

Introduction

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This is the first edition of *IPRI Policy Briefs*, a publication conceived by the Institute for International Relations Research (IPRI) of the Alexandre de Gusmão Foundation (FUNAG). This work is the result of annual research efforts within the scope of the IPRI Contemporary Research group, linked to CNPq, and the IPRI Volunteer Researcher Program (PPV), launched in 2024.

Between November 2024 and November 2025, nine volunteer researchers joined the Program and launched this new project, which aims to develop studies and research on international relations and Brazilian foreign policy and serve as a tool for greater involvement between FUNAG with the academic community. The researchers' studies adhere to one or more lines of research established for investigations within the research group and the PPV: cooperation and international agenda issues; the crisis of multilateralism and global governance; and Brazil and the world – Brazilian foreign policy.

With *IPRI-PB*, FUNAG seeks to innovate in form and content with a product that covers evidence-based discussion on, specific recommendations to deal with those issues, and, finally, outline possible paths for the implementation of those recommendations. The format adopted by this publication is more concise and direct, as a way to provide relevant and easy to read material that can contribute to the field of international relations, in addition to conceivably decision-making and public policy formulation.

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This issue of IPRI-PB begins with a paper by Bernardo Barreto de Vasconcelos Torres, which, based on empirical analysis and emphasizing a subnational approach, analyzes the asymmetries and potentialities of the international actions of Brazilian subnational governments based on a comparison between São Paulo and Mangaratiba, highlighting the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in strengthening decentralized international cooperation. The text argues those two municipalities have expanded their international involvement in search of solutions to local challenges, even though there are latent inequalities in their institutional structures and, therefore, in their potential for success in that field. Lastly, the author advocates as a solution to these asymmetries the institutional strengthening of municipal paradiplomacy; the technical training of public officials; and the integration of local agendas into national foreign policy, in order to make municipal internationalization more inclusive, strategic, and effective.

In an approach similar to that adopted in the study previously mentioned, i.e., the influence of the international on the local, Guilherme Lara Camargo Tampieri discusses the internalization of the global climate regime based on an analysis of how municipalities in the Belo Horizonte Metropolitan Region have structured their climate policies grounded in their state capacities. He found a lack of preparation among public officials as well as low transparency and institutional weaknesses, low transparency, and institutional weaknesses, especially in small and medium-sized municipalities, which limit local climate action. Belo Horizonte stands out as a good practices beacon, with a consolidated institutional framework, plans, inventories, and continuous climate governance. The study concludes that the lack of technical capacity, coordination, and instruments compromises the municipal response to climate change, recommending institutional integration, strengthening transparency, and data-based planning.

Also focusing on the local level, Verônica Moreira dos Santos Pires argues that the achievement of gender equality, as set out in SDG 5 and in Feminist Foreign Policies, depends fundamentally on action at the municipal level, where public policies directly impact people's lives. Despite global regulatory advances, there remains a wide gap between discourse and practice, exacerbated by local obstacles such as the instrumentalization of feminism, low female political representation, the invisibility of care work, and bureaucratic resistance. The study proposes concrete recommendations to municipalities, such as strengthening women's political participation, combating gender-based political violence, valuing care work, adopting intersectionality, training

civil servants, and creating gender-sensitive budgets, with a view to making equality measurable, auditable, and effective.

Also focusing on an empirical case, Julia Silva Rensi analyzes the new phase of Chinese investments in the Brazilian soy-meat complex, currently concentrated in infrastructure and logistics, and its impacts on land governance. Although these investments increase productive integration and export capacity, they reinforce Brazil's primary dependence and expose institutional weaknesses, such as the absence of a robust national land governance framework. In light of international guidelines, the study identifies gaps in land control via mergers and acquisitions, low transparency, and weak institutional coordination. The researcher proposes, as a response, the creation of a national land governance framework, due diligence mechanisms for foreign investments, mandatory traceability standards, the adoption of international indicators, and the expansion of Brazil–China cooperation on a sustainable basis, aiming to avoid conflicts and promote responsible development.

Felipe de Castro Faustino also addresses an interdependent issue between the national and international levels, analyzing how Brazil has become a route for irregular immigration and highlighting the role of international cooperation, especially between Brazilian agencies and Interpol, in combating migrant smuggling. The researcher argues that “coyotes” advise migrants to apply for asylum in order to remain temporarily in the country and then continue on to North America, exploiting legal loopholes and humanitarian policies adopted since the 2000s. The study argues that interagency cooperation is one of the most effective means of addressing this practice, recommending the strengthening of border control, the use of new technologies, the expansion of data sharing, and the updating of migration rules. It also proposes information campaigns to discourage irregular migration.

Also addressing the topic of international cooperation, Franciele Boeira Cataneo and Samira Kauchakje analyze the BRICS Action Plans for energy cooperation (2020–2025 and 2025–2030), highlighting advances, continuities, and challenges. The expansion of the bloc to ten members reinforces its global relevance, representing about 36% of world GDP and more than 40% of oil production. The Plans prioritize energy efficiency, renewable energy, hydrogen, digital technologies, and financing, but have limitations in terms of transparency and access to data, hindering monitoring and external participation. The researchers recommend creating permanent and open repositories, expanding institutional incentives, and developing pilot projects to demonstrate results. These measures could consolidate BRICS as a strategic

player in global energy governance and strengthen cooperation within and outside the bloc.

Moving on to an analysis based on the different concepts of Brazil, Daniel Afonso da Silva, in an ontological and conceptual discussion, argues that the concept of the Global South, which emerged as an alternative to the “third world,” has become an “intellectual and political deception,” as it lacks unity and coherence among its members. The author recommends abandoning simplified labels such as BRICS and the Global South and returning to the notion of a “Global Brazil,” which would be more appropriate to contemporary complexity and national interests, avoiding “illusions of southern solidarity that are not sustainable in practice.”

Giovanna Laís Duarte Viana closes this edition of *IPRI-PB* with an analysis of Brazil’s efforts to reform the UN Security Council and obtain a permanent seat on that body. The researcher considers the current structure of the UNSC, created in 1945, obsolete, since it concentrates power in the hands of the five permanent members and limits the representation of the Global South. Brazil advocates for a reform that would make the body more democratic and effective in the face of contemporary challenges and the recurrent use of the veto, which paralyzes decisions. The researcher recommends intensifying regional dialogue, revitalizing the G4, strengthening alliances with countries in the Global South, and keeping the issue of the UNSC reform on the agenda of multilateral forums such as BRICS and the G20. The creation of a Working Group at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Itamaraty) regarding this subject is proposed in order to coordinate.