

RISING BRAZIL: WHAT ROLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS?

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Thank you to Rogerio Arantes and Rossana Rocha Reis in particular for the kind invitation. It is a pleasure to be here. I very much look forward to the discussions this morning as my remarks will be on issues that you are the real experts on.

The focus of my remarks will be on the potential of Brazil to play a constructive role in the present and future development of the international human rights regime.

I think this is an important topic because the current gloom surrounding Brazil is in quite stark contrast to much international commentary on Brazil for nearly a decade. That Brazil is 'rising' has been taken for granted in many policy-circles.

From its membership in the so-called *BRICs* to its leadership role in the exclusive club of G20 countries, Brazil has emerged as a pivotal player in global governance. From being a country vulnerable to external shocks and a debtor country, Brazil has become a net creditor to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The very active foreign policy agenda pursued by the former President Lula clearly raised Brazil's international profile.

And, although current President Dilma has had a less frantic travel schedule, Brazilian foreign policy remains active, and the coverage of Brazil in the international press reflects a widespread view that the country matters for the outside world. As the country is gearing up to host the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games, Brazil is very likely to remain in the spotlight in the immediate future and in the medium-term at least.

Indeed, taking a broad macro perspective at the region of Latin America, there has been a strong sense of progress over the course of the last decade. Both the region as a whole and in particular certain individual countries – Mexico, Colombia, Chile, and Brazil – are seen as emerging, as rising, as increasingly influential countries on the global scene. Of course, much of the optimism has focused on the robust economic performance of many Latin American economies, which has highlighted stark contrasts with the recession-struck economies of

Europe and the US. For some, such contrasts indicate fundamental shifts in the global economy toward the 'Global South' that evoke an important part of a future 'multi-polar' world order. The contrast of Latin America with the prevailing sense of crisis and gloom in Europe in particular is indeed refreshing and exhilarating.

But on a more sober note, there are of course also formidable challenges – political, economic, and social – in today's Latin America. The country that best captures some of these regional trends and contradictions, these tensions between progress and enduring challenges – is, arguably, Brazil.

It is of course not the first time that outsiders have had high expectations on Brazil. But what may be most striking is that these are matched to some extent by increasing domestic expectations in Brazil that the country should take its rightful place in elite international fora.

Now, are these expectations justified? In other words, is Brazil rising?

This is a critical question to address of course, and for many international observers, particularly in the financial press, the sluggish performance of the Brazilian economy in recent years raises significant doubts. For other even more hardnosed observers, Brazil's limited military might, its hard power, seriously questions the capacity of Brazil to play any influential role on the global scene. Brazil remains a moderate military power, and will do so for the foreseeable future, despite what regional neighbours may believe, or fear.

Although an important question, whether Brazil is actually rising – however one may measure it – is not the immediate focus of my remarks today. Instead, what I would like to discuss are the domestic and international perceptions and expectations that Brazil is rising. I readily admit that it may not be quite as simple as this, but, simply put, as long as these perceptions and expectations persist, Brazil will continue its rise. Moreover, beyond external perceptions and expectations on Brazil, there are of course a host of domestic processes of change that have projected Brazil abroad. From Brazilian companies with mining interests in Africa, increased diplomatic activities and collaborations through various country constellations (IBSA, BRICs), through to its significant soft power projection, Brazil's international profile is more varied and extensive than ever before.

In short, as we raise questions of where Brazil is coming from, what Brazilian society may want from the present and the future, and where Brazil is going, we may start to understand better the character and direction of the Brazil's current and future trajectory – that is, whether and how Brazil is rising.

Indeed, beyond the many headlines that the country has generated – good and bad – important questions regarding Brazil, the character, meaning and direction of its rise remain unanswered.

In this spirit, my remarks will focus on five dimensions of ‘Rising Brazil’, which I hope will illustrate, on the one hand, a considerable dynamism and hopes that many have invested in Brazil, but also, on the other hand, will highlight the many uncertainties that accompany Brazil’s foreign policy in general and with regards to human rights policy in particular.

Human Rights in a World in Flux

Before turning specifically to Brazil however, let me just say a few words about why I believe the international human rights regime stands at a critical juncture, and why the case of Brazilian foreign policy in matters of human rights is important not only for Brazil, but also for the international human rights regime more generally.

The remarkable rise of human rights since the end of the Second World War is deeply connected with the expansion of the global liberal order sustained and promoted by Western states during this period. From dominant understandings of human rights as individual protections against a potentially threatening State to the relative exclusion of socio-economic and collective rights from the mainstream human rights canon, Western liberal thought has fundamentally shaped both the theory and practice of human rights. And the role of the United Nations at the heart of global governance since the 1950s is in many ways a reflection of the policy preferences of powerful Western states.

Yet, in recent years much attention has been given to ‘emerging powers’ such as Brazil, China, India, and South Africa and the effects their growing influence may have on the present and future management of issues of global concern, including human rights. The critical question therefore must be: If political, economic and social power is important in understanding the development of the international human rights regime, what are the implications as power shifts in the international system?

This question is increasingly crucial to address given incipient debates that focus on the meaning and wider implications of the rise of so-called non-Western States.

And, the future of human rights in a changing global order is of a wider significance that goes far beyond the concerns of Western policymakers struggling with the notion that their era of dominance in world affairs may be coming to an end. For human rights advocates around the world, as well as for rights-bearing people worldwide, understanding the present and future evolution of human rights constitutes one of the key challenges of the

twenty-first century. As I will return to towards the end of my remarks, the challenges of responding to a world in flux are being recognized by leading human rights organisations, including Conectas here in São Paulo. But many appear uncertain over the extent to which they need to adapt their advocacy strategies, rather than to simply apply the same lobbying techniques in what they perceive to be new centres of influence, such as Pretoria, New Dehli, and Brasilia.

Indeed, the growing influence of rising powers is likely to shape the future development of the global human rights regime. As Western liberalism may become increasingly challenged by rising powers, the status of human rights as the dominant moral discourse is likely to be challenged by the emergence of distinctive political discourses that emphasise different sets of values and priorities. After all, values are not easily separated from the hard power that underpins them.

There are, I believe, nonetheless, powerful reasons for “thoughtful wishing” when imagining the future of the global human rights regime. In the first instance, attempts over the course of the last decade or so on the part of the most powerful states in the international system to shift the normative balance between human rights and security in the name of the ‘war on terrorism’ have indeed showed the inherent power-based logic underpinning the global human rights regime. However, the resilience and normative strength of the human rights system has also been demonstrated by the ways in which the human rights discourse has re-asserted itself as a powerful critique of Western powers.

It should also be somewhat reassuring for human rights advocates that the evolution of human rights has become, to some extent, decoupled from the hard power of Western states. The power of human rights as a language of social criticism and as standards of behaviour and acceptable treatment of human beings has proved attractive to a wide range of movements and political forces across the world.

On this mixed message of hope and caution with regards to the present and future trajectory of the international human rights regime, let me now turn to Brazil.

Rising Brazil?

There are five particularly salient dimensions of Brazil’s human rights policies and foreign policy more generally that I would like to highlight here today:

- (i) Brazil’s role as an advocate for global governance reforms;
- (ii) its efforts to foster South-South relations;
- (iii) its position on the use of force for humanitarian purposes;
- (iv) Brazil’s regional status; and

- (v) the role of accountability politics and the multiple interlinkages between Brazil's past and present, and its domestic and international policies.

1. *Brazil and Global Governance Reforms*

Diplomatically, Brazil has traditionally expressed rhetorical support for multilateralism, and for the UN. But, there has always been a clear instrumental side to Brazilian diplomats' attitude towards multilateralism, which has tended to frame Brazil's own narrow national interests in terms of arguments for greater justice and representativeness in global governance institutions.¹

This has been particularly noteworthy in recent years as Brazil has sought to increase its international weight and influence by advocating for reform of global governance. This can most clearly be seen in Brazil's intense efforts to gain a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). It can also be seen in Brazil's successful efforts in joining the core group of states negotiating the Doha round trade talks of the World Trade Organization.

Brazil has not been particularly radical in the positions taken. But it has expressed opposition to the status quo as reflected in the policies pursued with regards to issues such as nuclear proliferation (regarding the sanctions regime imposed on Iran), and climate change (regarding the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities' that stresses the need for developed countries to shoulder the greater burden of the costs of adapting to climate change).

These demands resonate widely in the Global South as it draws on the widespread sense of the unrepresentative nature of international institutions.

They also build upon a deep-rooted nationalist tradition in Brazil – both on the political left and right – of viewing international institutions suspiciously and the international order as entrenching the privileges of the developed world. There has traditionally been a certain ambivalence among Brazilian elites about whether the country is part of the 'West' and should seek convergence with the global liberal order, or whether the country is a member of the 'Third World' and should therefore ally with the developing world in order to push for a greater role in international affairs.

The consequences for Brazil's human rights policy are significant. Brazil remains unwilling to convert that rhetorical support into concrete action. There has been very little evidence of

¹ Hurrell, 2008: 53

any 'mainstreaming' of human rights in Brazilian foreign policy on the international arena. Brazil has remained a comparatively inactive participant in terms of diplomatically supporting the international human rights regime, launching human rights initiatives in multilateral fora, and funding and staffing international agencies with rights mandates. For example, it is noteworthy that arguably the most prominent Brazilian on the global 'humanitarian scene', the late Sergio Vieira de Mello, received practically no official or diplomatic support from his country of birth during his career (Power, 2008).

And yet, Brazilian diplomatic discourse on human rights is likely to continue to stress internationalism and multilateralism and support for global liberal values, such as human rights. Rhetoric matters for the international human rights regime. The assertion by rising powers of alternative domestic and regional conceptions of human rights and their pursuit of different understandings of moral and political legitimacy could increasingly bring into question the current international human rights regime. From this perspective, Brazil's support for the fundamental tenets of the international human rights regime, and possibly as a diplomatic bridge between the radical critics of the regime on the one hand and its supporters on the other, will be important.

2. Brazil and South-South Relations

This brings me to the second dimension of Brazilian foreign policy, South-South relations.

In recent years, Brazil has prioritised the expansion of relations with other major developing countries, especially China, India, and South Africa. Efforts to intensify South-South dialogues are reflected in the increasing formalization of the IBSA forum (India, Brazil, and South Africa) and the gradual institutionalization of the BRIC group (Brazil, Russia, India, and China). They can also be seen in the more activist Brazilian diplomacy towards Africa, and increasingly the broader Middle East, including Syria.

Partly these diplomatic efforts need to be understood in the context of Brazil's attempts to mobilise support for its bid for a permanent seat on the UNSC, although stronger ties with the Third World also have deep roots in Brazilian foreign policy, as I have already mentioned.

Yet, the ambition to build South-South strategic alliances and to gain support for a UNSC seat has led Brazil to compromise on its expressed commitment to human rights. Although Brazil has traditionally refused to criticise other countries' human rights record, pragmatic strategic interests have tended to trump more principled concerns for human rights. Brazil consistently supports China, gave a quick endorsement of Iran's disputed presidential elections in 2009, and former President Lula invited Iran's president for an official visit.

Supporters of this pragmatic approach stress the importance of engaging rather than isolating Iran, for example, and Brazilian diplomats may have calculated that they have very little influence to change the domestic behaviour of states such as China and Iran in any case.

Many commentators have seized upon President's Dilma's personal history as a victim of human rights violations under Brazil's military regime, as evidence of an increasing willingness to engage internationally with human rights. And, indeed, in the early days of her presidency, Dilma adopted a more robust position on human rights by urging more robust criticism of Iran's human rights record.

Dilma's early policy shift on Iran exposed one of the main fault lines in Brazilian diplomacy on human rights that pit principled rhetorical condemnation against pragmatic and 'cordial' dialogue. Brazil's policy towards Syria is another example of the challenges encountered in engaging more actively with ongoing human rights crises. I will return to Syria in a few moments. The main point here is that Brazil's efforts to insert itself in international conflict resolution efforts do not by themselves reflect a fundamental shift in Brazilian diplomacy on human rights towards more assertive policies and condemnatory rhetoric.

3. Human Rights and the Use of Force

This is particularly apparent when considering the third dimension of Brazil's foreign policy orientation, with regards to the use of military force.

Brazil's foreign policy elites have traditionally had a strong preference for soft power over hard power strategies. Brazil's opposition to the NATO bombing campaign in Libya reflected the country's traditional aversion to the use of force and its preferences for mediation and diplomacy.

However, the expectations on Brazil, particularly by the US and the EU, to shoulder increasing responsibilities for the management of international security may continue to grow. Brazil's continuing leadership role in the UN mission in Haiti, for example, reflects an increasing willingness to engage in more robust UNSC-mandated missions. Similarly, the transfer of command responsibility of the UN mission in the DRC to a Brazilian force commander is another illustration of the Brazilian military's, and its civilian leadership's, projection of a more active role in coercive peacekeeping.

Moreover, often overlooked given the focus on UNSC Resolution 1973 that authorised the use of force in the case of Libya and which Brazil opposed, is the fact that Brazil voted in

favour of a previous UNSC Resolution (1970) that imposed sanctions on Libya and that referred the situation to the International Criminal Court. This is in contrast to previous Brazilian reluctance to support sanctions in the case of Iran for example.

And yet, Brazilian reluctance to support military intervention was seen in its response to the conflict in Libya. In March 2011 Brazil, as a temporary member of the UN Security Council, joined with China, India, Russia and Germany to abstain from the vote authorising 'all necessary measures' against Libya. Following the onset of NATO bombing of Libya, Brazil's opposition to the bombing hardened in the aftermath of the visit of US President Barack Obama to Brazil in March 2011 with the Foreign Ministry, the *Itamaraty*, issuing statements condemning the loss of civilian lives, and calling for a ceasefire and the initiation of a dialogue.

In addition, President Dilma's intervention in the debates over the 'Responsibility to Protect' that sought to focus on the responsibilities of the interveners, demonstrate that Brazil remains wary of the professed humanitarian purposes of those who call for military intervention in the ongoing civil war in Syria, for example. Moreover, any Brazilian policy shifts in these matters need to be understood in the context of the ongoing campaign to secure a permanent seat on the UNSC.

In the case of Syria, Brazilian policy has in many ways reflected these ambiguities. The *Itamaraty* seemed initially keen to sign off on a comparatively forceful condemnation of the violence in Syria that could have been construed as a call for a more active international intervention. However, following criticisms from China and Russia on the one hand, and the influential Syrian community in São Paulo on the other, Brazilian policy has more recently been scaled back with regards to Syria.

These ambiguities notwithstanding, it should be noted – once more – that Brazilian aversion to the use of force even for humanitarian purposes does not mean that it does not support other (softer) human rights enforcement measures, such as diplomatic dialogue and mediation. And Brazil's insistence that the use of force in the name of human rights has a very problematic record is an important reminder that many of the traditional military powers have become increasingly discredited as promoters of human rights.

4. *Brazil as an Ambivalent Regional Leader*

The fourth dimension of Brazilian foreign policy that I would like to highlight is its ambivalent role as a regional leader in Latin America.

Brazil's multilateralism has traditionally tended to be projected beyond the region of Latin America. But under Lula there was some recalibration of foreign policy priorities, as Brazil sought to intensify relations with the South American sub-region in particular. This was seen in efforts to broaden Mercosur (to include Venezuela) as well as deepen it (beyond purely economic relations and towards political cooperation, including on human rights matters). The regionalization of Brazilian foreign policy was also reflected in the creation of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

In recent years, Brazil has been more assertive in the wider Latin American region by becoming involved in politically contested issues, such as Brazil's leadership role in the UN peace-keeping mission in Haiti, and (tentative) expression of willingness to mediate in the Colombian conflict. However, these attempts have been fraught with problems, as regional countries – such as Argentina, Mexico in particular - do not necessarily sign off on Brazilian regional leadership.

With regards to human rights policy more specifically the limits of Brazil's regional leadership are also apparent. Even if it were willing to promote human rights as part of its regional foreign policy (Brazilian relations with Cuba indicates otherwise), Brazil's capacity to shape political outcomes in the region is limited. This could be seen in the frustrated attempts by Brazil to negotiate a political solution to the 2009 coup in Honduras, but also in Paraguay's continuing resistance to any attempts by Brazilian diplomacy to intervene to support democratic forces in that country.

Moreover, in terms of Brazil's engagement with the regional human rights regime, the country remains in many ways a regional laggard. Comparatively few cases were submitted to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) during the military regime. Following the democratic transition, Brazil was one of the last Organisation of American States (OAS) member states in Latin America to recognize the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Brazil has had comparatively few dealings with the IAHRs, and by the mid-1990s only a handful of the several hundred cases pending before the IACHR concerned Brazil. This pattern of recourse to the IAHRs continued throughout the 2000s. Moreover, up until the mid-1990s at least, Brazilian authorities put pressure on the IACHR not to recognize cases from Brazilian petitioners.

True, Brazil's ratification record of human rights treaties is notable compared to many other regional states (the US for example). And, in part, the relative neglect of the regional human rights system is explained by the fact that Brazilian governments' engagement with international human rights has tended to be projected outside the region and towards the UN, which has led to Brazil not having a clearly defined presence within the IAHRs. However, the Brazilian perception of having a self-contained legal system combined with a

reluctance to accept international scrutiny of the country's domestic human rights record on sovereignty grounds has made Brazil a relative latecomer to the international human rights regime (at least judged on regional terms).

During the Cardoso government however, the Brazilian state moved from an obstructionist to a more cooperative relationship with the IAHRs reaching a number of friendly settlement agreements with the IACHR. Also, Brazil supported the candidacies of Antônio Cançado Trindade to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (serving as judge on the Court from 1995 to 2006) and of Hélio Bicudo, a deputy of the Workers' Party and former prosecutor in São Paulo, who was elected member of the IACHR in 1997 (and served 1998-2001). Of course, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro has played an active role in various capacities on the Inter-American Commission. And more recently, Paulo Vannuchi's reinstated candidacy to the Inter-American Commission was successful.

Yet, in terms of concrete engagement with the IAHRs on specific cases, Brazilian state institutions have tended either to ignore judgements by the regional system or choose not to implement substantial measures. This has been the response by the Brazilian state to the *Araguaia* case. And it may be because of this pattern of orchestrated indifference to the Inter-American System that the Dilma government's aggressive response to the Commission's granting of precautionary measures in the case of *Belo Monte* came as a shock to the Commission.

The absence of Brazilian regional leadership is particularly noteworthy in the area of transitional justice. True, the creation of the National Truth Commission has been promoted by some as a significant advance and as a crucial step towards accountability for past human rights violations. Whether or not this is the case is an important debate that we can come back to in the Q&A session, but the main point here is that the Truth Commission notwithstanding, the contrast with Brazil's regional neighbours is instructive. Whilst very significant accountability advances have taken place in countries such as Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and, arguably, Peru, the Brazilian government has maintained its policy preference for 'truth' over 'justice'.

It has also continued to resist international and national efforts to hold individual military and police personnel to account for their involvement in human rights violations under the military regime. And, as a case of continuing lack of compliance with the ruling of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the *Gomes Lund et al. (Guerrilha do Araguaia)* case, Brazil's Amnesty Law remains intact. Time will tell whether it will remain possible for the Brazilian government to put a full stop to increasingly concerted legal efforts to hold individual military and police personnel to account for their involvement in human rights violations under the military regime.

Again, we may have different views on the relative importance of these policy areas for Brazil. But, this lack of regional leadership and enduring reluctance to accept substantive external scrutiny on human rights matters. It matters for many because what it means for a rising power to engage internationally, is to be able to accept external scrutiny in a serious way, and respond to such scrutiny constructively and responsibly.

5. Temporal and Spatial Interlinkages – Past and Present, Domestic and International

This brings me to the final area that I would like to highlight this morning, which is the question of accountability.

I can only be brief here as this is a notoriously complex issue, and very much in the headlines.

There are at least two overlapping, yet distinct, dimensions of accountability – past and present, domestic and international – that I think are relevant for our topic this morning.

First, the ways in which any society deals with its past, present, *and* future tend to be intimately linked. It is precisely in this sense that transitional justice for the Brazilian government, and Brazilian society more broadly, is not exclusively about the past, or a form of backward-looking accountability.

Rather, it is very much about the present and crucially directed towards the future. It raises issues of accountability of government towards its citizens and the limits on legitimate state violence. Simply put, what we are talking about is whether it was legitimate for the Brazilian state to disappear, torture and extra-judicially execute its citizens. These are of course events of the past, but it is up to the Brazilian government in the present to attempt to repair the harm done and, crucially, put in place preventive mechanisms and institutions that ensures that similar acts are not committed in the present and in the future.

The many continuities between the past and present in matters of human rights are of course well known. In the first decade or so following the Brazilian transition to democracy the country was a regional outlier in that political democratization coincided with a deterioration of the domestic human rights record, at least on measures related to citizen security. That is, despite the return of electoral democracy and Brazil's increasing engagement with international human rights, processes of democratization in Brazil have moved at a different speed, and occasionally in different directions, than human rights change.

The connections here between past and present accountability deficits are particularly apparent in the area of public security. As the police response to the ongoing street protests demonstrates, repression and lack of accountability continues to be the hallmark of the security forces.

And, the character of Brazilian federalism means that accountability for human rights violations remains dispersed, with the military police being controlled by state governors. This has meant in practice, that while the federal government may have developed a more responsive human rights policy, it has not been matched by a parallel recognition at the sub-national level. Indeed Brazil has ‘an extremely fragmented and heterogeneous polity which limits the central state’s capacity to implement effective strategies’.²

But, beyond the lack of accountability for violations committed by individual police officers and commanders, there is a broader political accountability gap here concerning political authorities and elites. Although the media discourse appeared to shift after the initial condemnation of the demonstrators as ‘vandals’, the fact remains that political and economic elites have for decades supported and legitimated repressive policing in ways that have undercut most attempts to reform the security forces.

Now, in what ways do these accountability deficits matter for Brazilian foreign policy in the area of human rights?

The immediate response is that how the Brazilian government and society more broadly, deal with the ongoing protests matters for Brazil not only domestically but also internationally. And I am not only referring here to the image of Brazil abroad, and in the international press. The prevailing narrative in much of the reporting on the protests in recent weeks goes something like this, as taken from the New York Times: “All of a sudden, a country that was once viewed as a stellar example of a rising, democratic power finds itself upended by an amorphous, leaderless popular uprising with one unifying theme: an angry, and sometimes violent, rejection of politics as usual.”³

But, the response by the government, and the political elite, to the protests will be important not primarily for what Brazil may represent to the outside world – “a stellar example of a rising, democratic power” – but for what it does.

² Panizza and Barahona de Brito, 1998: 21

³<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/22/world/americas/sweeping-protests-in-brazil-pull-in-an-array-of-grievances.html?src=un&feedurl=http%3A%2F%2Fjson8.nytimes.com%2Fpages%2Fworld%2Famericas%2Findex.jsonp>

It is therefore reassuring that the response by President Dilma to the protests has been to support their legitimacy and expressing agreement concerning their perceived root causes – lack of accountability, responsiveness to citizen demands, poor quality of public services etc. The contrast with the authoritarian response by the Turkish government to street protests in that country is very instructive in this regard. And yet, the key question will be whether the Dilma government will be able to leverage the public protests to push through much needed structural political reforms, and to reinvigorate efforts to address Brazil's huge inequalities.

The Brazilian Ambassador to the UK was interviewed on the BBC last week and he emphasised in response to questions about the reasons for and significance of the protests that Brazil remains a developing country with many challenges. It is of course true that Brazil is facing many challenges, but the image conveyed of a developing country is misleading. As any short-term visitor will become aware of, Brazil consists of many societies within one country. Indeed, for many, the stark inequalities that this image of different societies conveys are one of the key characteristics of Brazil.

And, what is striking with the protests in recent weeks is that the protesters themselves are very clearly disputing this image of a developing country valiantly, and increasingly successfully, struggling with its many challenges. One of the slogans that caught my attention was: 'First-world taxes, Third-world public services'.

Another example of how these domestic struggles are closely linked with international developments are the very conscious efforts by some protesters drawn on shared symbols of global youth protest – Guy Fawkes masks etc – and to disseminate information and propaganda to an international audience, often in English. And, of course, the focal points of the protests have been one of the central global events: the World Cup.

In short, domestic struggles matter for Brazilian foreign policy, and the international increasingly shapes what happens domestically.

Conclusion: 'Rising Brazil' - What Role for Human Rights?

This leads me towards some concluding thoughts.

As I have tried to argue, Brazil is important for the future development of the international human rights regime. The distinctiveness of the country, both in terms of its domestic human rights record, and in terms of its relationship with international human rights, means

that Brazil is likely to impact on debates on the meaning and nature of democratic rule and human rights in the decades to come.

Together with India and South Africa (and China), Brazil is not likely to develop understandings of human rights governance in line with Western ideals. Brazil has traditionally emphasised the importance of universalist multilateral institutions, including with regards to the international human rights regime.

But Brazil has also continued to stress the importance of the protections from external interference as enshrined in the principle of national sovereignty and voiced opposition to the idea, and practice, of humanitarian intervention. It has also resisted the inherent selectivity of Western criticisms of certain countries' human rights records (with, for example, Iran singled out as a human rights and security pariah, whereas Saudi Arabia is afforded the status of a key Western ally).

And, there are of course significant domestic challenges in terms of Brazil's own deeply problematic human rights record that I have already hinted at. Yet, domestic experiences of human rights challenges can provide important opportunities to pursue informed and effective policies abroad. This can be seen, for example, in the struggle against poverty and in Lula's international initiative on combating hunger, as well as in Brazil's constructive role in the follow-up to the Durban conference on racial discrimination.

And, of course, dominant countries have had their own internal human rights challenges (US and racial segregation, UK and colonial rule, and France in Algeria), while simultaneously supporting the development of the international human rights regime. And this is even before the more contemporary rights violating policies and practices by powerful states in the 'war on terror'.

In conclusion, it is therefore important to note two structural features that will continue to shape Brazilian policies when it comes to international human rights.

First, on the domestic side, democratization and the increasing participation of previously marginalised sectors of society, has had its impact on foreign policy making.

Brazilian human rights NGOs and social movements are increasingly seeking to influence Brazilian foreign policy in human rights matters. For example, Brazilian NGOs played an active role in lobbying efforts that shaped the creation of the UN Human Rights Council. They have also worked with 'key countries' to produce international norms in relation to, for example, the framing of norms concerning discrimination based on sexual orientation. And

Brazilian human rights groups are increasingly lobbying Brazilian policymakers on human rights and foreign policy matters.

There has been an increasing professionalization of Brazil's human rights organization over the course of the last decade. There has also been increased interaction between local NGOs and transnational networks as evidenced in the creation of Justiça Global by human rights professionals who previously worked at HRW and CEJIL.

This is partly the result of increased interest by major international donors such as the Ford Foundation, and more recently the Soros Foundation. The setting up of regional offices in Brazil by HRW and AI, reflects the rising expectations that Brazil needs to play a more active role in the promotion of human rights internationally. It also raises a number of tricky questions concerning how to do human rights advocacy in and with Brazil. It cannot be assumed that Brazil will easily converge with liberal values and norms, and that the human rights advocacy strategies that are deemed to have 'worked' with the US and European governments, are easily translatable into the Brazilian policy context.

The broader point remains though, Brazilian foreign policy is no longer merely driven by traditional Brazilian policy elites.

Second, internationally Brazil will have to manage increasing expectations that the country *should* play a more active and forceful role in shaping the development of the international human rights regime.

As I discussed at the beginning of this talk, the international human rights regime is facing an uncertain future as highlighted in the debates surrounding the meaning and wider implications of the rise of non-Western states, shifting global power balances, and what some predict could be the beginning of the end of the period of US hegemony.

In many ways the rise of Brazil is seen as distinct from authoritarian China, and other 'middle-powers' such as Iran (and for some, to use a more regionally relevant example, Venezuela). Yet, one cannot simply assume Brazil to converge to global liberal norms and values, including human rights.

Confronted with increasing expectations and demands to assume greater international responsibilities, Brazilian foreign policy-makers need to balance and assess often conflicting policy objectives.

This highlights some of the long-standing tensions in Brazilian foreign policy strategy and national identity. Does Brazil's future lie as the leader of the Global South? Or, as the

mediator between North and South? Or, as a rising power drawing on universal standards of legitimacy, such as human rights, for its own instrumental purposes?⁴

Therefore, in order to make sense of where Brazil finds itself today, a sense of the country's historical trajectory is crucial. We need to understand where Brazil is coming from in order to tell where it may be going. In particular, given the history of disillusion regarding Brazil's future, is there anything new with contemporary claims surrounding 'Rising Brazil'?

Moreover, we also need to examine what kind of society Brazil has become in order to understand what role it plays, and can play internationally. Therefore, how significant are domestic political changes for Brazil's foreign policy? In what ways, if any, does the character of Brazil's democratic politics influence foreign policy priorities and the projection of values abroad? To what extent do domestic human rights (and other) social, political and economic challenges affect Brazil's rise?

What are the Brazilian visions for the future? Economic power clearly matters for a country to play a significant international role. But, power in international relations matters not only in a material sense, but also in terms of how it translates into decision-making power. It therefore becomes important to examine the ways in which Brazil participates in and influences the rules of the game of international relations in different key areas of global governance. There has been significant attention to the gradually more prominent role of Brazil in the management of the global economy, international security, energy resources, and climate change. But how about another key area of global governance, human rights?

Moreover, how does Brazil manage its rise in terms of its relations with established powers (US, EU); other rising powers (China, India); its neighbours; and the developing world (e.g. Africa, Middle East)? And, crucially, how has Brazil's regional role evolved, particularly in relation to ongoing processes of regional integration in Latin America and the management of regional conflicts?

The answers to these questions remain uncertain of course. It is with this in mind that I thank you again for the invitation to come here today, and for your attention. I do hope that some of what I have said will have triggered questions and comments, and I look forward to our discussions.

Thank you.

⁴ Hurrell, 2008: 57