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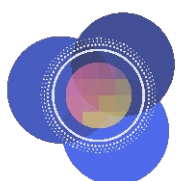


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# **CADERNOS** *de* **REGIONALISMO ODR**



GRUPO DE PESQUISA VINCULADO À REPRI  
**OBSERVATÓRIO**  
*de*  
REGIONALISMO

# REDE DE PESQUISA EM POLÍTICA EXTERNA E REGIONALISMO

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Foreign Policy and Regionalism: the governments plans of Brazilian presidential candidates in the 2022 elections

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### Diagramming and Graphic Design

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Luan Olliveira Pessoa

### Revision

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Davi Antonino Guimarães  
Flavia Loss de Araujo  
Heitor Erthal  
João Victor Motta  
Luan Olliveira Pessoa  
Maurício Luiz Borges Ramos Dias  
Paulo Cesar dos Santos Martins  
Thiago Vicino Fernandes

### Researchers

Bárbara Carvalho Neves  
Cairo Junqueira  
Davi Antonino Guimarães  
Flavia Loss de Araujo  
Heitor Erthal  
João Victor Motta  
Luan Olliveira Pessoa  
Maurício Luiz Borges Ramos Dias  
Paulo Cesar dos Santos Martins  
Thiago Vicino Fernandes

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Observatório de Regionalismo - Programa de Pós-Graduação San Tiago Dantas

Praça da Sé, 108 - 3º Andar - Sé - São Paulo - SP - CEP: 01001-900

Telefone: (11) 3116-1770 / (11) 3116-1780

Site: <http://observatorio.repri.org/>

E-mail: [observatorioderegionalismo@gmail.com](mailto:observatorioderegionalismo@gmail.com)

CADERNOS DE REGIONALISMO ODR  
DOSSIER - 2022

Foreign Policy and Regionalism: the governments  
plans of Brazilian presidential candidates  
in the 2022 elections



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## LUIZ INÁCIO LULA DA SILVA

*Davi Antonino Guimarães  
Maurício Luiz Borges Ramos Dias*

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### **Candidades**

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Partido dos Trabalhadores), presidente  
Geraldo José Rodrigues Alckmin Filho (Partido Socialista Brasileiro), vice-presidente

### **Coalition**

“Brazil of Hope” (PT, PSB, PCdoB, PV, PSOL, REDE, SOLIDARIEDADE, AVANTE, AGIR)

### **Previous political positions**

Federal Deputy for São Paulo state (1987-1991); President of the Republic (2003-2010)

### **Previous presidential campaigns**

1989, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2018<sup>1</sup>

### **International Relations advisor**

PT's International Relations Secretariat (under the responsibility of Romênio Pereira);  
Celso Amorim (former Lula government chancellor and current external adviser)

Given the current socio-economic and political conjunctures in post-redemocratization Brazil, the 2022 elections mark not only the return of former president Lula and former governor Geraldo Alckmin to public life, but the union, on the same political ticket, of candidates from very different origins and backgrounds, even marked as adversaries in the past. Two politicians with extensive administrative experience, each with their own characteristics and world views, at first, opposed, but who sought to complement each other to echo a unified criticism against the current government of Jair Bolsonaro. From this ticket emerges the promise of defending democracy and returning to a past of prosperity and hope not far from the affective memory of the Brazilian population - in this case, the federal administrations of the Workers' Party (PT) between 2003 and 2010.

Born into a poor family in the interior of the state of Pernambuco, but who migrated as a child to the industrial region of ABC Paulista, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva grew up and stood out within the Brazilian union movement. As one of the founders of the PT, he became one of the most prominent leaders of the civil society movement for the end of the military dictatorship (1964-1985). With redemocratization, he was a candidate for the Presidency of the Republic, having been elected in 2002, re-elected in 2006 - including defeating Geraldo Alckmin - in addition to having promoted Dilma Rousseff as his successor in 2010.

Despite being re-elected in 2014, Rousseff was impeached in 2016. In the wake of corruption scandals linked to the police operation 'Car-Wash', Lula was arrested in 2018, at the time he was already a candidate for a third presidential term. At the end of 2019, however, he had all the charges annulled by the Federal Supreme Court (STF) and was released from prison, having his political rights restored in 2021.

According to polls (INSTITUTO DATAFOLHA, 2022), Lula maintains a relatively advantageous leadership trajectory compared to other candidates and with a level of rejection below that of his main opponent, President Jair Bolsonaro - even with the possibility of being elected in the first round. These are, however, very polarized elections and already marked by an escalation of political violence, accompanied by threats to the electoral process and democratic institutions.

In the midst of debates and analyzes regarding government proposals, this paper proposes to present the views of Lula's candidacy, specifically, for Brazilian foreign

policy. To this end, commitments assumed based on the guidelines published by the “Brazil of Hope” coalition (PT, PSB, PCdoB, PV, PSOL, REDE, SOL, AVT, AGIR) (BRASIL, 2022) as well as in the 'Plan of Reconstruction and Transformation of Brazil', organized by the Perseu Abramo Foundation (FPA) - PT think tank -, in addition to public exhibitions made by the candidate and influential members of the party in the area linked to the theme (FUNDAÇÃO PERSEU ABRAMO, 2022).

Given this context, with a certain nostalgic look, Lula determines the need to recover the Brazilian condition of the global protagonist through the renewal of an ‘active and proactive foreign policy’. As defended by the ticket, this process would provide the defense of Brazil's sovereignty towards its national interests that can be achieved by its foreign (re)insertion, as well as regain its international prestige as a country that works for democracy, peace, development and self-determination.

In a practical way, the return of an active and proactive foreign policy would reorient Brazil towards regional integration with South America, Latin America and the Caribbean, with a view to inducing development in the region; South-South cooperation with the Latin American and African continents; the strengthening of the Southern Common Market (Mercosur), Union of South American Nations (Unasur), Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (Celac) and BRICS (comprised of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa); and greater Brazilian participation in multilateral organizations. Therefore, this foreign policy proposal is based on the strengthening of Brazilian multilateralism in line with the free, pragmatic and non-submissive establishment of Brazil with different nations and organizations. Furthermore, Lula's commitment to participate in the formation of a global order based on multilateralism, environmental sustainability, peace, social inclusion and respect for the sovereignty of countries stands out.

Latin America features prominently in the PT's international policy agenda, and South and Latin American integration is considered a priority for Brazil's relations with its neighboring countries, defended as a mechanism to promote regional security and the development of regional production chains - based on "potential productive complementarities" and physical integration, via infrastructure -, started on the strengthening of development instruments such as the Fund for Structural Convergence of Mercosur (Focem) and the Bank of the South, and organizations in South America to

the Caribbean, such as Mercosur, Unasur and Celac - the Forum for the Progress and Integration of South America (Prosur), started in 2019 and proposed as a “non-ideological” regional replacement for Unasur, was not mentioned by the party.

There is great concern about recovering Brazilian international prestige and national sovereignty considered lost since the party left power, although such recovery is not explicit in more specific proposals in the government plan. Nevertheless, it could be highlighted, quite recently, public statements by the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lula government and international policy consultant to the PT, Celso Amorim, in defense of Bolivia's full membership of Mercosur as part of the strengthening of the bloc and its international projection; to make adjustments to the agreement already approved with the European Union (EU); questions about the reduction of the common external tariff, in addition to the possibility of Brazil joining the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (WALTENBERG, 2022). Furthermore, the defense of the importance of formulating a regional integration that will work with different speeds and specific responsibilities for each regional organization is observed, if Latin America wants to be heard at the international level (CELAC, 2022).

It is worth mentioning a certain personalist and identity character, based on the personal figure of the former president and current presidential candidate, as a resource of great impact in relations with Latin America. Lula, after the death of Venezuelan Hugo Chávez and Argentine Néstor Kirchner, is considered the great living reference of the period of the so-called “pink wave”, in which so-called progressive or left-wing parties and leaders were interested in Latin American integration during the 2000s, being treated with deference and admiration by politicians on the continent, despite the political change in Brazil.

As new progressive governments rise in Latin America in recent years – Mexico, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Honduras, Colombia, respectively, to the point of considering a “new pink wave” underway in the region – more audiences and expectations about Lula's candidacy are created. Lula, on the other hand, is not exempt from communicating with his neighbors, whether by congratulating electoral victories or visiting political leaders in the region.

A great example of the relevance of Lula's figure was the visit in 2019 of the then



Peronist candidate for the Argentine presidency, Alberto Fernández, to the Brazilian former president - even though he was still in prison. After Alberto was elected, Lula, now freed, had a great public reception during his visit to Buenos Aires on his visit to the Argentine president at the end of last year.

In Lula's government plan, the commercial aspect is portrayed by factors to be reformulated. In the international market, one of the approaches is to progressively relieve the taxation of products with higher added value and embedded technology, while domestically, it is estimated to prioritize the fight against inflation, especially in the prices of food, fuel and electricity. Regarding fuels, Lula estimates that he will prevent pre-salt gains, currently affected by its dollarized parity, from being reduced by "Brazilianizing" their prices and expanding national production through new refining parks.

As far as the agricultural trade balance, the need to encourage greater added value to the sector's production was highlighted as a way of increasing its global competitiveness. Furthermore, it was emphasized that agriculture and livestock must be committed to social and environmental sustainability, while gaining space in the international market and fighting hunger.

In a meeting with businessmen at the Federation of Industries of the State of São Paulo (FIESP), on August 5, 2022, with Geraldo Alckmin as a strategic link with the business wing, Lula made pertinent statements (BIMBATI; TEIXEIRA, 2022). Among his promises, there was the guarantee of regaining the international credibility, predictability and stability of the country as an intermediary to receive new investments and expand international negotiations.

Recognizing the imposition of the climate crisis, caused by excessive consumption and production patterns, as a catastrophic future, Lula emphasizes in his government plan the need for Brazil to carry out its ecological transition. Moreover, the candidate intends to implement Brazilian commitments to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions, as provided for in the 2015 Paris Agreement, and implement an energy transition. This process would range from boosting a productive paradigm based on sustainability, the broad conservation of biodiversity and Brazilian terrestrial and maritime ecosystems, the fight against environmental crime, to the recovery and reforestation of degraded lands.

Further on the environmental agenda, in a press conference held on August 22, 2022,

Lula (PODER 360, 2022) that the possible resolution of the climate crisis will come from a joint international action in a desired new global configuration. In this sense, PT denotes the urgency of discussing unprecedented global geopolitics, with more countries participating in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and in new international institutions, which need to produce strong climate discussions and ensure that they are implemented within the domestic sphere of each State.

Likewise, without giving up national sovereignty and with a view to Latin America, the importance of promoting the conservation of the Amazon together with Amazonian countries, such as Colombia and Ecuador, was highlighted. In other words, it is clear that Lula understands not only the Brazilian responsibilities with respect to domestic biodiversity and the maintenance of the international climate, but also to condition, cooperatively, other countries for joint discussions and actions.

It was noted that, given the current situation, the government plan does not mention certain strategic issues for the international reintegration of Brazil, such as Brazilian positions with China and the United States. Thus, Lula's pronouncements on these themes were sought so that we can understand the possible paths of Brazilian foreign policy towards these countries, if elected.

Moving away from an automatic and unrewarded alignment with the United States, as defended by Bolsonaro during the Donald Trump administration, Lula, in a critical tone, indicated that, during his previous administrations, his foreign policy “never allowed the Brazil to speak slightly to the United States”(PARTIDO DOS TRABALHADORES, 2022, s.p). In this way, opposing a position of self-imposed subalternity and the current distance between Brazil and Joe Biden, the candidate demonstrates his desire to direct interactions with the United States towards the Brazilian national interest.

Similarly, as highlighted by Celso Amorim (CASADO, 2022), in a different pattern, Sino-Brazilian relations would not be based on Bolsonaro's intense ideological aversion to China, but rather on pragmatism in a possible Lula administration, without degrading the relationship of Brazil with the United States, the EU and Latin American neighbors. In this light, it is worth mentioning that Lula plans to position Brazil in different contexts involving Sino-American disputes, without, therefore, a fixed alignment devoid of strategy, with the objective of reheating the economy through new foreign

investments and reducing the industrial dependence on Asia.

Finally, in relation to the proposed foreign policy, it was deemed necessary to have clearer positions on the interaction of Lula and the PT with governments said to be leftists that are not internationally recognized as democracies - specifically Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua - and how this situation would be incompatible with the defense of democracy and human rights as a pillar of its foreign action. When asked in a recent interview in 'Jornal Nacional', Lula did not directly criticize these countries, he only pointed to self-determination as a basic premise for democracy, together with the need to dialogue with the different (JORNAL NACIONAL).

In the candidate's own words, Brazil must return to an active and proactive foreign policy, turning back to a period when the country was internationally respected and admired, as well as considering circumstances inherent to our contemporaneity. In general terms, with an appreciation for the past, Lula's project for the international (re)insertion of Brazil intends to resume what the country once achieved abroad, in addition to new contemporary challenges, such as, for example, the climate crisis, that must be overcome.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Lula was arrested in April 2018 and had his candidacy contested by the Superior Electoral Court (TSE). Fernando Haddad (PT-SP) and Manuela d'Ávila (PCdoB-RS) formed the replacement ticket for the 2018 election.

<sup>2</sup> The STF annulled the accusations against Lula on the grounds that the evidence was generated illegally by the Federal Police's 'Car-Wash' operation team, as well as the decision by the then responsible judge, Sérgio Moro, that was considered partial and suspicious.

### **Davi Antonino Guimarães**

Master's student at the Interinstitutional Graduate Program in International Relations 'San Tiago Dantas' (UNESP, UNICAMP, PUC-SP), bachelor in International Relations and Economics from Faculdades de Campinas (FACAMP), researcher at the Regionalism Observatory (ODR), at the Center for International Studies and Analysis (NEAI), the Brazilian Foreign Policy Observatory (OPEX) and the Center for Studies in International Relations (NERI), <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6740-4208>. Contact: [davi.antonino@unesp.br](mailto:davi.antonino@unesp.br).

**Maurício Luiz Borges Ramos Dias**

Master's student at the Interinstitutional Graduate Program in International Relations 'San Tiago Dantas' (UNESP, UNICAMP, PUC-SP), bachelor in International Relations from the Federal University of Pampa (UNIPAMPA), researcher at the Regionalism Observatory (ODR), Study Group of India and East Asia, the Curatorship of Japan Affairs and the Conflict Observatory, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9851-4111>. Contact: [mauriciolbrdias@gmail.com](mailto:mauriciolbrdias@gmail.com).

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