
Rodrigo Morales Castillo, *Evaluation of Brazil's Grand Strategy*

Historically, foreign policy has played a central role in Brazil's development, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs focusing its efforts on defending national sovereignty, while constantly striving to reaffirm Brazil's autonomy and establish the country as an independent power in the eyes of the world. During the 19th century and throughout most of the 20th century, Brazil opted to form close ties with the countries that led the way on the international arena as a means of achieving these goals. Since the 1970s, however, this so-called bandwagon policy has given way to one of soft balancing as the guiding principle of foreign policy. Whereas in the past these strategies were drawn up and implemented exclusively by the political elite, today Brazil's foreign policy, like any other government policy, has come under the scrutiny of public opinion, which is wielding increasing clout. The end of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's term in office—one of the most active and visible periods of the *grand strategy*—is as good a time as any to pause and reflect on how Brazilians perceive this strategy in particular and their country's foreign policy in general. This is exactly what Rodrigo Morales Castillo has done in his paper, which is based on the results of the *Brazil, the Americas and the World 2011* public opinion poll on foreign policy issues and international relations. What he discovers is a parochial society, disconnected from the world and with little interest or knowledge of international affairs. The author concludes by commenting on how Brazilians see their country in a global context and the mandates they will be issuing to Itamaraty.

Arlene B. Tickner, *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy in Colombia*

International affairs and foreign policy are not generally headline news or a matter of public debate in Colombia, yet according to the *Colombia, the Americas and the World 2010* poll, Colombians have formed their own opinions about what is going on in the world and their country's foreign policy. Based on the findings of this study, Arlene Tickner explores trends in public opinion, only to discover that despite professing an interest in international issues, Colombians are not well informed of these issues or their country's foreign policy. The author believes that, aside from reflecting a lack of public debate on foreign policy and the limited influence of global affairs in domestic political life, public opinion in Colombia either mirrors the government's priorities and actions or what the media, the government and multilateral entities portray as priorities.

Beatriz Zepeda and María Gabriela Egas, *The Foreign Policy of the Citizens' Revolution: Public Opinion and Attitudes*

Following the signing of a definitive peace agreement by representatives of Ecuador and Peru in Brasilia in 1998, Ecuador's foreign policy was left disoriented and ill equipped to address the challenges of the new millennium. The situation was turned around with the election of Rafael Correa as president in 2007. Up until then, the course of Ecuador's foreign policy had been determined by bilateral relations with the United States, Colombia and Peru (in that order of importance), but Correa's government came up with an alternative based on seven guiding principles: defense of national sovereignty, active multi-

lateralism, Latin American integration, the diversification of international markets and South-South cooperation, environmental protection, protection of the rights of Ecuadorian migrants abroad, the free movement of people and global citizenship. These principles underscore a series of official documents, including the 2009-2013 National Development Plan and the 2008 Constitution of Ecuador. Four years since the beginning of the so-called *Citizens' Revolution*, the question remains as to what extent Ecuadorians have been receptive to the new direction taken by their country's foreign policy and whether or not the general public shares the foreign policy goals of President Correa's government. Drawing on the results of the *Ecuador, the Americas and the World 2010* opinion poll, Beatriz Zepeda and María Gabriela Egas attempt to answer these questions. Their core argument is that Ecuadorians tend to take a more *conservative* attitude to foreign policy, which stands in stark contrast to the *revisionist* bent of the current administration's brand of diplomacy. Nonetheless, as the authors conclude, this has not translated into low levels of acceptance; on the contrary, Ecuadorians claim to be highly satisfied with the way foreign policy is being handled, even though it does not necessarily coincide with their preferences.

**Guadalupe González González and Jorge A. Schiavon,
*Mexicans and the World: Building Blocks in the Formulation of Foreign Policy***

A fundamental question in the field of international relations is how do States define their national interests and on what basis do governments determine the priorities and strategies of their foreign policies? According to Guadalupe González and Jorge Schiavon, in a democratic regime foreign policy should

promote national interests as defined by a process that represents the preferences and reflects the views of the majority. From this, we can conclude that the greater the knowledge of its citizens' world views, the greater the likelihood a government's foreign policy will be in tune with the true interests of society. And the chances are it will also be more effective, since it will enjoy the approval of that society. In this article, the authors sum up the main findings of the *Mexico, the Americas and the World 2010* poll and analyze these within a national and international context so as to suggest ways in which informed public opinion can help shape Mexico's foreign policy and its role in an international context. What are the concerns and aspirations of Mexicans *vis à vis* the world? Where do they think they stand in the global arena? What stance do they take on the migration phenomenon? How can the preferences and views of the Mexican people serve as building blocks in the formulation of foreign policy? González and Schiavon address these and other key aspects of Mexico's relationship with the world at a time when the country is taking stock of its present situation and debating its future in the light of 200 years of independence.

Farid Kahhat, *Peruvians and the World: Public Opinion and Foreign Policy*

In Peru's diplomatic circles, it is not uncommon to hear arguments that invoke the very nature of foreign policy in an attempt to justify its disengagement with public opinion. Indeed, many Peruvian diplomats believe that, in keeping with the specific rationale of foreign policies, the task of drawing these up should be left to the country's political and economic elite. This refusal to open foreign policy up to public criticism is based primarily

on the assumption that the average person has limited knowledge of international affairs and that any opinions he or she might have are the fruit of ignorance. Yet the *Peru, the Americas and the World 2010* opinion poll calls this assumption into question, revealing that Peruvians are not only interested in what is happening in the world, but are demanding that their country play a more active role on the international arena. In his essay, Farid Kahhat uses the results of the aforementioned poll to debunk the premises on which Peruvian diplomats act (generally in a vacuum far removed from public opinion) and illustrate that a country's foreign policy—in this case Peru's—remains a public policy and therefore cannot escape the scrutiny of the public eye. By way of example, he points out that, despite having relatively little direct contact with the outside world, Peruvians are interested in global affairs and believe their nation to be important within the international system, a self-perception that is perhaps linked to Peru's good economic performance in recent years, namely that of regions like Callao and Lima that have closer ties to the global economy.

Gerardo Maldonado and David Crow, *What is Latin America's Place in the World? Opinions and Attitudes of Latin Americans toward Other Countries and Regions*

The Americas and the World 2010-2011 is a research project designed to offer insight into the views of Latin Americans on international issues and the role their countries should play in an international context. Although the limited scope of the project—which is based on public opinion polls conducted among a sample of the population in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil and Mexico—prevents us from making generalizations about the region as a whole, the countries included are suffi-

ciently varied in terms of geographic location, size and degree of global integration so as to ascertain some basic differences and similarities. Gerardo Maldonado and David Crow have used the findings of these five opinion polls to analyze how Latin Americans see themselves as fitting into the global context, their attitudes toward their neighbors and other countries and regions, and to determine how the world views of Latin American societies differ and where they concur.