

SOUTH ATLANTIC SECURITY COMMUNITY: A REGIONAL SECURITY SUBCOMPLEX?

Wellington Dantas de Amorim¹

Vitor Deccache Chiozzo²

ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the link between Brazilian defense and foreign policy, based on its National Defense Strategy (NDS), alongside the other Southern Atlantic Basin countries, in order to build and strengthen a security community in the South Atlantic Ocean and in the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone (SAPCZ), between the years 2008 and 2014. This process is influenced by the creation of a South Atlantic regional identity founded on cooperation and mutual trust between the SAPCZ countries, with a converging strategy of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defense and the Brazilian Navy, aiming the national goals in the South Atlantic. To achieve them, Brazilian foreign policy has shown an active willingness to cooperate with other countries in the SAPCZ, especially as to preventing neo traditional threats and existing natural and energy resources in southern Atlantic marine space. The study applies Buzan and Wæver's Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) and points that such South Atlantic security community could be characterized as a Regional Security Subcomplex.

Keywords: Foreign Policy. Security community. South Atlantic. SAPCZ. Brazil. Regional Security Complex.

¹ PhD in Political Science from Fluminense Federal University and Master's degree in International Relations from University of Brasília. E-mail: wda3059@gmail.com

² Master's student of the Graduate Program in Maritime Studies (PPGEM-EGN). E-mail: vitorchiozzo@outlook.com

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to investigate the “intelligent” coordination between defense and foreign policy conducted by the Brazilian State and based on the National Defense Strategy (NDS), alongside the other Southern Atlantic Basin countries, to build and strengthen a security community in the South Atlantic Ocean and in the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone (SAPCZ).

The constitutive process of a security community in the South Atlantic, able to harmonize the region’s maritime security agendas, depends on the creation of a regional South-Atlantic identity, by Brazil, and on the regional dynamics of existing maritime security in the South of the Atlantic Ocean. This South-Atlantic identity would be centered on cooperation, consolidated in SAPCZ, and would have for purpose the establishment of mutual trust between the countries bordering the South Atlantic Ocean, based on the shared understanding of the challenges faced by Brazil, whether in its developing country dimension or in security issues (for example, because of neo traditional cross-border threats, namely, terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal transport of people and/or material, and piracy (SILVA, 2014, p. 201), as well as the guarantee of sovereignty over its marine natural and energy resources), are also faced by the Atlantic African countries members of the SAPCZ, which will lead to a community of cooperative security in the South Atlantic (PENHA, 2012, p. 131).

The foundation is the general hypothesis that Brazil is able to contribute to the construction of a security community in the South Atlantic. It is considered the causality relationship between two important intervening variables. First, (q) the formation of a regional South Atlantic identity between the countries-members of the SAPCZ; and second (r) the interdependence of security issues and threats, coupled with the securitization processes, with the discursive construction of a threat being able to modify the Brazilian perspective on the topic under analysis (WILLIAMS, 2008, p. 69).

Despite the intensification, in this beginning of the 21st century, of the neo traditional threats by non-State actors, which contribute further to the complexity of maritime security (SILVA, 2014, p. 201), it is indisputable that the national defense policies still prioritize the inter-State relations as is the case of Brazil (AMORIM, 2012). Neotraditional threats “can only be resolved through a combination of national, regional and international efforts, which should include both the exchange of information and cooperation” (FLEMES,

2005, p. 228). In relation to the South Atlantic, these inter-State cooperative efforts, within a Peace and Cooperation Zone, and represented by a South-Atlantic identity, oppose these threats, working as catalysts in the process of forming a security community, as according to Flemes (2005, p. 228), “the existence of an external threat to the potential security community operates as a unifying bond to stimulate the peaceful regulation of conflicts.”

With regard to theoretical aspects of this work, we opted for the approach of Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver (2003), with the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT), combining realistic, liberal, and constructivist aspects (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 40); in theory it comprises elements of three theories mentioned, suitable for the analysis of the process of building a security community that involves elements of power, its sharing, in addition to the issue of identity formation. The RSCT is also compatible for an analysis that meets the purposes of this study, namely, the possibility of building and strengthening a security community in the South Atlantic and surroundings. Furthermore, the RSCT is a theory that provides some predictive powers (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 4), and can be applied to a case study, because that is the purpose of this article: achieving the best result of analysis through the application of the RSCT model to reality of South-Atlantic maritime safety dynamics. After all, Levy (2002, p. 135) stresses the value of studies that generate or test theories, and states that best results are obtained when the case studies are analyzed through a more systematized theoretical framework.

It is necessary, preliminarily, as well, presenting the concepts of security and defense, as both will permeate this approach. The following definitions from the National Defense Policy (NDP) will be used:

I – Security is the condition that allows the Country to preserve its sovereignty and territorial integrity, promote its national interests, free of pressures and threats, and ensure citizens the exercise of their constitutional rights and responsibilities;

II – National Defense is the set of State measures and initiatives, with emphasis on the military field, for the defense of territory, sovereignty and national interests against mainly external threats, either potential or manifest. (BRASIL, 2012b, p.2)

Another preliminary caveat is the delimitation of the possible international activity pattern that could characterize the Brazilian foreign policy. One of the possibilities of characterization would be the concept of medium power, based on the understanding of Marques (2005, p. 44). Brazil would be recognized as such in its international activities due to persistence factors, which are incorporated to the international culture of the country, and are the foundation of its international image.

Thus, “the construction of Brazil’s international image as a medium power in the international system has been a constant in the foreign policy of the country”. (LAFER, 2001, apud MARQUES, 2005, p. 56). The Federal Constitution (1988) also establishes a series of principles governing Brazil in its international relations, including the cooperation between peoples for the progress of mankind (PINTO, 2015, p. 153).

Through this international image of medium power, the Brazilian interests of power would be perceived as peaceful cooperation and integration initiatives beyond our immediate surroundings in the Southern Cone, where “we aim to outlaw war as a form of resolving disputes between the South American States, creating a true security community in our region” (AMORIM, 2011, p. 271-273). This community would extend progressively to Africa, thus ensuring that the South Atlantic is a trade route that is safe and free of piracy and organized crime (AMORIM, 2012b, p. 4). The defense of Brazil’s national interests and its ability to shape the SAPCZ, to meet its geopolitical project of creating a security community, is aided “by the renewal of Brazil’s image as a builder of consensus and as interlocutor, mainly between the North and the South” (HURRELL, 1998, p. 257).

Brazilian initiatives are perceived not only because of its international image, but also because this cooperative *modus vivendi* is the shared identity in the South Atlantic, as, according to Ulusoy (2003, p. 5) identity is a key element in building regions. In this space, building its identity would have two contexts, an external and an internal one. Externally, the relations between States on the international setting, that is, their power relations and the regional securitization and, internally, the patterns of friendship and enmity, within the cooperation and conflict dyad, existing between the Member States of the SAPCZ. Thus, in the process of regionalization of the South Atlantic, there is, associated with the region construction process, the Brazilian effort to develop a community identity among the South Atlantic countries, as, “far from being ‘naturally’

outlined by geographical barriers or cultural characteristics, regions are political imaginaries, built over time by actors motivated by specific interests” (ABDENUR; SOUZA NETO, 2014a, p. 6). The strength of this feeling of belonging to the South Atlantic, the South-Atlantic identity, would be able to intensify the values shared between its surrounding States, of promotion and maintenance of peace among themselves, and of the solution of the issues of maritime security and defense through intracommunal cooperation:

The security of a country is affected by the degree of stability in the region where it is located. Thus, it is desirable that there is consensus, political harmony, and convergence of initiatives between neighboring countries to reduce transnational crimes and achieve better conditions for economic and social development, making the region more cohesive and stronger. (BRASIL, 2012b, p. 4)

Brazil's effort to constitute a common South Atlantic identity would be centered, therefore, in the “defense of the territory and resources of national interest,” in addition to the securitization of “some new transnational issues (...)” (ABDENUR; SOUZA NETO, 2014a, p.9). Such efforts to constitute a common identity can be found, for example, in the household sphere, in the “Blue Amazon,” as well as in the international sphere, in the diversification of bilateral ties with the countries of the West coast of Africa and in the restrengthening of the importance of the SAPCZ. Having for purpose the establishment of mutual trust, necessary for the projection of Brazilian power legitimately and consensually in this maritime space (ABDENUR; SOUZA NETO, 2014a, p.216).

A security community formed in the South Atlantic, where Brazil's regional leadership (FLEMES, 2005, p. 222) and its primacy are recognized internationally, would necessarily involve – in addition to the socialization of its international image with the other actors of the SAPCZ and to a common South-Atlantic identity – the political and spatial delimitation of the region, based on discourses and practices of the actors involved in this process; the acts and statements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE), the Ministry of Defense (MD) and the Navy of Brazil (MB), in this respect, would strengthen the aforementioned strategy.

Therefore, the Brazilian national interest in the South Atlantic, with the constitution of a security community, would be expressed through its foreign policy, guided by an intelligent strategy, based on its international image, and aiming at national objectives of defense, security and economic development. This convergent, continuous and persistent strategy in the South Atlantic stems from the National Defense Strategy (NDS) (2008, 2012). This falls in a defense policy, the National Defense Policy (2005, as Policy of National Defense, and 2012, as National Policy of Defense).

It is also essential to recover, through the constructivist theoretical view of the RSCT, how the internal context of regional identity is operated and configured. Buzan and Wæver (2003) argue that the formation and operation of the relationships between the units of a security community would depend, above all, on the patterns of friendship and enmity, built between these units. Consequently, the interpretations and perceptions of the initiatives and of the images of the States would have considerable weight in the relations of power, which would not be just a mere reflection of the distribution of power (*ibid*, p. 40). These patterns of friendship and enmity, socially constructed according to common norms, rules, values, cultures and identities shared among the actors, will reflect on policies of cooperation or coercion between them. The pattern of friendship and enmity will be the ideational foundation on which Regional Security Complexes (RSC) are constituted, whereas the distribution of power will be the real component of the inter-State relations in a RSC.

Currently, the international system does not undergo a situation of general and unrestricted war (BRASIL, 2012b, p. 2). Thus, the pattern of friendship and cooperation between Brazil and other countries of the SAPCZ is possible, particularly concerning sensitive issues such as defense (SILVA, 2014, p. 208). However, we cannot disregard the probability that, in the near future, Brazil faces challenges and threats of the most varying degrees of intensity, given its position of high geostrategic importance, related to its abundance of natural, mineral, and energy resources, in the surface of its territory, of continental dimensions, but especially to those resources that are located in its Territorial Sea (MT) and EEZ.

THE SOUTH-ATLANTIC PEACE AND COOPERATION ZONE (SAPCZ)

In October 1986, a Brazilian initiative presented to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proposed the creation – in conjunction with the other States of South America and Africa bordering the South Atlantic Ocean – of an organization founded on cooperation and peace between its members (CERVO, 2002, p. 343). Its existence would address the need to preserve the region from measures of militarization, the arms race, the presence of foreign military bases and, above all, nuclear weapons, in addition to deter the presence of extra-regional powers in the South Atlantic. As purpose underlying the SAPCZ, we can also mention the formation of a South-Atlantic security community. Resolution No. 41/11 of the UNGA creates, then, the SAPCZ. The United States was the only country to vote against the initiative at the UN, and several Western European countries and Japan decided to abstain.

(ABDENUR; SOUZA NETO, 2014a, p. 229).

It should be noted that, of the nine Member States of the Community of Portuguese Language Speaking Countries (CPLP), six are also part of the SAPCZ. The presence of Portuguese speaking nations in the SAPCZ contributes greatly to the Brazilian leadership in the process of creating a South-Atlantic identity, and to strengthen this community, as the relationship with these countries is one of the priorities of Brazil's foreign affairs (BRASIL, 2012b, p. 6).

However, the absence of a minimum organizational structure weakened the initiative of the countries of the Zone, apparently causing the end of the cooperation project. The SAPCZ would remain dormant for almost ten years, after the Ministerial Meetings of Rio de Janeiro (1988); Abuja, Nigeria (1990); Brasília (1994); Somerset West, South Africa (1996), and Buenos Aires, Argentina (1998), when the advance of piracy in the western coast of Africa revitalized the Zone, leading to the 6th Meeting in Luanda, Angola, in 2007.

The process of revitalizing the organization continued during the 7th Meeting, held in Montevideo, Uruguay, on January 15, 2013, which approved a comprehensive declaration on various topics, the Declaration of Montevideo, in addition to the Plan of Action of Montevideo. The SAPCZ, although struggling in its development – since “it is not easy to gather 21 (...) African countries and three (...) South American countries. It is a complex task, schedules do not match, the dates are difficult”

(AMORIM, 2013, p. 2) –, has contributed to regional stability and to a South Atlantic committed to promote peace, security, cooperation, democracy, respect for human rights, sustainable development, economic prosperity, socioeconomic inclusion, and cultural integration and solidarity among its Member States (ZOPACAS, 2013). The complexities of regional integration through the SAPCZ are also presented by Antonio Ruy de Almeida Silva, not without first emphasizing that the South-Atlantic identity has the same dynamics of the South-American identity:

The process of regional integration, started before the end of the Cold War, is complex. On the one hand, there are attempts at broader associations, whether in a hemispheric vision or in creating an Atlantic identity. On the other hand, Brazil tries to create a South-American identity, based on the core of the Mercosur, and a South-Atlantic identity, based on the SAPCZ. The construction of a South-Atlantic identity falls in the same dynamics of the construction of a South-American identity. However, this dynamic is more complex. First, because the South Atlantic is shared with dozens of nations of the African continent. Second, because of the presence of possessions of extra-regional countries (...) (SILVA, 2014, p. 209).

Thus, due to having the same dynamics of construction of identities, the success of SAPCZ is intrinsically related to the construction of a community of maritime security in the South Atlantic, just as Mercosur represents for the construction of a community of security in the Southern Cone (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003), as it is a forum established at the regional level capable of generating more stability, development and integration among the countries of the region, through a South-Atlantic identity and intraregional cooperation as to solutions to various neo traditional threats to this maritime space. Thus, “in deepening our relations in SAPCZ, we will prevent that the South Atlantic is seen as a power vacuum and, therefore, attracts external forces to our regions.” (AMORIM, 2013, p. 1).

Therefore, the SAPCZ, in addition to its purpose of integration between its members, secondarily seeks to reduce the influence of extraregional powers in the South Atlantic. However, it should be

emphasized that some factors have hindered the full accomplishment of the SAPCZ goals, especially those relating to the economic downturn that hit Brazil from 2014, with consequent budget constraints. In fact, the 8th Interministerial Meeting, to be held in Cape Verde, in 2015, has been postponed sine die, and (at least at the time this work is being written) there is no definition as to its conduct or a meeting in another country. Such aspect highlights how much the SAPCZ (Brazilian-inspired, as mentioned earlier) has in Brazil the main stimulating actor, which is also reflected in the contributions to the financial viability of the Ministerial Meetings. In the case of the 8th Interministerial Meeting, the diplomatic correspondence between the Secretary of State of International Relations and the Brazilian Embassy in Cape Verde makes clear the weight of budget constraints (BRASIL, 2015).

Still regarding the extraregional powers, according to the RSCT the global level (superpower and major powers) will always be present. In the case of SAPCZ, two actors stand out: Britain and France. The first has a distinct South-Atlantic position, as it dominates a number of overseas territories, and the dispute with Argentina in relation to the Falklands is still the main focus of tension involving an extraregional country, due to the use of fishery resources and the possibility of oil exploration in the region (RICHARDSON et al., 2012, p. 50; SILVA, 2014, p. 203; TILL, 2007, p. 158). While France has the overseas department of Guyana, location of the Centre Spatial Guyanais – (CNES), in Kourou, which makes launches for France and the European Space Agency, which, in geostrategic terms, has implications both in South America as well as in the South Atlantic.

The maintenance of these territories and overseas departments would be justifiable for both countries, especially in terms of expansion of territory and access to natural and energy resources of the South Atlantic (FRANÇA, 2015, p. 35; UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, 2010, p. 28; SILVA, 2014, p. 203). According to Amorim (2014, p. 204) “United Kingdom, (...), France (...), in conjunction with the EEZ and the Continental Shelf, assume a new dimension in relation to their peers; the land territories are multiplied by 32 and 20 times, respectively.

Given the marked presence of British territories in the South Atlantic, it is necessary to develop further the issue. Till (2007, p. 158) affirms that the United Kingdom does not consider the South Atlantic as a high-priority strategic area. However, the issue of the Falkland Islands, the

maintenance of the free flow of international trade (in addition to access to the Falklands and the British bases in Antarctica) are important elements (ibidem, p. 159; RICHARDSON et al., 2012, p. 43).

Thus, in case Brazil (as greater economic and military power in the region) is able to strengthen the construction of the South-Atlantic identity and ensures the security of flows, its hegemonic position would be seen favorably by the other members of the SAPCZ, also as a deterrent to extraregional interference. In this context, it is essential the growth of programs for research and occupation of the Atlantic archipelagos (ABDENUR; SOUZA NETO, 2014, p. 224), the islands of Fernando de Noronha (26 km²), Trindade and Martim Vaz (10.4 km²) which are, according to Penha (2012, p. 118) “trampolines for operations in the central and southern segments of the Atlantic and provide security to the cabotage traffic and lines of maritime communication where 90% of the Brazilian foreign trade circulate.”

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC TO BRAZIL

The South-Atlantic security community would be based on the arrangement of the SAPCZ, which “is the only framework that brings together all the countries of the South Atlantic basin” (WIEMER, 2013, p. 199). Through the publications of the NDP and the NDS, “the Brazilian government has intensified its efforts of cooperation – including in defense – with the countries on the perimeter of the South Atlantic.” Therefore, we currently witness a resurgence of the geopolitical importance of the South Atlantic for Brazil, and “both for the actors in the region and for those of outside,” the country “uses cooperation to promote the construction of a regional identity that begins to change the relations of power in this space” (ABDENUR; SOUZA NETO, 2014b, p. 5).

Accordingly, Brazil seeks – in addition to creating a regional identity in the South Atlantic, where it presents itself with the self-perception by its policy makers as regional leadership (GAMBA-STONEHOUSE, 1989, p. 78) and where it evokes this role in matters pertaining to security of navigation and to defense – to strengthen the relations with the African countries of Atlantic coast (LOPES, 2014, p. 387). Brazil aims to “ensure itself a prominent position” (ABDENUR; SOUZA NETO, 2014b, p. 6) and this is the target region of its projection of power (THOMPSON; MUGGAH, 2015). The South Atlantic is the main locus of

strategic initiative and projection of the Brazilian National Power in the Oceans.

The NDP defines the insertion of Brazil in the South American regional environment, stating that the country, seeking to deepen the cooperation bonds, understands that its strategic environment “goes beyond the South American region and includes the South Atlantic and the bordering countries of Africa (...)”. (BRASIL, 2012b, p. 4). This expansion of the South American region’s strategic environment, with the inclusion of the South Atlantic will be a key element, in this article, for the construction of a security community in this Ocean.

The defense of national interests, in each maritime area of the globe, in the understanding of the Brazilian Navy, would involve the analysis “(of) the geostrategic, political and economic aspects, situations with potential for confrontation, the Brazilian interests, the lines of maritime communication and focal areas and areas of specific security interest” (LOPES, 2014, p. 393). Undoubtedly, because it is the strategic environment of Brazil, monitoring the South Atlantic space receives priority attention from the Naval Staff (EMA).

In addition to the above-mentioned issues, we emphasize the increase in cases of piracy, neotraditional threat, in the Gulf of Guinea, one of the focal maritime areas of the South Atlantic (KAMAL-DEEN, 2015, p. 93). Additionally, we mention as focal areas of the South Atlantic the maritime area south of the Cape of Good Hope; the estuary of the Río de la Plata; off the Nigerian coast; off the coast of Cape Verde; off the coast of Cabo Frio and off the Fernando de Noronha archipelago, the latter adjoining the Brazilian territory. (MONTEIRO, 2006, apud LOPES, 2014, p. 369).

Concerning material resources of national interest, and energy security may be included in this scope, the South Atlantic is of vital importance as an object of study. According to Escorrega (2010), apud Lopes (2014, p. 389) “the strategic importance of the Gulf of Guinea as to production and exploitation of hydrocarbons is known, and because of that the competition for influence in the region is fierce.” The strategic importance in hydrocarbons off the coast of Brazil, as in the Gulf of Guinea, is no different. The major reserves of gas and oil, about 90% of the Brazilian exploration, are located on the continental shelf, exploration which is the activity at sea that most attracts attention at the moment (VIDIGAL, 2006, p. 133; BEIRÃO; PEREIRA, 2014).

REGIONAL SECURITY COMPLEXES

Regional security complexes constitute a theoretical approach developed in the so-called Copenhagen school, by Buzan and Wæver (1991), and detailed in their book *Regions and Powers: the structure of International Security* (2003), and which seeks to understand the issues of international security through “the prominence of the regional security pattern in international politics (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 11). “

The regionalist approach is clarifying, since the region is “a crucial spatial selection for the understanding of the threats, and the concept of Regional Security Complexes (RSC) is a fundamental interpretative key” (NOBRE, 2013, p. 53). The concept of region is defined by Buzan and Wæver as “the level where States or other units are close and sufficiently interlinked, such that their security cannot be considered independently.

The region would have great importance in international security, since the increased possibility for the construction of security policies would occur on a regional scale due to the fact that:

When it comes to establishing rules common to different countries in terms of security, the most likely is that it happens between small groups of States at regional level and not on a global scale, in which the unanimous or consensual acceptance of rules of security policies is more difficult (...) neighboring States have a broad spectrum of common historical experiences and a similar cultural context, which promotes the mutual understanding and the peaceful coordination of national interests, (FLEMES, 2005, p. 217).

However, not only the region would have great weight in matters of security, but also “the way the political actors perceive and interpret the idea is central region: all regions are socially constructed” (HURRELL, 1995, p. 25). Abdenur and Neto (2014, p. 7), based on Anderson (1983), argue that similarly to the State, the region can be thought as imagined community, with spatial dimensions. The authors continue:

Labeling and reification of the region bring concrete consequences, since the very construction process affects the distribution of power. For example, by assuming a leadership role, certain States become, effectively, the main region-builders – influencing patterns of friendship and rivalry between the States that come to constitute the region (ABDENUR; NETO, 2014b, p. 7).

Brazil, especially from the second half of the 1990s, adopted more assertive and activist positions in regional issues, using regionalism as a strategy in issues of nuclear proliferation and international security, constituting a builder of the South-American region (SPEKTOR, 2010, p. 27).

Regarding RSCs, “the regional level is where the extremes of national and global security interact, and where most actions occur” (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 43). As “in many cases, the military concerns of a group of States are so interdependent that a country’s security can only be understood if that of its neighbors is taken into consideration” (MEDEIROS FILHO, 2014, p. 24), it is necessary to understand the intermediary level of analysis between the national and the global. Thus, the issue of regional security complexes arises. As above, security issues are more intrinsically associated to their region, despite the continued interference of the polarity of the international system. That is, the global level (CEPIK, 2005).

The RSCT would provide a complete view, in terms both of a general theory of regional security – with explicit links with the main Theories of International Relations – and of an application of it in all areas of the world. (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. xvi). It would also be an approximation between the offensive realism and the constructivism, since it incorporates the distribution of power between units, and the socially constructed patterns of friendship and enmity, respectively, treating them as essentially independent variables (FUCCILLE; REZENDE, 2013, p. 80).

According to the authors, securitization works as a discursive process, in which an intersubjective understanding is formed within a community, that something is an existential threat to a value, for example,

a territory, sovereignty, principles, of a particular object of reference (States, communities, individuals) (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 491). A RSC, in the words of Buzan and Wæver, is defined as:

a set of units whose main processes of securitization, de-securitization, or both are so intertwined that their security issues cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved independently of the others (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 44).

In relation to the distribution of power, RSCs may be of two types: standard or centered. The first is basically defined by a political-military security agenda and with the presence of regional power(s), and may be unipolar or multipolar. Even when a standard RSC is considered unipolar, still the “security dynamics is not determined by the unipolar power in its center.” (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 474).

While centered RSCs have three forms: (1) unipolar, having as the pole a superpower (for example, the RSC of North America, with the pole being the United States); (2) unipolar, with the pole being a major power (the Commonwealth of independent States, CIS, formed after the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), whose pole is Russia); (3) centered, but integrated by institutions, and not by a regional power (European Union). Theorists suggest, however, a fourth option, (4), still nonexistent, that is, a unipolar centered RSC through a strictly regional power (*ibid.*, p. 474).

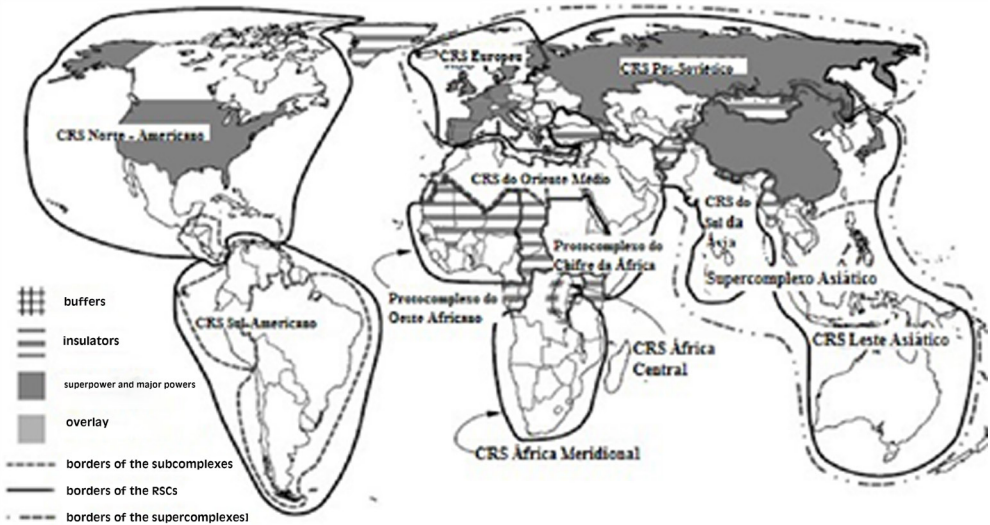
According to the authors, the essential structure of a RSC, whose security community is one of the possible cases, incorporates four variables: (1) Border, what differentiates the RSC from its neighbors, considering the mutually exclusive belonging of each country to one or to another complex (*ibid.*, p. 48, emphasis added); (2) Anarchic structure, which means that the RSC must consist of two or more autonomous units; (3) Polarity, which covers the distribution of power between the units; and (4) Social construction, which comprises the patterns of friendship and enmity between the units (*ibid.*, p. 53, emphasis added). In addition to these variables, it must be taken into consideration, for the scenario of the RSC, the regional power relations with extraregional actors, especially the great powers and the superpower (CEPIK, 2005, p. 4).

As to the structural evolution, the RSC can undergo an external transformation, which means that the outer limit of its border expands or contracts, changing the composition of the RSC, and probably transforming its essential structure, by merging or dividing two RSCs.

(BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 53).

Still in the context of the RSCs, these may have subcomplexes, which essentially are the same as a RSC, with the difference that a subcomplex is inside a large RSC (ibid, p. 492). In addition, there is the possibility of formation of supercomplexes, defined by a set of RSC, in which the presence of one or more than one great power generates relatively high and consistent levels of inter-regional security dynamics. (ibidem, p. 492). Finally, the authors consider the existence of eleven RSCs, which can be seen in the figure below:

Figure 1: Regional Security Complexes



Source: Prepared by the authors based on BUZAN & WÆVER, 2003, p. xxvi

THE SOUTH-AMERICAN REGIONAL COMPLEX

According to Buzan and Wæver, “South America has traditionally been a RSC, not overlaid, although penetrated, and not unstructured (although, in comparison with all other regions, except Africa, it is that in which the relationship between interaction capacity and distance/geography has had the most limited impact)” (ibid., p. 337).

The process of regional stabilization conducted by strong States in Latin America (ibid., p. 476), particularly in the Southern Cone of South America, whose RSC in its Atlantic portion has Brazil as its core, would provide the creation of a security community in the continental portion,

and also in the South-Atlantic portion.

In addition, the RSC in South America would progress to be a unipolar RSC centered on a regional power, Brazil, the fourth type which the authors found no case at the time. It should be noted that, in 2003, the authors had already left this possibility open, both in their RSCT and in the Southern Cone: “a RSC in the form of a security community has the possibility to build itself into a centered RSC” (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 66) and:

The Southern Cone is taken locally for following a robust, irreversible path to integration. (...) With (...) all border issues resolved, the sub-region, in addition to being a security regime, approaches a security community. **It is in the gray area between the two types of RSC, normal and centered.** (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 340, emphasis added).

Fuccille and Rezende (2013, p. 85, emphasis added) also point in this direction:

The role exercised by the country (Brazil) (...) qualifies it as central actor for the RSC, exercising its regional hegemony through institutionalization and aggregation for a regional integration process. In conjunction, these two factors contribute to enable tracing a change in the RSC in South America, but not toward a division of the region into two distinct subcomplexes, as Buzan and Wæver affirmed (2003), **but toward a centered RSC, with Brazil in the unipolar role. This would qualify the RSC in South America into the only category that these authors present, but do not identify any case: a centered RSC in which the pole is not a great global power.** However, albeit centered, it is an unstable RSC, due precisely to the faltering performance of Brazil as center.

In the case of the South Atlantic, the security community would be based mainly on securitization of external threat, and from this would result the need for regional stabilization (BRASIL, 2012b, p. 7). The common threat to be securitized would be that to marine natural and energy resources available in the South Atlantic, and its derivation resulting from regional stabilization, the SAPCZ.

Therefore, “a security community is possible, although unusual, to form a RSC in the Southern Cone” (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 57) and, one might add, in its expansion to the South Atlantic. To achieve a security community, the authors claim, would require a strong shared vision of the status quo, combined with a shared culture and/or well-developed institutions. (ibid, p. 173).

SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL SECURITY SUBCOMPLEX

The revival of SAPCZ, especially from the meetings in Luanda (2007), and in Montevideo (2013), with their respective plans of action, would cause the strengthening of the history of this arrangement as a Regional Security Subcomplex, in its security community mode, of the South America RSC, expanding its borders from its strategic environment to the Atlantic Ocean, reaching the countries of Africa’s West Coast.

However, this expansion of the border limits of the RSC would not be a phenomenon only in the Western Ocean. On the African continent, such expansion of limits also occurs. Its most well-formed RSC, Southern Africa, unipolar pattern and, therefore, weaker in the South Atlantic, in relation to the unipolar centered South American RSC proposed in this article, since the latter dominates the regional maritime security dynamics of this ocean, “has been expanded dramatically to unstructured area of Central Africa, leading to the appearance of a Central Africa RSC” (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 478).

However, it should be verified why the SAPCZ could not be included in the other classifications proposed by Buzan and Wæver (2003, p. 489-492), namely, a supercomplex, minicomplex, protocomplex, pre-complex, security complex, insulator and buffer.

The first possibility of the South Atlantic being a supercomplex formed by the RSCs of South America and South Africa is not plausible, since there is no major power in both the RSCs, nor high levels of regional security dynamics, i.e., of all dimensions of security, since the joint naval exercises carried out in this area are meant to strengthen the bonds of friendship

and increase interoperability between the countries members of the RSC, possessing thus a high cooperative level, but just on maritime security. In addition to that, these trainings have not configured the patrolling of jurisdictional waters of other countries, which could be interpreted as a high level, at least, of the dynamics of maritime security. Even if that happened, the first condition would not be achieved.

The second hypothesis, of being a minicomplex, is not valid, because the SAPCZ is not small in scale, being composed of 24 countries, and no sub-State actor (an autonomous regional government, for example) is part of its composition.

The third and fourth hypotheses, of being a protocomplex or a pre-complex also would not be suitable, because although there is a sufficient demonstration of interdependence in maritime security to delineate the region and differentiate it from its neighbors, the SAPCZ, the diverse initiatives and dynamics of regional security in the South Atlantic are not weak, but complex. Neither is it a pre-complex because the SAPCZ is based on multilateralism (ZOPACAS, 2013a) and the joint naval exercises conducted, aimed at combating the common neotraditional threats, are evidence that the countries already have inter-dependence in matters of maritime security.

The South-Atlantic region is marked by the characteristic trait of cooperation (NASSER; MORAES, 2014, p. 7) and by threats, although potential, to the natural and energy resources by extra regional actors, and to the common security of the bordering countries, the neotraditional threats. Such region perhaps could, a priori, be characterized as a RSC. However, in the work *Regions and Powers*, Buzan and Wæver present only two RSCs and a Regional Security Protocomplex in the region of the South Atlantic, the South American, that of the South Africa, and that of West Africa, respectively.

As the main processes of securitization and desecuritization (or both) of the countries bordering the South Atlantic are not yet so interconnected, that is, it is possible to analyze and solve independently at least most of the security problems involving them, neither we could characterize the region of the SAPCZ as a RSC. There would be evidence only of interdependence and cooperation in maritime securitization processes and “in the mapping of the continental shelves and marine resources adjacent to the coasts of these countries” (AMORIM, 2013, p. 2). In addition to this, in case the SAPCZ region were a RSC, we would have the belonging of countries to more than one RSC, which goes against the premise of the theoretical model of mutually exclusive belonging of each country to a RSC. In addition, if the region were a RSC

“the security dynamics of the region would be centralized in a single actor” (FUCCILLE; REZENDE, 2013, p. 93). However, that does not occur.

Still, the SAPCZ region also could not be an insulator, since it is not a State, and we argue it is not a minicomplex, despite being between two RSC with their own dynamics, but that even though do not keep from expanding its borders of maritime securitization, due to having a “single forum” where this expansion finds resonance (AMORIM, 2013, p. 2). And neither a buffer, since the SAPCZ is also not a State or minicomplex, and is not within a security complex, nor separates rival powers.

Given the current regional South Atlantic geopolitical configuration, that is, the highest level of Brazilian military and naval structure in relation to the other member States of the SAPCZ, combined with Brazil’s regional hegemony in the Atlantic portion of its RSC, and its stabilizing role in this surroundings (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 313) (FUCCILLE; REZENDE, 2013, p. 83), we can infer that there could occur the expansion of the emerging Southern Cone security community centered in the Mercosur (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 57, 335) also to the South Atlantic. Such process would occur in conjunction with the Brazilian expansion towards the South American hinterland (*ibid.*, p. 315) and with two factors:

a) the nonexistence of a full RSC in West Africa (only the West African Security Protocomplex) (*ibid.*, p. 239); b) South Africa RSC, also in the process of expansion into Central Africa and the borders of the Protocomplex mentioned (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 233-238).

The evolution of this process, in which two RSC and a Security Protocomplex converge geographically, requires the formation of a South-Atlantic Regional Security Subcomplex, within the South America RSC, but also able to approach the RSC of southern Africa.

This harmonization of the agendas of regional maritime security between the two RSC, through the regional unipolar power that could direct the dynamics of this regional agenda, Brazil, is only possible due to the relative decrease of South America in the agenda of priorities of the United States of America (USA), the superpower, becoming more free to explore its own regional dynamics (COLOMBO; FRECHERO, 2012, p. 196).

With a lower penetration of the United States, the chance of new actors having a more important role would have increased possibility. Noteworthy, this important role is, however, acquiesced, since the global level continues to influence the RSC. Through this allowed autonomy, Brazil starts to have a major role in the RSC (FUCCILLE; REZENDE, 2013, p. 85), harmonizing the

maritime security agendas among the three RSCs. The subcomplexes are not a necessary factor in the RSCs, but are also not uncommon, especially when the number of States in the RSC is large and when member States share common threats (whether by neotraditional or extraregional elements).

Therefore, we could classify the security dynamics of South-Atlantic region as a specific subcomplex of the South American RSC, since “subcomplexes represent a distinct pattern of security interdependence which is still caught in a wider pattern that defines the RSC.” (BUZAN; WÆVER, 2003, p. 51)

Therefore, the South Atlantic (which would separate the two RSCs), would become, through the formation of a South-Atlantic identity of belonging to the SAPCZ and all the values that the regional initiative represents, into the point of convergence of the borders of the South American and Southern Africa RSCs. Such configuration would present an own pattern of solution of neotraditional threats present in the maritime space, centered on the mutual trust and cooperation in a South-Atlantic Regional Security Subcomplex, as shown in the following figure:

SOUTH-ATLANTIC SECURITY SUBCOMPLEX

Figure 2: South-Atlantic Security Subcomplex



- 1 - Expanded South American RSC
- 2 - South Atlantic Security Subcomplex
- 3 - Expanded meridional Africa RSC
- 4 - Expanded West Africa Proto-complex

Source: Prepared by the authors based on BUZAN & WÆVER, 2003, p. xxvi

CONCLUSION

The Brazilian leadership and its prominent position in regional contexts of South America and South Atlantic unveiled a scenario in which its foreign policy demonstrated an active and clear willingness of Brazil as to cooperating with the other countries of its strategic environment, whether in prevention of neotraditional threats or threats to natural resources. In fact, Brazil managed to establish its international position as a reliable medium power, advocate of cooperative values and that, in the case of the South Atlantic, has contributed decisively to the formation of a security community, in the context of the SAPCZ.

One of the requirements for achieving a security community is the strong shared vision of a region out of intercommunal military conflicts, and in this case the SAPCZ meets this criterion, as it is a zone of peace and cooperation, combined with a shared culture, represented by the confluence of common interests and identity between the countries bordering the South Atlantic. The analysis of the South Atlantic regional maritime security dynamics showed that Brazil has been striving to build a common South Atlantic identity founded on mutual trust and cooperation with the member States of the SAPCZ, facilitated by those who also belong to the CPLP, due to the historical and cultural ties that approximate Brazil and lusophone Africa.

In this respect, the Brazilian strategy can be considered as an example of smartpower, i.e., an optimal combination of hard and soft power, as advocated by Nye Jr. (2102, p. xiii). The Brazilian power projection, provided it is allowed by the other actors, is not seen by them as harmful in itself – on the contrary.

The dynamics of international security today show their complexity, but to a large extent still reaffirm the observation that the regional dynamics are those that have the greatest impact in terms of possibility of conflict. It is in this context of regional security dynamics that we aimed to determine the niche that the South Atlantic security community – formed by the SAPCZ – could occupy in the theoretical model of the RSCT, of Buzan and Wæver, since only its South American variant was expected, originally, in *Regions and Powers*.

Before, it is important to note that, regardless of how the South-Atlantic marine security dynamics are classified within a predictive theoretical model such as the RSCT, it should be highlighted the fact that, currently, despite the neotraditional threats exposed in this work, the

South Atlantic is a region that has a set of characteristics that qualifies it as one of the most stable and peaceful in the world, in relative terms. In fact, we could already characterize the South Atlantic as a maritime security community (or at least with a strong tendency to be so), where the values and norms shared voluntarily between its coastal countries, grounded in a sense of belonging reinforced by the South-Atlantic identification, could already at least distinguish it from other parts of the world, as an environment of peace and cooperation. In fact, in the case of Africa, Bueger (2013) points out that the sharing initiatives aimed at maritime security are more recent and very fragmented. For example, according to Le Roux (2006), at the time “the Common African Defense and Security Policy did not mention any maritime issue or threat.” Since then, mainly because of the threat of Somali piracy, it can be said that a maritime security complex would be emerging, but still in protoforms, with the superposition of several smaller arrangements (BUEGER, 2013, p. 312).

In relation to Southeast Asia, the prospect is also of growing integration (BRADFORD, 2005), stemming from the success of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in minimizing or eliminating inter-State tensions so common to the members until decades ago (COLLINS, 2014). However, some external factors to the region may constitute destabilizing elements in the consolidated formation of a maritime security community. Among them, we can mention: the high incidence of piracy, the cut-throat competition for fishing spots, territorial disputes (mainly in the South China Sea) and the overt presence of two extraterritorial powers (USA and China), each with a diverse purpose.

As to the application of the RSCT to characterize the South Atlantic security community, it was found that, because of the Brazilian naval military primacy in relation to other countries members of the SAPCZ, combined with Brazil’s regional leadership and stabilizing role in the South-American RSC, it can be inferred that there would be a tendency of Brazilian expansion toward the South Atlantic, extending the border of the South America RSC. This phenomenon would also be observed on the African continent, in a joint movement of the Southern Africa RSC and of the West Africa Protocomplex.

Thus, the conditions for the structuring of a South Atlantic Regional Security Subcomplex would be established, within the South America RSC, defined in this article as unipolar centered on a regional

power, Brazil, but that is also able to approach the Southern Africa RSC, of unipolar pattern.

It was observed that the Brazilian State contributes to the creation of a South Atlantic security community, in the form of a South-Atlantic Regional Security Subcomplex, thus confirming the general hypothesis presented. Furthermore, it can promote cooperation in security and exploitation of natural and energy resources and the South-Atlantic identity among the SAPCZ countries, understood as a space of dialogue, also deterring the non-cooperative penetration of extraregional powers, since this is not the identity constructed in the South Atlantic.

Finally, it is concluded that this article is believed to have achieved a better analytical result as to the reality of the South-Atlantic maritime security dynamics, through application of the model of Buzan and Wæver, as proposed in its objective. Therefore, we hope it has contributed to assist policy makers and decision makers, despite the existing interaction between Brazil diplomatic and defense authorities, and we hope that they deepen still further, for a great strategy of Brazil for the South Atlantic.

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