam de R\$ 4 bi cortes no orçamento da Defesa', (R\$ 4 billion cuts in defence budget), *O Globo*, 30 July 2013. See <http://oglobo.globo.com/pais/passam-de-4-bi-cortes-no-orcamento-da-defesa-9278334>, accessed 16 August 2013.
 - 9 Interview with minister of defence Celso Amorim, Brasília, 6 August 2013.
 - 10 Brazil's interests in Antarctica appear both co-operative and competitive. Argentina and Chile helped Brazil to continue its Antarctic research programme after the 2012 fire at the Brazilian base. At the same time, several emerging powers, including China and India, have recently taken significant steps to strengthen their Antarctic programmes and Brazil is interested in supporting a common South American position on the region.
 - 11 'Cinturão de Boa Vontade', alluded to by the defence minister at the Brazilian War College (ESG), March 2012. Available at http://www.defesa.gov.br/arquivos/2012/mes03/esg_marco_2012.pdf, accessed 16 August 2013.
 - 12 Brazil is holding talks with South Africa to develop an oceanographic satellite exclusive to the South Atlantic. See http://thebricspost.com/brazil-sa-to-jointly-develop-satellite-for-south-atlantic/#.UhLH59L2_ZV, accessed 16 August 2013.
 - 13 Ministry of External Affairs of India "BRICS" New Delhi, April 2013, http://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/BRICS_for_XP_April_2013.pdf, accessed 16 August, 2013.

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