



September 17, 2007

On June 17-21, 2007, I had the opportunity to participate as a conference speaker at the “VII Strategic Studies Program” of the Brazilian Army, equivalent to the U.S. Army War College and the U.S. Army Command and Staff College (ECEME). The conference was held at the ECEME facilities in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and brought together over 300 students, faculty, and active duty and retired general officers. Additionally, approximately 20 serving and retired Ministers of Government were in attendance, along with several high ranking representatives of the private sector. The dialogue centered on the contemporary global threat environment. Given the likelihood that individual national powers—such as the United States and Brazil, and international organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the Organization of American States (OAS)—will be expected to provide the leverage to ensure peace, security, and stability in an increasing number of post-conflict and stabilization situations over the next several years, this conference was considered to be a very timely and important event.

Three major themes permeated the conference dialogue: 1) the need to develop Brazilian military and naval capabilities to take responsibility for protecting Brazilian interests in the Western Hemisphere, the South Atlantic Ocean, and elsewhere in the global security environment; 2) the need for enduring regional alliances—to include the United States—to enhance the maintenance and further development of Brazilian internal and global interests; and 3) the need for a coherent energy security policy to underpin capabilities to protect and enhance Brazil’s position as one of the top 10 economies of the world.

## **Toward a More Realistic Brazilian Approach to the Global Threat Environment.**

Since 1985, and the end of the period of military government in Brazil, the concept of national security has tended to stress socio-economic development. That development would allow Brazil to “grow out of” any individual or collective security problems the nation might have to deal with. At the same time, it was expected that national security would extend from socio-economic development to democratic governance, and to equity and freedom. Root-cause threats to individual security—such as poverty, lack of basic human services, institutional corruption, and underperforming or nonexistent government institutions within the national territory—were, and continue to be, seen as primary security threats.

Also, within the past several years, Brazil has been the recipient of considerable benefits resulting from global economic integration. That country's leadership is beginning to become aware that the key to these benefits is national, regional, and global stability. As a consequence, the conference consensus indicated that countries like Brazil that expect the benefits of global security and stability must understand and cope with the more conventional threats imposed by the new global security environment—and make a contribution, however small, to world stability. And, it was generally agreed that the threat dialogue at this level must address questions associated with peace-keeping/enforcement, stability operations, and possible state failure in areas of vital interest to Brazil. These “new” security issues also involve a more or less traditional approach to international relations that addresses the protection and enhancement of external as well as internal interests. At a minimum, that involves the protection of markets, sources of raw materials and hydro-carbons, and sea and land lines of communications to and from Brazil. That also involves the threat of inter-state conflict.

In order to continue its internal socio-economic development, Brazil must be prepared to become involved in a multipolar world, in which one or 100 state and non-state actors are exerting differing types and levels of power—and creating a security arena that is extremely volatile and dangerous. In this global security environment, international organizations, such as the UN and the OAS, and individual nation-states are increasingly being called on to respond to conflict generated by all kinds of material instabilities and human destabilizers. Likewise, the global community is increasingly being called on to respond to failing and failed states. As examples, Haiti in the Western Hemisphere and more than a few West African countries immediately come to mind. Consequently, the ability to project both hard and soft power internally and abroad is becoming an important element in assisting the Brazilian government to achieve domestic and foreign policy objectives.

In this context, the conference dialogue stressed four things: 1) the need to modernize the armed forces and extend their strategic reach; 2) the need to create an effective “blue water” navy capable of protecting the long Brazilian coast line and the SLOCS in the South Atlantic Ocean; 3) the need for civilian and military leaders to learn to think and act strategically and cooperatively within a viable alliance system that would empower Brazil's expanded regional and global strategy; and 4) the need to promulgate an energy security policy and strategy to guarantee the ability of the Brazilian nation to continue to develop economically, and to ensure that the armed forces can move, communicate, and operate effectively in the broadening global security environment.

### **Empowering Alliances.**

The conscious choices that civil-military leadership in the international community make about how to counter the myriad complex threats inherent in the contemporary global security environment are critical. These decisions and actions will define the processes of national, regional, and international security; stability; and well-being now

and far into the future. The security-stability threats of the 21st century are global in nature and indeterminable in length, and they require multilateral and long-term responses. Alone, no country—even a superpower such as the United States—can overcome the challenges and threats that confront every member of the global community. The United States and other countries, such as Brazil, that have so much to gain from the global economy need allies. Allies provide strength in numbers—the number of free nations that share a common commitment to peace, justice, security, and freedom.

Building strong alliances requires a proactive strategy that reinforces rather than undermines the sovereignty of the state and at the same time strengthens the bonds of trust and confidence between free peoples, enabling them to act in their common interest. The focus of this strategy should be on building enduring alliances, not just “coalitions of the willing.” As part of a comprehensive alliance-building strategy, the governments of the United States, Brazil, and other like-minded countries should undertake initiatives to establish partnerships that closely resemble those of the victorious allies during World War II and the Cold War. The clear and present dangers of transnational terrorism, nuclear and ballistic missile proliferation, and the emergence of neo-populist hegemons that demonstrate a propensity to take political power by force serve to remind us of the value of the model alliances of the not-too-distant past.

These relationships were defined by consistent and recurring cooperation, systematic engagement, and enduring bilateral relations that emerged from common values and mutual interests. Mutual recognition of the value of democratic government, the rule of law, individual rights, and the free market economy was combined with the development of deep cultural, economic, social, and military ties. That, in turn, generated shared trust, confidence, and a common view of what needed to be done. That is no less necessary today than it was 50 or 60 years ago. Yet, this notion is not a limited defensive military concept. There is another aspect of the idea that has considerable merit. That is, while striving to secure and enhance mutually agreed values and stability, the United States, Brazil, and other democracies and market economies of the world can generate substantial fuel for the engine of global and national growth and socio-economic development.

Thus, the conference dialogue encouraged the idea that the United States and Brazil need clear and proactive policies, and implementing public diplomacy programs of action for nurturing and building a new and enduring alliance. This kind of an alliance will not come about by chance. It will require a concerted U.S.-Brazilian effort. In these terms, frequent people-to-people—civil and military—interaction is essential, and that requires improving opportunities for exchanges and travel. That would include: 1) a long-term program to promote dialogue with foreign audiences (e.g., the General Mark W. Clark—Marshall J. B. Mascarenhas de Moraes lectures at the Brazilian and U.S. Army War Colleges); 2) nurture institutional relationships (e.g., military-to-military and State Department to Foreign Ministry); 3) help to educate young democrats and prospective friends (e.g., university-to-university exchanges); 4) share ideas (e.g., colloquia, seminars, roundtables, and workshops); and 5) create new opportunities for

security cooperation (e.g., reinvigorate instruments of international trade, security assistance and cooperation, and expand these mechanisms to address U.S. and Brazilian homeland security as well as defensive military capabilities).

### **Energy Security.**

Although Brazil is currently self-sufficient in energy, civilian and military leaders are growing increasingly concerned about secure energy supplies. As a major industrial nation with a population of 188 million, that country's demand for energy is increasing faster than secure supply. Problems with Bolivia and the slow-down and shut-off of legally contracted natural gas supplies to Brazil is frustrating leaders. At the same time, Argentine stoppage of natural gas deliveries to Chile and Russian severance of oil shipments to Estonia, as only two examples, have reminded national leaders that energy can be used by a supplier country as an instrument of power to frustrate a recipient nation's national security and foreign policy objectives. Brazilians clearly understand that freedom, opportunity for socio-economic development, and their quality of life are threatened by unstable and/or hostile supplier governments. In these terms, they understand that the hostile use of oil and gas pipelines can be as destructive to a nation and its economy as missiles. As a result, they expect their government to promulgate policies and programs that will protect—and enhance—their personal and collective interests.

Thus, energy security policies and programs must address access to energy resources that are ample, affordable, and reliable. Moreover, Brazilian leaders understand that assured access to energy also requires a secure internal infrastructure (smart, hacker-proof integrating national grids) to transmit and deliver electricity to commercial, military, and residential consumers. As one example of the issue, Brazilians are aware that on the night of November 9, 1965, Toronto, Canada, went dark. Then in succession, Boston, New York, and all the other cities all along the North American east coast were without electricity. In just 13 minutes, the computer-controlled power grid in the Canada-U.S. Eastern Intercom area was shut down. Over 30 million people in 80,000 square miles were without electricity. Luckily, within a few days the power grid was up and running again. But within those few days, civilian and military leaders saw some disturbing things: the economy coming to a halt; society beginning to unravel; increasing violence; the political system beginning to break down; and law enforcement organizations and the armed forces finding it virtually impossible to move, operate, and communicate.

Brazilians know full-well that they are vulnerable to disruption of energy supply and energy distribution; economic-social-political-security damage; and concomitant foreign policy consequences. Brazilian leaders also understand that the greatest degree of security comes from having access to the global market-place, and obtaining goods, resources, and services from friendly—rather than merely convenient—suppliers. And, they know that trade is best conducted with other free peoples—those that respect the rule of law; combat global terrorism;; and foster economic opportunity, democracy, and

justice. Moreover, from a national security perspective, it is understood that—regardless of size, level of modernization, possible reach, and the amount of money invested in law-enforcement organizations and the armed forces—without electricity, the armed forces and other security organizations cannot perform their legitimizing internal and external security tasks.

This understanding takes us back to the conference discussion regarding the need for taking a proactive approach to: 1) develop Brazilian military and naval capabilities to take responsibility for protecting regional and global interests; and 2), most importantly, develop enduring alliances with other democratic countries—especially the United States. The intent of these types of action would be to rebuild the old U.S.-Brazilian relationship, and generate new alliances that will support a broad national security agenda.

### **Conclusions.**

The common denominator theme of the conference and this paper, and the guiding end-state of proposed Brazilian national security policy, is what Brazilians call *grandeza* (greatness).

As always, Brazil is in transition. There have been and will continue to be times when it might be difficult to determine where a current transition is taking the country. Yet, astute Brazilians know that it is part of the *jetto* (ability to work something to one's advantage) that will allow the evolution toward *grandeza*. The obstacles to attaining *grandeza* noted in the main themes of the conference and this paper are formidable and not likely to be overcome easily or soon. However, beyond the cynicism that "Brazil is the country of the future—and always will be," there is a quiet confidence within the country that things will go Brazil's way. They always have. A lighter approach to the problem of Brazil's evolution to greatness is that "God is a Brazilian." But if not, and if Brazil appears to be trying to move in too many directions at the same time at the edge of an abyss, not to worry—"Brazil is bigger than the abyss."

Thus, when Brazil finally does emerge into the ranks of the key players in the international arena, it will probably be in one of two ways. First, if events catapult the country into a situation where it must play a major role, it will appear in style—as a Brazilian should. On the other hand, if the global situation allows, Brazilians would prefer to arrive on the scene without anyone having realized that they were not there all along. This conference was a step in the direction toward a capabilities position that would justify an expanding Brazilian role in global security affairs. If that country appears to be flailing around at the edge of its destiny, remember—Brazil is greater than the abyss!

### **Recommendations.**

The United States remains the world's only superpower. No other nation-state currently possesses the attributes needed for effective international and regional

leverage – political clout, economic impact, cultural appeal, and military reach. Still, the United States cannot do everything alone in a very volatile and dangerous global security arena. There are those allies and partners who can and will assist the United States in creating more peaceful and stable regional and international security environments, given cooperative and collegial partnership and careful end-state planning.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the United States reciprocate, and continue to accept, invitations to participate in the development of an enduring and viable U.S.-Brazilian civil-military relationship. Additionally, it is recommended that the U.S. Army take a leading role in promulgating a new and more productive relationship with a potentially very powerful Brazil. Otherwise, the expansion of general instability in the world and in the hemisphere could easily destroy the democracy, free market economies, and prosperity that have been achieved in recent years. In turn, that would constitute a direct threat to U.S. national security and indirect threat to the U.S. position in the world.

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