Drugs, Piracy and Sovereignty: Brazil, United States and European Union's Security Perspectives for South Atlantic*

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Abstract: This paper proposes a review of the Brazilian perspective for South Atlantic maritime security to recognize and articulate the United States and European Union's initiatives. First, the article shows the main threats to South Atlantic security, what sustains the argument that the current Brazilian perspective as inadequate and counterproductive. Second, the article points out the historical and conceptual backgrounds that qualify Brazil as a facilitator between Northern and Southern efforts for good governance of the South Atlantic. Finally, it points out United States and European Union initiatives that may deserve Brazilian attention and commitment.

Keywords: Maritime security, South Atlantic, Brazil, United States, European Union, transnational criminal organizations
Schlagworte: Maritime Sicherheit, Südatlantik, Brasilien, Vereinigte Staaten, Europäische Union, transnationale organisierte Kriminalität

1. Introduction

For 20 years, at least, Brazilian defence-policymaking has followed at default-mode due to the absence of clearly hostile actors with capabilities and intent to harm Brazil and its interests. Moreover, after the Second World War, the United States consolidated themselves as the regional hegemon and the American continent 'free' of a regional second great power.[1] In South America, Brazilian continuous superior economic development over its peers in the last 30 years also determines its superiority in the distribution of military power. Particularly, Brazil has been able to build the strongest army of the Southern Cone, which imposes a regional deterrence and stabilizing strategy.[2]

From the Brazilian perspective, that would change as a result of the void in the Western hemisphere as consequence of the United States' 'Asian-Pacific turning point'. Therefore, Brazil advances defence programs and reforms considering that conventional threats can rise after 2025 and from competition for security or a leading role between regional and extra-regional countries on South Atlantic.[3] Nevertheless, Brazil is still developing an understanding that those and other threats will emerge from transnational threats facing the South Atlantic today.

The novelty of the South Atlantic as a new global source of energy should not elude its severe problems of insecurity because of low levels of governance. Since 2004, the South Atlantic is the world's largest pathway of drugs, and, since 2012, the Gulf of Guinea has risen as the sanctuary of the most violent piracy activities.[4] The correlations among those activities to smuggling, depletion of natural resources, unsecure sea-lanes, insurgencies and corruption affect West African and the South American states, including Brazil.

First, several of those criminal organizations are transnational and related to the high levels of violence and unsafety in Brazilian capital cities, especially those in its north-eastern region. Second, Brazil is the primary client of South Atlantic commercial sea lines and among the top investors and business partners of West Africa. Third, Brazil fears that an unstable South Atlantic can be an invitation for the United States and European countries to build up their military presences in the region. This is especially sensitive during a period of conclusion of the international and national regulations towards the offshore hydrocarbons deposits' ownerships and standards of exploitation.[5]

Therefore, while the United States (US), European Union (EU) and individual European countries' security initiatives around the South Atlantic do not provide impressive positive results yet, Brazil does not collaborate or simply rejects most of the initiatives. Brazilian negative perceptions of the US and EU have different reasons, but all of them have equally worsened since Brazil launched a new approach to securing its maritime domains and exclusive economic zones (EEZs) in 2007.

Since Lula's administration, Brazil has a more incisive agenda for the South Atlantic, and Brazilian officials state that Brazil aims to see the South Atlantic free from great powers.[6] However, Brazil is not able to reset the overall US and European initiatives, especially on the West African coast, just by re-launching the Zone for Peace and Cooperation of South Atlantic (ZPCSA).[7] Historically, Brazil has always aimed to perform the role of a moderator between Northern and Southern hemispheres. For the sake of a good governance of the South Atlantic, Brazil needs to be able to enhance that to be a security provider of the region, by selecting and articulating those US and EU initiatives that are more promising. Only by providing positive signs of commitment and results, Brazil shall be able to shape and improve the South Atlantic security environment.

* This article has been double blind peer reviewed.
1 *John Mearsheimer*, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics (New York: WW Norton, 2001).
2 *Lucas Rezende*, Sob e Desce: Explicando a Cooperação em Defesa na América do Sul (Brasilia: UnB, 2015); *Érico Esteves Duarte*, "Securing the South Atlantic: In Favour of a Revised Brazilian Maritime Strategy," in Enduring NATO, Rising Brazil (Rome: NATO Defence College, 2015).
3 Brasil, Estratégia Nacional de Defesa (Brasília: Ministério da Defesa, 2012).
4 *UNODC*, World Drug Report (Vienna: United Nations, 2013); *UNODC*, Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa: A Threat Assessmnent (Vienna: United Nations, 2013).

5 *Analúcia Pereira*, "South Atlantic, Southern Africa and South America: Cooperation and Development", Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations 2, no. 4 (September, 2013), http://seer.ufrgs.br/index.php/austral/article/view/41304.
6 The South Atlantic was for the first time pointed out as a strategic region by Brazil in 2005's National Defence Policy and successively reinforced in 2008 and 2012's National Defence Strategy and 2012's White Book.
7 The 2013's Declaration of Montevideo proposed a regional agenda of maritime security. After a celebrated initiative, there was no follow-up and nowadays ZPCSA has limited support outside and inside Brazilian government. *Érico Duarte*, "Brazil, the Blue Economy and the Maritime Security of the South Atlantic," Journal of the Indian Ocean Region 12, no. 1 (2016): 97-111.

2. The South Atlantic Insecurity and the Brazilian Maritime Approach

The greatest challenge to Southern Atlantic countries is already upon them: to convert the present and projected hydrocarbons and related trade's revenues in sustainable development, reversing the evidence of the Dutch Disease and 'oil curse' in the region, that means the problems related to the disarticulation of other productive sectors and the spread of corruption.[8] Due to a history of political instability and socio-economic underdevelopment, older threats have also increased from the overall new richness and ill governance of the South Atlantic. Former drug cartels, insurgencies and robbery gangs evolved into transnational networks of criminal pipelines, criminalizing South American and West African regions as sanctuaries and enclaves.[9]

2.1 Drug Cartels' Transregional Networks and Impacts

South American cartels have the monopoly on cocaine production. However, the successful US, EU and Mexican anti-drug operations in the North Atlantic and Caribbean have changed the drugs' direct maritime shipment routes. Today, West Africa is the trans-shipment area for smuggling cocaine across the Atlantic into Europe. The new routes proved to be cheaper and more effective in evading anti-narcotics operations and forces than previous ones, as the drug cartels found in Africa more available workforce and complicity from regional governments.[10]

The United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime reports that the maritime shipping of drugs via West Africa has increased, though the apprehensions have not increased proportionally. In 2013, the exports of cocaine from South America remained stable around 400 tons, and the apprehensions in the United States and Europe have decreased 65% and 18%, respectively, while the apprehensions doubled from 78 to 162 tons in Central America and West Africa. On one hand, several West African countries report very small seizures of few kilograms of cocaine, and most of them lacks borders control and share, in fact, ungoverned or failed borders. On another hand, while the UN estimated a reduction of cocaine transiting West Africa on its way to Europe from 21 tons in 2009 to 18 tons in 201, the tonnage of cocaine seized from shipping containers increased five times in the same period, and the sizes of individual apprehensions have reduced continuously since 2005. The only conclusion is that cocaine trafficking has succeeded to evade controls in West Africa.[11]

The overall consequences on both coasts of the South Atlantic are tremendous. One can figure them out by comparing the drug cartels' revenues to those of blood diamonds. While the latter achieved its peak around US$ 300 million, only one ton of cocaine makes up US$ 50 million.[12]

The regional impact of drug cartels in South America is old and vast. Particularly after the end of the Cold War, it was the civil war in Colombia against Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – FARCs) and cocaine barons that became the main reason for instability in the last years, promoting the largest armed conflict in the region; moments of escalation among Colombia, Venezuela and Ecuador; and was the main issue of diplomatic tension of Brazil-US relations on 1990s. While Colombia turned out to be the largest US military footprint in South America, that development was one the main reasons for Brazilian promotion of a regional regime with attention to regional security – the South American Defence Council at the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) – without US participation.

Domestically, drug-trafficking is one the most controversial issues in Brazil. Its links to other types of crime and involvement of border and urban poor areas have created all sorts of institutional and sociological dysfunctionalities. One of the most critical issues was the review in 2013 of the restriction for the employment of armed forces in policing roles in border areas and urban slams, despite the strong opposition from inside the armed forces and other groups. The expansion of military role for provision of public order is temerarious due to the institutional consequences of Brazilian military regime, such as the low-institutionalized civil-military relations and the low standards of performance and security-awareness of Brazilian police forces.[13]

2.2 West African Piracies' High Operational Standards

The seamanship's skills, the criminal network and governmental co-optation and under-reporting also are features of South Atlantic piracy activities. From opportunistic sea robbers until 2007, the South Atlantic pirates became the most violent and operationally versatile of the day. Remarkably, they achieved the mark of 400 thousands of barrels of petroleum stolen per day in 2012, costing to the region between US$ 500 million and US$ 2 billion in damages.[14]

Preliminary International Maritime Bureau's report on piracy indicates there were 35 violent incidents against ships and 80 violent incidents against crews in West Africa in 2015.[15] However, it is common sense that the official numbers are only a fraction of the reality. Besides the connivance of corrupted police forces and governmental officials, ship-owners and

8 *Paul Isbell*, "Atlantic Energy and the Changing Global Energy Flow Map," Atlantic Future Scientific Paper 17 (2014).
9 *Adeniyi Osinowo*, "Combating Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea," Africa Security Brief February, no. 30 (2015): 1–8; *Chatham House,* "Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea," Report of the Conference Held at Chatham House, London, 6 December 2012 (London: Chatham House, 2013).
10 *Ashley Bybee*, "The Twenty-First Century Expansion of the Transnational Drug Trade in Africa", Journal of International Affairs 66, no. 1 (2012): 69–84.
11 *UNODC*, Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa: A Threat Assessment (Vienna: United Nations, 2013); *UNODC*, World Drug Report (Vienna: United Nations, 2015).

12 *Douglas Farah*, "Terrorist-Criminal Pipelines and Criminalized States Emerging Alliances", PRISM Security Studies Journal 2, no. 3 (June 2011): 15–32.
13 See: *Celso Amroim*. Portaria Normativa n. 3.461 – Garantia da Lei e da Ordem (Brasilia: Ministério da Defesa do Brasil, 19 December of 2013).
14 *Osinowo*, "Combating Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea"; Chatham House, "Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea."
15 *International Maritime Bureau*, Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships (London, 2016): 10.

governments lower the numbers of incidents or do not report to avoid shipping costs and bad reputation.[16]

Operationally, the West African piracy has four striking features.[17] First, while Somalian piracy uses fishing vessels and skiffs as platforms, and light weapons, the West African piracy uses speedboats and heavy weapons, such as rocket launchers, grenades and machine guns. Second, most piracy in the world consists of low-risk robbery and Somalian piracy performs opportunity hijacking of personnel on large area of operations. The Gulf of Guinea's pirates are able to conduct surgical attacks on the high seas, and controlling and sealing ships through thousands of kilometres to steal tons of petroleum or goods. Third, they are also able to assault ships on ports and onshore facilities, performing more versatile and complex operations. Fourth, they have a transnational criminal network on readiness to support their operations and to smuggle and trade large volumes of petroleum and goods in several countries of the Gulf of Guinea. In 2011 for instance, after assaulting the *Duzgit Venture* in Benin and failing to transfer the oil to a barge in Gabon, the pirates sailed the vessel to Nigeria, where they tried to transfer only lighter cargo and kidnapped the captain.[18] The African states are deeply concerned about the expansion of the use of private military security companies, mainly by European ship-owners and charterers to protect their ships.

A controversial point is the use of private security companies. On one side, it seems to be a trend among European ship-owners and charterers to protect their ships in response the lack of credibility of African security forces and perceived success in the Gulf of Aden.[19] On another hand, African and Brazilian hold other perspectives. African officials doubt the legitimacy and competence of private maritime security companies to face the violent pirates of Gulf of Guinea,[20] and for Brazilian officials those companies compete with the agenda of defence diplomacy and cooperation between Brazilian and African navies, for instance, with Angola and Namibia. [21]

The problem is that the damages caused by the drug syndicates and piracy gangs operating go beyond private property. On the one hand, they were able to criminalize certain areas of Latin American and West African countries, as they need *ungoverned* or *stateless* corridors on land to run their businesses. On another hand, there is coordination between piracy and drug organizations with terrorists, militias and insurgencies groups. The Al-Qaeda in the Islamic

Maghreb (AQIM) has provided the service of land transportation of cocaine from West Africa to Europe for a long time. Moreover, the history and structures of several piracy organizations in the Gulf of Guinea are related to insurgency movements, for instance, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) in the case of Nigerian piracy.[22]

The association between criminal organizations, on the one hand, and terrorist and insurgent groups, on another, is the most perilous one. Its immediate and potential consequences, particularly after the series of terrorist attacks and attempts in European countries in the last two years, may have a decisive impact in resetting the irresolute articulation between the US and EU regarding extra-regional military presence in West Africa. In the short term, their focus is concentrated on the Middle East, though African countries such as Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria have emerged vulnerable to radicalisation and violent extremism, and all have active presences of extremist groups affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

2.3 The Limited Effect of Brazilian Maritime Security Approach

Brazil has a great concern that new energy renaissance will be a future source of regional instabilities among its neighbours and cause for a feared US and European interventionism. On the one hand, Brazilian areas of pre-salt deposits are not entirely safe of contestation. Most of them are found at the bottom of seas of recently conceded exclusive economic zones (EEZs), but not all. The United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf still evaluates 19% of the area that Brazil claimed for extension of the continental shelf.[23] One the other hand, Brazil considers the potential threat of spill-over effects of disputes over EEZs and national waters among other South Atlantic countries, notably in the Gulf of Guinea and, more recently, the one between Argentina and the United Kingdom over the Falklands recently discovered hydrocarbons deposits.

To deal with all that, Brazil initially tried to launch an alternative approach for South Atlantic governance. In January of 2013, it supported the Montevideo Declaration, which relaunching the Zone of Peace and Cooperation for South Atlantic (ZPCSA) as the key Brazilian diplomatic initiative for the South Atlantic. The initiative aimed to be a maritime counterpart to the South American Defence Council of the Union for South American Nations (UNASUR), providing a regional and multilateral architecture for confidence building, management of crisis, and cooperation on common security issues. However, ZPCSA has been unsuccessful in playing that role. First, it has a larger and more diverse number of members. Second, while the South American Defence Council is a priority initiative under Brazilian Ministry of Defence, ZPCSA is a disarticulated, understaffed and underfunded effort under the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. That was one of the results of President Dilma's distress with the

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16 *Maritime Executive*, "2014: Gulf of Guinea Piracy Declines 18%," The Maritime Executive, accessed October 21, 2015, http://www.maritime-executive.com/article/2014-gulf-of-guinea-piracy-declines-18; *Charles Ukeje*, "The Abuja Declaration and the Challenge of Implementing a Maritime Security Strategy in the Gulf of Guinea and the South Atlantic," Journal of the Indian Ocean Region 11, no. 2 (December 2015): 220–35, doi:10.1080/19480881.2015.1074784.

17 *Ali Kamal-Deen,* "The Anatomy of Gulf of Guinea Piracy," Naval War College Review 68, 1 (2015): 93–118.

18 Nigeria has the world's highest figures of kidnapped crews of 2015: 19. *International Maritime Bureau*, Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships (London, 2016): 10.

19 *Annina Bürgin,* "Spain's Fight Against Maritime Piracy: The Legitimacy of Maritime Security Governance," Contemporary Security Policy 35, no. 1 (April 2014): 96–115, doi:10.1080/13523260.2014.88433; *Annina Bürgin* & *Patricia Schneider,* "Regulation of Private Maritime Security Companies in Germany and Spain: A Comparative Study," Ocean Development & International Law 46, no.2 (2015):123-137.

20 Chatham House, "Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea.":22-26.

21 *Marcos dos Reis* & *Tamiris Santos,* "Análise de Ameaças Transnacionais Contemporâneas no Entorno Estratégico Brasileiro", Revista da Escola de Guerra Naval 20, no 1 (2014): 218.

22 *Kamal-Deen*, "The Anatomy of Gulf of Guinea Piracy"; Farah, "Terrorist-Criminal Pipelines and Criminalized States Emerging Alliances".

23 *United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf*, Outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines: Submission by Brazil (Geneva, 13 March 2013).

Brazilian diplomatic service, incurring in the reduction of its budget, participation in international organizations and programs in Africa. Third, South Africa is unwilling to support ZPCSA and has its own initiative through the Southern African Development Community (SADEC) and the Southern African Maritime Strategy. South Africa proposes a bi-ocean governance framework involving Southern African countries, India and Australia. For the Brazilian chancellery, that framework is unfeasible and invites too many players for the South Atlantic arena.[24]

Beyond that, Brazilian efforts in favour a security governance of the South Atlantic cannot avoid the involvement with the countries on the edges of those transnational crime organizations' area of operations. There are no official conversations with the European Union on the matter, and informal talks with the US Navy advanced little. Strikingly, Brazilian security official documentation neglects international cooperation against drug trafficking.

3. Historical and Conceptual Backgrounds of Brazilian Traditional Eclectic Pragmatism

To grasp Brazilian foreign policy, one has to understand that historical continuity constrains it and that the possibility of change, even on a small scale, is critical to its diplomatic branch. In spite of the Grotian rhetoric, Brazil has been very pragmatic and non-normative in pursuing its development and autonomy, in its most sophisticated formulation in 1974, under General Ernesto Geisel's administration.[25]

3.1 Brazilian Institutional Pragmatism

On the one hand, in the international relationships with more powerful countries, Brazil has avoided bilateral relationships on issues other than technical and very general ones. Conversely, it has favoured using high-institutionalized multilateral organizations as channels to dilute and block asymmetrical relations with Northern countries. Brazilian behaviour in these forums has been cautious in pursuing relative gains of power such as trade. Moreover, it has only worked for absolute gains on issues such human rights, poverty and environment.

On the other hand, in the regional relationships with less powerful Southern Hemisphere countries and, especially in the cases of neighbours, Brazil has used low-institutionalized and limited multilateral regimes exclusively to optimize its asymmetrical condition of power and avoid others countries' conditions of blocking it. In these instances, Brazil has attended the relative gains of power by first, acting proactively against anti-Brazilian coalitions, which could have drained resources from the primary directive of development to pacify regional instabilities. Accordingly, Brazil has always promoted regional organizations that should be cheap. That is by way of example the case of the Group of Rio, Mercosur, Community of Countries of Portuguese Language (CPLP) and even the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR). Second, these regional regimes worked to open Southern Hemisphere national markets to the expansion of Brazilian public and private enterprises, which advanced Brazilian economic hegemony in the region.[26]

3.2 Brazilian Maritime Security Approach and BRICS

Brazil's recent emphasis on South-South relationships over a balanced North-South foreign agenda was unprecedented. However, there is no evidence that Brazil desires to search BRICS countries in the implementation of an elaborate plan regarding a new status quo of emergent powers. Any Brazilian deliberation along with the BRICS just took form five years after Goldman Sachs' statement in 2001 and,[27] even nowadays, most of Brazilian decisions and actions seem to focus on specific BRICS rather than on the execution of a planned agenda for BRICS as a bloc. Brazil uses it as soft power, enjoying looking *big* in line with Russia and China and, opportunistically, after the crisis of 2008, as a pressure bloc in the international finance regimes, particularly over European recent economic dismal.[28] In spite of those gains, Brazilian diplomatic planning never had so large latitude to operate its foreign policy, and Brazil did not search for strategic partnerships with BRICS as well as any other country more powerful than itself.[29]

Therefore, the Brazilian perspective for South Atlantic security does not embrace BRICS. Brazil's Foreign Service points out that India and China have enough challenges to deal with on the Indian Ocean. It is either unable to see how a Russian involvement could be of any help. In fact, Brazil fears the rise of clashing interests among Russia, China, Europe and the United States with potential negative spill-over effects on Brazilian initiatives. When noticing US engagement in the Pacific in the containment of China, and the Western tensions with Russia in Ukraine and Syria, the Brazilian perspective looks sound.

Those historical and theoretical expositions explain Brazilian resistance to any security cooperation directly with Northern countries. They support the statement that it is unlikely for Brazil to join any proposal of combined collaboration with the US and

24 *Alcides Vaz,* "Brazilian Approaches to Maritime Security Cooperation in IBSA and the Prospects for an Atlantic–Indian Maritime Security Governance," Journal of the Indian Ocean Region 11, no. 2 (December 2015): 170–83, doi:10.1080/19480881.2015.1067382.

25 *Matias Spektor,* "Origens e Direção do Pragmatismo Ecumênico e Responsável (1974-1979)," Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional 47, no. 2 (December 2004): 191–222, doi:10.1590/S0034-73292004000200007; *Letícia Pinheiro,* "Traídos pelo Desejo: Um Ensaio sobre a Teoria e a Prática da Política Externa Brasileira Contemporânea," Contexto Internacional 22, no. 2 (2000): 305–335.

26 *Stratfor,* "The Geopolitics of Brazil: An Emergent Power's Struggle with Geography", Stratfor, 2012, http://www.stratfor.com/sample/analysis/geopolitics-brazil-emergent-powers-struggle-geography.

27 The acronym BRIC, without S, has as origin a portfolio report from the fund bank in 30 November of 2001.

28 *Leonardo Ramos et al.,* "The Global Economic Governance and the Challenges of the G-20 after the Financial Crisis: An Analysis of the Positions of the United States, China, Germany and Brazil," Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional 55, no. 2 (December 2012): 10–27, http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0034-73292012000200002.

29 Note that, in terms of current programs of acquisition or development of weapons systems, Brazil has a very diversified portfolio of foreign partners and none with Russia, China or India, but one with South Africa. *Christiano Ambros,* "Hierarquia Internacional da Indústria Global de Defesa: o Trilema da Modernização de Defesa no caso Brasileiro," *Anais do IX Encontro Nacional da Associação Brasileira de Estudos de Defesa* (Florianópolis, 2016); *Srdjan Vucetic & Erico Duarte,* "New Fighter Aircraft Acquisitions in Brazil and India: Why Not Buy American?," Politics & Policy 43, no. 3 (2015): 401-425.

European armed forces in the region, as well as for Brazil to block, as it did before, any NATO activity in the South Atlantic. The proposal of a South Atlantic Treaty Organization (SATO) in the 1970s was one the reasons for the stronger Brazilian divergences with South Africa since then and one of the main reason for the creation of the Zone for Peace and Cooperation of South Atlantic (ZPCSA) under the UN. More recently, Portugal's attempt to redirect NATO's new strategic concept to the South Atlantic received a harsh Brazilian response between 2009 and 2010.[30]

The same can be said for the odds of a direct Brazilian security relationship with Northern powers outside robust multilateral institutions. Therefore, the solution is to search for US and EU multilateral security cooperation initiatives, which allow Brazilian cooperation directly with South American and West African organizations and countries, and yet to consider further international organizations' initiatives in the region, such as those from the UN and Interpol.

4. Brazilian Cooperation with the US and EU in the South Atlantic Rim

The best model of cooperation between Brazil, the US and EU is the creation of the Interregional Coordination Centre for Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea, located in Cameroon. It receives US, European and Brazilian technical and financial resources and provides West African regional organizations with capabilities to face piracy and transnational threats.

It evolved from the Summit of Heads of State and Government on Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea of June of 2013. Brazil's participation followed the invitation from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and it was able to play a central role in the designing of that centre, along with conducting several training and exercises operations along with West African navies since then. Today, the centre is under construction, and the US, EU and Brazilian roles are merely supportive. For consideration of further possibilities, it is relevant to contextualize the US and EU's perspectives and actions regarding the South Atlantic.

4.1 United States

The US never had a traditional strategic interest in Africa, and during the Cold War the South Atlantic division of areas of influence was very clear, and Africa was under the European ones, especially France.[31] That changed with the creation of the US Africa Command in 2007, with responsibility for all African countries, except Egypt, and headquarters in Stuttgart. It was created especially to counter terrorism and provide humanitarian assistance, but it also engaged in supporting a more secure environment in the Gulf of Guinea. Although US forces have an advanced HQ in Djibouti, the demands

of force employment everywhere else and the regional sensibilities make the US to adopt palliatives and spin control measures in West Africa.[32] Consequently, the US has no dedicated assets or operations in the Gulf of Guinea and has redeployed 10% of its Atlantic naval assets to the Pacific.[33] However, it does not support "expanding regional naval forces or deploying Western naval forces to fill a perceived security void", as stated by the AFRICOM Deputy Commander for Civil Affairs, Ambassador Christopher Dell.[34] The US perspective focuses on building partner capacities and working alongside European and African partners and regional organizations to strengthen African capabilities to produce regional solutions to regional insecurity problems.[35]

The US leading maritime initiative is the African Coastal and Border Security Program (ACBSP), through which the US supplies specialized military equipment for the patrol and defence of coastal waters to African countries. However, it offers training in intelligence operations and airborne surveillance only in some cases. The provision of training follows two other programs. Under the initiative of the African Partnership Station (APS), a navy ship serves as a continuing sea base of operations and a floating schoolhouse to provide assistance and training to the Gulf nations. Moreover, since 2010 the annual joint exercises Obangame Express takes place with participation of European and Brazilian navies.[36]

Nonetheless, several observers already pointed out that boarding and patrolling training and exercises are not enough to face the threats of transnational organized crime (Cepik and Borba 2011). The African armed service officers demand education on strategic planning and command and control to be able to deal with the coastal and land dimensions of the regional criminal organizations. Moreover, Brazil could expand its expertise and action to design the Namibian Navy and graduate thousands of naval officers.

4.2 European Union

Although it is not yet possible to establish a strong causality, the expansion of EU security initiatives in West Africa followed the reduction of French military presence and role.[37] The expansion of the EU's role in West Africa started during deliberations of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), which created room for France and UK to establish regular contacts and to work together in meetings about West Africa. That laid the foundation for a shared understanding that expanded to the other EU members. Another dimension of the EU's role in the South Atlantic is a maritime one.[38]

30 *Pedro Seabra*, "A Case of Unmet Expectations: Portugal and the South Atlantic," Portuguese Journal of Social Science 13, no. 3 (September 2014): 331–46, doi:10.1386/pjss.13.3.331_1.

31 *Lysias Dodd Gilbert, Ufo Okeke Uzodike, and Christopher Isike,* "The United States Africa Command: Security for Whom?," Journal of Pan African Studies 2, no. 9 (March 2, 2009): 264–81.

32 *David Francis*, US Strategy in Africa: AFRICOM, Terrorism and Security Challenges (New York: Routledge, 2011).

33 *Raghavendra Mishra*, "Maritime Military Context of the US Rebalance: Strategic Basis and Prognosis," Maritime Affairs: Journal of the National Maritime Foundation of India 10, no. 2 (July 3, 2014): 52–76, doi:10.1080/09733159.2014.972668.

34 *Chatham House,* "Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea," 31.

35 *United States*, United States Maritime Security Strategy: A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower. (Secretary of Navy, 2015).

36 *Gilbert, Uzodike,* and *Isike,* "The United States Africa Command"; Lauren Ploch, "Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa," Congressional Research Service: Report, (3 April 2010): 1–41.

37 *Victor-Manuel Vallin,* "France as the Gendarme of Africa, 1960-2014," Political Science Quarterly (Wiley-Blackwell) 130, no. 1 (March 2015): 79–101, doi:10.1002/polq.12289.

38 *Tony Chafer,* "The UK and France in West Africa: Toward Convergence?," African Security 6, no. 3/4 (July 2013): 234–56, doi:10.1080/19392206.2013.853583.

Since the 1999 Helsinki Summit, there has been a watershed effort towards an 'EU Maritime Dimension Study' (2005-2006), which evolved into an integrated maritime policy. That evolved into two complementary policies: the Marine and Maritime Agenda of Growth and Jobs – or Blue Growth – and the European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS), organized and implemented by action plans. EU maritime agencies are the Community Fisheries Control Agency, the European Maritime Safety Agency and FRONTEX. They complement each other and have as boundaries the wider Mediterranean, North and Baltic seas.[39]

Consequently, the EU security perspective for the South Atlantic is still in an assessment stage; more articulated initiatives are dependent on previous French-UK efforts in collaboration with ECOWAS, essentially, military training exercises and centres for peacekeeping training. There is no clear articulation with South American countries regarding transnational criminal activities and groups, though the nature of South Atlantic criminal organizations clearly shows the need for transatlantic efforts.[40]

One possible transatlantic venue is the current EU-level measures to the development of Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE) that shall link systems such as the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR), and embrace the Atlantic region. One can recommend the articulation of this initiative along with the Interregional Centre in Cameroon, as this one can perform a liaison role in collaboration with the Regional Centre of Maritime Traffic of South Atlantic Area (Centro Regional de Tráfego Marítimo da Área Marítima do Atlântico Sul – CRT-AMAS). That is the integration of the Brazilian system of maritime traffic control with Argentina's and Uruguay's.

4.3 United Nations and Interpol

Finally, the Transnational Crime Units (TCU), a UN initiative in collaboration with Interpol and ECOWAS, will have limited results if they operate just in West Africa countries (Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau). In that sense, Brazil should assume a leading role in expanding those surveillance and anti-transnational crime units to South America. The current timing is sound, as Brazil designs new surveillance systems for its land and maritime borders.[41]

5. Closing Remarks

All Brazilian security and defence policies are designed regarding the absence of conventional immediate threat. This also resulted in diffused policies and severe defence budget cuts. The rise of the South Atlantic as a stable source of minerals and energy changed that. On the one hand, the recently achieved Brazilian

virtual independence from energy imposes that its armed forces be able to secure that essential provision for its national development. The reality of the South Atlantic as a stable source of minerals and energy are creating new economic and political dynamics, and some of them can have destabilizing effects. For instance, the recently found deposits of resources on the Falklands Islands will have to be addressed to avoid the resurgence of disputes between Argentina and United Kingdom.

Furthermore, Brazil's maritime security approach, as well as those of regional countries, has blind spots regarding current transnational threats and their national and regional destabilizing effects.

Drug cartels are notoriously one of the most critical problems of Brazilian security, impacting on the high levels of violence on its cities. They also impact regional security, as they move their production centres throughout South America. More recently, drug trafficking has become a maritime security issue of wider scope since West Africa has become a main base of operations, strengthening other criminal groups, such as insurgents, terrorists and warlords.

Another regional transnational threat already tracked down is the Gulf of Guinea's piracy. Having benefited from the expansion of drilling activities and maritime trade and the criminal pipelines along criminalized stateless areas on the region, West Africa pirates perform high-risk and complex operations. The ultimate result has international reach and causes figureless damage.

Brazil is the main client of South Atlantic resources and sea-lanes, therefore the country with the strongest interest for its security. However, it does not yet have the means and the legitimacy to be the sole regional player. If and until that day comes, Brazil will have to figure out a way to cooperate with the United States and European countries to face those transnational threats. The possibility of extra-regional unilateral initiatives, besides potentially being ineffective, may generate regional suspicions and misperceptions that should be avoided.

Brazil is historically against cooperation with the United States and Europe on strategic issues. Even so, anyone can see that Brazil is able to complement several of US and European security initiatives on West Africa, which will continue to have limited results if not expanded, and that would demand a Brazilian commitment not only with the African partners. Training programs on intelligence operations and maritime surveillance may be a possibility. Moreover, it is unavoidable to have some measure of exchange between Brazil's Regional Centre of Maritime Traffic of South Atlantic Area and European Union's Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE). Finally, Brazil should be much more proactive in working with the United Nations and Interpol's anti-organized crime units, already present in West Africa, in order to operate in South America.

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40 *European Commission,* "Action Plan for a Maritime Strategy in the Atlantic Area" (European Union, 2013); *European Council*, "European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS) – Action Plan" (European Union, 2014); European Commission, "Developing a Maritime Strategy for the Atlantic Ocean Area" (European Union, 2011).
41 *Flavia Fagundes & Érico Duarte*, "International Cooperation for Ensuring the Safety of Brazil's Land and Maritime Boundaries," in Multilateral Security Governance (Rio de Janeiro: Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung, 2014).
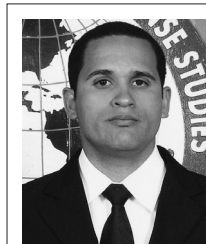
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