

# Peace and the post-2015 development agenda

## Understanding the Brazilian perspective



June 2014

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# Overview

**THERE IS A GROWING ACKNOWLEDGMENT** that sustainable peace should be one of the global priorities addressed within the new post-2015 development framework.<sup>i</sup> Yet some United Nations member states such as Brazil have substantive concerns about including peace in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>ii</sup> Fostering greater understanding and consensus on such issues is of paramount importance for the post-2015 development agenda, particularly as the framework will shape the direction of development policy and practice in the coming years. The active participation of key states from the Global South – particularly Brazil – in the framing of the SDGs is also necessary to guarantee that selected goals and targets are legitimate and effective.<sup>iii</sup>

Brazil is already a major player in the debate on the post-2015 development agenda. At the forefront of shaping the contours of the sustainable development debate since 1992, Brazil has made significant contributions to promoting an integrated approach to peace and development in various fora, including the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence (since 2006). In 2014, as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Brazil currently plays a key role in advancing the interlinkages between peace, security and development. Yet at the moment, Brazil appears to be opposed to the inclusion of a standalone goal on ‘peaceful societies’ and many of the proposed peace-related targets within the SDGs.

In January 2014, the Igarapé Institute together with Saferworld co-hosted two roundtables in Brasilia and Rio de Janeiro with representatives of the Brazilian government, civil society, intergovernmental bodies, and academia on the inclusion of peace in the post-2015 development agenda. These sessions were designed to generate a better understanding of Brazil’s position and to create a space for constructive engagement on whether peace, or associated issues such as security, justice and governance, should be included in the SDGs. This briefing is informed by these consultations. It examines Brazil’s position on the inclusion of peace within the post-2015 development agenda and also engages with some of the arguments that Brazil has made to date.

<sup>i</sup> For example see the report prepared by the UN System Task Team (June 2012), the Report of the High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (May 2013) and report prepared by the UN Global Compact (June 2013).

<sup>ii</sup> For the purposes of this briefing, the terms ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ and the ‘post-2015 development agenda’ will be used interchangeably. While we recognize that these are separate processes, at present the principle forum for discussions on the post-2015 development agenda is the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.

<sup>iii</sup> Muggah, Robert, Ivan Campbell, Eduarda Hamann, Gustavo Diniz, and Marina Motta, “Promoting Peace in the Post-2015 Framework: the role of rising powers”. Saferworld and Igarape. February 2013, <http://pt.igarape.org.br/promoting-peace-in-the-post-2015-framework-the-role-of-rising-powers/>



## 1

# Introduction

## The Millennium Development Goals and Brazil

**BRAZIL HAS LONG INVESTED** in advancing sustainable development around the world. Former President Lula da Silva described the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as “a significant achievement of contemporary humanism” arguing that they represented “the victory of values of human solidarity over doctrines of moral indifference and political omission towards the excluded”.<sup>1</sup> Launched in 2002, the MDGs are comprised of eight goals:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- Achieve universal primary education;
- Promote gender equality and empower women;
- Reduce child mortality;
- Improve maternal health;
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- Ensure environmental sustainability;
- Forge global partnerships and action among different countries.

Brazil is on track to achieve five of the MDGs by 2015. Notably, poverty rates have declined substantially – the proportion of the population living with less than \$1.25 per day has decreased from 17% to 7% between 1990 and 2009.<sup>2</sup> Brazil is also lauded for reducing its under-five mortality rate by 77% between 1990 and 2012.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Brazilian efforts to combat poverty and hunger through policies and programmes like *Bolsa Familia*<sup>4</sup> and *Fight Against Hunger* are considered a model for analogous efforts across the globe.

And while Brazil has much to commend itself in promoting development, progress in some areas remains uneven. Under the current administration of President Dilma Rousseff, poverty eradication is still a key priority, especially since an estimated 6.5 million Brazilians still live in extreme poverty.<sup>5</sup> For example, as of 2010, 6% of the population, equivalent to over 11 million people, was still living in favelas.<sup>6</sup> Notwithstanding major efforts, ensuring environmental sustainability is another critical challenge – Brazil will not achieve MDG Goal 7.

<sup>1</sup> Statement by H. E. Mr. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, at the High Level Meeting of the General Assembly, September 15, 2005, [www.un.int/brazil/speech/005d-lils-60agnu-High%20Level%201509.html](http://www.un.int/brazil/speech/005d-lils-60agnu-High%20Level%201509.html)

<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed analysis on Brazil's progress towards the MDGs as of December 2012 see, “Factsheet: The MDGs in Brazil”. Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. [www.kas.de/wf/doc/9942-1442-2-30.pdf](http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/9942-1442-2-30.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Press release, “Some 35 million more children under five at risk if child mortality goal not met”. Unicef. September 2013, [www.unicef.org/media/media\\_70371.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_70371.html)

<sup>4</sup> See for example, “Brazil's cash transfer scheme a source of empowerment for women”. The Guardian. December 2013, [www.theguardian.com/global-development/2013/dec/18/brazil-bolsa-familia-women-empowerment](http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2013/dec/18/brazil-bolsa-familia-women-empowerment) and “Bolsa-Familia: template for poverty reduction or recipe for dependency”. The Guardian. November 2013, [www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2013/nov/05/bolsa-familia-brazil-cash-transfer-system](http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2013/nov/05/bolsa-familia-brazil-cash-transfer-system).

<sup>5</sup> See, “Brasil retirou 3,5 milhões de pessoas da pobreza em 2012”. IPEA. October 2013, [www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=19998](http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19998).

<sup>6</sup> “Factsheet: The MDGs in Brazil”. Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. [www.kas.de/wf/doc/9942-1442-2-30.pdf](http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/9942-1442-2-30.pdf)



**Figure 1.1. Debating the Millennium Development Goals**

Supporters of the MDGs have argued that by having “a simplicity that is engaging, targets that are quantitative, objectives that are easy to comprehend, and good intentions with which no one could possibly disagree”, the MDGs have been successful in mobilizing public and political support for development.<sup>7</sup> However, there are many well-developed critiques of the MDGs. Some have argued that much of the success in meeting global MDG targets cannot be attributed to the MDGs themselves. Progress on poverty reduction, for example, has largely been a consequence of rapid development in China and India where the number of people living in extreme poverty declined by 455 million between 1990 and 2005 (with a further additional 320 million expected to join their ranks by 2015).<sup>8</sup> Other criticisms have focused on how the MDGs have been donor-led with little accountability and therefore the MDGs “did not serve their larger strategic purpose of changing the discourse on development”.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the perception of the MDGs as a Western-imposed framework, which defined the development priorities of developing countries without adequate consultation, is strong. Perhaps most importantly, many regard the MDGs as incomplete as they don’t adequately incorporate other crucial dimensions of development such as climate change and governance.

**The post-2015 development agenda**

In 2015, the Millennium Development Goals will expire. There is clear consensus that a new framework is essential in order to advance global development after the expiration of the MDGs. This common vision was expressed at the 68th UN General Assembly (UNGA) in September 2013 when member states called for a “single framework and set of goals – universal in nature and applicable to all countries”.<sup>10</sup> A global debate reviewing the possible contents of this new framework is well underway, with wide-ranging consultations having already taken place in the Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As an outcome of the Rio+20 Summit, member states are committed to developing a set of goals to spur action on sustainable development known as the SDGs. The goals will be highly influential in determining the shape of the post-2015 development agenda, as they will be proposed prior to the start of intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development framework in September 2014. However, recommendations on specific SDGs will be made alongside several other inputs, many of which are unrelated to the outcomes of the Rio+20 Summit, such as the report of the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on the Post-MDGs that recommended five “transformative shifts”. There are numerous decisions to be made – the most important of which revolves around whether, and if so which, additional goals, targets and indicators on issues outside the original scope of the MDGs should be included in the new post-2015 development agenda.

**Peace and the post-2015 development agenda**

The interdependence between peace and development is high on the post-2015 development agenda. As the Outcome Document for the Special Event on the MDGs in September 2013 noted, “conflict and post-conflict countries are the most challenged in achieving any of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.”<sup>11</sup> Indeed, only about 20 per cent of the countries that the World Bank categorises as ‘fragile or conflict-affected’ are on track to meet the basic poverty target. A group of nineteen countries self-categorizing themselves as fragile – the g7+ – has also drawn attention to the very real challenges of conflict and insecurity in impeding progress in meeting basic development targets.

<sup>7</sup> [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/deepak\\_nayyar\\_Aug.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/deepak_nayyar_Aug.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-china-reduced-poverty-remarkably-mdg-report/article2211400.ece](http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-china-reduced-poverty-remarkably-mdg-report/article2211400.ece)

<sup>9</sup> [www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7061.pdf](http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7061.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> “Special Event 25 September: Outcome Document”. United Nations. September 2013, [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Outcome%20documentMDG.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Outcome%20documentMDG.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> “Special Event 25 September: Outcome Document”. United Nations. September 2013, [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Outcome%20documentMDG.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Outcome%20documentMDG.pdf).

**Figure 1.2. Examples of how violence and insecurity have undermined development and attainment of the MDGs<sup>12</sup>**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>MDG 1:<br/>Eradicate Extreme<br/>Poverty and Hunger</b> | A country that experienced major violence over the period from 1981 to 2005 has a <b>poverty rate</b> 21 percentage points higher than a country that saw no violence. <sup>13</sup>  |
| <b>MDG 2:<br/>Achieve Universal<br/>Primary Education</b>  | Globally, the number of <b>children out of school</b> has fallen, from 60 million in 2008 to 57 million in 2011. But “the benefits of this progress have not reached children in conflict-affected countries. These children make up 22% of the world’s primary school aged population, yet they comprise 50% of children who are denied an education, a proportion that has increased from 42% in 2008.” Not only are these children disproportionately unable to enrol in primary school but also their <b>completion, secondary enrolment, literacy, and mortality rates</b> are much worse than in other countries. <sup>14</sup> |
| <b>MDG 4:<br/>Reduce Child<br/>Mortality</b>               | Half of all <b>child deaths</b> occur in conflict-affected areas. <sup>15</sup>   |
| <b>MDG 5:<br/>Improve Maternal<br/>Health</b>              | The Economic Commission on Africa reports that of the 40 countries classified as having a <b>high maternal mortality</b> ratio in 2010, 36 are in Africa, and that the majority of these countries are either experiencing or recovering from conflict. <sup>16</sup>   |

Focusing specifically on Latin America and the Caribbean, it is clear that the prevention of violence and promotion of safety are critical issues. The Global Burden of Armed Violence (2011), demonstrated how the region is the only place where lethal violence increased between 2000 and 2010.<sup>17</sup> A recent United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report also identifies commonalities in the occurrence of insecurity and violence acknowledging that increasingly, “a regional consensus is needed to tackle the obstacles and response to citizen insecurity”.<sup>18</sup> There is also evidence that Brazilians see security as one of their top priorities.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, the global burden of violence is unevenly distributed. Roughly 526,000 people die each year from violence, most of them in lower and middle-income countries, many of which are in Latin America and the Caribbean.<sup>20</sup> The incidence of violence is particularly striking in Brazil where official statistics registered 56,000 murders in 2012 alone. Between 2004 and 2007, almost 200,000 people died of homicide in Brazil, exceeding the 169,574 people killed in the 12 largest armed conflicts in the world during the same period.<sup>21</sup>

### An emerging consensus

The Outcome Document for the Special Event on the MDGs, which all member states signed-up to in September 2013, stated explicitly that a new framework should “promote peace and security, democratic governance, the rule of law, gender equality and human rights for all.”<sup>22</sup> More recently, with the inclusion of a pillar on peace and

<sup>12</sup> *Issue Paper 1: The impact of conflict and violence on achieving development*. Saferworld. November 2012, [www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/709](http://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/709).

<sup>13</sup> “World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development”. World Bank Report. 2011, p 61.

<sup>14</sup> “The Hidden Crisis: Armed Conflict and Education”. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation Report. 2011, p 2.

<sup>15</sup> World Bank. 2011, p 62.

<sup>16</sup> “Overview of economic and social conditions in Africa in 2012”. United Nations Economic Commission on Africa and African Union Commission. 2012, [www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/document\\_files/overview-of-economic-and-social-conditions-n-africaen.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/document_files/overview-of-economic-and-social-conditions-n-africaen.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> “Global Burden of Armed Violence 2011”. Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. 2011, [www.genevadeclaration.org/measurability/global-burden-of-armed-violence/global-burden-of-armed-violence-2011.html](http://www.genevadeclaration.org/measurability/global-burden-of-armed-violence/global-burden-of-armed-violence-2011.html).

<sup>18</sup> *Citizen Security with a Human Face: evidence and proposals for Latin America*. United Nations Development Programme. 2013, [www.undp.org/content/dam/rblac/docs/Research%20and%20Publications/IDH/IDH-AL-ExecutiveSummary.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rblac/docs/Research%20and%20Publications/IDH/IDH-AL-ExecutiveSummary.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> See for example, “Para brasileiros, saúde e segurança são principais problemas em 2014”. UOL. February 2014, <http://noticias.uol.com.br/cotidiano/ultimas-noticias/2014/02/12/para-brasileiros-saude-e-seguranca-sao-principais-problemas-em-2014.htm>. Also see, “Brazil’s crime crisis worsening”. Miami Herald. June 2014, [www.miamiherald.com/2014/06/08/4163099/brazils-crime-crisis-worsening.html](http://www.miamiherald.com/2014/06/08/4163099/brazils-crime-crisis-worsening.html).

<sup>20</sup> “Global Burden of Armed Violence 2011”. Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. 2011, [www.genevadeclaration.org/measurability/global-burden-of-armed-violence/global-burden-of-armed-violence-2011.html](http://www.genevadeclaration.org/measurability/global-burden-of-armed-violence/global-burden-of-armed-violence-2011.html). See also, “Reducing Armed Violence, Enabling Development”. Small Arms Survey. July 2012, [www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/H-Research\\_Notes/SAS-Research-Note-19.pdf](http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/H-Research_Notes/SAS-Research-Note-19.pdf). [www.estadao.com.br/](http://www.estadao.com.br/)

<sup>21</sup> “País teve 50 mil mortes em 2012”. Estadão. November 2013, [www.estadao.com.br/noticias/geral,pais-teve-50-mil-mortes-em-2012,1092793,0.htm](http://www.estadao.com.br/noticias/geral,pais-teve-50-mil-mortes-em-2012,1092793,0.htm).

<sup>22</sup> “Special Event 25 September: Outcome Document”. United Nations. September 2013, [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Outcome%20documentMDG.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Outcome%20documentMDG.pdf).

security in the Common African Position on the post-2015 development agenda, 54 African member states added their voices to the growing consensus that, in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive development that truly leaves no-one behind, peace and security should be a key pillar of the post-2015 development agenda. This refrain has been echoed in several key reports on the post-2015 framework (including the UN Task Team Report<sup>23</sup>, the High-Level Panel Report<sup>24</sup> and the UN Global Compact Report<sup>25</sup>). It is also underlined in the statements of a diverse range of member-states and multilateral groupings, including the 19 G7+ countries, 28 states of the European Union<sup>26</sup>, numerous Least Developed Countries, and the many other states that agreed the Dili Consensus as well as several members of Caribbean Community.

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<sup>23</sup> UN Task Team report available at: [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Post\\_2015\\_UNTTreport.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Post_2015_UNTTreport.pdf).

<sup>24</sup> UN High-Level Panel report available at: [www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/UN-Report.pdf](http://www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/UN-Report.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> UN Global Compact report available at: [www.unfoundation.org/assets/pdf/global-compact-report-1.pdf](http://www.unfoundation.org/assets/pdf/global-compact-report-1.pdf).

<sup>26</sup> Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. February 2014, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6445eu1.pdf>.

# 2

## Brazil, peace and the post-2015 development agenda

### What is Brazil's position on the inclusion of peace within post-2015?

**AT FIRST GLANCE,** Brazil appears to be a strong proponent of a post-2015 agenda that takes peace seriously. It unambiguously acknowledges how “an environment of stability and peace is essential for development” and its diplomats have been instrumental in promoting an integrated approach to peace and development over the past decade.<sup>27</sup> At the UN Security Council (UNSC), for example, Brazil has encouraged members to address the key drivers of conflict – not only its symptoms – and cautioned against an over-reliance on “purely military engagement[s]” – most notably by organising a high-level debate on the interdependence between security and development in February 2011.<sup>28</sup> Brazil also supports wide-ranging peacekeeping engagements and development cooperation and has extensive experience of how peace, security and development are inter-related in practice. One Brazilian government official described an emergent “Brazilian school” of practice that “tries to show the dividends of peace” to those experiencing or recovering from conflict.<sup>29</sup> Brazil’s ability to shape the discourse and international policy on issues of peace and security is demonstrated by its crafting of the concept of “Responsibility While Protecting” (2011), with some going as far as to describe Brazil as a “norms entrepreneur”.<sup>30</sup>

Nonetheless, Brazil is still reluctant to endorse the nexus between peace, security and development in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. On the one hand, Brazilian diplomats do not see a contradiction between its resistance to include peace in the SDGs and its active pursuit of pro-peace policies and practices around the world. Most recently at the OWG on SDGs, Nicaragua, speaking on behalf of Brazil, stated that peace should be considered an enabler for development and “should be mainstreamed in other relevant clusters and focus areas, not discussed separately”.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> “Statement by Ambassador Patriota at the 8th Session of the Open Working Group”. February 2013, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6520brazil.pdf>.

<sup>28</sup> “The interdependence between security and development”. Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations. 2011, [www.un.int/brazil/book/interdependence.html](http://www.un.int/brazil/book/interdependence.html)

<sup>29</sup> Comment made during roundtable in January 2014.

<sup>30</sup> “Brazil as a norm entrepreneur: the “Responsibility While Protecting” Initiative”. Global Public Policy Initiative. March 2013, [www.gppi.net/fileadmin/media/pub/2013/Benner\\_2013\\_Working-Paper\\_Brazil-RWP.pdf](http://www.gppi.net/fileadmin/media/pub/2013/Benner_2013_Working-Paper_Brazil-RWP.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> Statement by Nicaragua on behalf of Brazil and Nicaragua, “Focus Area 19: Peace and non-violent societies, rule of law and capable institutions”. April 2014, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/8132nicaragua.pdf>.

Indeed, Brazil has advanced various explanations for why commitments to promote peace should not be directly prioritized in the post-2015 framework. Some of these are described at length below:

### **1. The focus of the SDGs should be on the Rio+20 agenda which does not include a pillar on peace**

Speaking at the UN General Assembly in September 2013, President Dilma stated that the post-2015 development agenda “must focus on the results of Rio+20”, with a particular emphasis on the three pillars of sustainable development.<sup>32</sup> Brazil’s stance – that the post-2015 development agenda must take its lead from Rio+20 – reflects a view that Rio+20 does not give any member state the mandate to weave peace-related themes in ongoing discussions. While the Rio+20 outcome document affirms the “importance of freedom, peace and security” and calls for “special attention” for countries experiencing conflict, it includes no specific pillar or goal on peace, security, justice or governance.<sup>33</sup> Brazilian officials have described this omission as a “conscious decision”, expressing concern that the inclusion of peace could distract attention – and official development assistance (ODA) – away from what they regard as the critical priorities of any post-2015 development framework.<sup>34</sup>

### **2. The inclusion of peace will lead to the “securitization” of the development agenda and could translate into “new conditionalities” which will lead to the violation of countries’ sovereignty**

Brazil firmly believes that if a goal on peace is included in the post-2015 development framework it could securitize the broader development agenda. Brazil’s diplomats already fear that the UN system is overly focused on peace and security, and that this is crowding out engagement with development priorities. Or as one Brazilian government official put it, “security has the money and has the eyes of the world already”. Indeed, Brazilian government officials repeatedly draw attention to the scale of resources devoted to peacekeeping and how this diverts resources away from the UN’s core funding and voluntary contributions that would be better spent on development.

The “securitization” of the development agenda could, some diplomats argue, also generate far-reaching implications for the sovereignty of member states. In particular, the inclusion of specific peace-related targets might allow for the imposition of conditionalities on the recipients of international aid, who could be compelled to focus on activities related to peace and security as opposed to development. As Muggah and Hamann (2014) have argued, concerns about potential violations of sovereignty have also manifested through Brazil’s criticisms of the “mixing” of the concepts of “conflict” and “violence”, with the latter being described as “a domestic-level affair” and therefore not warranting an internationalized approach such as that being proposed through the post-2015 development agenda.<sup>35</sup>

### **3. Concerns that a peace goal would not be universally applicable in the context of the post-2015 agenda**

In explaining its overarching approach to how the post-2015 development agenda should be designed, Brazil has stated that the “central premise” is that “we are now

<sup>32</sup> “Statement by H. E. Dilma Rousseff, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil at Opening of the General Debate of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly”. September 2013, [http://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/68/BR\\_en.pdf](http://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/68/BR_en.pdf).

<sup>33</sup> “The future we want”. Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. June 2012, [www.uncsd2012.org/content/documents/774futurewewant\\_english.pdf](http://www.uncsd2012.org/content/documents/774futurewewant_english.pdf).

<sup>34</sup> “Statement by Ambassador Patriota at the 8th Session of the Open Working Group”. February 2013, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6520brazil.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Robert Muggah and Eduarda Hamann, “Memo to Brazil: in the post-2015 development agenda, advocate for peace”. Open Security. February 2014, [www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/robert-muggah-eduarda-hamann/memo-to-brazil-in-post-2015-development-agenda-advocate-fo](http://www.opendemocracy.net/opensecurity/robert-muggah-eduarda-hamann/memo-to-brazil-in-post-2015-development-agenda-advocate-fo)

transitioning from MDGs applicable exclusively to the developing world to SDGs, of universal applicability”<sup>36</sup> In other words, any SDGs that are formulated have to be relevant to *all* countries – unlike the MDGs. As it is currently presented, Brazil does not believe that the peace agenda as it has been discussed in the post-2015 development debate fulfils the criterion of “universal applicability”. This is premised on the view that the conditions that underpin conflict are “case-specific” and therefore do not lend themselves to what it describes as “one size fits all” (i.e. universal) approaches – which is what Brazil feels the inclusion of peace within the SDGs will promote.<sup>37</sup>

#### **4. Development comes first and leads to peace, not the other way around**

While there is a consensus that peace, security and development are interconnected the nexus is not interpreted in the same way by member states. Some governments argue that peace should be the first priority to achieve development; others contend that development comes first and will lead to peace. There is of course widespread recognition that in almost all cases both are critical. However, in many ways, Brazil is endorsing what could be characterized as a “development-first” approach that highlights underdevelopment as the cause of conflict. Brazil, in some ways, is seeking to “rebalance” the nexus, seeking in a manner to “give development a chance”. For example, at the OWG session on countries in special situations Brazil argued that, “poverty and inequality is the root cause of ... conflicts, urban crime and other scourges that affect the (African) continent”<sup>38</sup> Even so, the Brazilian government has endorsed high-level debates on the interdependence between peace, security and development. However, they resist a security-first approach in the post-2015 forum pointing instead to the responsibilities of the Peacebuilding Commission and the UN Security Council in this area.

#### **5. Fears that the debate over whether to include peace in post-2015 could divide the Global South**

The Brazilian government is deeply concerned that disagreements on the peace agenda will have the effect of dividing the Global South and therefore run “the risk of jeopardizing a process that can be extremely beneficial to development” by negating the collective bargaining power of developing countries.<sup>39</sup> These sentiments were most clearly expressed in the debate on countries in special situations wherein Brazil cautioned against “creating additional levels of graduation among developing countries” and that this could “lead to a fragmentation and thereby the weakening of the political voice of the South in expressing a common position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda process.”<sup>40</sup>

#### **6. Countries experiencing or recovering from conflict already receive attention from the pre-existing peace and security architecture**

In Brazil’s view, the post-2015 development agenda offers an opportunity to ensure focus – and resources – on the issues facing poorer countries in general. Furthermore, Brazil is apprehensive that the inclusion of peace in the post-2015 development agenda could lead to a reconfiguration of the responsibilities of different UN organs or agencies, especially the UN Security Council (UNSC) – which is strongly opposed on the basis that, at present, it considers the UNSC to be an inadequate and undemocratic institution.

<sup>36</sup> Statement by Nicaragua on behalf of Brazil and Nicaragua, “Focus Area 19: Peace and non-violent societies, rule of law and capable institutions”. April 2014, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/8132nicaragua.pdf>.

<sup>37</sup> “Statement by Ambassador Patriota at the 8th Session of the Open Working Group”. February 2013, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6520brazil.pdf>.

<sup>38</sup> Statement by Brazil and Nicaragua “Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals VI Meeting”. December 2013, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5895brazil3.pdf>.

<sup>39</sup> “Statement by Ambassador Patriota at the 8th Session of the Open Working Group”. February 2013, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6520brazil.pdf>.

<sup>40</sup> Statement by Brazil and Nicaragua “Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals VI Meeting”. December 2013, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5895brazil3.pdf>.

## 7. Measurement, stigma and military expenditure

Brazil's opposition to the peace agenda in the context of the post-2015 development agenda also has deep historical and ideological moorings. For example, Brazil has significant doubts that peace-related targets can be measured in a way that respects the different "histories, political circumstances and cultures" of each member state<sup>41</sup> Also underlying some of Brazil's opposition is the perception that the inclusion of peace in the SDGs could promulgate the "discriminatory idea that violence and instability only exist in poor or less developed regions."<sup>42</sup> And while Brazil is relatively open to discussing domestic insecurity and violence, there is resistance to putting an international focus on an issue that it finds challenging domestically.<sup>43</sup>

Brazil has also challenged the framing of the peace agenda highlighting that any "serious universal approach" to discussing peaceful societies in the context of the post-2015 framework would need to include a focus on issues such as reviewing disarmament commitments, as well as the impacts of unilaterally imposed sanctions, of the relationships between military expenditure and development spending, as well as issues related to cross-border drone attacks and torture. While these issues are of paramount importance, given that Brazil is opposed to discussing peace in the context of the SDGs, an opportunity to discuss a broader concept of peace – one that tackles aspects of hard security, not only soft security – is being missed.

**Figure 1.3. Responding to Brazil's perspective on the inclusion of peace within the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda**

| Argument  | Response   |
|---|--|
| Focus should be on Rio+20 – no pillar on peace  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ There is a consensus on three pillars of sustainable development, but a <b>broader development agenda is now being considered</b>, beyond what was agreed at Rio+20.</li> <li>■ Peace can support sustainable development and environmental protection, as the Rio Declaration of 1992 affirmed with Principle 25: <b>"Peace, development and environmental protection are interdependent and indivisible"</b>. For example, a recent report by the African Development Bank (AfDB) highlights that conflict-affected and unstable countries in Africa had either stalled or regressed on environment and clean energy indicators.<sup>44</sup></li> </ul>  |
| Inclusion of peace will lead to "securitization" of development                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This <i>is</i> a substantive concern, but rather than totally rejecting consideration of the peace agenda in the post-2015 development agenda, <b>constructive engagement by member states such as Brazil could ensure that some of the concerns associated with the "securitization" of development do not manifest.</b></li> <li>■ Specific peace-related targets can contribute to building resilience and the ability to prevent conflicts from becoming violent. Indeed, such an approach could be instrumental in reducing the number of situations where conflicts escalate rapidly necessitating high-levels of military expenditure and responses from the UN Security Council – which can consequently lead to polarizing responses such as that seen in Libya or inaction as seen in Syria.</li> </ul> |
| Potential violation of member states sovereignty through imposition of conditionalities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Implementation of the <b>peace agenda</b> should occur at the <b>national level</b> and be <b>nationally owned. Member states will have ownership</b> over choosing their own baselines and benchmarks for indicators.</li> <li>■ Most importantly, the <b>new framework is non-binding.</b></li> </ul>   |

41 "Statement by Ambassador Patriota at the 8th Session of the Open Working Group". February 2013, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6520brazil.pdf>.

42 Statement by Nicaragua on behalf of Brazil and Nicaragua, "Focus Area 19: Peace and non-violent societies, rule of law and capable institutions". April 2014, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/8132nicaragua.pdf>.

43 Robert Muggah and Eduarda Hamann, "Dispatch to Brazil: Give Peace a Change in the Post-2015 Development Agenda". The Global Observatory. March 2014, <http://theglobalobservatory.org/component/myblog/blogger/Robert%20Muggah%20and%20Eduarda%20Hamann/>.

44 "Development Effectiveness Review 2012: Fragile States and Conflict-Affected Countries". African Development Bank Group. 2012, [www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/Development\\_Effectiveness\\_Review\\_2012\\_-\\_Fragile\\_States\\_and\\_Conflict-Affected\\_Countries.pdf](http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/Development_Effectiveness_Review_2012_-_Fragile_States_and_Conflict-Affected_Countries.pdf)

| Argument  | Response   |
|---|--|
| Violence is a “domestic-level” affair, subject to national level jurisdiction. Whereas conflict resides more in the realm of “international affairs”. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Creating a distinction between conflict and violence in this way is unhelpful especially as the <b>vast majority of today’s armed conflicts</b> are <b>“domestic-level” affairs</b> even if they are fuelled in part by <b>complex global drivers</b>.</li> <li>■ Moreover, it is important to highlight that some drivers of <b>conflict and insecurity cannot be addressed by single states alone</b>, which is why external stresses – such as flow of illicit finances, drugs, war commodities and arms – need to be collectively addressed under a goal on global cooperation, through a framework like the SDGs.</li> </ul>   |
| Concerns that a peace goal would not be universally applicable in the context of the post-2015 agenda   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ It is <b>not in dispute that the causes of conflict and violence vary widely and are complex</b>, but they <b>can be prevented by working constructively on the root causes of conflict</b>. Development actions – such as improving trust in security provision, access to justice, reducing number of violent deaths, women’s empowerment, reducing corruption and bribery – are capable of helping to prevent all forms of conflict, violence and insecurity.</li> <li>■ While it is clear that post-conflict countries are especially vulnerable to fragility and new outbreaks of violence, <b>riots in London and Athens, upheaval in Thailand, or the events of the Arab Spring illustrate that no country is immune from violence</b>.</li> <li>■ Bosnia offers an illustration of the risk of conflict as “development in reverse”. In 1990, it was a relatively poorer part of an affluent European state. As such, its GDP per capita stood at \$1,713. By 1995, after conflict had transformed the former Yugoslavia’s development prospects, Bosnia’s per capita GDP had fallen to just \$563.<sup>45</sup></li> </ul> |
| Development comes first and leads to peace, not the other way around  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Evidence has shown that development progress can be made in insecure, deeply corrupt or non-inclusive societies, especially in the form of economic growth. However, the overwhelming evidence is that making progress in such societies is much harder, and that contexts where there is a lack of peace, are much more vulnerable than others to falling backwards in terms of peace and development. If these countries are empowered – which the SDGs could be a great instrument for – they would not be so exposed and vulnerable to external influences.</li> <li>■ The <b>new post-2015 development framework should not be framed on what is exceptional, nor on approaches that store up risks for the future</b>. Instead it should encourage approaches that the evidence shows have the real potential to lead to lasting violence reduction and better long-term development results.</li> </ul>  |
| Could divide the Global South weakening negotiating position  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A broad range of <b>important issues</b> are being discussed in the context of the post-2015 development agenda such as climate change, international public finance and peace. <b>None of these should be seen as “zero-sum” battles pitting developed countries against developing countries</b>, especially given that the need for progress is so critical. Moreover, as the Common African Position has illustrated, <b>peace is just as much a Southern agenda as it is a Northern one</b>.</li> </ul>  |
| Countries experiencing or recovering from conflict already receive attention from the pre-existing peace and security architecture                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Addressing peace</b> within the post-2015 development agenda is about <b>mainstreaming a preventative approach within development</b> that can contribute to reducing conflict and violence.</li> <li>■ A preventative approach, including both development activities and better regulation of the global market of weapons and ammunition, for example, <b>can ease the burden on other parts of the UN system</b> through the reduction of military spending on responding to outbreaks of conflicts and potentially lessen the occurrence of polarizing international responses to conflict.</li> </ul>  |

<sup>45</sup> See statistic at: <http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=SNAAMA&f=grID%3A101%3BcurrID%3AUSD%3BpcFlag%3A1>



| Argument  | Response   |
|---|--|
| Measurement issues  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Progress towards peace can be measured.</b> Previous analysis has already identified over 160 existing indicators that could be used to measure progress on the peace agenda.<sup>46</sup></li> <li>■ <b>New indicators will need to be developed in some cases.</b> Serious investment in the capacity of countries to collect data will be important. This alone would be <b>an incredibly positive outcome of the post-2015 development framework</b> and should be seen as such.</li> </ul>  |
| Including peace could stigmatize certain countries  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Certain member states will have more work to do, but including specific <b>targets on peace</b> related issues in the post-2015 development agenda <b>will enable member states to identify priorities before crises occur, as well as to highlight what gains are being made.</b></li> <li>■ Evidence shows that global perceptions of insecurity do not match the reality: including peace in the SDGs could allow for member states to redress misperceptions about their countries.</li> </ul>  |
| Genuinely addressing issues of conflict and violence requires discussion of issues such as weapons of mass destruction, military expenditure and exceptionalism amongst many others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ An <b>open dialogue about issues such as armament, occupation, aggression and exceptionalism is necessary</b> – as is ensuring that we have the institutions to do so. This is the very purpose of the UN – the first purpose listed in its charter.</li> <li>■ However, at the same time, <b>it must be recognized that there are some aspects of the peace agenda that are clearly within the mandate of institutions that focus on 'hard security' issues</b> and notwithstanding this, <b>it cannot be disputed that development has a contribution to make towards resolving these issues</b> – by promoting a more preventative approach towards conflict.</li> <li>■ Finally, discussing these issues within the context of the post-2015 development agenda could be so polarizing that they have the potential to undermine efforts to achieve a transformative development agenda – a result which no member state wants to see.</li> </ul> |

<sup>46</sup> "Addressing Conflict and Violence from 2015: A vision for goals, targets and indicators". Saferworld. February 2013, [www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/730-a-vision-of-goals-targets-and-indicators](http://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/730-a-vision-of-goals-targets-and-indicators).

## 3

## Reframing the debate on peace and post-2015

**DESPITE BRAZIL'S CONCERNS** about including a goal on peace in the SDGs, there are many aspects of the peace agenda that Brazil has actively endorsed. Therefore constructive engagement could stimulate new areas of consensus:

- Brazil supports the language of **human rights** – including a people-centred safety agenda – to frame its approach to the SDGs. At the 8th Session of the OWG, Argentina speaking for a bloc including Brazil called for a “human rights-based, people-centered ... agenda”.<sup>47</sup> Similarly at the 4th Session of the OWG, Uruguay speaking for Brazil urged “that human rights and empowerment of women and girls ... be positioned as critical pillars of the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals”.<sup>48</sup>
- Brazil is also very supportive of efforts to address **gender** issues – including violence against women and girls – within the post-2015 framework. At the 8th Session of the OWG, Argentina speaking for a bloc including Brazil called for the SDGs to help “end all forms of gender-based violence”, and further called for increases in women’s and young people’s participation in decision-making.<sup>49</sup>
- Brazil has also highlighted the importance of tackling **illicit financial flows** – specifically international tax avoidance and evasion.<sup>50</sup> Demonstrable commitment by member states supportive of the peace agenda to address issues of financing and implementation as well as external stresses that fuel conflict like illicit financial flows could create more room to engage with member states such as Brazil.

In other areas, reframing the linkages between different issues could also strengthen the case for including peace in the post-2015 development agenda. For example, rather than focusing on the ways in which violence holds back development, highlighting how rapid economic development could contribute to increased insecurity and violence in the future could be a way of changing the narrative on peace within the post-2015 discussions. With increasing rates of urbanisation and demographic growth – particularly among 15–29 year olds – Brazil faces an array of challenges such as providing adequate housing and employment. And Brazil has recognised that

<sup>47</sup> “Joint Statement to the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals”. February 2014, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6405argentina.pdf>.

<sup>48</sup> “Joint Statement to the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals”. June 2014, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/3688uruguay.pdf>.

<sup>49</sup> “Joint Statement to the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals”. February 2014, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6405argentina.pdf>

<sup>50</sup> “Open Working Group on Sustainable Goals V Meeting”. November 2013, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5910brazil6.pdf>.

“rising unemployment ... among young adults in developing countries is a severe setback to society and closely relates to national insecurity and violence”.<sup>51</sup>

An approach that reconfigures the relationship between peace, security and development could help break down distinctions such as “developed” and “developing” and indeed “stable” and “fragile”. What is more, focusing on the positive experiences of major Brazilian cities in preventing violence and improving security through innovative development initiatives could serve as an inspiration to like-minded member states.<sup>52</sup>

Recent initiatives suggest that there is still room for manoeuvre to engage the Brazilian government on the post-2015 agenda. In March 2014, the Brazilian Ministry of External Relations met with the Ministries of Environment and Social Development and the Secretary General of the Executive to launch an Inter-Ministerial Working Group on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The group will focus on the three dimensions of sustainable development as they are framed in the Rio+20 agenda. The Working Group presents an opportunity to engage with a range of ministries, not least the Ministry of Justice, to make the case for the inclusion of peace-related issues in the post-2015 development agenda.

More recently in May 2014, the Brazilian Presidency organised an event on the MDGs and the SDGs. While the event focused on the need to “align” the positions of the government and Brazilian civil society, it (along with the work of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group) offers an opportunity for civil society to actively engage the government on the intrinsic and extrinsic value of integrating peace into the ongoing post-2015 discussions. While this is challenging – especially given that peace-related issues were absent from these initial discussions – at a minimum this process could help to identify ways in which economic, social and environmental themes can be infused with a peace perspective.

## Next Steps

The Brazilian government is in the process of elaborating a comprehensive vision of the post-2015 development agenda. It has much at stake, not least given the formidable challenges and development opportunities at home and in its neighborhood. Yet the debate in Brazil appears to have been limited, side-stepping difficult questions of peace, as well as security, justice and governance. And yet these issues are at the top of the national policy agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean. What is more, the views advanced by Brazil seem at odds with those expressed by regional partners including Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, and those of other important stakeholders including African member states. With security concerns now a top priority, Brazil's position seems at odds with the very real grievances of its citizens. Now is the time to ensure that the debate moves beyond narrow confines to reflect the concerns of the Brazilian people.

<sup>51</sup> “Statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China”. June 2013, <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/3667g77.pdf>.

<sup>52</sup> See the special issue of Brazilian cities in the International Journal “Stability of Security & Development” for several examples: [www.stabilityjournal.org/collections/special/citizen-security-dialogues-making-brazilian-cities-safer](http://www.stabilityjournal.org/collections/special/citizen-security-dialogues-making-brazilian-cities-safer).

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**COVER PHOTO:** United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH)'s Brazilian peacekeepers and United States soldiers distribute food and water in the slum of Cité Soleil, Haiti. © UN PHOTO



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