

CHAPTER 7

LONG-LOST BROTHERS IN ARMS?

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Brazil and India are both former colonies with immense territories, populations, and economic clout. Together, the two countries account for roughly 5% of the global gross domestic product and by 2050 they will represent 18% of the world economy (PwC, 2017). India and Brazil are also two of the biggest democracies in the world, with similar international aspirations. In social terms, both countries face daunting domestic challenges, such as poverty, inequality, and illiteracy. In cultural terms, there seem to be so many common traits between the two countries that they could almost be long-lost twins or brothers-in-arms.

More recently, bilateral, plurilateral, and multilateral advancements have led Brazil and India to an unprecedented international rapprochement. This includes a number of new agreements and partnerships in the public and private domains,

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as well as the BRICS, IBSA, G20, the World Trade Organization,⁴ and various forums within the United Nations. In short, the two rising powers have converged significantly in both political and economic terms (SAXENA, 2014; MARCHÁN, 2012). The duo has jointly championed South-South cooperation and, along with China, changed the configuration of polarity in contemporary international relations.

Yet cooperation within other important sectors, such as defense and security, is lagging behind. This suggests that a broader pattern of bilateral cooperation has yet to be reached. By way of example, India, despite having the fifth-largest defense budget in the world at US\$ 62 billion for the current fiscal year (THE ECONOMIST, 2018), and being the world's biggest arms importer for nearly a decade (BLANCHFIELD *et al.*, 2017), buys practically no arms and military equipment from Brazil (WEZEMAN *et al.*, 2018). This indicates that both countries have yet to identify a mutual interest in arms transfers, especially concerning Indian imports from Brazil. Bilateral cooperation does not only involve arms transfers, of course, but this particular model of bilateral relation is very relevant due to spill-over effects, complementarity, and interdependence (KINNE, 2017; KYTÖMÄKI, 2015; PARKER, 2008).

Essentially, a more profound Indo-Brazilian proximity has been hindered by several challenges, among which informational asymmetry, low understanding of each other's culture and intentions, red tape, and a lack of trust stand out (RIS, 2018; CHATURVEDI and MULAKALA, 2016; CHATURVEDI, 2015; CARDOZO, 2012; HAFFNER and MONTEIRO, 2011; HIRST, 2008; BASU, 2006). At the heart of such challenges are questions

4 For more examples of leadership by Brazil and India in the WTO, please refer to Efstathopoulos, C., 2012, "Brazil, India and the Doha development agenda," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 25: 269-293.

of “what do we do?” and “how can we do it?” These questions are especially pertinent in Brasilia and New Delhi, where the main decision-makers, policymakers, and diplomats of both countries must, on the one hand, discuss, design and implement programs in light of shared gains, while also, on the other hand, doing it without alienating other partners in the international arena or jeopardizing pre-existing positive relations with third parties. Ultimately, such questions relate to the true potential – and desired benefits – of solid cooperation between Brazil and India in sectors beyond trade and global governance. More specifically, how can both countries reach out to one another to best provide their own national defense?

Existing and latent cooperation on defense-related matters between Brazil and India

Defense cooperation between India and Brazil is incipient at best. An *Agreement on Cooperation in Defense Matters* was concluded in New Delhi in 2003 and ratified by both governments in 2006. The agreement calls for mutual collaboration in several defense-related areas, such as research, acquisitions, procurement, and logistic support. Subsequently, a Defense Wing was established in the Embassy of India in Brasilia in December 2007, and Brazil opened its Defense and Air Attaché Office in New Delhi in April 2009. These are important developments in diplomatic terms, but they seem to have more symbolism than substance given that 15 years have already passed since the agreement was signed.

Mechanisms for broader bilateral cooperation already exist. Article 3 of the Agreement established a *Joint Defense Committee*, which seeks to explore possibilities for enhanced bilateral cooperation in defense. This encompasses a variety of common and complementary activities, for example, educational exchanges within military schools, joint training for peacekeeping

operations, military participation in simulations and training programs, mutual involvement in strategic projects, technology-related partnerships, sharing best practices, and high-level visits, among other initiatives. Four meetings have taken place in this committee between the two sides to date,⁵ but few developments seem to have been reached thus far. This calls for a new strategy (and renewed routine of joint work) in the Committee with a results-oriented mindset and an expanded common agenda, to improve international cooperation in the defense realm.

According to a recent technical report by the Brazilian Ministry of Defense (MD, 2017), India's defense sector has several relevant characteristics that justify Brazil's interest in increasing bilateral relations. These include Indian technological excellence in a number of areas, such as satellite development and launching, cruise and ballistic missile technology, nuclear submarines, and drones. The Brazilian interest in India, however, may go beyond receiving technology or exporting defense products; it could involve learning from India's experiences with reforming and modernizing its defense sector. In this vein, the defense industrial complexes in both countries appear to face very similar challenges: under-performance, excessive bureaucracy, complicated procurement processes, counterproductive regulations, and low private (national and international) investment (SMITH, 2018; IPEA, 2016). These similarities may create opportunities for learning from one another amid concomitant efforts to reform their respective defense sectors.

5 The 4th meeting was held in 2015 in Brazil and the 5th meeting was held in New Delhi in late 2017. Additionally, through the Committee, the Brazilian Ministry of Defense received a delegation from the High Naval Command Course of the Naval Warfare School of India in 2017 in order to exchange experiences in the area of military shipbuilding.

On the idiosyncrasies of international cooperation: what to do and how to do it?

Contrary to idealistic interpretations and popular belief, international cooperation is neither an altruistic nor a charitable set of actions; it cannot be reduced to “aid” or programmatic “partnerships.” Indeed, international cooperation often requires states and governments to engage in complex negotiations, bargains, and discussions in order for both sides to change their behavior. This involves hard work, political will, and most of all, aspiration for more strategic gains in various domains (political, economic, and social) in the wider international context. Herbert (1986) clarifies this by stating that, in practice, international cooperation involves coordinating policies, which is different from “harmony.” Cooperation, therefore, cannot simply be seen as a function of common interests; “it becomes instead a potential goal for states” (HERBERT 1986, p. 41). In fact, international cooperation is a “public good” that policymakers should strive to increase because it creates the potential for both states to make joint gains (KEOHANE, 1984). Understanding this challenge at the highest political and government levels, as well as producing concrete decision making in that direction, is the first step toward creating the necessary ecosystem for mutually beneficial international cooperation.

The second step is to bring on board both countries’ bureaucracies because they will be behind the actions that will allow bilateral cooperation to flourish. In the defense sector, both Brazil and India have knowledgeable, responsible, and committed civil servants and military personnel, thereby providing the necessary and desired human resources for the task. There is, however, a need for both countries to learn more about the specific agencies and their counterparts in the other country. Mapping

such agencies in both countries, and adapting their expectations, goals, and capabilities accordingly, should generate the necessary environment for greater rapprochement and cooperation.

The third step involves elaborating convergent public policies, programs, and projects at the various planning levels (strategic, tactical, and operational) while observing the proper stages of project development and management (initiation, design, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and termination). Although none of these factors alone assures success in international cooperation, it will, at the very least, improve countries' familiarity about one another, bringing both societies closer and creating a history from which to learn from when moving forward. In this vein, without neglecting any bilateral initiatives that are already underway, a further programmatic cooperative agenda in defense between India and Brazil could focus in five distinct areas, as discussed in the next paragraphs.

Firstly, India is one of the few developing countries to have an extremely advanced space program, and it is practically all nationalized. This is a clear area in which collaboration could generate mutual gains. In fact, Brazil and India already have the legal and institutional frameworks necessary to support further cooperation, especially the agreement involving the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), the Brazilian Space Agency (AEB), and the Brazilian National Institute for Space Research (INPE). The agreement emphasizes satellite projects, such as satellite tracking, launching, and development projects. Ground stations in Brazil (Alcântara and Cuiabá) have been providing tracking support for Indian satellites (Chandrayaan-I, Megha Tropiques, MOM, and ASTROSAT) on a commercial basis for almost a decade. Nonetheless, there is still room for improvement: Brazil has shown an interest in telemedicine and tele-education programs,

as well as scientist exchanges, whereas India has pushed for enhanced satellite programs linked to food safety, natural resource management, and disaster monitoring (SIDDIQUI, 2018; RIBEIRO & VASCONCELLOS, 2017; INPE, 2015).

Secondly, India has a sophisticated defense research network both inside and outside the government apparatus; the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and the Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses (IDSA) both catch the eye. DRDO, which is part of India's Ministry of Defense, is responsible for research on and development of new equipment. It has a network of 52 laboratories, covering aeronautics, armaments, electronics, and land-combat engineering (BANERJEE, 2018). IDSA is a highly productive non-partisan, autonomous think tank dedicated to policy-relevant research on defense and security. Such entities could well act as models or benchmarks for their Brazilian counterparts, especially the Pandiá Calógeras Institute, the Brazilian government's think tank, which has struggled to find its identity since its creation (ROCHA & CORTINHAS, 2013). Along with the Brazilian Association of Defense Studies and other public and private organizations,⁶ Brazil could team up with India's best research and analysis institutions in order to generate and disseminate data, information, and knowledge on defense- and security-related issues. Ultimately, the bilateral research cooperation would promote not only reciprocal understanding between the two countries but also foster national, regional, and international stability.

Thirdly, Brazil and India are active and perennial participants in peacekeeping missions under the auspices of the United Nations. Yet, they have seldom shared best practices and lessons learned

⁶ For example, the Superior War College (Escola Superior de Guerra – ESG) and the Department of Teaching (DEPEN/SESPED) within the Ministry of Defence, not to mention a plethora of research units in public and private institutions of higher education and the Brazilian armed forces.

in the field, even when acting in the same theatres of operations (such as Haiti). The Brazilian Peace Operations Joint Training Centre (CCOPAB, by its acronym in Portuguese) in Rio de Janeiro and the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) in Delhi could develop a more systematic program of joint courses, training, and related activities. As of today, the collaboration between the two centers seems to be irregular. This also applies to faculty and student exchanges between the two countries' military academies.

Fourthly, there seems to be much potential for convergence, collaboration, and integration at various levels and various projects in both countries' defense industries. For example, in the naval field, both countries have been developing Scorpène-class submarines under respective contracts signed with the French Naval Group (the former DCN-DCNS). The two countries could also find common ground in developing variants of the Gripen NG aircraft through triangular cooperation with the Swedish SAAB, the aircraft's manufacturer.⁷ Likewise, Brazil and India could partner in the development of airborne warning and control systems (AWACS), building on the indigenous airborne early warning and control system (AEW&C) manufactured by India's DRDO using modified Brazilian Embraer jets (THE INDIAN EXPRESS, 2018). Moreover, India is at the forefront of naval innovation with the Indian Naval Indigenization Plan (INIP) 2015-2030, which established a new phase of self-reliance by domestically manufacturing technologically advanced equipment (PARRIKAR, 2018). Curiously, India has also made substantial strides through co-production and co-development projects with foreign partners.

7 The Brazilian federal government and the Swedish SAAB signed a contract for the development and production of 36 aircrafts in 2014. The contract and its associated industrial cooperation (which includes technology transfer and offsets) came into effect in 2015, with the first deliveries expected in 2020. More recently, SAAB has reportedly expressed its intention to continue developing the maritime variant of the aircraft, with attention now being focused on a sale to India following Brazil's recent decision to axe its Sao Paulo aircraft carrier (Bharat Shakti 2017).

Brazil could draw important lessons from these Indian experiences – whether in terms of successes/failures, indigenization/foreign direct investment, or centralization/decentralization.

Fifth and lastly, the two countries could consider stimulating a number of strategic projects in the terrestrial, naval, aeronautical, and spatial segments through the creation of joint ventures. Both countries have considerable experience in creating this particular kind of enterprise with third parties, but an Indo-Brazilian joint venture in the defense sector has never materialized. Furthermore, both countries could benefit from a coordinated industrial mapping of needs and surpluses as a means to an eventual integration of production chains. Both countries currently do not seem to know exactly their capacities, qualities, and potentials for mutual supply and demand in terms of defense industrial outputs.

The ongoing initiatives and potential pathways for cooperation not only suggest that high-level Indo-Brazilian defense partnerships are possible, but also that there are already bilateral structural initiatives that they can build on. Both are large countries with considerable defense needs, whether is in terms of arms transfers, defense modernization, joint operations, and training, or technical exchanges. The main bilateral challenge faced by these two regional leaders is how to develop and grow the existing cooperative foundations. In other words, the main obstacles to advanced bilateral cooperation between Brazil and India in the defense sector lie within the domestic and foreign dynamics of the international cooperation itself.

For their own benefit, Brazil and India should expand their cooperation by increasing collaboration between their defense sectors, as well as other areas in which there are clear room for synergies (education, energy, and healthcare, to name a few); as Marchán (2012) notes, “where complementary, lessons from each

country's home-grown development strategies can be learned to help address each other's individual challenges" (p. 13). Accordingly, a fundamental component of international cooperation is the effective coordination of intragovernmental and intergovernmental policies through a decision-making process that takes into account potential partners' diffuse expectations (STEIN 1993; MILNER 1992). Specifically, international intergovernmental cooperation occurs when the policies effectively followed by one actor facilitate the realization of another actor's interests. As the late David Mitraný (1966) suggests, "(...) a successful collaboration in one particular technical field or functional area may lead to further collaboration in other related fields by means of the spill-over mechanism. Governments recognize the common benefits to be gained by such cooperative endeavors and allow for their further expansion" (VIOTTI & KAUPPI, 1993, p. 241).

Looking ahead and aiming at pragmatic, mutually beneficial results

Both countries are natural leaders in their respective regions and display enormous potential for complementarity. India is the world's largest democracy, an economic power, and a millennial society. Brazil is South America's most influential country, a rising economic power, and one of the world's biggest democracies. As a rising economic powerhouse and nuclear-armed state, India has emerged as an important regional power with a commitment to the security and development of its immediate neighbors through Project SAGAR (*Security and Growth for All in the Region*) (BANERJEE, 2018). Brazil, in its turn, has been an exponent of South American regional organizations such as UNASUR and MERCOSUR, and was at the forefront of the formation of the first nuclear-free zone in a densely populated region (through the *Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America*

and the Caribbean – the Treaty of Tlatelolco). Accordingly, both countries are in favorable positions for not only establishing intense bilateral policy coordination but also promoting greater inter-regional cooperation.

Foreign policy and diplomacy are important tools for any country looking to establish good relations in the global arena, whether multilaterally or bilaterally. However, defense and military capacities are equally necessary for a foreign policy due to deterrence effects and practical ostensive actions, such as patrolling and monitoring international waters. In this regard, Brazil and India have extensive experience in contributing to multilateral efforts made by the United Nations, having provided blue helmets for peacekeeping operations and missions and participated in interregional naval exercises such as IBSAMAR.⁸ Both countries should engage in more consistent exchanges of experiences and best practices, as well as joint training and planning. The leadership of both countries should make efforts to stimulate mutual knowledge, collaboration, and coordination in various defense-related areas.

Moreover, Brazil and India can realistically innovate and create a benchmark in defense cooperation and military modernization, which includes “updating doctrines, training and restructuring of the defense forces and a supporting military industry” (BANERJEE, 2018, p. 23). Both countries have built solid institutional structures under the auspices of the agreement signed in 2003. Accordingly, the Ministries of Defense and national security advisers should meet regularly in order to stimulate and strengthen defense policy coordination with a focus on practical

8 The initiative has two main objectives: first, it seeks to increase the interoperability among the three navies and develop common understandings and procedures for maritime security operations; second, it looks to improve maritime security in the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean for the benefit of the global maritime community (Indian Navy 2018).

results. The defense attachés in Delhi and Brasília must improve their procedures, projects and programs that are being conducted with their counterpart's executive branches and armed forces. India, as the world's biggest arms importer, has the power to create favorable conditions for Brazilian defense products to enter the market. Brazil, in turn, can make preferential investments in the research, development, and production of tailor-made defense goods and services suitable to the needs and specificities of Indian buyers. India may figure as a preferential partner for Brazil's defense policy and strategy, as well as a model to draw lessons from, considering the rich Indian experience in reforming and modernizing its defense sector. Both countries need to learn how to do this whilst simultaneously preserving their own autonomy when acting in the main international forums.

Final considerations

In short, Brazil and India must seriously aim to maximize the benefits of complementary bilateral relations. By joining forces, the two countries could "break ground on a tangible South-South agenda that could have a far-reaching impact" (MARCHÁN, 2012).

Both countries already have institutional mechanisms at their disposal for enhancing bilateral cooperation in defense, involving not only arms and technology transfers, but also information sharing and joint research, development, and training. Such mechanisms should be put into concrete use as soon as possible.

Superior bilateral cooperation, with a focus on complementarity, will be key to sustaining and strengthening ties between the two giants. Due to their political, economic, social, and even military capabilities and resources, the two countries' international behavior should influence their neighbors' domestic and foreign policies, as well as the ambitions of extra-regional

powers with a stake in Asia and Latin America. In fact, there is evidence that both countries are poised to play a more active role in hegemonic stability in the near future, filling the gap left by the declining military capabilities of traditional U.S. allies (SCHWARTZ & WILSON, 2013).

Ultimately, Brazil and India – two newfound, long-lost brothers in arms – may find themselves securing global commons and delivering two rare (and valuable) global public goods: national, regional, and international stability and peace.

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