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South–South cooperation and democracy in Africa: Brazil’s role in Guinea-Bissau

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Over the past decade, Brazilian foreign policy has struggled to balance two principles: respect for national sovereignty and the commitment to promote democracy and human rights both at home and abroad. Understanding how this balancing act affects Brazil’s relations with Africa has become particularly important because Brazilian cooperation with African partners has expanded considerably over the past decade. This article analyzes Brazil’s initiatives in democracy and human rights promotion in the context of Guinea-Bissau. We find that Brazil’s initiatives in this area are channeled through two interconnected venues: multilaterally, especially through the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries and the UN Peacebuilding Commission, and bilaterally, through the official technical development cooperation programs coordinated by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency. We argue that, in the case of Guinea-Bissau, Brazil has worked to maintain institution-building as an essential component of development and security efforts to stabilize the country.

Keywords: Guinea-Bissau; Brazil; democracy; human rights; Africa; South–South cooperation

1. Introduction

While states that provide South–South development cooperation have tended to stress the importance of national sovereignty and non-conditionality, some governments carry out cooperation programs that openly reference democracy and human rights. The existence of such programs suggests that, contrary to the common assumption that democracy and human rights promotion are exclusive to the Western agenda, certain rising powers are actively engaged in promoting these principles and practices abroad, including in Africa.

In this article, we pose the following questions: ‘How do rising powers engage in democracy promotion within the context of political instability in Africa? Do these approaches differ from those of European and American practices?’ By using the case of Brazil’s role in (and cooperation with) Guinea-Bissau, we analyze how political discourses and concrete practices related to democracy and human rights promotion are justified and implemented. Drawing on a combination of document analysis encompassing Brazilian government reports, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) statements and resolutions and documents from African multilateral initiatives, we map out and examine the cooperation initiatives and positions that the Brazilian

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government has taken in Guinea-Bissau, focusing on those either openly or implicitly designed to boost democracy and human rights in the country.

For these purposes, the specific case of Guinea-Bissau is interesting for multiple reasons. First, Guinea-Bissau is a historic partner for Brazil, both bilaterally and through multilateral institutions such as the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) and the UN. The chronic instability that has characterized Guinea-Bissau's political scene has prompted Brazil to tailor its cooperation to the local context. Finally, given the concentration of the academic and policy literature on Brazil's ties with major partners in Africa, such as Mozambique, Angola, and South Africa, the focus on Guinea-Bissau helps to shed light on how Brazil has been engaging with smaller countries in the continent.

Broadly put, we find that, in Guinea-Bissau, Brazil engages in democracy and human rights promotion through three interrelated channels: its multilateral engagement, especially through the CPLP and the UN; the bilateral cooperation coordinated by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC); and trilateral cooperation efforts, such as those carried out in partnership with the USA. Overall, perhaps the biggest difference between Brazil's approach to democracy and human rights promotion and that of Northern aid is that Brazil refrains from making these programs into political conditionalities for development cooperation. Instead, these projects are presented as part of a broader (and primarily demand-driven) state-building effort geared to stabilize the situation in Guinea-Bissau, while gently nudging the country in the direction of democracy.

In order to address those questions, the first part of the article provides a brief overview of rising powers and democracy promotion. The second part analyzes the role that democracy has played within Brazilian foreign policy, both historically and in the contemporary period, and with particular reference to Brazil's engagement with Africa. Next, we analyze Brazilian cooperation with Guinea-Bissau, focusing on those activities that are associated within the official discourse with democracy and human rights, and looking at Brazil's engagement with Guinea-Bissau through multilateral as well as bilateral channels. The conclusion examines some of the repercussions of these ties for Brazil–Africa cooperation and identifies some key directions for future research.

2. Rising powers and democracy promotion

Democracy promotion and related efforts in human rights have long been associated with the development aid provided by European donors and the USA, both via bilateral assistance and through the programs implemented by multilateral, yet Northern-dominated, international organizations, including the Bretton Woods organizations. The promotion of democracy in the definition provided by Carothers (1999) of 'aid specifically designed to foster opening in a non-democratic country or to further a democratic transition in a country that has experienced a democratic opening' can take many different forms, for instance support of ongoing initiatives or inducement of new efforts toward democratization.

In these aid flows, democracy-building efforts can either be required as part of political conditionalities placed upon economic and other kinds of aid, or they can be more or less freestanding efforts, independent of broader aid packages (Crawford 2001). For instance, in the 1990s, the European Union (EU) made the promotion of democratic institutions and the enhancement of the rule of law both an objective and a condition for its aid to developing countries (Santiso 2003). Similarly, the World Bank, increasingly concerned over aid effectiveness, mainstreamed 'good governance' into its development prescriptions. Some analysts argue that democratization as a political conditionality has lost space within development aid, whether due to inefficacy, loss of legitimacy, or competitive pressure from providers of South–South cooperation (Youngs 2010).

Northern donors frequently work to promote democracy and human rights abroad, whether or not these activities are explicitly tied to the provision of economic or technical assistance. Given the growing role of rising powers in development cooperation, there is growing interest within the international community about these states' role in democracy and human rights promotion. One key question is how these rising powers use their growing political and economic clout to contest and reshape international norms in fields like security and development. The governments of democratic rising powers such as India, South Africa, and Brazil have adopted official discourses that stress the need to democratize global governance. Even more interestingly, they are joined by non-democratic rising powers like Russia and China, who also question the legitimacy of established international regimes, including those of the United Nations and the Bretton Woods Institutions, based on the idea that the key organizations that shape global governance are undemocratic.

At the same time, these two broad categories of rising powers, democratic and non-democratic regimes, seem to diverge with respect to how they address issues of democracy and human rights within their foreign policies. While the first group also stresses the respect for national sovereignty and adherence to non-interventionism, they include within their South–South cooperation programs some components that are geared specifically to strengthen democratic institutions and practices abroad. In contrast, the second group seems to adopt a more rigid emphasis on non-interference in cooperation partners' political regimes. Yet even democratic rising powers, as Carothers and Youngs (2011) note, often prove reluctant to 'publicly embrace a democracy and human rights agenda'.

The role that democracy (and related issues of human rights) assumes in South–South cooperation is of particular importance to the African context because cooperation programs by rising powers have intensified substantially since the turn of the millennium. Moreover, the shifts in development assistance have been magnified by the global economic crisis, to which rising powers have generally responded (so far) with greater resilience than the USA and most European countries. Finally, these rising powers claim to have a different view of Africa than Northern donors and the major multilateral development institutions, in that they regard Africa as a continent of hope and opportunity for mutual benefit rather than a space of hopelessness.

As a democratic rising power with an active South–South cooperation program that covers most African countries, Brazil has struggled to balance, within its foreign policy, the promotion of democracy and human rights and its traditional stress on the respect for national sovereignty. In this article, we analyze Brazil's approach to a partner of historic importance in Africa: Guinea-Bissau. This partnership is important to Brazil not only due to the two countries' longtime ties and common links through multilateral institutions such as the CPLP, but also because Guinea-Bissau, perhaps more than any other African partner, has required (or allowed) Brazil to be proactive in its democracy promotion, always in tandem with development cooperation and institution-building efforts. Although Brazil's experience with Guinea-Bissau cannot be generalized to rising powers' engagement with democracy in Africa as a whole, the case study sheds light on some of the peculiarities of the Brazilian approach to democracy and human rights promotion, some of whose components may be shared by other democratic rising powers.

3. Democracy and Brazilian foreign policy

According to Santiso (2002), during the redemocratization process of the 1980s, two goals coalesced within Brazilian foreign policy: the maintenance of the constitutional principles of sovereignty and non-intervention and a commitment with the promotion of democracy, especially within the regional arrangements in which Brazil participates. At the same time, there is an ambiguity in Brazilian foreign policy in keeping with the two goals, leading to tensions between a

commitment to upholding and maintain democracy at the domestic level and a more complex democratic engagement still marked by strong notions of sovereignty. When faced with democratic crises in the Western Hemisphere, Brazil's ambiguity is explained by the existence of a realist agenda, in which the defense and promotion of democracy and human rights are subordinated to Brazil's economic and political interests. As a result, Brazil acts to promote democracy and human rights only when these principles do not interfere with the pursuit of other interests (Burgess and Daudelin 2007). This approach occasionally puts Brazil at odds with countries that generally support intervention (including of the military kind) through the UN or outside of the regime altogether. This is reflected, for instance, in certain voting instances within the UNSC, when Brazil has refused to endorse proposals for military intervention by the NATO countries.

Conversely, maintenance and promotion of human rights are enshrined within the Brazilian Constitution of 1988, not only as guiding principles for domestic policy, but also for the country's foreign policy. Indeed, Brazil is a signatory of numerous conventions that include clauses on the maintenance and promotion of these values, both in South America and outside the region. Brazil's activism within the UN Human Rights Council – including its strong endorsement of the Universal Periodic Review – reflects this concern, but Brazilian bilateral relations also often openly refer to issues of democracy and human rights. This is important to note because this stance has not prevented Brazil from criticizing the USA and some European countries for espousing to be promoters of democracy and human rights, yet violating both principles at key moments. Outside of these multilateral efforts, Brazil has also acted decisively at certain moments to avert military coups and support democracy in Latin American countries, and it has led the MINUSTAH peacekeeping operation in Haiti, focusing on stabilization and state-building.

Within South–South cooperation, Brazil has sought to diversify its partnerships over the past decade, with Brazil often billing itself as a model to inspire other developing countries. As one former Minister of External Relations put it, 'For every African problem, there is a Brazilian solution.'¹ Recent research, however, has shown that Brazilian development cooperation has focused heavily on addressing socioeconomic wellbeing issues, rather than engaging in political development. In other words, official Brazilian cooperation has been overwhelmingly based on home-grown attempts to provide solutions to problems faced by Brazil at the domestic level, in areas such as agriculture, education, health, and access to technology. Brazil's public policy innovations in decreasing poverty and inequality at home emerged within the context of redemocratization and the establishment of human rights norms domestically. Although Brazil draws on these policy models as inspiration for its international cooperation efforts, those initiatives tend to overlook the political context in the innovations arose.

4. Brazil's approach to democracy in Africa

Over the past decade, Brazil has dramatically diversified its relations with Africa. Former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003–2011) viewed an increase in diplomatic representations not only as a way to strengthen relations with the Global South, but also as a way to forge a more autonomous foreign policy. This diversification means that Brazil now has diplomatic relations and cooperation programs, with a much broader gamut of political regimes on the continent.

Broadly put, Brazil seems to openly promote democracy and human rights in Africa primarily under two circumstances. The first is when dealing with partners who are also members of certain multilateral organizations, particularly the CPLP. This is due to the strong role accorded to democracy and human rights by the organization itself, since its very inception. CPLP seems

to provide Brazil with a platform in which openly referring to and addressing democracy and human rights is legitimized by the collective acceptance of these principles as they are codified within the CPLP charter – even if many of these countries do not have democratic regimes per se. In addition to addressing the topic within the multilateral setting, however, Brazil also feels more comfortable resorting to the language of democracy and human rights bilaterally with those members.

Concrete initiatives in democracy promotion include cooperation in electronic voting. In this area, Brazil's Superior Electoral Court (Tribunal Superior Eleitoral [TSE]) has accumulated significant experience in promoting abroad the technologies and practices developed in Brazil to solve a domestic problem that arose during the redemocratization process: how to expand voting among illiterate or handicapped parcels of the population. The TSE has developed considerable expertise in this area, carrying out seminars and missions to divulge to partner countries the machines and systems that were developed in Brazil. Brazil also carries out institution-building initiatives in several countries that are geared, first, to help to boost political stability and, in certain cases, to strengthen democratic institutions.

In addition to this, the Brazilian government has consistently assumed public positions on major security issues in Africa, including stability crises (and corresponding interventions, in given cases) such as those in Libya and Mali. Regarding the Arab Spring events, Brazil has also expressed a wish for further democratization in both Tunisia and Egypt. Brazil had positively responded to the new Egyptian government's request for cooperation in the transition toward democracy, but concrete projects had not been implemented by the time that President Morsi was deposed by the military.

Another instance in which Brazil has addressed democracy and human rights is when its involvement in Africa is mediated through agencies of the United Nations. Given the resurgence, since the 9/11 attacks and the War on Terror, of the notion that security and development are closely intertwined, international organizations working on development in Africa typically stress the need to address problems of chronic and structural conflict as a prerequisite for, or as an integral part of, socioeconomic development.

In the case of Guinea-Bissau, outlined below, Brazil deals with a partner that is both a member of the CPLP and a space of interest for the UNSC. Particularly given Brazil's involvement in Guinea-Bissau through its leadership of the UN Peacebuilding Committee, in Guinea-Bissau Brazil has had to strike a new balance between its positions on sovereignty and its engagement with democracy and human rights.

5. Brazil and state-building in Guinea-Bissau

5.1 *Brazil–Guinea-Bissau relations*

Brazil's cooperation with Guinea-Bissau is of interest for a number of reasons. First, its engagement with the African nation takes place through a variety of institutions, both bilateral and multilateral, in ways that generally mutually reinforce one another. In addition, Guinea-Bissau is important to Brazilian foreign policy because of the two countries' shared Portuguese common identity and membership in the CPLP. More recently, Guinea-Bissau became a key concern for Brazil because of the latter's leadership of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).

While it is beyond the scope of this article to provide a detailed analysis of the political instability in Guinea-Bissau since independence (for overviews, see Ferreira 2004; Ostheimer 2010; Vigh 2006), Brazil has worked to maintain the country on the agenda of the Security Council, despite a combination of resistance and omission by SC members.

Brazil and Guinea-Bissau have had diplomatic ties since shortly after the latter's 1974 independence,² with a Memorandum of Understanding signed in June 1976. An additional Basic Agreement on Technical Cooperation was signed in May 1978. A list of agreements signed by the two countries since then shows that there were minimal initiatives during the 1980s and the 1990s, when Africa was not a priority concern for Brazilian foreign policy. In contrast, trade between the two countries (although very small in absolute terms) increased dramatically over the past decade, growing from US\$ 181,000 in 2002 to 11,694,000 in 2009 (Ministry of External Relations, Guinea-Bissau).

This increase in trade is a reflection of Brazil's complex involvement in Guinea-Bissau, through both bilateral and multilateral channels. From 1998 to 1999, Guinea-Bissau was racked by a civil war which, despite its relatively short duration, destroyed the country's already inadequate infrastructure. Shortly after the coup, Brazil participated in an emergency meeting organized by Guinea-Bissau's development partners, in Geneva. Representatives from the transitional government of Guinea-Bissau also visited Brazil to discuss with President Fernando Henrique Cardoso measures to strengthen cooperation between the two countries, showing that there was active demand for Brazilian assistance from Guinea-Bissau (Brazil in the Security Council). At the UNSC, Brazil participated in the formal meetings on the issue as well as in the informal consultative meetings of the UNSC members, openly expressing its support for the strengthening of democracy and reconstruction of Guinea-Bissau.

In April 1999, following a cease-fire, the UN established the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS), originally in charge of facilitating a general election and restoring stability, but with a limited mandate and resources – a reflection of the low priority accorded to Guinea-Bissau within the Council. UNOGBIS' mandate was extended after the elections were held, and again in 2004. This renovation and the broadening of UNOGBIS' mandate were carried out after Brazil, which held a non-permanent seat in the UNSC in 2004–2005, pressured the council to pay greater attention to the situation in Guinea-Bissau. Until then, the UNSC had dealt with the Guinea-Bissau situation through mere letter exchanges, rather than issuing resolutions (Viegas 2008). Brazil had to overcome resistance from the USA, which questioned Brazilian proposals to act in state-building and reform of the Armed Forces (Uziel 2010). Both projects were geared to strengthen institutions, boost stability, and nudge Guinea-Bissau toward democracy.

5.2 *Brazil and the UN PBC*

In 2005, as part of the reform process initiated during the General Assembly's 60th session, the UN established the PBC, an intergovernmental advisory body that helps countries with post-conflict peacebuilding, reconstruction, and development. This advisory body was designed to fill a perceived gap within the UN's structure to help the prevention of state collapse and assist countries in transitioning to lasting peace.

This period coincided with an increase in Brazil's engagement with Guinea-Bissau through the CPLP, where Brazil has also been mobilizing efforts to address instability in Guinea-Bissau. In April 2004, Brazil provided assistance to the legislative elections that took place in the country (MRE 2004). In October 2004, Brazil expressed concern over the maneuvers by rebel forces against the democratically elected government. In November 2004, Brazil's Foreign Minister attended a CPLP meeting in Lisbon to discuss the situation in Guinea-Bissau, and President Lula personally visited Guinea-Bissau in April 2005. Two months later, Brazil participated in the CPLP observer mission for the presidential elections (MRE 2004). President João Bernardo Vieira reciprocated Lula's gesture by visiting Brazil in November 2007.

At the same time, Brazil stepped up its bilateral development cooperation with Guinea-Bissau. In 2005, a mission from the Regional Electoral Court of Minas Gerais state traveled to the country to provide technical assistance with presidential elections, held that June. The mission donated 25 computers used to register voters.

The following year, the two countries began negotiating technical cooperation in the military sector. Brazil believes that one of the most important ways in which to promote stability in Guinea-Bissau is to create opportunities for member of the Armed Forces to retire, allowing for the renewal of military officers, and to help make those forces more professional. According to Embaló (2012), Guinea-Bissau's Armed Forces are outdated and oversized. Data from a 2009 census show that 41.9% of the forces are senior officers, and that 50.8% of the officers are between 40 and 60 years old, with 20% of the officers having served for more than 30 years and another 20% for more than 20 years. In addition to the officers, there are around 6.000 veterans with unclear status, some of them living in the barracks (Embaló 2012, 257, 258, 276).

Guinea-Bissau was placed on the PBC agenda in December 2007, again thanks in part to Brazilian pressure within the Security Council, and in 2008 Guinea-Bissau received an initial fund of US\$ 6 million through the Peacebuilding Fund to finance projects that included legislative elections, rehabilitation of key infrastructure, and support for youth education and employment programs. The next step of the funding involved US\$16.8 million for the 2011–2013 period, prioritizing reform of defense and security sector, national reconciliation and dialog, and economic development (Bissau Digital).

The inclusion of Guinea-Bissau in the PBC agenda, and the concrete projects that began to be undertaken, represented an important shift, as the Council began to pay greater attention to the country. Brazil was then asked to lead the Guinea-Bissau configuration, a position that it assumed in December 2007, with the Brazilian permanent representative to the UN heading the configuration. Within this position, Brazil was able to bring attention to the links between political instability, social deprivation, and institutional fragility, in addition to organized crime (Uziel 2010).

Since the implementation of the UN PBC, Brazil's engagement with Guinea-Bissau has deepened considerably, posing new possibilities as well as new challenges for Brazil's democracy promotion efforts. This involvement allows Brazil to promote what it sees as its contribution to debates regarding state-building and stabilization, with an emphasis on addressing social inequality and strengthening state institutions, as will be described in further detail below. At the same time, the chronic political instability raises the stakes of Brazil's role in the country, both through bilateral cooperation and its multilateral engagement via CPLP and the UN.

In 2009, UNSC Resolution 1876 replaced the UNOGBIS with the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), in order to better coordinate the efforts of different UN agencies, funds, and programs operating in the country. Yet further efforts to stabilize the country suffered yet another setback when a military insurrection took place in April 2010. The insurrection had an immediate impact on aid to Guinea-Bissau: the EU, which had launched a security sector reform in June 2008, ended the initiative in protest against the appointment of Antonio Indjai, who had participated in numerous coup efforts and was a key suspect in international cocaine trafficking network (Bello 2012).

Throughout this turbulent scenario, Brazil's contribution – including some of its bilateral initiatives – can be understood in light of the PCB's tasks in Guinea-Bissau. According to a 11 December 2007 letter from the Security Council President, these included increasing government capacity; developing accountable and sustainable security systems; boosting the independence of the country's judiciary and rule of law; and developing democratic accountability and elections capacity (UNSC 2007). While many of Brazil's efforts outlined in the previous sections conform to these recommendations, Brazilian initiatives went beyond these items. As Hirst

(2012) notes, in the case of Guinea-Bissau Brazil's commitment to enhance stability is twofold, encompassing its responsibility before the UN as well as the commitment of cooperation for institution-building.

In addition to playing a key role in keeping the Security Council updated on the situation in Guinea-Bissau, Brazil joined other multilateral initiatives to support stability the country. These efforts included the International Contact Group for Guinea-Bissau, where Brazil worked alongside Angola, Cape Verde, France, Ghana, Guinea, Niger, Nigeria, Portugal, Senegal, Spain, and the Gambia. Brazil also participated in efforts coordinated by international institutions such as the IMF, UN, EU, World Bank, CPLP, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) (Roque 2009, 12). The group, formed in 2006, has met several times and has pledged to assist Guinea-Bissau with the strengthening of its institutions, including providing assistance with legislative elections (Asemana). Through these initiatives, Brazil has continued to ensure its role in efforts to stabilize Guinea-Bissau and guide the regime in the direction of democracy and human rights.

5.3 *The April 2012 coup*

Since February 2011, UNIOGBIS has worked to boost police and internal security agencies, including through the opening of a model police station. In March 2011, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau visited Brasília to discuss the strengthening of cooperation in Guinea-Bissau, especially in areas such as security, rule of law, and fighting drug trafficking – another sign of the growing links between Brazil's bilateral and multilateral initiatives in Guinea-Bissau (MRE 2011).

Despite these efforts, political instability in Guinea-Bissau resurged. Optimistic assessments by both UNIOGBIS and the Guinea-Bissau country-specific configuration of the PBC proved premature when another coup took place on 12 April 2012. This event created new setbacks and once again challenged the efficacy of the PBC for Guinea-Bissau. Brazil reacted immediately by issuing a statement strongly condemning the coup and the interruption of the electoral process in the country. The President of the Guinea-Bissau Configuration of the PBC urged the parties involved to resolve their disputes through peaceful means and within the framework of democratic institutions. The Brazilian Foreign Ministry also urged the leaders of the Guinea-Bissau Armed Forces to release the civilian authorities who were being held in custody and to restore constitutional order in the country.

Days after the coup, Brazil participated in a CPLP meeting held in Lisbon to examine the situation (MRE 2012). During the meeting, the CPLP members stressed that the primacy of democracy, the rule of law, human rights and social justice were founding principles of the CPLP (2013). The statement issued also stressed the need to reform the country's defense and security sector – one area where Brazil has been contributing concretely, especially through the cooperation programs executed by Brazil's Federal Police.

The UN has acknowledged that it was taken by surprise by the April 2012 coup (UNSC 2013a, 19) and that the event led to further deterioration of the human rights situation in Guinea-Bissau (ONU Brasil). Progress made on several fronts was interrupted as Peacebuilding Fund projects were suspended. There were multilateral initiatives to address the immediate aftermath. Angola withdrew its technical military mission, MISSANG, and ECOWAS convened an Extraordinary Summit on Guinea-Bissau (and Mali) in Abuja, Nigeria, on 11 November 2012, calling on the AU and other partners to actively participate in the implementation of the 7 November agreements signed by the ECOWAS Commission and the transitional government. As of July 2013, a mission composed of representatives from ECOWAS, the UN, and the EU had visited Guinea-Bissau to negotiate the details of the November 2013 presidential elections. Brazil has

been stressing the importance of holding these elections since the beginning of this particular crisis (Agencia Brasil).

At the same time, Brazil's stance on Guinea-Bissau also reflects the country's position of emphasizing the importance of the role of regional actors. Based on this idea, Brazil has been coordinating with Angola to jointly support Guinea-Bissau. Both countries have set up military cooperation missions in Guinea-Bissau to cooperate with local authorities (Angola in March 2011 and Brazil in April 2011) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brazil). In addition, both ECOWAS and CPLP have been cooperating with the Program for the Reform of the country's security and defense sector.

The UN has since appointed José Ramos-Horta, the Nobel Prize winner and former president and prime minister of Timor-Leste, as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau and Head of UNIOGBIS. The council extended UNIOGBIS' mandate to allow Ramos-Horta to assess the situation and help decide on the possibility of sanctions as well as ways to combat the drug trafficking. Horta has characterized the role of Brazil in Guinea-Bissau as essential, stating that Brazil has 'enormous credibility' as well as consolidated cooperation ties with Africa (Africa 21 Digital 2013).

As of its ministerial meeting in July 2013 in Maputo, CPLP ministers stated that the November 2013 elections in Guinea-Bissau are an important step for the consolidation of the transition and return to democratic normality in the country. Ministers also confirmed their interest in working together with the African Union, the UN, EU, ECOWAS, and the International Organization of La Francophonie.

5.4 *Brazilian development cooperation with Guinea-Bissau*

Bilateral cooperation between Brazil and Guinea-Bissau ties increased substantially after 2007, with the creation of the Guinea-Bissau country-specific PBC (Ministry of External Relations, Guinea-Bissau). There are two interrelated reasons for this: one is the prioritization of Africa within Brazilian foreign policy starting with the Lula administration and the second is Brazil's role within the PBC. Finally, new security concerns make Guinea-Bissau increasingly important from the perspective of Brazilian defense policy. While working with Guinea-Bissau is important to promote a Brazilian approach toward state-building (Kenkel 2013), contributing toward the stability of the country is also crucial to Brazil for geostrategic regions. Brazil's security interests in Guinea-Bissau are partly related to the fact that Guinea-Bissau is located on the South Atlantic, which Brazil's National Defence Strategy, issued in 2008, has made one of the top priorities of Brazilian security policy-making (Abdenur and de Souza Neto 2013). For instance, the Brazilian government has expressed concern about the growing role of Guinea-Bissau as a transshipment point for Latin America-based cocaine traffickers (Johansen 2008). The UNSC has also expressed concern that drug trafficking has continued to grow in the country (UNSC 2012). The fragility of state institutions in the country, especially those related to law enforcement, enabled the trafficking to take root and expand. This situation has contributed to the country being treated by the international community as a case of extreme institutional fragility within a post-conflict context that is still characterized by organized groups, both local and external (Hirst 2012).

In order to boost its ties with Guinea-Bissau, Brazil has implemented several South–South cooperation programs, many of them aimed at helping to strengthen institutions and build capacity. In some ways, Guinea-Bissau constitutes a 'special case' for Brazilian South–South cooperation, in that Brazil has worked to take over the void left behind by European countries (with the exception of Portugal), who ended their assistance due to the country's instability (Hirst 2012). Brazil has implemented a wide gamut of cooperation programs, most channeled through the CPLP. By 2010, Guinea-Bissau was ninth on the list of developing countries

receiving the most cooperation in Brazil, as measured by total flows; Brazil spent R\$2.8 million on cooperation with Guinea-Bissau (IPEA 2013). When the Brazilian ambassador to Guinea-Bissau met with the representative of the UN Secretary-General in Bissau, he stressed the importance of two projects: the Military Academy in São-Vicente and the Police Academy in JoãoLandim (Bissau Digital).

At the end of 2011, Brazil had right bilateral cooperation projects under implementation with Guinea-Bissau in the areas of professional training, agriculture, social inclusion, and human rights. As of 2010, 1200 Guinea-Bissau citizens had attended professional training courses offered by SENAI (Abril 2010). In addition, Brazil cooperates via trilateral projects (a total of 5 in 2011) in public security and education, including cooperation in elections through triangular cooperation with the USA. Through the India, Brazil and South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA) Trilateral Fund, Brazil has contributed to agricultural development projects in Guinea-Bissau (2005–2007, 2009–2011, 2011–2014) (UNDP 2012). The government of Guinea-Bissau has, at several points, expressed interest in, and actively sought out, enhanced cooperation with Brazil, either bilaterally or multilaterally. For instance, in 2009 a diplomat from the embassy in Brasília met with the FAO's representative in Brazil to discuss potential projects in food security, including the idea of extending Brazil's food security cooperation program for Africa (Programa de Aquisição de Alimentos para África) to Guinea-Bissau (FAO n.d.).

Also in 2011, the two countries completed a project in which Brazil assisted Guinea-Bissau in designing and monitoring a national program for birth registries. The General Coordinator of the equivalent program in Brazil visited Guinea-Bissau in late 2011; in addition to monitoring the project, she held talks with the government regarding the possibility of further cooperation in the field of human rights, including a film festival focusing on human rights issues (Bissau Digital). The birth registry project, undertaken by the Human Rights Office of the Presidency of Brazil, prompted a proposal of two additional initiatives: the consolidation of the registry and a project to strengthen Guinea-Bissau's National Human Rights Commission. These efforts were boosted by the signing of a Complementary Adjustment to the basic cooperation agreement, specifically for the implementation of a processing plant for cashew and other tropical fruit, and the two governments discussed the possibility of undertaking additional projects in agriculture and public health (ABC, Foreign Office 2013).

ABC's project database shows that Brazil carried out a project component (filed under the heading 'Strengthening Democracy') geared to help Guinea-Bissau to consolidate its National Popular Assembly. The file description justifies this project by stating that it was carried out 'due to Brazil having been chosen to coordinate the activities of the UN PBC in the country, whose mandate includes, among other areas, public sector reform and the development of democratic accountability in preparing for the 2008 elections' (Agência Brasileira de Cooperação). This statement reflects how closely intertwined Brazil's bilateral initiatives in Guinea-Bissau have become with its multilateral engagement with the country, especially through UN channels. It also shows that Brazil uses its bilateral cooperation to help enhance the efficacy of the PBC mandate, including in booting social order and strengthening institutions.

In addition to the general effect that such institution-building may have on the country's stability, some of Brazil's cooperation efforts are specifically geared to build up public security. The Guinea-Bissau police have historically served as a purely repressive agent rather than an impartial body acting to protect the community's interests and rights – a role encouraged by the country's legal frameworks for police action (Ferreira 2004). In order to help Guinea-Bissau to transform the role of the police, from 2006 to 2009, Brazil's Federal Police participated in a project to assist Guinea-Bissau's Training Center (Agência Brasileira de Cooperação). This project is aimed essentially at restricting the role of the armed forces to military issues. In 2010, when President Lula mentioned Brazil's initiative of sending a military mission to Guinea-Bissau, he also

stated that such a mission would also assist the country's Armed Forces in conducting infrastructure projects, such as building bridges.

The creation of the Police Academy has entailed the formulation of a local public security doctrine, as well as capacity-building of a police force committed to the rule of law (Hirst 2012). According to the ABC, the objective of the project was to draw on the experiences of Brazil's Federal Police, including its record in international cooperation through CPLP and MERCOSUR, to create a more modern, professionalized police force capable of combating organized crime in Guinea-Bissau.

As for Brazil's economic interests in the country, these seem to be severely limited due to chronic instability. During a 2008 visit to Bissau, the Brazilian Foreign Minister mentioned that Brazilian companies were beginning to develop an interest in the country. He also praised pacification efforts in the country at the time and mentioned the importance of peace and stability as an important source of attraction to investments (*Expresso*). A 2011 agreement between Angola and Guinea-Bissau to build a port in Buba, in Southwest Guinea-Bissau, entailed the participation of a Brazilian company in the port construction. However, the April 2012 coup has cast further doubt on the involvement of Brazilian companies in Guinea-Bissau, at least in the short term.

However, this scenario might change if Guinea-Bissau manages to establish enough stability for companies to create a presence in the country. In 2013, Guinea-Bissau benefitted from President Dilma Rousseff's decision to pardon the debts of 12 African countries, at a total of nearly US \$900 million (the other beneficiaries are the Ivory Coast, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Mauritania, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sudan, Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia, and the Republic of the Congo). Rousseff presented this initiative as being a mutually beneficial arrangement, since Brazil cannot establish further investment agreements with those countries while they are indebted to Brazil (*BBC* 2013). From a technical standpoint, without the debt pardon, financing from Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) could not be made available to those countries (Fleck 2013). In the case of Guinea-Bissau, 98% of the country's debt would be pardoned, which would facilitate Brazilian investments in the country. The announcement was made by the President in July 2013, but it is subject to congressional approval by the end of 2013.

6. Conclusion

This article has shown that Brazil's involvement in Guinea-Bissau has increased and grown more complex over the past decade, through a combination of bilateral and multilateral engagements within a context of high and ongoing instability. Guinea-Bissau's membership in the CPLP, and Brazil's leadership of the country-specific configuration of the PBC, have increased the stakes for Brazilian involvement with security and development in the country, even if Brazilian economic interests – present elsewhere in Africa – are for the moment severely limited by the chronic instability. Nevertheless, Brazil has made democracy and human rights promotion key components of its cooperation with Guinea-Bissau, working not only to encourage elections, but also to strengthen institutions that are essential to the rule of law and adherence to the norms of democracy and human rights.

Whether these efforts will be effective in the long run is still open to debate, especially given the recurring political turbulence. Despite multiple efforts by the international community, including Brazil, to help stabilize Guinea-Bissau build up its institutions, foment socioeconomic development, and promote democracy and human rights, as of this writing Guinea-Bissau's situation remains highly uncertain. Plans for a transitional government seem to be faltering, and the restoration of constitutional order uncertain. A Security Council report from February 2013 mentioned that the lack of oversight over defense and security forces, coupled with impunity, remained major problems: 'There is a general atmosphere of fear within the population arising from the recent

cases of beatings, torture and intimidation that continue to restrict freedom of assembly and of information' (UNSC 2013b, 3).

With particular respect to democracy and human rights promotion, the international community's approach to Guinea-Bissau continues to stress the importance of electoral monitoring and observation. Yet, in the past, elections have had limited impact in institution-building, failing to induce deeper change. This scenario is a reflection of the current situation in the country, in which Western-style elections make no difference since in Guinea-Bissau power politics are distributed more via neo-patrimonial political alliances rather than through allocation within state institutions, in a context in which the solution would be to support grassroots nation-building rather than state-building from outside (Kohnert 2010).

Within these international efforts, Brazil's strategy does seem to have a few differentials. In contrast to the American and European approaches, Brazil is hesitant to reduce Guinea-Bissau to the simplistic label of 'narco-state' – even as Brazil acknowledges that drug trafficking has become one of the threats to stability and development. Instead of addressing only security in the narrow sense of stemming narco-trafficking, Brazil also calls attention to the need for structural and social development activities that can help prevent the resurgence of violence. On the one hand, the refusal to collapse the entire experience of Guinea-Bissau into the problem of drug trafficking yields a more nuanced, organic perception of the problems that beset Guinea-Bissau. On the other hand, although this view is presented with an optimistic tone, analysts also caution that the Brazilian approach can only be implemented with success if complemented by other approaches (Roque 2009).

Brazil's accumulated engagement with Guinea-Bissau will help to ensure that, in many ways, it will remain a litmus test for Brazil's democracy and human rights promotion in Africa, particularly within contexts of high instability. At the same time, understanding Brazil's role in democracy and human rights in Africa will require going beyond the case of Guinea-Bissau, where – despite the existence of concrete projects being implemented – the specificities and chronic political instability of the context have shaped Brazil's initiatives in ways that are tailored to that context. Future research into Brazil's democracy and human rights promotion efforts elsewhere on the continent and with partners of different types of regimes is needed for a fuller picture of how this rising power is increasingly relevant to socioeconomic change in the African continent.

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Notes

1. The quote was reproduced in Portuguese in an article by former Foreign Minister Celso Amorim. According to Amorim, the quote was mentioned to him, during the time that he spent at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government in 2011, by Calestous Juma, a Kenyan professor at the Kennedy School. *Source*: Amorim (2011).
2. Due to financial restrictions, Guinea-Bissau could only open a resident embassy in Brasília in 2011.

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