

GERALDO ALCKMIN

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Candidates

Geraldo Alckmin, Brazilian Social-Democracy Party (Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira. Acronym: PSDB)

Ana Amélia, vice-president candidate, Progressists (Progressistas. Acronym: PP)

Political Coalitions

"To Unite Brazil" - PSDB/PP/PTB/PSD/SD/PRB/DEM/PPS/PR

Prior Political Enrollments

Alderman for Pindamonhangaba (1973-1977); Mayor of Pindamonhangaba (1977-1982); State Deputy (1983-1987); Federal Deputy (1987-1995); Vice-Governor of São Paulo State (1995-2001); Governor of São Paulo State (2001-2003; 2003-2006; 2011-2015; 2015-2018)

Disputes in Presidential Elections

2006, 2018

International Relations Advisor

Tasso Jereissati (PSDB general campaign coordinator)

The PSDB presents Geraldo Alckmin as its president candidate in a politically disturbed moment in comparison with the prior presidential disputes in Brazil. Differing from the traditional clash between PT and PSDB, Alckmin emerges not only as an anti-PT candidate, but with the challenge of demonstrating to be the best anti-PT candidate in comparison with the new representative of this ideal, candidate Jair Bolsonaro (PSL). Taking in account that Bolsonaro and Alckmin chase the same electorate (electors of the political “right” and PT critics) and that Alckmin is below 10% of the vote intentions, the PSDB central strategy has been to be critical to the apology for violence made by its adversary, seeking to gain more votes. Choosing Ana Amélia as its vice-president can be seen as a part of this strategy as her representative state, Rio Grande do Sul, has a strong number of Bolsonaro supporters, in addition to being a way of gaining more women voters¹.

Counting on ten days less for the electoral campaign if compared to the last elections, in order to convince the Brazilian population that the PSDB candidate is a differentiated political for the country, Alckmin’s campaign invests in defending that the current economic crisis is a result of the PT governments under Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff’s administrations. Based on 62 daily small advertises in open television and 5 minutes and 32 seconds in the free electoral propaganda on TV², the party has strongly invested in changing the results of the last presidential elections disputed. In addition, Alckmin granted for himself the biggest propaganda time in free-to-air television for having accomplished obtaining a great political alliance with many other parties as: PP, PR, PTB, PPS, DEM, PRB, Solidariedade and PSD³.

To understand the foreign policy actions defended by the PSDB it is necessary to consider two central elements: the continuity of the general practices from prior political programs released by the Party, and the relevant political indications to the post of minister of Foreign Affairs during Temer’s

Government - namely José Serra e Aloysio Nunes -, and hence their actions while occupying this position. The foreign policy initiatives during this period converged with the proposals defended by the PSDB in the 2010, and 2014⁴ elections, which were based on a discourse of ideological detachment that in reality followed the party ideology and also prioritized international trade within the foreign policy agenda expecting to have Brazil as a protagonist in the global and regional negotiations.

In its institutional website there is no information about the existence of an International Relations department for the Party and the last register about this issue is dated by the year of 2011. Within this non-occupied space there is the Teotônio Vilela Institute (ITV), a political formation institute related to the PSDB “with a doctrinal nature [looking for the] improvement and disclosure of the social-democracy in Brazil”⁵. With the intention of elaborating public policies proposals the institute offers and supports many activities for its public (i.e. reports, seminars, congress, debates and speeches). The Institute directors are Tasso Jereissati; Ataídes Oliveira; Otávio Leite; Mariana Carvalho; and Ricardo Ferraço – which has already chaired the Federal Senate Commission on Foreign Policy and National Defense.

The main publication of the ITV is the “Formulation Letters”⁶, which present several recent articles. Within the 2018 published issues about international politics many different themes are debated, as for instance the current Venezuela’s political and economic situation, and the effects of Trump’s administration protectionism over the international relations. There are also letters that do not specifically present debates on international affairs; however, they contain information about industry, development and foreign trade. Yet, in the “Opinion” section of the ITV there are original articles about different themes that were presented in national newspapers. Within this section it is possible to identify relevant political names who have discoursed about subjects related to foreign policy and South American relations in the year of 2018: Aloysio Nunes, who wrote about Brazil in the OECD; Celso

Lafer, who was critical to the foreign affairs of the previous Brazilian governments; and Rubens Barbosa, who invested in the negotiation between Mercosur and the EU. José Goldenberg and José Serra also had articles published by the "Opinion" section.

Concerning its government plan, the PSDB presented two documents⁷: the first one was smaller, containing only the main issues defended by the coalition; the second one, released one month before the elections' first round of voting, covers more themes such as public security, education and foreign affairs. In the first document, the foreign affairs section presents the central proposal for this area: the use of the diplomacy to sign commercial agreements in order to expand the Brazilian international trade market. This proposition is connected to the Party general orientation, which aims, according to the document, to regain Brazil's economic growth through reducing the number of Ministries; following up and evaluating the policy effects; privatizations; commercial opening; attracting foreign investments; and promoting infrastructural investments through public-private partnerships. Related to South America, subjects as Human Rights; democracy and the Amazon administration respecting the Sustainable Development Objectives (SDO) principles are the main themes discussed.

In the second document presented, the foreign affairs section starts being critical to the Brazilian insulation in the international system. It's defended that the country has isolated itself from the international dynamic flows, having its image damaged due to corruption scandals and its diplomacy bowing and scraping to PT's ideological expansion. There is a common understanding that an active participation in foreign affairs is a fundamental element for promoting the commercial opening, which is also seen as a condition to a better acting in the global political scenario. In addition, it is sustained that foreign policy must be a State policy and therefore, the Itamaraty, Brazil's diplomatic institution, should have a more autonomous acting in coordinating the national policies in economy, defense, security, climate change and the

environment, as well as human rights. A special emphasis is given to the commercial opening process, including the promotion of foreign investments, the expansion of trade markets and the Brazilian insertion in the global productive chains.

Likewise, the regional integration is treated as a commercial issue. However, the highlighted government proposals do not present defined actions and positions to be followed, keeping the issue in a broad understanding: it's sustained that a new strategy should be taken in account when negotiating bilaterally with the South American region and Mercosur; the commitment to complete the negotiations between Mercosur and the European Union, Japan, the EFTA, South Korea, Canada and Singapore is reaffirmed; and finally, a commercial agreement negotiation between Mercosur and the African countries is proposed.

The two most structured proposals presented are the application to be part of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) – in which the participation of Japan, the Pacific Alliance and other Asian countries that compose the partnership is seen as an interesting asset –, and the reevaluation about the Brazilian participation in Unasur and its Defense Council, in addition to its participation in CELAC. It is necessary to point out that there is no mention to an approximation between Mercosur and the Pacific Alliance even though the issue has been present during Temer's government and through its ministers of Foreign Affairs agenda (both politicians of the PSDB).

So far, in the PSDB formulations, foreign policy and regional integration processes are based on a commercial strategy, choosing to keep up with the initiatives started during Temer's government (2016-2018) and the prior strategies presented by the Party in previous presidential disputes (2010 and 2014). Both are coherent proposals with the current understanding in the Party's political formulation.

Finally, in none of the three recent debates that the candidate participated – the Brazilian Infrastructural and Industry Association (ABDIB) Seminar;

Record TV Debate; and TV Globo Debate – there were presented or discussed possible foreign policies strategies that Alckmin’s government, if elected, would follow, also for the Brazilian position in South America and its efforts towards regional integration. However, during ABDIB Seminar, in August 2018, Alckmin affirmed his commitment to accomplishing the national social security reform and then to regaining a positive industrial production in the country to secure better investments in a way that he would be able to endorse an effective foreign policy during his government.

NOTES

- 1 MORAES, Marcelo. Alckmin mira Bolsonaro com escolha de Ana Amélia. O Estado de S. Paulo. Política. Available online: <https://politica.estadao.com.br/noticias/eleicoes,analise-alckmin-mira-bolsonaro-com-escolha-de-ana-amelia,70002428775>. Accessed on: Sep. 17 2018.
- 2 COSTA, R. Como nas últimas eleições, PT e PSDB devem se digladiar na tevê e no rádio. Correio Brasiliense. Política. Available online: https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/app/noticia/politica/2018/08/08/interna_politica,699607/como-nas-ultimas-eleicoes-pt-e-psdb-devem-se-digladiar-na-tv-e-radio.shtml. Accessed on: Sep. 17 2018.
- 3 APÓS... 2018. Após Alianças Alckmin é quem mais terá tempo de televisão. O GLOBO. Brasil. Available online: <https://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/apos-aliancas-alckmin-quem-mais-tera-tempo-de-televisao-22952370>. Accessed on: Sep. 17 2018.
- 4 PARTIDO DA SOCIAL DEMOCRACIA (PSDB). Programa de Governo. 2010. Available online: <http://www.psdb.org.br/storage/2010/10/Programa-de-Governo-Jose-Serra.pdf>;
Plano de Governo. 2014. Available online: http://contee.org.br/contee/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Plano-de-governo_aecio1.pdf. Accessed on: 13 set. 2018.
- 5 Instituto Teotônio Vilela. O Instituto. Available online: <http://itv.org.br/sobre>. Accessed on: Sep. 18 2018.
- 6 Instituto Teotônio Vilela. Cartas de Formulação. Available online: <http://itv.org.br/cartas-de-formulacao>. Accessed on: Sep. 13 2018.
- 7 PARTIDO DA SOCIAL DEMOCRACIA (PSDB). Diretrizes Gerais. jul. 2018. Available online: <https://www.geraldealckmin.com.br/programa-de-governo-geraldo-alckmin-2018.pdf>. Accessed on: Sep. 18 2018;
Plano de Governo. set. 2018. Available online: https://www.geraldealckmin.com.br/AF_Programa_de_Governo_A4_SEGURANCA_EDUCACA_O_P_EXTERNA.pdf. Accessed on: Sep. 18 2018.