

# International System as Foreign Policy Determinant Variable: Brazil South-South Policy under Lula da Silva

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**Abstract:** Lula da Silva as the elected Brazil President has brought a new approach to the Brazil's foreign policy implementation in 2003-2010. Brazil's foreign policy in this period was focused on the relations between the Souths, either between the countries in South America, Africa, or Asia. Through the South-South relations, Lula's Administration was trying to build strong alliances by creating balanced bilateral and multilateral relations. Brazil's effort to intensify the South-South relations were done by promoting cooperation and integration between the Third World Countries. The policies implemented by Brazil included the political aspect, such as building diplomatic relations with countries in Africa and Middle East. Brazil also initiated to strengthen the economic ties between middle-power countries, both in the South American region or other regions. Brazil's South-South policy was more or less shaped by the international system. Acknowledging the existence of levels between countries in the world, Brazil as a middle country and the regional leader in the system would rationally balance the global power by minimizing the gap of power and escalate its bargaining power through the South-South policy. The writer will elaborate the correlation between the developing international system to Brazil's South-South policy under the administration of Lula da Silva.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Foreign policy is the response of the state government in relation to certain issues encountered, especially in the context of its relationship with the state and other international actors. Similar to the type of policy in general, the international policies taken by the state are dynamic based on various influencing factors and situations. In relation to Brazil's foreign policy, in general also experience a variety of specific dynamics. During President Lula da Silva 2003 to 2010, Brazil's policy focus was directed at making Brazil an influential global actor. This objective is then realized with a policy of building strong relationships with neighboring countries, especially those classified as "southern" countries. The foreign policy outline of the Lula da Silva era, which came to be known as the "south-south" policy, was implemented through the improvement and intensification of relationships to developing countries. Referring to Zanini's opinion (2014) the "south-south" policy is largely run by President Lula's government by establishing strong relations with countries such as Russia, India, China and South Africa by strengthening the BRICS summit. While on the other side also build good relations with hard left

government in Latin America region like Venezuela and Cuba as well as some other dictators in Middle East and small country of Africa region.

The formation of government under President Lula da Silva has reignited Brazil's foreign policy direction towards developing countries. In this period Brazil is not interested in channeling itself against the United States as the hegemony as well as the main regional power of the Americas, but emphasizing the development of developing countries in Asia and Africa as the main concentric circle. Referring to the views of Fontine and Sifert (n.d), the South-linked cooperative co-operation developed by Lula's government is thoroughly executed at the political, economic and technical levels. This is done both through dominant bilateral patterns and the application of multilateral relations. At the bilateral level, for example, the Lula Government is strengthening Brazilian presence in African and Middle Eastern countries by strengthening multi-faceted bilateral cooperation along with the increasing intensity of this regional visit. In addition to leading to bilateral relations, in line with the views of Fontine and Sifert (n.d), the "south-south" foreign policy tendency of the Lula da Silva government is also built through a multilateral pattern. It is not just continuing

the already established multilateral framework. President Lula also acted as an incisiator of several other new multilateral frameworks covering various aspects which in their intent acts as a bridge for strengthening relations between "southern" countries and Brazil.

The policy of developing countries more dominant in the era of Lula da Silva's government was built on three main pillars that referred to Brazil's goals as an important player in the international order. Sousa (2008) mentions that these three pillars include the first is the promotion of regional integration in order to realize economic and social development. Second is to support and promote multilateralism at the global level, especially the UN and WTO. The third is the promotion of "southern" state coopreasi reflected by various agreements with other southern power countries in the form of IBSA and other developing countries in Latin America. In relation to Lula da Silva's foreign policy, it is generally known that the state of the international system experienced by Brazil is more likely to be the reason behind the Lula da Silva Government's interest in building alliances with developing countries rather than focusing on relations with developed countries such as the United States and Europe.

### 1.1 International System and Foreign Policy Decision Making

Given the understanding that the dynamics at international level are able to shape foreign policy patterns, Breuning (2007) in his thesis reveals that it is important for decision makers to consider the conditions of the international environment experienced. Along with the nature of the internationally understood system, policymakers are required to see all possibilities in the dynamics of international pressure faced in order to at least protect the interests of their country. Referring to this view it is understandable that the policies adopted by individual leaders of the state will be different in line with the different positions held by each country in the international system map that is formed. One of the factors that make up the difference in policy response is related to the difference in capability in each country as the main indicator that determines the role of the country at global level (Breuning, 2007). Thus the aspect of both tangible and intangible forces determines how a country responds to the position it faces in relation to other international actors.

More on the linkages between capability relations, the international system and the determination of the country's foreign policy, refers to the Breuning thesis (2007) decision-makers play a more important role as mediators who read the relative strength of their countries against other countries as well as their perceptions of opportunities and international pressure which then underlies what action options should be taken. The relative strength of the country

in which the outline is intended can be a comparison of the geographic state, population level, economic capability, and military of a country against another. In detail then Breuning (2007) emphasizes that aspects such as geographical conditions and population density do not necessarily make a powerful state in the international system. But that aspect of capability is more of a profit for each country in its mission in relationships at the global level. Likewise with other aspects of capability that is economic capability, it is seen that the country with the advantage of geography and population owned can not necessarily be classified as an economically advanced country because there are other aspects that also affect such as conditions and education owned in each population. In addition to the military strength as an additional calculation of state capabilities relative to other international actors. This is because, although not always in line, the position of the state in the international system is relatively increasingly calculated along with the magnitude of military power both in terms of allocation of amount and technological sophistication.

It is simply understood that Breuning (2007) views the relative capability of the state to explain only a small part of the country's position in the international environment as a whole. Our understanding of state capability in this context does not directly explain the decision of foreign policy adopted by the decision maker. It helps to analyze the reasons for the policies taken as we understand the positions faced by the state in the international environment in line with the relative capability possessed of its surroundings. In broad outline it can be seen that countries with small capabiltias tend to face more pressure in policy decisions than countries with greater geographic, population, and economic capabilities (Breuning, 2007). In addition to the measurement of these capability variables, in analyzing the behavior of countries based on the international environment encountered, Breuning (2007) states the importance of comprehensively classifying the position of the state in the international system. This is important given that the understanding of the state is not merely a geographical reality. So the understanding of the capability of the state in the form of geographical and population conditions alone can not explain the position of the country in the international system as well as the established foreign policy related to the condition.

In general, the comprehensive classification of the country's position in the international system according to Breuning (2007) refers to the division of states into state, small power, middle power, regional power and super power. This classification is derived based on the role played in international politics in line with the objective power possessed against other countries. Related to this state that belonging to failed state refers to countries with weak government institutions. Meanwhile, small power refers to

countries with weak capabilities. Meanwhile, the state belonging to the middle power of the country with influential power in a fairly qualified international system that refers to the G-22 countries. Despite the crosshairs but the concept of middle power needs to be distinguished also with regional power that refers to the most influential countries in its regional. Meanwhile, the super power in the international system is the most influential state as well as capability in changing the growing international system refers to the United States and other G-8 countries (Breuning, 2007). Related to this classification, Breuning (2007) in theory states that there is a tendency of a country's policy based on its position in the international classification. Small power states focus policy on diplomacy and role in international institutions in line with the small capacity to influence other countries. Unlike the middle poweryang countries in some ways have the ability to influence even though not through military *kekawatan*. Countries in this position typically use their resources to influence countries to reconcile and overcome the disparities between countries. This is done by acting as an enterpreneur norm in order to require other parties to follow suit against certain international norms or standards through advocacy and diplomacy (Breuning, 2007).

Further, the small and medium-sized states in the south of their policies are also tied to the relative depth of relations with the state with greater strength. So compared to countries with great strength, unequal pattern of relationship in this system requires policy makers to form their own foreign policy patterns based on consideration of the extent to which hard power and soft power capabilities possessed can affect the system. However Breuning (2007) also mentioned that the differentiated forces in the international system experienced are not the sole consideration of decision makers. There are aspects such as the history of previous relations between countries which have an effect on the preference of a country on certain policies and to certain countries today. It should be noted that the nature of the international system that tends to be stable and changing over long periods has created a national role conception that has been rooted in each country which is then still used as a reference for decision makers both in certain situations and on the continuation of ongoing relations.

## 1.2 Brazil Position in the International System and South-South Policy

As explained earlier the election of Lula da Silva in 2003 has provided a new atmosphere for Brazil's foreign policy. The Brazilian government during the 2003-2010 Lula da Silva government period in its foreign policy focused on relations with developing countries in Asia, especially on China and India and some countries in the African region. This relation was built through the formation of a "south-south"

cooperation framework that the Brazilian Government initiated against fellow developing countries across the region. When referring to the model of foreign policy analysis proposed by Breuning (2007) this Brazil policy is inseparable from Brazil's comprehensive capability and position at the international system level. Frontine and Siffert (n.d) mentioned that the south-south cooperation that became a concentric circle in Brazilian foreign policy during the era of President Lula was actually a form of Brazilian foreign policy modernization that had taken root with Brazil's position in the international system in several previous periods. As a medium powered country with capabilities that in some contexts are not qualified enough to speak much on a global level, initiating intensive relationships with small power and middle power country is seen as a strategic choice for Brazil. Through understanding based on neorealism and dependencies it can be understood that initiating south-south cooperation can be interpreted as a Brazilian option in maintaining or improving its relative position in relation to other parties, especially countries with more dominant powers.

Brazil's dominant foreign policy towards developing countries can be understood as a horizontal relationship that seeks to build a Lula da Silva government based on certain profitability and calculation of Brazil's position along with the unilateralism of the world formed post-Cold War. Lechin (in Patricio, n.d) mentions that this Brazilian policy as an essential step which strengthens the relations of other countries with the aim of strengthening the position of bargaining power in the international system. Together with other BRICS countries such as China, South Africa, Russia and India, Brazil is emerging power that seeks to mobilize other developing countries in order to overcome the asymmetrical forces developed in the international system in line with the dominance of the role of the United States and other northern countries. The current negative impact of the international system on the limitations of middle-income countries including Brazil basically provides its own consideration for the Lula da Silva government to enhance Brazil's position as an important player in the international system in line with its active role as a representative of the southern states. By positioning itself as a global south leader, the Government sees that goals related to sustainable growth and prosperity of Brazil and other southern states will be realized when complex co-operation between southern states is created under the full support of Brazil (Sousa, 2008). In line with that view, O'niell (in Patricio, nd) asserted that the complex co-operation of the southern states including BRICS as well as other developing countries in South America and Africa has the potential to trigger Brazil's rapid development as well as other middle- and middle-income countries, economy in the next few years.

In general, Brazilian behavior during the reign of President Lula actually shows the general tendency of foreign policy applied by the state government in the middle or ambiguous position in the international system. Sousa (2008) argues that this ambiguous or hybrid position is obtained in line with the reality on the one hand that Brazil has all the capabilities as an important actor in a system that grows in view of the wide area, population, and rapid economic growth in recent periods. But on the other hand Brazil is still a part of developing countries with a level of capability is relatively lower than the global power like the United States. The "south-south" approach of policy Brazil demonstrates the general role of the middle power states that in some ways is capable of affecting the international system through the use of its resources to demand a more symmetrical relationship and acting as the norm of entrepreneurs in a developing system. In this position unlike the previous administration of Cardoso, which seemed to follow the flow of hegemony and globalization, Lula's leadership prompted Brazilian diplomacy more as an anti-hegemonic counter power seer with China and Russia. In addition, the diplomacy developed by the Lula da Silva government also relates to the re-affirmation of the role of Latin American regional leaders against regional rivals such as Argentina and Colombia (de Almeida, 2010). Through a foreign policy program that emphasizes Brazil as the leader of a third world country, especially for other African and Latin American countries, Brazil seems to want to demonstrate the feasibility of its capability to coexist with global forces within the UN as well as the overall system.

Brazil's foreign policy to serve as a forum for cooperation against third-world countries across the region is basically also supported by the superiority of capability possessed against other southern countries. Sousa (2008) explains that Brazil already has a demographic and geographical capital that is capable and can be juxtaposed with countries such as China. This is then supported by the increase in economic capability in line with the level of economic growth is increasingly stable even able to occupy the top ten of the world economy with an average growth of 5 percent per year. In line with that, in the context of Brazil's soft power capability also supports the role it attempted to emerge during Lula's reign as the "southern" state leader. The mission associated with co-ordination of the "southern" state is supported by Brazil's skillful diplomacy and negotiation capability. De Almeida (2010) mentions that the ability of Brazilian diplomats has become a separate force for Brazil in projecting its strength in the global order. In fact, diplomacy and negotiation skills are acting as a key capacity compared to aspects of Brazil's military and economic power in relation to other countries, especially the southern countries that have been the focus since the Presden Lula da Silva era. The calculation of relative capability is a separate

reason for President Lula to increase Brazil's bargaining power to become more involved in the UN and WTO by running foreign policy programs that support the interests of "southern" countries. The use of this capability source is then applied in policies such as restructuring relationships to third world countries including poor countries in Africa and Latin American dictators. In addition Brazil is also increasingly active in providing assistance and support to the state and institutions concerning developing countries.

In particular, Brazil's relative capability relationship to the environment associated with "south-south" policies by the author can be traced through the dynamics both experienced at regional and extra-regional levels. At the regional level of Latin America itself the authors assume that south-south policy related to regional dynamics that occurred along with Brazil's position as a natural leader. This is in line with Brazil's superiority of power in the context of Brazil's hard power and soft power when compared to other countries in Latin America. However, the position of regional leader is in fact getting opposition from other countries. De Almeida (2010) mentions that Brazil's dominance in the Latin American region is only obtained objectively in terms of its real power. Meanwhile, the recognition of the position as a dominant regional force has not been obtained subjectively in line with the opposition that arises from other major South American countries, especially Argentina and Venezuela, as well as relatively smaller countries such as Uruguay, Bolivia, Paraguay, and even Ecuador. Along with these conditions, it is understood that the co-operative policy of the "southern" state as an effort to increase the bargaining power and reaffirm the position of Brazil as a regional power without going through aggressive action. Fontine and Siffert (nd) then argued that the Lula Presidential Government saw that south-south polic could be instrumental in gaining momentum in order to reaffirm Brazil's leading role in the Latin American region especially to suppress the increasingly dominant US intervention in the region. This was then implemented by the Lula da Silva government through a more interventionist role towards fellow southern states in the region. This is done through a multilateral pattern in line with Brazil's growing support for intra-regional institutions on the one hand enhancing Brazil's involvement in the region, and on the other hand also creating more favorable conditions when faced with political and economic conditions at a global level. In addition to the multilateral pattern, this policy in the region is also built bilaterally to keep the alliance's relations profitable and related to the maintenance of prestige against certain countries in Latin America.

Both decisions on the application of south-south policy can also be understood in terms of dynamics in extra-regional. At this level the author tries to understand President Lula's policy through the

understanding offered by Breuning and Lima. Breuning (2007) views that cooperation and upholding certain standards is one way for the middle-powered states to influence the growing system. In this context it is seen that Lula da Silva's foreign policy is related to the effort of integrating the power of third world countries to influence the system that has been under the domination of the United States for certain international and domestic purposes. In line with that thinking Five (in Fontine and Siffert, nd) argues that foreign policy which tends to build collective action and common multilateralism is a common pattern of policy by a system affecting state that is understood to be a country with weaker resources and relative capacity than the global power. Brazil is classified as a system affecting state using collective action in a multilateral pattern in various forms of global south cooperation as a way of giving influence as well as role as a "broker" to the conditions at the international arena level. Implementation of the policy is then implemented in two levels internationally, namely strengthening cooperation against fellow system affecting state and to other developing countries outside the region that is not classified as a system affecting state.

At the level of system affecting state, Brazil's "south-south" policy focuses on strengthening ties to BRICS countries (China, Russia, India and South Africa) and other G-20 members who are in the same position in the system international. This policy can be understood by Fontine and Siffert (n.d) as part of a general strategy known as the dominant foreign autonomy through diversification in the Lula da Silva era to be able to affect the global level. This is bilaterally done by Brazil by building strategic alliances one of them against China and India and South Africa in some ways, covering multi-faceted with the main basis as a counterweight to the dominance of the United States and other major countries in the international system as a whole. In addition to the bilateral approach, the placement of cooperatives such as the IBSA alliance of the G-22 forum as the main policy focus also reflects the foreign autonomy through diversification strategy of the Lula da Silva government period in its mission to make Brazil an important actor in a growing international system. The "south-south" policy which Brazil also focuses on developing countries outside of the affecting state system in Africa, Middle East and South Asia regionally and bilaterally as well as part of Lula's government's reaction to the international dynamics faced. Through the explanation of the theory of developing country dependence, this step according to the author can be explained as a response to the dependence of third world countries on developed countries. Initiating third-world interdependence, with the creation of close relationships with others through the "south-south" policy is the most strategic step of the Brazilian government in reducing its dependence while

strengthening Brazil's position in international forums in line with increased support from third world countries.

Lula da Silva government's policy of prioritizing developing country relations can also be traced to the pattern of previous policy responses to a growing international system. Since the protectionist policy of 1950, Brazil's foreign policy has largely shown the development of the international system, especially on the expansion of US influence. According to de Almeida (2010) this superficial nationalist policy response then continues in response to the development of the contemporary international world. Patricio (nd) then adds that the "south-south" policy as a re-formation of the traditional Brazilian paradigm that tends to apply multilateral policies with third world countries in response to the dependence and underdevelopment of positions in line with the development of the international system, especially after the end of the bipolar system. However, there is a difference in which the policy paradigm towards the "south" of President Lula's administration runs more offensively in order to achieve a key position in the UN and the WTO. Prior to Lula's reign, several periods have demonstrated policy implementation leading to US anti-hegemonization measures. One example is spelled out by Fontine and Siffert (nd) that in 1994 along with NAFTA in North America, Brazil was in a policy of seeking an alternative South American integration in order to assume its position as a regional leader. The Brazilian government then rejected all the ideas of the United States in seeking a form of integration in South America. This is based on the fact that the existence of the United States along with its integration project such as FTAA will only result in Brazil's inferior position in the region when confronted with US forces in the South American region.

The experience of the anti-Americanization attitude established by the past policy has been the author of national role conception which is rooted and has a lot of influence on the application of foreign policy in the "left" era in Lula da Silva era. United States unilateralism persisted in contemporary line with Brazil's demands to keep its position in balance with United States influence. Therefore, according to the writer of south-south policy of Lula da Silva era as the sustainability of anti-imperialism spirit in the growing international system. This can then be achieved through the development of strategic alliances against countries with other potential powers such as India, China and South Africa as well as against other third world countries as the primary choice in counterweight to US imperialism especially to South America. De Almeida (2010) goes on to explain that the Lula Government's decision to prioritize relations to small and medium-sized countries rather than cooperate with the United States as an illustration of a more confrontational placement of a hegemonic state that is seen as impeding Brazil's

welfare and dominance mission era of his government. In addition, this policy model can also be understood as the reaction of the Brazilian government to avoid direct opposition in attempts to block the spread of US interests as a state of hegemony. It thus appears that the Lula da Silva government expects its own distinct advantages over Brazil's position that remains an opposition to the interests of hegemony in the international system through the role of leader representing the interests of small and medium-sized countries.

## 2 CONCLUSION

Based on the above descriptions, the authors draw the conclusion that although not as a major factor, the state of the developing international system exerted an influence behind Brazil's "south-south" policy of President Lula da Silva's government era. In fact the situation of the international system faced became one of the considerations of the Brazilian government at that time in implementing this policy. This relates to Brazil's relative capability to other countries as well as its position in the entire international system that prompted the government at that time to implement this policy. Brazil's position as a middle power as well as regional power of Latin America then gave rise to demands for the government to continue to balance and minimize the asymmetric power that appears to global power in this case the United States and other "northern" countries. The reality of this difference in relative capability which then rationally raises the Lula da Silva government's view that the focus of integrating the power of third world countries as a strategic step is related to the effort to increase bargaining power and affirmation of existence in the international arena. "South-south" policy can be said to be a strategic choice based on certain views that one of them relates to Brazil's relatively superior ability compared to some other third world countries in Africa and Asia in terms of economy, region, and other aspects of capability. The focus of relations on third world countries is considered to create a more balanced and mutually beneficial pattern of relationships, especially for Lula da Silva's planned developmental mission since the beginning of his reign.

Meanwhile, on the other hand, bargaining power in every Brazil international forum is assessed to increase along with the strong network built on the middle class countries with large numbers.

In addition to referring to the relative capability aspect, the international system as a determinant in the determination of the policy can also be traced from a deeply rooted national conception role as the basis for reference in responding to the evolving international situation. In the Brazilian context itself, this aspect relates to a deeply rooted protectionist nationalist policy in policy-makers that are implemented in line

with the pressures faced in contemporary international systems. The "south-south" policy of the Lula da Silva government era is a new implementation of Brazil's anti-hellemonic tendencies rooted in the previous government period. The relationship between this past policy tendency can be demonstrated in the context of Brazilian relations with the US haggoni which in some ways is contradictory. An example is Brazil's foreign policy in 1994 against the idea of the United States FTAA that would only strengthen the United States' position in the South American region and would undermine Brazil's position within the region. In some ways, Brazil's "south-south" policy of the Lula era can be understood as the same thing, which is related to Brazil's efforts to balance the position of fraud over the positions of hegemony in a growing international system.

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