GRAND STRATEGY: FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY IN A CHANGING WORLD[1]

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On January 2nd 2014, a bomb attack in Beirut wounded 60 people and took the lives of at least five of them, one of those being the Brazilian Malak Zahwe. The young Malak, who was born in Foz do Iguaçu, lived with her family in Lebanon and was shopping with her stepmother when the explosion occurred. A significant Lebanese community lives among us and a growing number of Brazilians in Lebanon. We have a close and direct link with that country. As the barbaric assault in January 2014 reminded us, this connection is, above all, a human link.

Tragic situations as that one reinforce the understanding of that we are part of a global society. The indifference to the challenges we face abroad is no longer tolerable. Isolationist attitudes such as "we should not involve ourselves in matters that do not concern us" reveal not only insensitivity, but also a high lack of realism and misunderstanding. One effect of the much-vaunted *globalization* is that "all issues are ours."

We have a clear interest in world peace and we must help preserve it. That was what Brazil tried to do, in some cases successfully and in others releasing seeds that would geminate later. We attracted Cuba to the Rio Group and to the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). Today that country coexists peacefully with all nations of America. Together with Turkey we strived to reach a deal with Iran about their nuclear program, which demonstrated that there was ground for searching solutions to that thorny issue through dialogue. Today, in both cases, we congratulate the pro-

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gress made by the greatest power in the world.

On another occasion, I stated that Brazil should not be satisfied with being a peaceful country, but should also seek to be a "peace provider" country. For this purpose, Brazil should adopt a *grand strategy* which combines foreign policy and defense policy. Naturally, diplomacy is the first line of defense of our interests. And dialogue should be its main instrument. But in a world where conflict is far from being extinct and the great powers often resort to unilateral actions, diplomacy must have the permanent support of defense policy.

Much is being said about soft power since Joseph Nye, a Harvard professor and a former US assistant secretary of defense, coined the term. It is an innovative concept that applies to many characteristics of Brazil and its people, its culture and its tradition of peace. But no country asserts itself in the world only by the attraction of its culture and habits. And there are situations, as we experienced during World War II, in which soft power itself is not enough to prevent attacks or incursions that could affect our sovereignty. So, at the same time we cultivate and exercise our soft power, we should strengthen it. Our soft power, expressed in the ability of cooperating in a mutually beneficial way with other countries, will be enhanced by our hard power, which is able to deter threats and turn the defense matters collaboration with our neighbours and partners (for example, the protection of natural resources) into reality.

The until now successful experience in Haiti, through which we contributed to restore order in that country, gave back to Haitian people the capacity to decide about their destiny, and is also an example of the combination of soft power and hard power in a situation that wasn't an immediate threat to our country. In Haiti there was a very real risk that a sister nation, with which we have many affinities - and that, after all, is not so far from us -, fell under control of armed gangs, a perverse combination of former military coup officers and drug dealers. It was because of Haiti that we coined (or we borrowed from the African Union, until now I am not certain about it) the concept of "non-indifference".

The presence of a frigate of Brazil's Navy in the maritime component of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, UNIFIL, is another illustration of how the use of military instruments may strengthen the diplomatic action in the pursuit of peace. In spite of the great difficulties that Lebanon is facing, we are sure that we are fulfilling our responsibility to this friendly nation. In addition, we reinforce with our military presence the assets for an eventual political and diplomatic action, when conditions in that region allow. One or two decades ago, the participation of a Brazilian warship in operations

in the Mediterranean Sea, one of the most traditional geopolitical chessboards of the world, would be seen as highly unlikely. Today, even the critics of Brazil's involvement in seemingly distant issues, such as the Middle East, do not seem to doubt the importance of our contribution to UNIFIL. This evolution is in a way related to the direct impact of the 2006 war between Israel and Lebanon, when seven Brazilian died and three thousand compatriots were evacuated by air to Brazil in a coordinated operation by our Ministry of Foreign Relations with the decisive support of our Air Force. I was in Beirut the day after the cease-fire and I could see with my eyes the eloquent proof of the proximity between the two peoples: t-shirts of the Brazilian team and flags of Brazil in the midst of the rubble and destruction caused by the Israeli bombing.

Our participation in Lebanon, as well as our diplomatic action in situations such as the one that led to the "Tehran Declaration" on Iran's nuclear program, and also the invitation to participate in the Annapolis Conference on the conflict Israeli-Palestinian[3] emphasize the importance of reflecting about our challenges and of defining our interests. We have to think about our role in the world without questions and autonomy. The conception of an authentically Brazilian *grand strategy* – combining foreign policy and defense policy – will result from a wide public dialogue about our challenges and priorities, which involves political, diplomatic and military resources, with the participation of academy, media, productive sectors (employers and employees) and society in general. The publication in 2013 of the Defense White Paper and revised editions of the National Defense Policy and National Defense Strategy should be seen as part of this dialogue.

Much has been written about the fluid nature of international reality. In the last years of the twentieth century, after the end of the Cold War, we went from bipolarity to a kind of "consented unipolarity". Later, in the new millennium, the world has evolved into a mixed structure, which preserves the characteristics of unipolarity at the same time that approaches to a multipolar world in some ways. At the same time, we watch arise in the horizon a potentially new bipolarity, with China assuming, *mutatis mutandi*, the role of the old Soviet Union, without the ideologic fervor.

We live in a time of fast and deep changes, marked also by ambivalence. The emergence of new actors and the so-called "asymmetrical threats" often mentioned by defense and international relations scholars has not eliminated the former agents in the world order. And the conflict between the States has not disappeared from the horizon. Even in times of economic glo-

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3 I talk about these two themes in two of the narratives of my most recent book "Tehran, Rammalah and Doha: memoirs of an active and proud foreign policy" (Benvirá, 2015).

balization, nation-states still keep their importance and sovereignty remains a guiding principle. The "international community" was often used to justify actions that correspond to the interest of one or more of a great power. The "responsibility to protect", as enshrined in UN resolutions, was invoked in situations where the real goal was "regime change" and not, as claimed, the "protection of civilians". Multilateralism has not overcome the defense of national positions.

In the wake of the global financial crisis of 2008, it took shape in the United States an extensive debate about the supposed decline of their relative position in the world. Four years ago, when I was at Harvard for a month, in a fellowship of the famous Kennedy School of Government, after leaving the Ministry of Foreign Relations, I could attend many discussions and debates in which the relative decline (or not) of the United States was a central object for American scholars themselves. I was back to that institution in 2015 after leaving the Ministry of Defense and I verified that the axis of the discussion had changed. Today, more than multipolarity, it is the rise of China, its economic influence and, above all, its maritime projection strategy that raise interest and apprehension. More than any other one, the logic of national interest determines the definition of positions. It is in this context that one should understand the stimulus for Japan to take over again a military and strategic role, which was abandoned after World War II.

In a world where ideologies lost importance in the definition of national policy, State coalitions, more than ever, reflect a variable geometry. Despite Washington's efforts, governments of major European economies did not evade to participate in the Asian Development Bank, led by Beijing. The former group of seven major industrialized economies, the G7, has evolved into the G8, with the temporary incorporation of Russia (more in due to its nuclear status than to their economic relevance), and then to the G20, that has included emerging economies and that was defined by the President of the United States as having the primary role in economic and financial issues. The recent resurgence of the G-7 does not change this picture. And in reality, it is a fact much less relevant than the increasing coordination among members of the BRICS. Some authors have come to find that, with the gradual dissipation of the surplus power of the superpower, there would be given the conditions for a so-called "G-Zero", in which nor the United States could lead and neither other countries be willing to follow. Fareed Zakaria, among others, drew attention to what he described as "the rise of the rest"[4].

Whatever these "Gs" are, we now have a complex reality that does not

4 Zakaria, Fareed. "The post-American world and the rise of the rest". (Penguin Books, 2009).

fit the models dictated by the "single thought". There is a wide consensus that there would be an ongoing decentralization of power in the political, economic and cultural fields, and even (perhaps less) in scientific and technological fields. Multipolarity, even though imperfect, has raised hopes of a world more balanced and free from hegemonic powers. However, in the military field, unipolarity continues to prevail on a large scale. It suffices to recall that defense spending in the United States exceeds the total military spending of all other countries. The advances of this country in areas such as cyber have no equivalent in other powers.

Despite this superiority, varied psychological and social factors, especially the growing aversion to the deaths of fellow compatriot graphically transmitted by modern media, reduce the margins for the projection of military power in other regions. If television has contributed in some way with their tragedy-filled images of napalm victims to hasten the end of the Vietnam War, one can imagine what could be done by the social networking, the twitters, etc. in a similar situation nowadays. Therefore all the incessant search for means of destruction "without risk" or very low risk as the drones and the threats of cyber warfare. Even less advanced forms of low-risk attacks were applied, for instance, in military operations against Serbia in Kosovo, where the air strikes were carried out at high altitudes making it impossible the accurate discernment of targets. In both cases, the side effects on civilian populations increase considerably.

The exception to this aversion to risk exposure occurred only - and with the qualifications above - in situations when the safety of the American people itself was perceived as directly threatened, as happened on September 11. Despite all the revulsion caused by the so-called "Islamic state", the number of assorted air against ISIS or ISIL militants is infinitely smaller than what was verified in the Second Gulf War, which resulted in the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

The usually shared assumption is that, in a "post-hegemonic world", the international institutions created at the end of the Second War would be maintained. With the probable overcoming of United States by China as the world's greatest economy in the next decades, it would be convenient for the whole world and for the United States itself that Washington abandoned the logic of exceptionalism and adhered, more strictly, to the rules of multilateral institutions. The courageous initiatives of the Obama administration towards Iran and Cuba allow some optimism, despite the resistance of more conservative Americans sectors.

This would also bring benefits to other countries, ensuring some level of stability to the international relations. However, regarding the developing

nations, these benefits will only be full if the commitment to international norms is accompanied by effective reform of decision-making process of these institutions, starting with the UN Security Council. But in relation to this topic, the largest opposition seems to come not only from the still greater power - that keeps an ambivalent position about the enlargement - but also from other quarters, including China, our partner in the BRICS, what once again underlines the complexity of relations between States in the contemporary world.

In a recent article, Kofi Annan and Gro Harlem Brundtland[5] made a proposal for an interesting compromise: long term mandates, with indefinitely long mandate members able for re-election. But even this mid solution seems difficult to adopt in the short and medium term, since it implies a reform of the San Francisco Charter, requiring the ratification of the eventual amendments by 2/3 of member states, including the so-called P5. A G-20 that started to mind also themes related to peace and international security – with no harm to UNSC's detention of the last decision power – seems to offer the best hope of a greater degree of decentralization of international order, injecting "fresh air" into discussions about these themes.

Regarding the Middle East situation, at a certain point, the major powers seemed to understand the importance of a wider participation of countries from various regions, including developing nations. Washington's invitation to Brazil, India and South Africa to participate in the Annapolis Conference in December 2007 illustrates this kind of understanding. It is evident that informal arrangements such as the G-20 cannot replace the need for a reformed Security Council, which must remain a strategic goal for the Brazilian foreign policy, with consequences to the defense policy. The reform of the UNSC is necessarily part of the "Grand Strategy" of Brazil.

The authors that admit that there is a decline (absolute or relative) of US hegemony point out the contradictions involved. The political and military presence of the superpower in many conflicts and crises around the globe, which is a consequence of global hegemony logic that resulted from the end of the Cold War, may drain vital resources for investments in other areas such as the environment, health or education. A reduced involvement would imply reviewing compromises with many allies and, in general, disengagement of a series of operating theaters. Depending on the point of view, such an evolution can be seen as positive or negative, but it would have important implications for the international order.

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5   Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/07/opinion/kofi-annan-gro-harlem-brundtland-four-ideas-for-a-stronger-un.html?_r=0

Published in the framework of the American debate, a common point to these theses is the recognition of a downward trend, discreet but noticeable, of some of the asymmetries between the superpower and the other States. The assessment of some of these "declinist" theses could strengthen the perception that the redistribution of global power is still an unpredictable range phenomenon. For now, it's not possible to tell if the new post-unipolar order will be consolidated as a multipolarity, that is, a distribution of the world power between a certain number of States – or groups of States – in a relative balance, or whether, as exposed above, it will take the direction of a new bipolarity, this time between the United States and China.

Looking at the world from our point of view and, with the indispensable realism, it seems right to affirm that it will still persist for some time if not a unipolar reality, at least a *unipolar mentality*. The most worrying aspect of this mentality is that it is not purely descriptive or analytical, it brings together a prescriptive element such as "we have to accept reality and adapt to it". In other words: according to this narrow vision, Brazil would have to continue to play a secondary role in the global scenario, submitting itself to the dominant power strategy and seeking, at most, to extract advantages from a subordinate association.

Equally dangerous is the correlation between hegemony and stability. In the "hegemonic" view, which prevailed in the immediate "post-Cold War", stability would be guaranteed by a certain "benign domination". As the past decade has demonstrated, the thesis that the hegemony generates stability is misleading. In the opposite direction to the superpower own interests, including the expansion of terrorism, the invasion of Iraq and the subsequent destabilization of the precarious Middle East order are eloquent proof that hegemony leads to insecurity, not stability.

Thucydides, in his masterful narrative about the war between the Hellenic peoples, perfectly understood this point. At the beginning of the "History of the Peloponnesian War", the Athenian historian explains that the origin of the conflict was because Sparta realized the excessive accumulation of power in Athens. In another part of the book, Thucydides makes an explanation of transcendent importance about the subject and still valid today: "I do not blame those who wish to dominate, but those who surrender hastily. It is part of the nature of man to dominate those who surrender him, as it is to resist those who attack him"(IV, 61). These words aptly apply when seeking to explain the opposition of several States to the attack on Iraq in 2003. Such opposition also reflected the concern for the integrity of the normative system of the United Nations Charter, which outlaws the use of force without the prior and explicit authorization of the Security Council (except in cases of

legitimate defense, a concept that should always be interpreted cautiously and narrowly)[6].

Historical perspective sheds additional light on the reason why Brazil started to work tirelessly, from the beginning of the last decade, in order to stimulate the incipient multipolarity elements of the contemporary world. Not only from the angle of the principles, but even from the pragmatic perspective, unilateralism stimulated by the hegemony brought consequences contrary to those desired. The goal of multipolarity was sought by Brazil on several fronts, such as the high priority given to the integration of South America; the demand for the democratization of decision-making bodies of the United Nations; the search for more justice in trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization; and the articulation with new partners in the developing world, such as members of the IBSA and BRICS, but also with Arab and African countries. Needless to say, economic, cultural and human motivations were also present to varying degrees in these efforts. The multipolarity, based on multilaterally accepted norms, provides the most favorable conditions. The multipolarity, based on multilaterally accepted norms, provides the most favourable conditions for Brazil to define autonomously its interests and carry out a *grand strategy* that includes not only the dimension of a peaceful country, but of a *peace provider country*.

We are in a period of transition between the unipolar mentality, the risk of new bipolarity and the promise of multipolarity. It is against this background that it is necessary to examine the dynamic areas of some of the situations with potential for conflict in the current reality. One of these situations is the disputes over maritime territories rich in natural resources in Asia, where different States demand the extent of their jurisdictions on overlapping areas. We have witnessed a competition involving regional powers such as China, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Vietnam and India, as well as extra-regional powers such as the United States. Recent developments in these areas indicate, first, an effort by the US government to reorient its political-military engagement to the so-called "pivot to Asia".

In an editorial, an important newspaper of the United States supported the measures of the Japanese government toward a bigger flexibility in the use of military force and demanded the formation of an alliance of democracies in Asia to counterbalance - in the words of the editorial - China's rise. In Asia, the insufficiency of confidence-building, promotion of transparency and definition of common rules of conduct mechanisms is a ponderable fact in the analysis of the development of that region.

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6 On the brink of the Second Gulf War, supporters of a military attack largely used the idea of preemptive self-defense, which is full of dangerous implications.

Another area that is stage for major changes - not all in a positive sense - is the Middle East. The so-called "Arab Spring" raised high hopes that several countries would walk toward more democratic political systems with greater popular participation. But with the possible exception of Tunisia (and even this country is subjected to violent terrorist eruptions that put into question the government's ability to face the attraction of fundamentalist doctrines), what could be seen was the degeneration of the democratic movement in factional conflicts, as in Syria, or the pure and simple retrocession toward authoritarianism, as in Egypt.

In recent years, concerns emerged about the future of the territorial *status quo* created by the famous Sykes-Picot Agreement between France and Great Britain, that predicted the end of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the First War. It could be even positive if the routing of changes had occurred peacefully - which obviously is not the case. The famous phrase of Marx that "violence is the midwife of history" fully applies to the Middle East, but not in the direction of social and political progress, as advocated by the German thinker.

The possibility that the Middle East map ceases to exist as drawn about a century ago is seen more with apprehension than with hope. Some of the actions of the great powers contributed strongly to this evolution. Political support and the provision of weapons to rebellious factions fuelled fundamentalist sectors, just as, at the other extreme, military aid to authoritarian governments did not stimulate the search for solutions through dialogue.

On the other side of the scale, the recent agreement between the P5 + 1 and Iran creates a positive expectation for forwarding certain issues such as the future of Iraq and Syria (and the related issue of the so-called "Islamic State"), regardless of the fears, for different reasons, of some countries in the region such as Saudi Arabia and Israel.

In the Middle East, strategic factors are mixed up with interests on access to natural resources and emphasize ethnic or religious cleavages. Until recently, Syria had been a microcosm of these tensions. Today it disputes this position with Iraq, not mentioning Yemen. The agreement sponsored by Russia and supported by the United States in September 2013, which foresees the destruction of Syrian chemical arsenal, was an encouraging sign of the opened space for diplomacy. Few people know that the special envoy of the Director of the Organisation for the Chemical Weapons Prohibition in this important mission is a Brazilian, Ambassador José Artur Denot Medeiros, who for five years was our representative at the OPCW.

In the case of Syria, it is common to hear the known (and correct) refrain that there is no military solution to the conflict. At the same time,

the behavior of the great powers by arming one or other side of the civil war contrasts with this vaunted pacifist conviction. The destabilization caused in Libya and in the North Africa by the Anglo-French-American military intervention against the Gaddafi regime in 2011 fits into the same scenario.

To the drama of the refugees is added the plight of immigrants. Although external interference in the Syrian conflict has not reached similar proportions, it's necessary to register that the conflagration in that country has spilled over into neighboring countries, as became clear in the bombing in Beirut that killed our compatriot Malak Zahwe.

The threat of an aggressive "Islamic state" goes from the Middle East to almost the Gulf of Guinea. Crises such as Syria's require an attitude of respect to the UN rules and of a joint work with all interested parties that may have influence the ongoing political process, including - in the case – Iran. What I want to denote is that, on the contrary to what we often see being defended, foreign intervention is a remedy that usually attacks the patient, not the disease. The situation in Iraq post-2003 has been a sad demonstration of that, while the country is threatened by ethnic and religious conflicts and by the proliferation of terrorist groups.

A situation that highlights the growing fluidity in the contemporary international reality is comprised of vast spaces located beyond the national jurisdiction of sovereign States or in their limits, which is the case of the deep seas, the high latitudes and the outer space. These areas are not free from pretensions of hegemonic control (and I do not speak here of a single superpower) at the expense of the rights of the coastal States or the rights of exploitation according multilateral rules of conduct. The opening of new routes and the exploration possibilities in the Arctic gave impetus to the discussion of the subject. An editorial of the *Financial Times* noted in the region that "for now, the struggle for resources remains polished. But it may not last, if the discoveries happen in advance of the game rules". Obviously, this risk is not limited to the Arctic. It extends to all parts of the world where the competition for natural resources will tend to intensify, as the global demand increases. The South Atlantic, area of our interest, will not be free of it.

Cyberspace is another dimension in what is visible the engagement of the major powers with economic and military purposes. Because it is a recent phenomenon, the cyber warfare is still not fully known. However, it is questioned, in analogy to the prevailing conceptions at the time of World War I, if it is not being created a "cult of cyber offensive". This impression is reinforced by initiatives such as the decision taken by a major country, the Great Britain, to develop offensive capabilities (not just defense) in the cyber field. The honest approach to the subject by that country's Minister caused

wide repercussions. But certainly London is not the only capital to pursue this path. The case of the Stuxnet virus, that attacked Iran's nuclear program, should be studied carefully, especially when you know the tendency in certain circles to extend the concept and scope of the non-proliferation to the "counter-proliferation".

According to some experts, new war technologies like cybernetics, but also unmanned aerial vehicles, will erase the traditional distinctions between "war" and "peace," "military" and "civilian", "foreign" and "domestic" and "national" and "international", with the potential to invert the logic of aversion to the risk that I mentioned before. More broadly, what is emerging on the horizon is the possibility that it will be set up a permanent state of belligerence between opponents countries, even more because the boundaries between espionage and war are not precisely defined. To David Rothkopf, editor of the *Foreign Policy* journal, it is a new kind of war that is called the *Cool War*, opposed to the *Cold War*. In the Cold War mutually assured destruction (significantly known as "MAD", its acronym in English) by nuclear weapons prevented the superpowers to attack each other. In this new kind of war, a little 'hotter' than the last, each contender might be able to "attack constantly, without triggering an open war". Countries such as Brazil cannot remain indifferent to the signs that these lines of thought may come to prevail.

The common denominator of the territorial tensions in Asia, the risks of fragmentation in the Middle East, the rivalry on the seabed and the militarization of cyberspace, among several other fluid areas of the international system, has the potential to spread globally, inevitably affecting Brazil and our strategic environment, beginning with South America and the South Atlantic, in the sequence. Some of these elements of tension are naturally more distant from us, while others inspire more immediate care. However, all of them have systemic repercussions, and may be factors of vulnerability for the Brazilian and other South American countries' interests, which collectively interests us to protect.

A reasonable balance of world power is a fundamental, though not sufficient, condition for the maintenance of peace. This is one of the proposals of grand strategy of Brazil, combining soft power and hard power in order to provide peace. We must be adequately able to defend our territory, our people and our interests. The purpose of these and many other measures is to assure the Brazilian possession of means that can remove threats and aggressions that we can suffer at any time and originated in any framework.

To defend, deterrence is not enough. It's necessary also to cooperate. This has been and must remain the basic principle of the defense policy in the Brazilian strategic environment. With the neighbors of South America,

we are deepening trust, transparency and a shared vision of Defense goals, bilaterally and through the Council of South-American Defense. The defense of South America is a responsibility of the South Americans. It is important the gradual consolidation of this view in the policies of all countries of our subcontinent. The recently created South American School of Defense (ES-UDE in Portuguese), headquartered in Quito but acting in a decentralized form, is a major step to deepen and to extend the traditional cooperation that we already have with other South American nations. We should take this co-operation to new areas such as industry and high-tech, as aerospace and cy-bernetics (which has already begun to happen) as well as to countries that, in due to their incipient development, are more vulnerable to the interference of extra-regional interests.

Also in the South Atlantic, it is noteworthy the cooperation we have provided to the formation of the Coast Guard and naval capacity of Cape Verde and the assistance that the Brazilian Navy is giving to the African Union, with regard to maritime safety. The Brazilian Navy, in a pioneering way, extended the cooperation with Namibia and has participated in the discussions and exercises related to the security of the Gulf of Guinea. And it's not just for sol-idarity, which is also relevant. It's a direct interest of Brazil, considering that a great part of our trade with Africa passes through there, especially our oil supply. Through ZPCSA[7], we unite efforts so that our ocean is a zone of peace and cooperation, free of nuclear weapons and all sorts of strange rivalries to our strategic environment.

The realistic understanding of Brazil's defense needs in the world has distinguished precursors. It was with a great foresight that Rui Barbosa, in a piece of 1896, argued that "peace is the essential clause of our progress. But (...) the first condition for peace is respectability and the respectability of the force". Or, in a current terminology: soft power must be supported by hard power.

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7 The Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic (ZPCSA) was established in 1986 by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 41/11.

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ABSTRACT

In the last years of the twentieth century, after the end of the Cold War, the world has evolved into a mixed structure, which preserves the characteristics of unipolarity at the same time that approaches to a multipolar world in some ways. In an international reality marked by its fluid nature, the emergence of new actors and the so-called "asymmetric threats" has not eliminated the former agents in the world order. And the conflict between the States has not disappeared from the horizon. In this context, diplomacy must have the permanent support of defense policy. Therefore, in the Brazilian case, the paper presents that the country should adopt a *grand strategy* that combines foreign policy and defense policy, in which soft power will be enhanced by hard power.

KEYWORDS