

Politicization, Foreign Policy and Nuclear Diplomacy: Brazil in the Global Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime after the NPT

Politicização, Política Externa e Diplomacia Nuclear: o Brasil no Regime Global de Não Proliferação Nuclear após o TNP

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Abstract

According to the current literature, since the redemocratization, Brazilian foreign policy has been marked by a process of increasing politicization. This article's main objective is to verify the relation between administrative shifts and Brazilian nuclear diplomacy. Accordingly, the question dealt with in the article is: since Brazil joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), have administration variations interfered with the formulation of Brazilian nuclear diplomacy? This article argues that Brazilian nuclear diplomacy has been an exception to this trend. No matter how innovative some administrations have been in foreign policy, nuclear diplomacy has been insulated from governmental changes, having consolidated a coherent and stable rhetoric internationally. The research was carried out by analyzing the Brazilian rhetoric between 1998 and 2019 in the NPT Review Conferences and Preparatory Committees, vis-à-vis different administrations, through the method of substantive content analysis. The result consisted in the verification that the majority of the rhetorical issues used were present in all studied administrations, indicating the absence of correlation between administration shifts and the Brazilian stance in the Global Nonproliferation Regime.

Keywords: Brazilian foreign policy; Politicization; Nuclear Diplomacy.

Resumo

De acordo com a literatura contemporânea, desde a redemocratização, a política externa brasileira tem sido marcada por um processo de politicização crescente. O objetivo principal deste artigo é verificar a relação entre as mudanças de administração e a diplomacia nuclear brasileira. Nesse sentido, a questão de que trata o artigo é: desde que o Brasil aderiu ao Tratado de Não Proliferação de Armas Nucleares (TNP), as variações de administração têm interferido na formulação da diplomacia nuclear brasileira? Neste artigo argumenta-se que a diplomacia nuclear brasileira tem sido uma exceção a essa tendência. Por mais inovadores que alguns governos tenham sido na política externa, a diplomacia nuclear tem sido isolada das mudanças de governo, consolidando uma retórica coerente e estável internacionalmente. A pesquisa foi realizada por meio da análise da retórica brasileira entre 1998 e 2019 nas Conferências de Revisão e Comitês Preparatórios do TNP, frente às diferentes administrações, por meio do método de análise substantiva de conteúdo. O resultado foi a constatação de que a maioria das questões retóricas utilizadas estavam presentes em todas as administrações estudadas, indicando a ausência de correlação entre a alternância de administrações e a postura brasileira no Regime Global de Não Proliferação.

Palavras-chave: Política Externa Brasileira; Politicização; Diplomacia Nuclear.

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Introduction

The relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy is a current theme in the studies of foreign policy analysis. “Top-down” structure-oriented theorists defend that some national security-sensitive issues are protected from domestic politics, except as minor sources of disturbance in a utility-maximizing and rationally coherent decision-making process. “Bottom-up” domestic-oriented theorists understand that domestic politics is an inherent component of foreign policy (MORAVCSIK, 1997, p. 517 e 541; ALLISON; ZELIKOW, 1999, p. 27-40; AMORIM NETO, 2011, p. 20-24). While the former believe that this process is dominated by statesmen, diplomats and the military as well as that the state acting as a unified actor; the latter understand that the current international relations landscape deals with a broad and complex set of issues that mix domestic and international domains, leading to the increasing presence of non-traditional actors in the decision-making process (PINHEIRO; MILANI, 2012, p. 14-16; MILANI, 2012, p. 37-39).

Brazilian foreign policy has shown, at least since the redemocratization, a tendency for increasing politicization (CERVO, 2008, p. 76-82; FARIA, 2008; 2018; LIMA, 2000, p. 295; LOPES, 2011; 2020; MILANI, 2012, p. 38-43; 2015, p. 67). The exact date may vary. For Amado Cervo, for example, it was in the 1990s that Brazil’s foreign policy was no longer closed “inside a cocoon” of Itamaraty¹, since during president Cardoso’s administration “the cocoon blew up” (CERVO, 2003, p. 361). Politicization is a process of “society intrusion” (BADIE, 2009) on the conduct of foreign policy that transmits the notion that states’ decisions in foreign affairs are a consequence of a clash of multiple actors that operate domestically in interaction with external influences. This challenges theoretical models that ontologically distinguish domestic and international politics which is reflected in recent events of Brazilian foreign policy such as environment, human rights, Middle East, regional integration, and trade, to cite some, that have changed significantly along the last decades, depending on the elected government. However, is this also true for security-sensitive issues, such as nuclear diplomacy²?

Given this context of increasing politicization in Brazilian foreign policy, this article’s main objective is to verify if there is a link between administration shifts and the conduct of Brazilian nuclear diplomacy. Hence, the research was designed around the question: since Brazil joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), have administration variations interfered with the formulation of Brazilian nuclear diplomacy? This article argues that, despite the current tendency of politicization of Brazilian foreign policy, no matter how innovative new administrations have been, the Brazilian nuclear diplomacy has remained insulated from governmental changes, having consolidated a very coherent and stable rhetoric internationally since the paradigm-shifting decision to sign the NPT in 1998. Since NPT is the main normative instrument of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and, consequently, its quinquennial review conferences are one of the main forums of this regime, along with the respective preparatory committees, Brazilian participation in these meetings was thoroughly analyzed. A substantive content analysis of these documents was made using a method “based on the study of words, themes and items that focuses on the content of the communication”, instead of the textual structure (RICH et al., 2018, p. 184).

The literature presents an engaging discussion on the relation between foreign policy and political regime. As the parameters of this research limit its scope to events after 1998, all studied administrations belong to the same political regime. Nevertheless, as have elaborated Amado Cervo, Andrew Hurrell, Thomas Skidmore, and Sombra Saraiva, to mention some, Brazil’s foreign policy history presents cases of both the prevalence of foreign policy over change of regimes and the shift of foreign policy in situations of continuity of the regime (SARAIVA, 2003).

¹ It’s a reference to the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Itamaraty is the palace in Rio de Janeiro where the headquarters of the ministry was located before the Brazilian capital and government were moved to Brasília.

² “nuclear diplomacy is defined as the interaction among and between international actors (be they states, international organisations, individuals and transnational non-state organisations) on nuclear-related issues, actors and interests (be they material or non-material) to achieve objectives aligned with an actor’s construction of its self- or national interests, its particular identity and the nuclear-related norms it initiates, innovates, maintains, and with which it is compliant or non-compliant” (VAN WYK, 2013, p. 54).

In addition to the introduction and conclusion, this article is divided into three sections: the first presents a literature review of Brazilian foreign policy that comprehends the period analyzed (1998-2019), highlighting the growing politicization of Brazilian foreign affairs; the second summarizes the main events and the Brazilian participation in the Global Nonproliferation Regime; the third, the result of the substantive content analysis of the NPT Preparatory Committees (PrepComs) and Review Conferences (RevCons) is presented.

Brazilian foreign policy and politicization (1998-2019)

This section, viewed through the lenses of Brazilian foreign policy interpreters, provides a contextualization of the general environment from 1998 to 2019. As will be shown, different administrations adopt diverse styles of foreign policy, including Cardoso's liberal cosmopolitanism, Lula's "active and bold"³ diplomacy, Dilma's protocolar approach, Temer's foreign trade emphasis and Bolsonaro's antiglobalist shift. Among these administrations there is an increasing process of politicization of Brazilian foreign policy.

Amado Luiz Cervo (2008) offers a paradigmatic approach to foreign policy, which begins with the fact that countries always base their foreign policies on a model of international insertion. For Cervo (2008, p. 72-85), from 1990 to 2003, Brazilian foreign policy was governed mainly by elements of the "neoliberal paradigm" with underlying elements of the previous "developmental paradigm" laying the foundations for the succeeding "logistical paradigm". For Gelson Fonseca (2004, p. 367-369) Brazilian foreign policy must be understood as a permanent search for autonomy and in the 1990s autonomy manifested itself as participation. According to Pinheiro (2000, p. 325-326) Cardoso's foreign policy was marked by "pragmatic institutionalism" verified by Brazil's resistance in assuming the costs of the hegemon role, although it strived to guarantee the benefits of this role. For Hirst (2009, p. 15) it could be classified as "adjustment-affirmation", meaning greater flexibility in relation to US expectations within the scope of economic-commercial policies, diplomacy and international security. Finally, for Vigevani, Oliveira and Cintra (2003, p. 32 e 37) it was oriented by the logic of "autonomy through integration" in which, from the administration's perspective, the end to be achieved was a proactive agenda which would enable the country to expand its power and control its destiny⁴.

Maria Regina Soares Lima (2000, p. 295) and Carlos Faria (2008, p. 85) associate the politicization process of Brazilian foreign policy with the 1990s economic and commercial opening that followed the sinking of the developmental model. The end of the economic model based on industrial protectionism led to an increase in the importance of domestic politics in foreign policy agenda setting with two mutually-reinforcing consequences: the depletion of Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MFA) autonomy and the politicization of the foreign policy due to more impactful consequences of foreign affairs for domestic distributive conflicts (LIMA, 2000, p. 295).

With Lula's assumption of the presidency, according to Vigevani and Cepaluni (2009), the foreign policy strategy was guided by the logic of "autonomy through diversification". For these authors the country sought to broaden and institutionalize partnerships with non-traditional markets, as well as increase its bargaining power in multilateral negotiations with developed countries, with a view to alter the hegemonic structure that has existed since 1945 (VIGEVAANI; CEPALUNI, 2009, p. XVIII). For Hirst (2009, p. 15), this moment can be identified by its "affirmative" character and by its "proud" positions that set the limits of concessions and the scope of Brazilian pretensions. Rubens Ricupero (2017) labeled this foreign policy as "Protagonistic and Prestige Diplomacy". For this author, the foreign policy in general was not incompatible with previous objectives and practices. However, the multi-party consensus⁵ that started in the New Republic ceased to exist. Lula's foreign policy had a "double face" or a parallel diplomacy. One face, led by the

³ "Active and bold" foreign policy is how Celso Amorim, Brazilian chancellor between 2003 and 2010, labels Lula's foreign policy (AMORIM, 2010, p. 239).

⁴ Originally coined by Luiz Felipe Lampreia (1998, p. 11).

⁵ Originally labeled as Tancredo's consensus (RICUPERO, 2001).

chancellor, presented greater continuity with the country's diplomatic tradition, including themes of global policy such as "Brazil's entry in the United Nations Security Council, negotiations of the Doha Round, initiatives in the Middle East, and the attempted agreement on the nuclear problem of Iran" (RICUPERO, 2017, p. 650)⁶. The other face, led by the head of the President's International Advisory, a former member of the Workers' Party, was responsible for matters relating to South and Latin America neighbors; this was a more disruptive foreign policy in terms of ideological and partisan inspiration (RICUPERO, 2017, p. 647 e 650).

For Carlos Faria (2008, p. 86) and Amorim Neto (2011, p. 18), Lula's administration used foreign policy to compensate its conservative macroeconomic policies, emphasizing relations with developing countries, adopting a critical stance towards the north-south asymmetries while fortifying the south-south dialogue. These authors argue that Brazilian foreign policy was used to generate domestic partisan political gains, signaling rhetorical coherence and searching for the appeasement of the Worker's Party traditional supporters (AMORIM NETO, 2011, p. 18; FARIA, 2008, p. 86; RICUPERO, 2017, p. 647-651).

According to Cervo and Lessa (2014), the period of 2011-2014 was marked by the decline of Brazil's international insertion, in relation to the period of 2003 and 2010, when the country was dealing with the process of "ascension". This change was caused by a new trend related to the state's difficulties in "maintaining an intense and confident dialogue with the dynamic segments of society that would result in the Brazilian rise as an emerging power" (CERVO; LESSA, 2014, p. 133)⁷. For Ricupero (2017, p. 681), the Rousseff administration's foreign policy changed in form and style. The devaluation of diplomatic activity and its executing body during this period left no room or incentive for foreign policy initiatives worthy of mention. Therefore, Ricupero labeled this administration's foreign policy as "routine diplomacy" (2010-2016) "dictated by the calendar of periodic meetings of international organizations, visits by foreign personalities and the trips of the president and ministers" (RICUPERO, 2017, p. 684)⁸. Furthermore, what happened resulted from unforeseen facts such as Paraguay's suspension from Mercosur and Venezuela's promotion to full candidate member (RICUPERO, 2017, p. 683-687).

Carlos Faria and Dawisson Belém Lopes argue that during Rousseff's administration, two different foreign policy projects became clear, one from the Worker's Party and the other from the main oppositionist party, the Brazilian Social-Democratic Party (FARIA, 2018, p. 66-69; LOPES, 2014, p. 146). At this point, if foreign affairs were not present at the electoral campaigns, controversial positions were certainly used to damage the prestige of incumbent politicians (FARIA; LOPES, 2014, p. 146). A good example of partisan political influence on foreign affairs from Rousseff's administration is the Roger Pinto Molina case, which, according to Ricupero (2017, p. 684-686) was conducted through an ideological bias, characteristic of the Worker's Party's foreign policy and, then, politically exploited by the opposition⁹.

For Silva and Pérez (2019, p. 177), "many of the policies, both foreign and domestic, that were crafted during the Lula years depended for their success on a favorable economic, domestic, and international context". The failure to acknowledge the prospect of an economic recession or a radical shift in the domestic or international political context limited its successor's ability to continue the predecessor's projects. For these authors, "the logistical paradigm's approach to foreign policy placed too much confidence in Brazil's large corporations, overlooking the ways in which their newly acquired clout could become destructive" (SILVA; PÉREZ, 2019, p. 178). As the economic tide turned and

⁶ In the original: "ingresso do Brasil no Conselho de Segurança, negociações da Rodada Doha, iniciativas no Oriente Médio, tentativa de acordo sobre o problema nuclear do Irã". Our translation.

⁷ In the original: "a dificuldade do Estado em manter o diálogo intenso e confiante com os segmentos dinâmicos da sociedade de que resultara a ascensão brasileira como potência emergente". Our translation.

⁸ In the original: ditada pelo calendário das reuniões periódicas de organismos internacionais, das visitas de personalidades estrangeiras e das viagens da presidente e ministros. Our translation.

⁹ For Ricupero, it was an ideological bias due to the way in which the government reacted to the request for asylum, the delay to grant political asylum status and the persecution that diplomats Eduardo Saboia and Marcel Biato were subjected to. It would have represented a rupture of the Brazilian diplomatic tradition, the repeated postponing of the consideration of the request without legal grounds. This case was exploited by the opposition as a human rights case and, thus, condemning the government's response.

commodity prices plummeted, added to the Operation Car Wash scandal, Rousseff's capacities to invest in international initiatives were now diluted because her domestic agenda became increasingly difficult and time-consuming (VEIGA; RIOS, 2011; SILVA; PÉREZ, 2019, p. 178).

If it had been difficult for a democratically elected president to navigate a conjuncture of difficult domestic and international factors, it became almost impossible for an illegitimate president governing a deeply polarized country (SILVA; PÉREZ, 2019, p. 181). During Temer's administration, the logistical paradigm has come under stress as the economic recession and the Operation Car Wash dismantled the policy of promoting large national corporations, particularly in the construction sector. Moreover, Temer reverted the Brazilian economic agenda to Cardoso's neoliberalism, at least partially, considering many social programs created by the Workers' Party have been maintained (SILVA; PÉREZ, 2019, p. 181).

According to Casarões (2016) Temer's administration's foreign policy represents a sudden rupture with the Workers' Party administrations. Casarões (2016, p. 81) highlights the nomination of the senator José Serra, a lead politician from the Brazilian Social-Democratic Party, as chancellor, responsible for "correcting the route" of Brazilian foreign policy¹⁰. It enunciated a turn towards commercial issues and the so-called "traditional partners" - USA and Europe -, as well as incorporated the Brazilian Export and Investment Promotion Agency to the MFA. Serra prioritized bilateral trade agreements instead of multilateral arrangements under the World Trade Organization framework (CASARÕES, 2016, p. 82-87; LOPES, 2020, p. 7).

For Rodriguez-Dominguez (2017) and Casarões (2016, p. 86-89) a reorientation in the foreign policy was especially evident at the regional level. This included a more critical stance against human rights violations and, regarding the role sought by Mercosur and Unasur, Brazil together with Argentina and Uruguay blocked the passing of Mercosur's *pro-tempore* presidency to Venezuela. It also favored the Organization of American States as the main conflict resolution organ, in detriment of Unasur. On the global level it sought alignment with the US and renounced its intention of reforming the UNSC (RODRIGUEZ-DOMINGUEZ, 2017). In relation to Brazil's foreign policy towards the Middle-East - in the areas of economic interest, political and cultural issues - according to Vigevani and Calandrina (2019, p. 19) no significant changes were made compared to the previous administrations addressed in this article.

For Medeiros, Villas-Boas and Andrade (2019), Jair Bolsonaro foreign policy introduces the ideological Americanism, which contrasts with the traditional pragmatic Americanisms that have characterized the country's foreign policy. However, for Lima and Albuquerque (2019, p. 16) the novelty in this administration was not ideology or alignment with the US, but the methods which were used to expose its intentions. In this sense, Marcos Nobre (2019) provides a key perspective in understanding the role of foreign policy in the logic of Bolsonaro's administration. In it, the government operates on the premise of destruction and the creation of chaos as a government strategy, in order to keep its electoral base cohesive. Foreign policy feeds the Bolsonarist networks of the hard core of social support and allows the exercise of the function of president, which addresses the forces of the system that support it. The tension between the "digital influencer" and the role of president is permanent and instigates a large part of the conflicts within the Executive branch (LIMA; ALBUQUERQUE, 2019, p. 20).

Thus, if the *status quo* is maintained, the ability of the "strategy of chaos" in foreign policy to challenge and abandon some of the principles of conduct that have guided foreign policy since the redemocratization is revealing (LIMA; ALBUQUERQUE, 2019, p. 17-20; NOBRE, 2019). These challenges to the foreign policy principles can be seen in the following cases: abandonment of the traditional role of mediator in regional conflicts, alignment with North American positions in South America, anti-globalist and Chinese-contesting discourse, contempt for multilateralism, disregard for the two-state solution in Palestine, involvement in other states' affairs, environmental regulatory loosening and a

¹⁰ Label used by the new government officials meaning that they turned Foreign Policy back to track as it was before the Workers' Party came into office.

nationalist stance towards deforestation control, and unconditional adherence to Trump's policy (CASARÕES; FLEMES, 2019; LIMA; ALBUQUERQUE, 2019, p. 20; MEDEIROS; VILAS-BOAS; ANDRADE, 2019; LOPES, 2020, p. 6).

As can be seen, Brazilian foreign policy has changed significantly in the administrations addressed in this article. This contributes to the argument that a tendency for politicization has existed since the redemocratization. However, as will be shown, this is not the case for Brazilian nuclear diplomacy.

Brazil in the Global Nonproliferation Regime

In this section to better understand Brazilian nuclear diplomacy in the context of the evolution of the Global Nonproliferation Regime, greater emphasis will be given to Brazil's participation in the PrepCom's and RevCon's starting in 1995, when the regime went through one of its most significant changes.

During the 5th Review and Extension Conference of the NPT, in 1995, although state parties could not agree on a final document a decision was reached to extend the Treaty indefinitely. For this decision to be achieved, a "package deal" was made which included the approval of three decisions and a resolution: Decision 1 affirmed that a RevCon "should continue to be held every five years", the PrepCom "should hold a meeting in each of the three years prior to the" RevCon (UNITED NATIONS, 1995a); Decision 2 established "a set of principles and objectives" for assessing progress in: universality, nonproliferation, nuclear disarmament, nuclear-weapon-free zones, security assurances, safeguards, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy (UNITED NATIONS, 1995b); Decision 3 declared that "a majority exists among states party to the Treaty for its indefinite extension, in accordance with article X, paragraph 2, the Treaty shall continue in force indefinitely" (UNITED NATIONS, 1995c); and the resolution on the Middle East which called upon all States in this area to take practical steps aimed at making progress towards "the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems" (UNITED NATIONS, 1995d). While Brazil was not a party of the NPT, it participated in this Conference as an observer state in a movement of Cardoso's administration that can be seen as a mild approximation to the regime.

Between the 5th and the 6th RevCons the International Court of Justice (ICJ) gave its Advisory Opinion to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons. The ICJ concluded unanimously, on July 8th, 1996, that: "There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control" (ICJ, 1996).

In the same decade that the NPT became permanent, Brazil decided to make important commitments to the global nonproliferation regime such as: placing the Tlatelolco Treaty (1994) in force, signing the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (1996), joining the Nuclear Suppliers Group (1996) and signing the NPT, in 1997. This was a paradigm-shifting event that represented a change of a three-decade-old Brazilian stance against the inherently asymmetrical nature of the NPT. Thus, it has been discussed by various authors and analyzed through different perspectives.

It can be affirmed that decision to sign the NPT is related to various factors such as: the expectation that the benefits would come automatically (ALSINA JR, 2003; VISENTINI, 2003; SARAIVA, 2005; CERVO, 2008); the increase in its international credibility (VIGEVANI; OLIVEIRA; CINTRA, 2003; FONSECA, 2004; HIRST, 2006; LIMA; HIRST, 2009; LESSA; COUTO; FARIAS, 2009; PECEQUILO, 2012); the absence of external security threats (GARDINI, 2005; COUTTO, 2014; SPEKTOR, 2016); international isolation (SILVA, 2012); the end of the Autonomous Nuclear Technology Program (OLIVEIRA, 2014); economic vulnerability (BATISTA, 2011); redemocratization of Brazil and Argentina (ALBRIGHT, 1989; BLUTH, 2010; CARSALES, 1995; PATTI, 2010; PLUM; RESENDE, 2016); the relevance of both countries' epistemic communities for fostering mutual confidence and mitigating suspicion (KUTCHESFAHANI, 2010); and the civil control over the military and the demilitarization of the nuclear program (SOTOMAYOR, 2013).

Despite these new commitments, Brazil did not sign the International Atomic Energy Agency Model Additional Protocol or INFCIRC/540 (corrected) created in 1997 due to its intrusive nature and sovereignty relativization. As well as the fact that more sensitive issues related to this protocol were linked to the protection of valuable technological and strategic information related to the Brazilian nuclear propulsion submarine program (MOURA, 2001, p. 181).

Between the signing and the ratification of the NPT, Brazil took part in the creation of the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) along with Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, and Slovenia¹¹. These “states were concerned by the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament after the NPT’s 1995 indefinite extension and wanted to build a new momentum on the multilateral discussion of those issues” (JESUS, 2010, p. 562). According to Lafer (1998, p. 8), in that moment, since practically all NNWS were under the aegis of the NPT, it would no longer be possible for NWS to impute to them, as in the past, any double intention in their insistence on nuclear disarmament measures. On one hand, Cardoso administration signed the NPT; on the other hand, it introduced the doctrine of conditioning further nonproliferation commitments from the NNWS to practical measures from the NWS towards disarmament. The NAC is one of the main channels through which Brazil endorses this position.

During the 6th RevCon, in 2000, states parties were able to achieve a final document and agreement that there should be an unequivocal undertaking by the NWS “to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament” (UNITED NATIONS, 2000, p. 14). According to Rublee (2010, p. 51), the NAC is “widely credited with fostering the success” of this conference as it produced the 13 Practical Steps toward the goal of nuclear disarmament. However, the progress achieved was hampered by events such as 9/11, the Afghanistan war, the discovery of the Iranian nuclear program and North Korea's withdrawal from the NPT. Furthermore, at the 7th RevCon, in 2005, presided by the Brazilian ambassador Sérgio de Queiroz Duarte, states parties failed to reach agreement on any final document. Although the NAC recognized that the challenge presented by the threat from nuclear terrorism has the potential to divert attention towards the nonproliferation pillar of the NPT, it argued that the fight against such a threat should not be developed at the expense of NPT’s article VI (JESUS, 2010, p.562).

In 2003, a new administration in Brazil was inaugurated. The leftist Lula da Silva took office with a critical platform in relation to his predecessor. He characterized the NPT as unfair and obsolete during his electoral campaign (STUENKEL, 2010, p. 529). Nevertheless, as soon as he took office, his chancellor, Celso Amorim, through a press note in January 12th 2003, stated the new administration would reassure the thesis of irreversibility of international commitments for disarmament and nonproliferation (BRAZIL, 2017, p. 304). His administration sought to be a mediator between NWS and NNWS “in order to consolidate its position as a strong negotiator and to benefit from the possible gains of this position in terms of greater participation in international institutions” (JESUS, 2010, p. 552; 2012, p. 44). He also strived to pressure NWS to fulfill their article VI obligations¹² while seeking to maintain autonomy to develop peaceful nuclear activities (JESUS, 2010, p. 552; 2012, p. 44).

During this period the Ministry of Defense created the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and the Brazilian Navy emphasized the importance of the Blue Amazon¹³ and the need to protect this area. In this sense the NDS underscored the importance of a nuclear propulsion submarine in ensuring the objective of denying the use of the sea and mentioned the need to accelerate investments for the Brazilian nuclear propulsion submarine (BRASIL, 2008). In this sense, Brazil created a program for the development of submarines that provided for the construction of a nuclear propulsion submarine. In addition, the NDS, in reference to the INFCIRC/540 (corrected), stated that the country would not adhere

¹¹ The last two countries eventually left the Coalition.

¹² Article VI “Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control” (UNITED NATIONS, 2000).

¹³ Blue Amazon is a political strategic concept launched by the Brazilian Navy that refers to the 5.7 million km² maritime area which includes extensive oil and gas reserves, as well as biodiversity, fishing and mining concessions (BRASIL, 2012, p. 17, 33 e 75).

to additions to the NPT that implied greater restrictions without the NWS advancing in favor of nuclear disarmament (BRASIL, 2008).

According to Ricupero, one of the highest points of Brazilian foreign policy activism in the administration was the mediation by Brazil and Turkey on Iran's uranium enrichment program (RICUPERO, 2017, p. 665). The fuel-swap agreement "was intended not only to prevent sanctions that would damage trade activity with Iran, but also to consolidate the international right to develop peaceful nuclear activities" (JESUS, 2011, p.72). Lula's nuclear diplomacy, in the Iran nuclear deal, showed a combination of his foreign policy style with the nonproliferation principles defended in the previous administration, thus consolidating the Brazilian posture in nonproliferation issues.

Between the 7th and the 8th RevCons the New START treaty was signed, the International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) was created and in Prague, Barack Obama, then president of the US, affirmed that NWS would move towards disarmament (OBAMA, 2009). This declaration removed the stigma of irrealism from the disarmament movement and provided a positive environment which contributed to the adoption of a consensus final document, at the 8th RevCon, in 2010. The final document contained 64 actions to be taken by the NPT members in the 3 pillars of the Treaty (non-proliferation, disarmament and use of nuclear material for peaceful purposes) (JESUS, 2012, p. 54; MÜLLER; WUNDERLICH, 2020, p. 176).

During Rousseff's administration, through the 2012 updated version of the NDS, the country's commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear material was reaffirmed, as well as the need to move forward with the nuclear propulsion submarine program. It also continued to condition the country's adherence to INFCIRC/540 (corrected) to progress in nuclear disarmament (BRASIL, 2012, p. 50 e 95-96). During this administration, despite the country's economic crisis, Brazil's Navy continued to promote the advantages of this program for the protection of the Blue Amazon in possible scenarios of "conflict over food, arable land, drinking water or energy" (SÁ, 2015, p. 16).

In 2012 an Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) was established in the UNGA to explore future disarmament steps. Boycotted by the NWS, but with the presence of India and Pakistan, it met for three sessions in 2013. The embargo strengthened the positions of coalition members pleading for progress without the NWS (MÜLLER; WUNDERLICH, 2020, p. 176). In 2013, Norway invited ICAN to help prepare the first Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. This conference had the attendance of 128 states, a second conference held in Mexico, at the end of 2013, had 146 states and a third conference held in Austria, in 2014, had 158 states and several international and civil society organizations participating. Brazil was present in all conferences. On the first and second conferences the NWS did not attend. However, on the third conference the US and the UK attended, while China chose to send an observer.

In the first conference, the dangers presented by nuclear weapons requiring action were assessed; in the second conference the existence of a "legal gap" - "the failure to prohibit nuclear weapons like biological and chemical weapons, antipersonnel mines, and cluster munitions despite their much higher destructivity" - was emphasized and in the following conference 127 countries, including Brazil, signed a "humanitarian pledge" to fill that gap (MÜLLER; WUNDERLICH, 2020, p. 176). These conferences contributed to the construction of "an international discourse on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapon detonations, with a view to revitalizing nuclear disarmament efforts" (BORRIE, 2014, p. 625).

Despite the advances promoted through those conferences during the 9th RevCon, in 2015, states parties failed to reach agreement on any final document. Difficulties arose in achieving a consensus on the process for convening a conference on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the pace of implementation of Article VI of the Treaty, as well as action steps agreed to at the 8th RevCon. During this RevCon the NWS obstructed a series of disarmament measures that were agreed at the last RevCon without providing a reason and refused to engage with the humanitarian-risk argument. Thus, after this conference, there was a preference for negotiating without the NWS. Consequently,

efforts were made for a simple ban since a technical-operative convention necessitated input from NWS expertise (MÜLLER; WUNDERLICH, 2020, p. 177).

Since the 9th RevCon, Iran and the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) have accepted the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) which established significant restrictions on Iran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief. In 2018, the US announced its withdrawal from the JCPOA, while the remaining members criticized this decision and underscored their support for the agreement. In the subsequent year, the US withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic the 10th RevCon, that would have taken place in 2020, was postponed.

During Temer's administration, Brazil was the first state to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) created in 2017¹⁴. However, after the TPNW was presented to Congress, in September 2018, it suffered a delay due to the rapporteur's absence on the last business day - which is a recurrent practice - followed by parliamentary recession period and its non-re-election in the following legislature.

The Bolsonaro administration has taken no significant acts in the regime, whose main forums have been on hold for the most part of 2020 and 2021 because of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Some of its actions have pointed in opposite directions. On one hand, after he took office, with a renewed Congress, the rapporteurship was reassigned to one of his allies, who required a public hearing that was approved in July 2019. Since then, there has been no movement toward the voting on the TPNW text (CÂMARA DOS DEPUTADOS, 2021; PLUM, 2021). On the other hand, during Bolsonaro administration the NDS 2019 updated version, unlike previous versions, did not mention the condition of advances in nuclear disarmament for the adherence to INFCIRC/540 (corrected), which may suggest a possible flexibility in the Brazilian posture.

This section's discussion has demonstrated that although Brazilian foreign policy has changed significantly in the administrations addressed in this paper, this is not the case when it comes to nuclear diplomacy. The next section will make this argument clearer as the results of the substantive content analysis of the RevCons and PrepComs are presented.

Content analysis results

In this section the collected data is compiled and analyzed. The data used includes all available documents produced by the RevCons and the respective PrepComs that included Brazil, between 1998 and 2019, summing up 120 analyzed documents. These documents included various forms: final documents, final reports, papers, reports, statements, summary records and working papers.

Most of these documents are available on the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs website (UNODA, 2021), on the NPT Review Conferences and Preparatory Committees page, some could only be found on the United Nations Digital Library (UNDL, 2021). In this case the search was made through the use of the document's standard codes. Some documents were not available. The reason is that the summary records are provided exclusively for the Committee's opening meetings, the general debate and the closing meetings, according to the reports of the PrepComs¹⁵.

A substantive context analysis was carried out. The first step consisted in mapping all rhetorical issues mentioned directly or indirectly¹⁶ by Brazil in the aggregated data through the selective reading of all documents available for the period between 1998 and 2019, taking in consideration the context of each occurrence. After the

¹⁴ It should be noted that despite the pandemic on January 22nd 2021 the TPNW went into force.

¹⁵ This was the explanation offered by the librarians at the United Nations Library Geneva and at the Dag Hammarskjöld Library.

¹⁶ While directly is a document signed or a speech addressed by the Brazilian representative, indirectly means a speech addressed in the name of Brazil, but by a representative of another country, such as has been the case for joint manifestations of the NAC.

identification of thirteen rhetorical issues, it was checked what issue was mentioned in each administration at least once. The result was compiled in table 1.

Table 1 - Occurrence of rhetorical issues by administration

	<i>Rhetorical issues</i>	<i>Administrations*</i>
I	Defense of the universality of the NPT.	C-L-D-T-B
II	General reiteration of the three pillars of the NPT: non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful use of nuclear technology.	C-L-D-T-B
III	Reiteration of the three principles agreed upon in the 5th RevCon (1995): irreversibility, transparency and verifiability.	C-L-D-T-B
IV	Urging for revision of the role of nuclear weapons in NWS's military doctrines (that emphasizes vertical proliferation such as arsenal modernization or upgrade) and its irreconcilability with international peace and security.	C-L-D-T-B
V	Denunciation of the imminent risk of an accidental nuclear detonation.	C-L-D-T-B
VI	Demand of implementation of previously agreed upon disarmament-oriented measures.	C-L-D-T-B
VII	Urging for the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East: establishment of a weapon of mass destruction free zone in the region.	C-L-D-T-B
VIII	Reiteration of the importance or proposition of legally binding confidence and security building measures by the NNWS to the NWS parties to the NPT.	C-L-D-T-B
IX	Proposition of an internationally legally binding framework of nuclear disarmament measures for the NWS.	D-T-B
X	Approval of specific non-legally binding measures towards disarmament of NWS.	C-L
XI	Complaint of the asymmetry between the NWS and the NNWS legal obligations.	C-L-D
XII	Reaffirmation of the inalienable right of all members of the NPT to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination.	L-D-T
XIII	Enunciation of the humanitarian cost of nuclear weapons (including the embedded security risks and opportunity costs).	D-T-B

*Administrations: C = Cardoso; L = Lula; D = Dilma; T = Temer; B = Bolsonaro.

Source: Elaborated by the authors using different documents based on the data from UNODA and UNDL archives.

The Brazilian position in the Global Nonproliferation Regime has been characterized by the defense of the universality of the NPT (I); the reaffirmation of its pillars (nonproliferation, disarmament and peaceful use of nuclear technology) (II); the reiteration of the irreversibility, transparency and verifiability principles (III) and the urging for the resolution on the Middle East (VII) agreed on the 5th Review and Extension Conference of the NPT; the urging for revision of the role of nuclear weapons in NWS's military doctrines (IV), the denunciation of the imminent risk of an accidental nuclear detonation (V); and the contestation of its asymmetries due to the lack of implementation of previously agreed upon disarmament-oriented measures (VI). The proposition of measures to improve the regime, in particular the fulfillment of the NWS obligations, are also present in all five administrations but with technical and vocabulary differences (VIII, IX and X) related to the regime's historical evolution.

The approval of specific non-legally binding measures towards disarmament of NWS (X), present only in Cardoso's and Lula's administrations, involved the 13 practical steps and 22 actions present in the 64-point action plan. The nonfulfillment of the commitments made by the NWS aggravated the growing mistrust present in the regime. Consequently, the reiteration of the importance or proposition of legally binding confidence and security building measures by the NNWS to the NWS parties to the NPT (VIII), that was already present during Cardoso's administration, became more urgent and evolved to the proposition of an internationally legally binding framework of nuclear disarmament measures for the NWS (IX).

During Cardoso's administration, issue XII was absent. Instead of emphasizing the inalienable right of using nuclear technology for peaceful ends, this administration politically exploited its recent adherence to the NPT. The reason

behind this is that it was probably more concerned with making evident to the international community that the country was a responsible actor, thus enhancing its international credibility.

During Dilma's administration, the NNWS started to propose internationally legally binding frameworks of nuclear disarmament measures for the NWS (XIII). This issue appeared in the documents after the 2013 and 2014 Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. Therefore, it can be affirmed that these issues are not exclusively related to the different governments and their political orientation but also to the international context. In the course of this administration there was one RevCon, the 10th (2015), in which no significant disarmament measures were adopted. This responds to the absence of issue X. The absence of other RevCons after 2015 justifies the absence of issue X thereafter. In both Bolsonaro and Temer administrations, issue XI is missing. Though Brazil has not dropped complaints of lack of efforts for implementation of disarmament measures by the NWS, it has no longer pointed out the asymmetry between NNWS and NWS, which could be understood as a tenuous inclination towards an alignment with the central powers, though such understanding is attenuated with the permanence of most of the other issues.

Just like in Cardoso's administration, issue XII is absent in Bolsonaro's administration. It should be considered, nonetheless, that only the 2019 documents were available under his administration, which, compared to the others, is the smallest sample. The reason is that the pandemic delayed the 2020 RevCon, so no other meeting happened since 2019.

Bolsonaro's administration, in spite of the clear change of course in many traditional foreign policy principles, has kept nuclear diplomacy unchanged. He has purposefully implemented very significant changes in the country's foreign affairs agenda and has used it to serve his electorate in an unprecedented way, as explained by Lima and Albuquerque, (2019, p. 17-20). In this sense, Bolsonaro administration could have been the exemplary case of how an alternance in leadership can potentially introduce change even in security-sensitive issues such as the Brazilian nuclear diplomacy. Instead, the data shows that Brazil has presented a very consistent rhetoric in the NPT RevCons and PrepComs between 1998 and 2019.

At least ten issues out of the thirteen listed in table 1 can be found in every administration. This is a very significant level of coincidence. It is even more significant given that some issues' absence are justified by contextual reasonings, such as issues X and XII. Almost all issues contest the global nuclear regime's status-quo, defended by the NWS. So, even if three issues are absent during two administrations, all the other issues are pointing towards a critical position, which has been the tone assumed by Brazil during all the studied period, demonstrating its rhetorical coherence and stability. This indicates the absence of correlation between administration alternance and the Brazilian stance at the PrepComs and RevCons. As a result, considering the importance of these forums for the regime, it can be inferred that Brazilian nuclear diplomacy is a field insulated from the process of politicization verified in Brazilian foreign policy.

Conclusion

As the politicization of Brazilian foreign policy has increased since the redemocratization, it has led to a more comprehensive group of stakeholders to influence its formulation and decision making. Ruptures such as those represented by Lula's inauguration in 2003, Temer's in 2016, or Bolsonaro's in 2019 have caused changes in some fields of Brazilian foreign policy that mattered more for the political groups in power.

For Lula, the rapprochement with the Brazilian neighbors, the defense of the Global South international political coordination, and the reiteration of multilateralism were fundamental. For Temer, the establishment of a more pragmatic trade policy, working in favor of new bilateral free-trade agreements, instead of a costly defense of a multilateral solution of the Doha round, has been the political priority of its foreign policy. Meanwhile, the Bolsonaro

administration, in opposition to the so-called “globalist agenda”, abandons some consolidated foreign policy principles in the fields of climate change, environment, human rights, regional integration, and non-interference in other states’ affairs; and innovates by subjugating the Brazilian foreign policy to a specific US administration, the Trump government. However, none of these governments implemented significant changes in Brazilian nuclear diplomacy.

Brazilian nuclear diplomacy has been insulated from changes of administration, in contrast to other fields of Brazilian foreign policy. This confirms the article’s main argument: notwithstanding the general tendency of politicization of Brazilian foreign affairs, the formulation of Brazilian nuclear diplomacy presents no significant variation vis-à-vis different administrations, since Brazil adhered to the NPT. This reveals the limits of politicization in the Brazilian foreign policy-making structure and is an issue that can be easily intersected by structure-oriented and domestic-oriented approaches. On one hand, this exception could fortify the argument that security-related issues tend to overcome domestic “disturbance” in favor of a unified approach to be formulated by traditional actors and lower societal involvement, explaining the stability verified in the research. On the other hand, there is a complex network of organizational relations and interactions involving relevant national stakeholders that deserve further development in future studies.

This research has been limited by its theme and time scope. It deserves further development in the study of reasons behind the insulation of Brazilian nuclear diplomacy. Moreover, the content analysis of Brazilian rhetoric in other international regimes and in other historical periods would contribute even further to understanding the link between administration shifts and foreign policy, as well as would complement the results presented by this article.

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