

# **RISING POWERS AND THE SECURITY- DEVELOPMENT NEXUS: BRAZIL'S ENGAGEMENT WITH GUINEA-BISSAU**

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# INTRODUCTION

Looking at Brazil's engagement with Guinea-Bissau to analyze the country's contemporary involvement with situations of fragility, particularly concerning the security-development nexus

Guinea-Bissau provides an account of different ways in which Brazil engages with some of the key issues associated with the maintenance of international peace and security at varied levels: bilateral (SSC), regional (ZOPACAS), multilateral (UN, CPLP).

Guinea-Bissau serves as “showcase” for the different ways in which Brazil can contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security. Still remains highly understudied in Brazil.



## CONTEXT IN GUINEA-BISSAU

**Context:** Guinea-Bissau, independent in 1974, democratic period 1994-1998, civil war 1998-1999, chronic instability, most recent overthrow of government in April 2012, democratic elections in 2014. Recent political instability August 2015.

Heterarchical configuration of political order with groups competing for political power within complex logics of civil/military, national/local, state/non-state relations (Embaló)

Fragility of state institutions and incapacity to guarantee payment of civil servants. Armed Forces: resort to criminal activities to guarantee income and resources

As of 2007, risk of becoming world's first narco-state (UNODC), transshipment of drugs from South America to Europe

# INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

## **UN engagement:**

UN Peace-building Support Office in Guinea Bissau (UNOGBIS) since 1999, transformed in UN Integrated Peace-building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) in 2010.

Guinea-Bissau is in the PBC since 2007, with Brazil as the chair of the country specific configuration

## **Responses by international community:**

SSR (European Union), South-South cooperation (Brazil, South Africa, India), bilateral assistance (Portugal, France, Spain)

# INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S ENGAGEMENT WITH GUINEA-BISSAU

- Guinea-Bissau is an “akward fit” in regards to other situations under consideration of the UN peacebuilding architecture: it was not coming out of conflict, no peacekeeping mission and no pressing humanitarian emergency. Inclusion valued due to conflict prevention implications.
- Traditionally, GB has received less attention than other countries on the agenda of the PBC, particularly due to greater interest on the part of permanent members of the SC regarding other situations (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast).
- Efforts have been constrained by a proliferation of actors and different approaches towards the cause of instability in the country (CPLP, ECOWAS, African Union, EU).

# HOW THE PBC HAS AFFECTED GUINEA-BISSAU

- Participation in the PBC has allowed for an expansion of institutional channels with the international community including regional actors (Nigeria, Senegal, Angola) and Brazil, Portugal and EU.
- PBC is important as a platform for political coordination regarding Guinea-Bissau, including support for elections and other initiatives.
- Personality matters: Ramos Horta's role as SRSG and head of UNIOGBIS was key, engagement with different stakeholders and understanding their demands. Brazilian leadership of the Configuration: also indicated as key in terms of maintaining the issue on the agenda of the UNSC and demonstrating commitment beyond support during elections.

# CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

- Uneven involvement of national stakeholders, particularly civil society and women's groups
- Need for additional resource mobilization.
  - PBF approved 6 million to GB, 15 million to Liberia, 35 million to Burundi and 35 million to Sierra Leone (2007-2008)
  - In regards to SSR, PBF allocated less than 4 million to GB, 10 million to Sierra Leone and 12 million to Burundi (2012)
- Need to go beyond assistance in the electoral period (identified by Ramos-Horta and Brazil)
- Need to address the root-causes of underdevelopment that lead to criminal activities (Brazil)



# BRAZIL AND GUINEA BISSAU

- Historical connection: recognition of independence
- Paulo Freire's involvement in Guinea-Bissau (1970s, adult literacy)
- Brazil has significant presence in Bissau (15 resident embassies, 8 non-African: Cuba, China, Russia, Portugal...). GB's embassy opened in Brasília in 2011
- IBSA Fund operates in GB (gender inclusiveness, agricultural productivity)
- Civil registry project: promote citizenship
- Assistance with establishment of pension system for retired officers
- Cultural and educational influence (PEC-G: 1336 out of 6771)
- UNILAB: largest contingent of foreign students is from GB (386 compared to 18 Moz, 77 Cape Verde). Teacher training

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- Assistance with electoral process, parliamentary training
- Brazil's involvement is justified by claims of solidarity, responsibility as UN member state. Responsibility towards its geographical surroundings (LAC and South Atlantic). Amorim: "goodwill belt around Brazil"
- Under Lula: emergence of "ethical foreign policy" discourse, moral debt towards Africa, increase in humanitarian cooperation. Justified by common African heritage used for both Haiti and Guinea-Bissau
- Brazil supports a response that goes beyond a "securitized" approach, need to account for development and social justice.



# BRAZIL, GB AND THE SECDEV NEXUS

- Brazil's key normative contribution is the capacity to articulate a different narrative regarding GB,: “root causes of development”, inclusive assistance as opposed to “GB as a source of threat”
- Involvement with GB at the PBC gives Brazil space and voice in the Security Council (keeping item in the agenda)
- Brazil's position as a developing country chairing a CSC at the PBC gives it legitimacy (Morocco now chairs CSC CAR)
- Cooperating in GB is aligned with Brazil's rhetoric of South-South Cooperation: emphasis on strengthening the capacity of state institutions. Role of the state in securing well-being of local population

# UNPACKING THE ENGAGEMENT

- Engagement is selective (non-indifference does not trump non-interference) and determined by certain geopolitical elements as well as logistical/financial limitations.
- *Exceptionalism*: Perception that there is an inherent empathy within the “Global South” derives need to differentiate itself from Northern actors and other rising powers.
- *Geopolitical considerations*: Spill-over risks of criminality that could threaten Brazil and the region and GB, need to take responsibility in order to avoid external interference in the South Atlantic space (US, France)
- Balance between South-South solidarity and economic and investment interests

- Impact of budgetary restrictions as well as a domestically-oriented presidential agenda illustrate the fragility and challenges of Brazilian South-South discourse and practices> Brazil's approach is complementary not antagonistic
- Need to articulate an integrated approach regarding common Brazilian strategy towards GB (Itamaraty, Defence, Education, Police Academy).
- Potential comparison with other rising powers (China in Liberia and Sudan, Turkey in Somalia, India in Afghanistan)
- “Brazil is a peaceful country but we have to go beyond that, we have to be providers of peace”. Potential in GB but how to translate this into practice?

# THANK YOU.

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