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WHEN ONE DOESN'T WANT TO, TWO DON'T FIGHT? PRESIDENT LULA'S DISCOURSE VIS-À-VIS THE RUSSO-UKRAINIAN WAR

Quando um não quer, dois não brigam? O Discurso do Presidente Lula sobre a Guerra Russo-Ucraniana

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ABSTRACT

The return of Lula to the Brazilian presidency marks the revival of multilateralism as a guiding principle of Brazilian foreign policy. In this context, the war in Ukraine has served as a testing ground for the restoration of a policy built around Brazil's ambition to play a role as a mediator in global conflicts. This paper sets out to shed light on how president Lula da Silva frames the war in light of broader Brazilian foreign policy goals. By employing framing analysis on all of President Lula's official discourse (comprising 94 speeches, interviews, and tweets) regarding the Russo-Ukrainian war from his inauguration on January 1 until October 7, 2023, when the Israel-Hamas war began to dominate the agenda, our research results indicate that Lula uses two main frames to describe the conflict: a Global South frame, which traces the causes of the war to asymmetries between north and south in the global governance arrangement, and a quarrel frame, which construes the war in terms of an interpersonal conflict.

Keywords: Russo-Ukrainian war. Lula. Brazilian foreign policy.

RESUMO

A volta de Lula à presidência brasileira marca o retorno do multilateralismo como princípio norteador da política externa brasileira. Nisso, a guerra na Ucrânia serve de campo de teste para a restauração de uma política construída em torno da ambição brasileira de empenhar um papel como mediador nos conflitos internacionais. Esse artigo busca entender como o presidente Lula da Silva enquadra a guerra à luz dos objetivos mais gerais da política externa brasileira. Utilizando o método da análise de *framing* em todo o discurso oficial do presidente Lula (compreendendo 94 discursos, entrevistas e tweets) em relação à guerra russo-ucraniana desde a sua posse em 1 de janeiro até 7 de outubro de 2023, quando a guerra Israel-Hamas começou a dominar a agenda, os resultados da nossa pesquisa indicam que o presidente utiliza dois *frames* principais: o *Global South frame*, que assinala assimetrias entre norte e sul no arranjo de governança global como a principal causa da guerra, e um *frame* de conflito (*quarrel*), que constrói a guerra em termos de um conflito interpessoal.

Palavras-chave: Guerra Russo-Ucraniana. Lula. Política externa brasileira.

INTRODUCTION

The third presidency of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (1 January 2023 – present) has seen a return to foreign policy principles familiar from his first and second terms in office, while these principles have been put to the test in the face of new conflicts and global challenges, such as the Russo-Ukrainian war. The issue has been prominent in Lula's foreign policy discourse, especially during the spring and summer of 2023, when he embarked on a series of official state visits and attended major summits such as the G7, EU-CELAC, Amazon, BRICS and G-20, using the occasions to frequently comment on the war. Lula's position has attracted criticism primarily among Brazil's

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western partners, leading to diplomatic attrition with countries and blocs such as the United States, the European Union, and Ukraine itself.

A primary source of criticism has been the perception of ambiguity in the Brazilian government's stance on the conflict. While Lula has openly condemned Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and endorsed Brazil's vote in favour of a UN resolution condemning the invasion under the Bolsonaro government (2019-2022), he has also attributed blame to Western governments, whom he argues are contributing to or even incentivizing the war. This was the case when Lula, in a joint press conference with German chancellor Olaf Scholz, used the Brazilian expression "onde um não quer, dois não brigam", which literally translates to "where one [party] doesn't want to, two don't fight" and is roughly equivalent to the American expression "it takes two to tango". He used that expression in response to a journalist's request to confirm a statement of his in a 2022 interview with Time Magazine[3] about Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy being equally responsible for the war as Russian president Vladimir Putin[4].

Amid this context, Lula is attempting to restore Brazilian international credentials and take up the role of a mediator, which resembles past foreign policy endeavours and, at the same time, can pave the way for perceptions that "Brazil is punching above its weight". It is thus important to examine how the Brazilian president, a leader of the so-called "Global South", frames global conflicts – their inner causes, developments and solutions – with the war in Europe constituting the most prominent case of at least the first 9 months of his third term. We therefore start from the research question of how president Lula frames the full-scale Russo-Ukrainian war to then investigate his views on Brazil's role as regards the struggle, in light of the country's broader foreign policy goals

Accordingly, frames shape worldviews, guide interpretations and condition behaviour (Gamson and Modigliani 1989; Benford and Snow 2000; Ferree et al 2002; Small et al 2010). Our methodological paradigm is based on Entman (2006), to whom frames (1) define problems, (2) diagnose causes, (3) make moral judgements about causal agents and their effects, and (4) suggest remedies.

Relying on software Atlas.ti as a basis for a qualitative discourse analysis of all of Lula's public statements, both written and oral, on the war from his inauguration on 1 January 2023 until the start of the Israel-Hamas war on 7 October 2023, we identify two main frames serving as a basis for Brazil's foreign policy engagements. This timeframe was chosen for two reasons: first, the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war on October 7 shifted international attention away from the European conflict, which had entered a deadlock, and came to dominate the global security

[3] At this time, Lula was still a presidential candidate.
[4] Time magazine, 4 May 2022. https://time.com/6172611/brazil-president-lula-interview/

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agenda. Second, it was during this period that President Lula most actively engaged with the Russo-Ukrainian war, demonstrating his strongest inclination to assert leadership on the issue.

As for the two frames, the first emphasizes the negative effects of the war on the Global South and the role it can play in furthering peace through multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, which must however be reformed and democratized. The second conceives of the war as an interpersonal conflict with unclear causes, while laying the blame on both Russia and Ukraine and its Western allies, who were brought into the war and want to but are not able to stop it, for which they need third-party mediation. We call the first frame the 'Global South frame', while defining the second as the 'Quarrel frame'. We argue that the first frame reflects the Lula administration's ambition to recover Brazil's standing as a credible voice of the developing world, while the second highlights Lula's attempt to place Brazil as an impartial mediator, being able to bring the conflict to an end.

We argue that while these frames may appear distinct, they have interconnections: on the one hand, Brazil's self-positioning as a mediator in the 'Quarrel frame' aligns with its broader Global South leadership ambitions, an aspiration that continues to shape its foreign policy under President Lula's current term, as well as with its diplomatic tradition of promoting peaceful resolution of international disputes. From this perspective, Brazil's capacity to mediate complex conflicts derives from its standing in international affairs. On the other hand, successful mediation efforts, such as the one Brazil sought in the context of the Russo–Ukrainian war, could further reinforce its broader international status among emerging powers.

The remainder of the paper proceeds with two literature sections — an overview of the new administration's foreign policy and a timeline of Lula's engagement with the war — a methodology section, two empirical sections, one for each frame, and a discussion and concluding remarks section.

BRAZIL'S "NEW" FOREIGN POLICY UNDER LULA

With a view to "return to normalcy", the third term of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's presidency (2023-) ushered in significant shifts in Brazil's overall foreign policy. On one hand, it marked a departure from the turbulent Jair Bolsonaro administration (2019-2022), which questioned the country's long standing diplomatic principles, antagonized traditional allies, replaced universalism with selective engagements with other far-right leaders, contested the rules-based international order, and weakened the role of Itamaraty. On the other hand, the new government sought to revive its views on global development, multilateralism, South-South cooperation, autonomy, and non-alignment (Albuquerque, 2023; Belém Lopes and Vázquez, 2024). While referring to past deeds, such as Brazil's domestic policies to fight hunger and poverty and its attempts to reinforce variable geometry coalitions like the BRICS, the IBSA Dialogue Forum, the BASIC and the G-20, the new government also aimed for recognition and praise for its renewed views and actions on topics like environmental protection and mediation of international conflicts.

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One year in, Lula's administration expected to recover Brazil's identity of being a South American and developing country with global interests (Brazil, 2023a). As part of the "Brazil is back" strategy (Marcondes and Silva 2023), reminiscent of the "proud and bold" behaviour under chancellor Celso Amorim (2003-2010), the new government focused on four main and transversal axes, the first two receiving more attention in comparison to previous terms under Lula: environment and climate change, defence of democracy, food fighting inequalities, poverty, and hunger, and Latin America. The four agendas served the broader interest of renovating the country's international standing and positioning Brazil as a proactive emerging power following the confrontational years of Bolsonaro.

Environment and climate change remain at the forefront of Brazil's recent foreign policy for four main reasons. First, to distinguish the current government from its predecessor. Second, to reinstate existing environmental funding programmes, such as the Amazon Fund, and to attract new sources of climate funding from developed countries historically responsible for climate change. Third, to support the new minister of the Environment and Climate Change, Marina Silva, and the environmental sector against the rural caucus and the coalition of center-right and right-wing parties known as Centrão. Fourth, to enhance international prestige and strategically place Brazil as a much-needed player in the context of the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the energy transition, and the sustainable development goals (Albuquerque, 2023). Under Lula, Brazil reinstated command-and-control measures, reinforced the role of bureaucracies, revitalized environmental funding programs, and implemented initiatives to protect the Yanomami People, echoing domestic actions with multilateral pledges and demands.

Regarding fighting inequalities, poverty, and hunger, Lula's address at the 2023 UN General Assembly remarked on the world's moral and political imperative to eradicate poverty and end hunger (Brazil, 2023b). During the first phase of its presidency, Brazil spearheaded the Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty as part of its G20 presidency, engaged as co-chair at the Global School Meals Coalition, and reestablished actions and programs to fight hunger and alleviate poverty, such as the Brazil without Hunger plan. In terms of regional efforts, the third axis of Lula's foreign policy, Brazil reengaged with the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), attempted to reactivate the Union of South American Nations (Unasur), hosted a meeting of South American presidents in Brasília, held the first Amazon Summit and sponsored the relaunching of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (OTCA). Declarations of intentions and political movement apart, more is still needed in terms of lasting and effective cooperation.

Lastly, the defence of democracy gained prominence in Brazil's foreign policy following the January 8th, 2023, coup attempt and the polarized domestic political landscape. In promoting democratic Brazil abroad and showcasing to the world how it averted a seizure of power, Lula's administration used foreign policy as a tool of domestic politics, setting itself apart from Bolsonaro

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and signalling to the opposition and the military that any future attempts would not garner international support.

Also central to the discourse on "democracy", the defence of democratic and legitimate institutions has long been a cornerstone of Brazil's diplomacy, featuring prominently in the country's speeches at multilateral forums and often directed towards bodies like the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. For Lula's administration, the liberal international order is viewed as inherently unjust, cementing power divisions established after the Second World War. According to Brazilian foreign policy makers aligned with the "autonomist" current of thought within Itamaraty (Saraiva, 2010), the rules-based order ought to encompass diverse views and concepts of "ordering", including perspectives from the Global South (Hurrell, 2018). Under this procedural approach to international relations, the emphasis lies on reforming how norms and principles are established, rather than fundamentally altering the status quo. As described by Albuquerque (2020), during Lula's initial two terms and even with Dilma Rousseff's presidency (2011-2016), in this case mostly by inertia, Brazil expected to promote changes in the order but not of the order itself. A similar notion persists today, during the president's third mandate, although in a very different global context.

In Lula's Brazil, the global order can only be considered "democratic" if it undergoes a process of "democratization". This idea necessarily involves greater participation by countries from Latin America, Africa, and Asia in the decision-making of multilateral institutions. While advocating these ideals, Lula's administration aims to be perceived as a legitimate representative of the developing world without clearly saying so. Leadership, for Brazil, should stem from its domestic achievements, for instance, the policies to fight hunger and poverty, and from international acknowledgement, rather than from self-assertion over its regional and/or developing peers.

Multilateralism, therefore, is not an end in itself but rather a means to attain a higher standing in global affairs. It is central to Brazil's strategy to gain more credibility without bearing the costs of leadership or assuming the role of paymaster, as often expected by its regional neighbours. Brazil's engagement in multilateral forums combines demanding developed powers to contribute more and offer greater support – mostly financial – to their developing peers, while also voluntarily taking on additional obligations, a step further in Brazil's "graduation process" (Milani, Pinheiro and Lima, 2017; Guimarães and Almeida, 2018). By espousing such a discourse, Brazil can maintain a position in-between the rich and the developing worlds, nurturing an image of prudence and responsibility.

With this parsimonious behaviour, comes the idea that Brazil has the confidence and credibility to serve as mediator or "bridge-country", capable of, for example, reconciling parties and intervening for peaceful ends (Chatin, 2018; Lopes and Vázquez, 2024), acting independently and without being entangled in disputes between the United States, China, and Russia (Spektor, 2023). Within Brazilian diplomacy, this orientation began in the early XX century and included

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endeavours such as participation in the 1907 Hague Peace Conference and mediation in tensions between Colombia and Peru in the 1930s.

In the 2010s, Lula made attempts to mediate the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and, together with Turkey, address the Iranian nuclear program. In collaboration with IBSA, Brazilian negotiators consulted with the Syrian government, hoping to halt violence. As noted by Albuquerque (2020), Brazilian efforts in these three situations failed to receive support from developed countries and did not yield lasting solutions. Buarque and Mikelli (2023) argue that great powers are reluctant to grant Brazil a mediating role in significant global security conflicts, viewing Brazil's actions as surpassing its influence in international security. This activism was discontinued during Rousseff's administration (Burges, 2015), which led some to argue that Brazil had been acting "adventurously" and punching above its weight. Brazil's absence during the peace agreement between the Colombian government and the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (Farc) in 2016 was notable. For Malamud (2017), Brazil's international rollback was a consequence of insufficient resource endowment and cumulative policy mistakes.

Now, the expectation with Lula is to "unite and rebuild" domestically while bouncing back internationally. In his first year of government, Lula participated in the G7 summit, reinforcing the defence of peace and multilateralism; announced the COP-30 in Belém; called on rich countries at the opening of the New Global Finance Pact in Paris; and attended the BRICS summit in South Africa and the summit of Portuguese-speaking Countries in São Tomé and Príncipe. Moreover, Brazil took over the G-20 presidency and rejoined the Global Compact for Migration, undoing the Bolsonaro administration's decision to leave[5].

The emphasis on being perceived as a mediator persists, but this self-image does not always match external perceptions of Brazil's power, nor does it lead to lasting, feasible solutions, with Brazil seeking to foster peaceful solutions to controversies, reconciliation, and cooperation. This was evident in Brazil's involvement in the electoral agreement between the Venezuelan government and the opposition in mid-2023, aimed at ensuring fair and transparent elections. However, in 2024, the tone changed, when president Nicolás Maduro banned an opposition candidate, prompting criticism from Brazil. Growing discontent with Caracas also responded to the overall negative public opinion on Maduro's regime and to the Guyana-Venezuela crisis.

Another failed attempt at mediation occurred during the war between Israel and Hamas. As the death toll continued to climb, Brazil accused Israel of committing genocide against the Palestinian people, leading Israel to discredit Brazilian efforts. Better results were achieved when the country held the UNSC seat, where Brazilian negotiators crafted a resolution condemning all violence against civilians and all acts of terrorism, calling for humanitarian pauses in the Israel-

[5] "UN Network on Migration Welcomes Brazil's Return to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration". IOM UN Migration, Latin America and the Caribbean, January 10 2023. Retrieved from: https://lac.iom.int/en/news/un-network-migration-welcomes-brazils-return-global-compact-safe-orderly-and-regular-migration

Gaza crisis. Although not adopted, the draft resolution garnered support from 12 UNSC members, including veto players China and France.

As happened in the past with Iran, Syria, and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Brazilian mediation efforts fell through. Its intentions were not matched by effective actions or enough ability to unite contending parties, leading to arguments that Brazil is acting beyond its capabilities (Schenoni, Ribeiro, Lopes and Casarões, 2022), particularly in direct mediation efforts. This view has taken on renewed contours as Brazil continues to recover from Bolsonaro's years in office and grapples with domestic polarization. When acting through multilateralism, however, Brazil tends to receive more positive consideration. In these settings, Brazil is seen as capable of effectively supporting the achievement of multilateral agreements, bringing diverse perspectives to the negotiating table, as in debates on topics such as climate change.

As the following sections show, Brazil's role in the Russo-Ukrainian war represents a compelling example of the tension between the country's self-perception as a mediator and its actual capacity to propose lasting solutions.

LULA AND THE FULL-SCALE RUSSO-UKRAINIAN WAR

The statements of Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva about the Russian invasion of Ukraine can be divided into three key phases: his electoral campaign statements, those made at the beginning of his government, and later statements issued under pressure, in which he adjusted his rhetoric about the war. Tensions on the Russian-Ukrainian border began to rise in early 2021, with an exponential increase in Russian military presence in the region[6]. Throughout the year, Russian President Vladimir Putin categorically denied preparing for war[7]. The situation escalated on February 21, 2022, when the Russian government recognized the independence of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, located along the Donets River, areas with a significant concentration of Russian citizens[8].

The war began three days later, with the Russian bombing of several Ukrainian cities, including the capital, Kyiv, over 500 kilometres away[9]. On February 24, 2022, when the war began, Jair Bolsonaro was the President of Brazil. The conflict entered Brazilian public debate during Bolsonaro's trip to Eastern Europe, during which he met with Vladimir Putin and Hungarian Prime

[6] "Russia planning massive military offensive against Ukraine involving 175,000 troops, U.S. intelligence warns". The Washington Post, December 3 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/russia-ukraine-invasion/2021/12/03/98a3760e-546b-11ec-8769-2f4ecdf7a2ad_story.html
[7] "Russia's attack on Ukraine came after months of denials it would attack". The Washington Post, February 24, 2022. Retrieved from: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/02/24/ukraine-russia-denials/
[8] "Russia recognizes independence of Ukraine separatist regions". DW, February 21 2022. Retrieved from: https://www.dw.com/en/russia-recognizes-independence-of-ukraine-separatist-regions/a-60861963
[9] "Ukraine in maps: Tracking the war with Russia". BBC, June 25, 2025. Retrieved from: https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0l0k4389g2o

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Minister Viktor Orbán[10]. This trip generated criticisms in Brazil due to its potential negative diplomatic impact on the relations with important partners such as the US and the EU, as well as the authoritarian nature of both leaders[11]. During the tour, Bolsonaro expressed solidarity with Russia[12]. Days later, however, Brazil's diplomacy supported a UN resolution condemning the invasion of Ukraine[13].

At that time, Lula had not yet announced his candidacy for president, which was only confirmed on May 7[14]. Shortly before that, the Workers Party (PT) candidate had given an interview to Time Magazine, outlining his campaign stance: holding both countries responsible for the conflict[15]. This position differed from Bolsonaro's veiled support for Putin and also from the West's stance of total condemnation of the invasion of a sovereign nation.

The Brazilian elections were held on October 2, 2022 (first round) and October 30, 2022 (run-off)[16]. The topic of the war in Ukraine did not prominently feature in the election campaign nor in the following months, during which Bolsonaro supported started camping en masse near the main government buildings in Brasília and there were arrests of allies suspected of organizing anti-democratic activities[17]. This threat materialized on January 8 with the storming of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies, the Planalto Palace and the Supreme Court by extremist Bolsonaro loyalists[18]. The topic dominated the period between the elections and the inauguration on January 1, 2023, continuing on top of the agenda in the early days of Lula's government. Regarding the Russo-Ukrainian war, Lula's statements, as president, initially suggested that both countries were at fault, emphasizing Brazil's potential role as a mediator in the conflict (see Appendix II).

[10] "Depois de Putin, Bolsonaro se reúne com o primeiro-ministro húngaro Orban". UOL, February 17 2022. Retrieved from: https://noticias.uol.com.br/ultimas-noticias/afp/2022/02/17/depois-de-putin-bolsonaro-se-reune-com-o-primeiro-ministro-hungaro-orban.htm

[11] "'Muito ruim', 'inoportuna': especialistas criticam viagem de Bolsonaro à Rússia neste momento". G1, February 12 2022. Retrieved from: https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2022/02/12/muito-ruim-inoportuna-especialistas-criticam-viagem-de-bolsonaro-a-russia-neste-momento.ghtml

[12] "Estados Unidos criticam declaração de Bolsonaro pró-Rússia". CNN Brasil, February 17 2022. Retrieved from: https://www.cnnbrasil.com.br/internacional/estados-unidos-criticam-declaracao-de-bolsonaro-pro-russia/

[13] "Brasil condena invasão da Ucrânia; saiba as razões do voto brasileiro no Conselho de Segurança da ONU". G1, February 25 2022. Retrieved from: https://g1.globo.com/mundo/ucrania-russia/noticia/2022/02/25/brasil-condena-invasao-da-ucrania-saiba-as-razoes-do-voto-do-brasil-na-onu.ghtml

[14] "PT oficializa pré-candidatura de Lula à Presidência e lança Geraldo Alckmin (PSB) como candidato a vice". G1, May 7 2022. Retrieved from: https://g1.globo.com/jornal-nacional/noticia/2022/05/07/pt-oficializa-pre-candidatura-de-lula-a-presidencia-e-lanca-geraldo-alckmin-psb-como-candidato-a-vice.ghtml

[15] "Lula conversa com TIME sobre a Ucrânia, Bolsonaro e a frágil democracia Brasileira". Time Magazine, May 4 2022. Retrieved from: https://time.com/6173104/lula-da-silva-transcricao/

[16] "Resultados da apuração para presidente no 2º turno". Folha de São Paulo, October 31 2022. Retrieved from: https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/eleicoes/2022/apuracao/2turno/brasil/

[17] "PF faz operação contra bolsonaristas radicais suspeitos de organizar atos antidemocráticos". G1, December 15 2022. Retrieved from: https://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2022/12/15/pf-faz-operacao-contra-bolsonaristas-suspeitos-de-organizar-atos-antidemocraticos.ghtml

[18] "Atos terroristas: os 11 pontos para entender tudo desde o 8 de janeiro". O Globo, January 11 2023. Retrieved from: https://oglobo.globo.com/politica/noticia/2023/01/atos-golpistas-os-11-principais-fatos-para-entender-tudo-desde-o-8-de-janeiro.ghtml

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A shift towards a more moderate stance, and thus closer to the Western position, occurred in April 2023, between two of Lula's trips. During his first trip to China, from April 11 to 14, Lula made statements blaming not only the two warring countries but also the European Union and the United States (see Appendix II). This prompted protests from the Ukrainian community in Portugal, an early ally of Ukraine, even before the European Union's official declaration of support[19]. Lula's subsequent trip to Portugal from April 21 to 25 marked a period of moderation, signalling the start of a third phase where Lula alternated the tone of his statements, reflecting the evolving frames he adopted (based on the analysis of the corpus, see Appendix II for links to specific speeches).

DATA AND METHOD

This paper relies on discourse analysis and builds especially on Entman's (1993) understanding of discourse analysis not just as a methodology but as a "research paradigm". That is, "a general theory that informs most scholarship on the operation and outcomes of any particular system of thought and action." (p. 56). Specifically, according to Entman, frames highlight certain aspects of an issue, thus increasing their salience, and, in so doing, they promote a specific problem definition, causal analysis, moral judgement and prophylaxis for the issue at hand (p. 52). However, aside from highlighting, frames also omit certain elements of reality, and these omissions are often just as important as the included elements (p. 54). Importantly, frames are not limited to communication alone, but condition behaviour as well: the way people act is informed by how they perceive reality (Goffman, 1986). Furthermore, political elites' framing of issues strongly shapes public opinion (Zaller, 1992).

We took as our corpus all of Lula's public statements, both written and oral, on the war, which we collected using a variety of methods. First, we used keywords such as "Lula", "Ucrânia" (Ukraine), "guerra" (war) and "paz" (peace) on Google to collect the statements. Google results also include YouTube videos, and we used the Tools "Anytime" Custom range option to search month-by-month and ensure we found all statements made during the period of interest (01/01/2023 – 07/10/2023). Some of the sources we included were newspapers and magazines, Lula's official YouTube channel, TV interviews available online, and tweets from Lula's official twitter account. For transcribing video recordings, we used a ChatGPT plugin in Google Chrome (Unlimited Summary Generator for YouTube™) to provide an initial transcript, which we checked by watching the video in its entirety and correcting it where necessary. We largely collected the statements as they were made. Later on, we nevertheless realized that transcripts of Lula's public statements and interviews were eventually uploaded onto the official website of the Brazilian

[19] "Ucranianos protestam contra Lula em frente à embaixada brasileira em Lisboa". CNN Brasil, April 21 2023. Retrieved from: https://www.cnnbrasil.com.br/internacional/ucranianos-protestam-contra-lula-em-frente-a-embaixada-brasileira-em-lisboa/

presidency[20], sometimes with a delay of up to one month, after which we started relying primarily on that source. This led to a collection of 94 texts.

We then imported these primary texts into Atlas.ti, a widely-used software package for qualitative data analysis. This was followed by coding the text: an inductive process in which we added new codes that seemed relevant to the analysis. These codes were aggregated into families, such as "solution", "metaphor", or "role of Brazil". After coding the corpus in this way, we did a simplification round, in which we combined closely-related codes to make the analysis more manageable.

The next step was to arrange the codes in the "network view", where codes are represented as nodes and edges can be created to connect them to other codes and memos. The network view with the codes can be consulted in Appendix I. In this way, we inductively identified two main clusters corresponding to two main frames: the Global South frame and the quarrel frame, which we use to conduct the analysis. No other major frames were found. To privilege the most representative ones, we prioritized codes with the most citations and rhetorical consistency. In the end, the selected frames were the ones most closely aligned to Brazil's overall foreign policy orientation and connected to key tensions in its international inroads - particularly the ambition to lead the Global South while grappling with structural constraints on its capacity to exert influence abroad.

In implementing Entman's paradigm, we drew inspiration from Lepianka (2015) in organizing the text. For each frame she identifies, Lepianka has four subsections: "problem definition", "diagnosis and solution" (merging Entman's elements of causal analysis and prophylaxis), the role of key actors (in her case, the poor), which accounts for Entman's moral evaluation item, and "framing devices", which can be semantic, syntactic or rhetorical in nature, and include metaphors, catchphrases, allusions and stereotypes. This latter item does not feature in Entman's framework, but is instead an addition by Lepianka based on Van Gorp (2005).

Finally, we opted to look into the discourses of president Lula - rather than institutional statements from Itamaraty or the presidency, two alternative sources commonly employed in foreign policy research - for the fact that presidents historically exert a central role in the formulation and implementation of Brazil's foreign policy. There is a good number of works in the field of foreign policy analysis that corroborate the relevance of the leader and how his/her preferences might affect a country's international insertion. Malamud (2003), for instance, mentions the notion of "hiperpresidentialism". Cason and Power (2009), for their part, use the idea of "presidentialization" to explain change in foreign policy, while Saraiva and Albuquerque

[20] We relied on the pages "Últimas Entrevistas" (latest interviews, https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas) and "Últimos discursos e pronunciamentos" (latest speeches and statements, https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/discursos-e-pronunciamentos).

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(2022) focus on cognitive maps and decision-making processes to explain the shifts between the presidencies of Jair Bolsonaro and Lula da Silva.

Another reason was the relevant number of Lula's public statements on the war between Russia and Ukraine. For almost nine months, he referred to the conflict 94 times, which suggests not only his interest in the matter - and the consequences for Brazil's positions abroad -, but also a pressing topic to be explored.

THE GLOBAL SOUTH FRAME

Problem definition

The Global South frame construes the war as a problem for the world, with consequences reaching far beyond the borders of Russia and Ukraine. By causing global disruptions in energy, fertilizer, and food markets, it aggravates existing issues faced by developing countries, notably hunger and poverty, and stands in the way of improving wellbeing and sustainable development. Furthermore, the risk of nuclear escalation constitutes a grave threat, being a situation caused by the developed world with unbridled effects on the Global South. The following quote by president Lula illustrates this view well:

> "I spoke about our concern regarding the effects of the war that extend beyond the European continent. I reiterated my concern about the global consequences of this conflict in terms of food and energy security, especially for the poorest regions of the planet." (P16, authors' translation)

And, regarding the risk of escalation:

> "I talked to President Biden, I talked to Xi Jinping, in an attempt to build a movement that brings peace back here in our dear Europe, so that we don't dream every night about the possibility of a third world war or even the use of nuclear bombs." (P20, authors' translation)

Diagnosis and solution

The Global South frame lays the blame of the conflict directly on an anachronistic global architecture, one that still resembles the balance of power established in the aftermath of the Second World War. According to the frame, the UN Security Council is described as dysfunctional, inept, and unrepresentative. More concretely, this notion emphasizes that most of the wars in recent history are or have been prosecuted by the council's permanent members (P05) - who are also some of the largest arms producers and sellers - but are not resolved by them. Moreover, regions like Africa, where protracted conflicts take place, do not have a seat at the council, undermining its legitimacy.

Hence, veto-wielding permanent members can act unilaterally on matters related to peace and security, unchecked by the rest of the Council and by other UN member states. In the traditional view of Brazil's diplomacy, which was reinforced during Lula's third term, the Council

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should be reformed to include some developed powers like Germany and Japan, as well as upcoming ones like India, all composing the G-4 alongside Brazil. As for Brazil, it is well-positioned to advocate for the interests of the Global South, which are centered on peace, stability, and socioeconomic development rather than warfare. The following quotes exemplify this argument. First, regarding the deeper roots of the problem, Lula says the following:

> "We live in a very strange world, Mr. President. We live in a world where the UN Security Council, its permanent members, all of them are the biggest producers of weapons in the world, they are the biggest sellers of weapons in the world, and they are the biggest participants in wars in the world. (...) Why isn't Spain [on the Security Council]? Why isn't Brazil? Why isn't Japan? Why isn't Germany? Why isn't India? Why isn't Nigeria? Why isn't Egypt? Why isn't South Africa? Who determines this? The winners of the Second World War. But that was many years ago. The geography of the world has changed, geopolitics has changed, the economy has changed." (P23, authors' translation)

On the current problems plaguing the Council, he added:

> "At the same time, you cannot have a UN coordination where countries have veto rights and countries that are part of the Security Council sometimes wage war without discussing it in the Security Council. The United States invaded Iraq without discussing it in the Security Council. England and France invaded Libya without discussing it in the Security Council. Now Russia has invaded Ukraine without discussing it in the Security Council." (P13, authors' translation)

Lula even goes as far as to argue that the dysfunctionality of the Security Council may have been a necessary condition for the war in Ukraine, in the sense that he believes the war might not have happened in the absence of this condition:

> "If this war had been discussed in the UN Security Council, if it had been taken seriously, and if the UN Security Council had behaved as a global governance [system] that respected the collective of countries in the world, it could have possibly reached the conclusion that there does not have to be war." (P38, authors' translation)

Three interrelated solutions are associated with this frame: the reform of the UN Security Council to make it more representative and functional, together with a renewed role for UN bodies such as the General Assembly; the creation of alternative institutions, which echoes Brazil's quest for a multipolar world operated multilaterally (Adler and Long, 2023; Amorim, 2022; Schenon, Ribeiro, Lopes and Casarões, 2022); and the creation of a group of "neutral" countries to mediate the conflict and broker peace. The following citations illustrate each solution.

Regarding the first, the expansion and strengthening of the UN through the reform of the Security Council, Lula mentions that:

> "More countries need to be added to participate in the United Nations, in the Security Council. It is important that we include new countries and increase the governance capacity of the UN, that it's not just a decorative institution, but one that makes decisions effectively. And it could have decided to avoid this war, it could have organized many discussions, it could have convened a General Assembly." (P09, authors' translation)

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Regarding the second solution, Lula refers to the G-20, which Brazil favors for being more representative than the Security Council and for it proved successful, for instance, during the context of the 2008 financial crisis. Also, Brazil presided the G-20 from late 2023 to late 2024 and made use of it to portray the pillars of its modern diplomacy: the fight against hunger, poverty, and inequality, which was epitomized in the creation of the Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty; the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental); and the reform of global governance. As stated by Lula,

> "I think we need to build a group of countries that starts organizing itself for peace, that is, creating a kind of G-20 for peace. We created the G-20 when there was the economic crisis. Therefore, we need to create another political instrument of countries that are not participating in any activity in this war and discuss with them." (P07, authors' translation)

Regarding the third solution, Lula defended the creation of a group of "neutral", "disinterested" countries to mediate the conflict:

> "That is, a group of countries that have nothing to do with the war. That did not sell weapons, that did not give money. Meaning, a group of countries that may be able to talk to both the president of Ukraine as well as to the president of Russia. What I think is that the situation is very delicate, because the European Union, even unintentionally, is involved in the war." (P03, authors' translation)

This idea to respond to a new bipolar conflict between the US and Europe on the one hand, and Russia on the other, by building a group of unbiased countries, somehow echoes the nonaligned movement founded in the 1960s by a group of developing countries, most of which were newly independent, to advance their interests and maintain their autonomy in the face of the developing Cold War. This analogy becomes clearer in the following statement: "so, it's a group of southern countries that want to (…) find the peace that the north is not managing to achieve." (P27, authors' translation)

This brings us to the issue of BRICS. A total of 28 passages related to BRICS were coded in the corpus. It is interesting to note that Lula only directly relates BRICS to the war a few times. Only twice, does he signal an intention to talk about the war at the BRICS Summit and mentions the BRICS as a possible forum to negotiate an end to the war (P40, P41), on August 14 and August 22, respectively. The BRICS summit would take place on that latter day, and Lula's statement was made just before it started. However, on September 9, Lula says:

> "On the matter of BRICS, for instance, we did not discuss the war. We think that we have other forums to discuss the war." (P45, authors' translation)

Mentioning BRICS here is nevertheless relevant, because Lula repeatedly associates BRICS with an effort to redress the unequal structure of existing global governance institutions and give a voice to the Global South, as well as a way of giving underrepresented countries "a chance to participate for the first time in their lives" (P42). But this reveals a contradiction: if the enfranchisement of the Global South is the key to solving the current war and future wars, then

why was it apparently not possible to discuss the war at a gathering that symbolizes that enfranchisement?

Key actors and their roles

The key, according to the Global South frame, includes the UN Security Council and Brazil, portrayed as a willing protagonist in the reform of global governance institutions, along with its capabilities and Lula's ability to negotiate an end to the war. The following quote aptly illustrates the idea of Brazil's self-defined prominence:

> "So, as far as my will is concerned, we are going to create a group, and I am going to the G-7 now [May 2023] in Japan. There, I will bring up this topic again because it is not just about discussing what the United States wants to discuss. Not just discussing what Japan wants to discuss. What does Brazil want to discuss? What is Brazil thinking about things? So, that's what Brazil has to show. The greatness of its population, the greatness of its size, you know, Brazil is not lesser than anyone. We don't want to be greater, but we also don't want to be lesser." (P10, authors' translation)

The frame also includes other important actors such as Europe and the US, which are said to be at best involved in the war and at worst incentivizing it, as demonstrate the subsequent quotes:

> "Europe and the United States end up contributing to the continuation of this war." (P15, authors' translation). "Patience is necessary to talk to the president of Ukraine, but it is necessary, above all, to convince the countries that are supplying weapons, incentivizing the war, to stop." (P14, authors' translation)

Strikingly absent in this frame are the roles of Ukraine and Russia, which feature neither in the diagnosis nor in the solution. Instead, this frame conceives of the current war as a symptom of a broader power imbalance in the world, which is accentuated and perpetuated by the structure of the UN Security Council and the interests of the developed powers. This stands in stark contrast to the quarrel frame, discussed in the next section, where the focus is precisely on the two countries that allegedly cannot make peace.

Framing devices

A number of framing devices are used to underline the Global South frame. Often appearing in Lula's words, there is an opposition between the (money spent on) prosecution of the war and (the money that could be spent on) improving the human condition, especially reducing hunger and improving wellbeing, and to a lesser extent, economic and social development. This is illustrated by the following quote:

> "There is a figure that is exaggeratedly strong to show the irresponsibility with which the issue of social inequality is treated in the world. Namely, we have, according to the FAO [the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations], 735 million people going hungry, and at the same time, in the year 2022, the equivalent of 2.24 trillion [US] dollars spent on arms. It is a contradiction because, if this money had been spent on combating

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> hunger, this money would certainly be enough to end hunger or create the perspective of jobs, work, development for these people who are in need around the world." (P38, authors' translation).

Three underlying motifs are associated with this framing device. They are used to reinforce the argument that the world as a whole is adversely impacted by the war, that there is a trade-off between waging war and improving wellbeing, and that war causes irreparable loss of life. The first motif consists of variations on the theme "the world is against the war", where "the world" can also be "humanity" or "everybody", and "is against the war" can be substituted by "wants the war to stop" or "wants peace". This motif occurs 17 times, making it, by far, the most common motif in the corpus. The second motif is variations on Lula's statement that his war is against hunger in his country, which occurs 7 times. The third motif are statements along the lines of the victims' lives not being recoverable. It occurs 6 times.

Another discursive strategy involves critically mentioning the wars the major powers have prosecuted in recent history. It is used to emphasize that the overarching problem is not the specific war between Russia and Ukraine, but the chronic war-like behavior of most of the permanent members of the UN Security Council. It implicitly follows that, aside from Russia, these are all Western states (China has not been at war since 1979): the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. Comparisons with the Iraq war (18 occurrences) and the 2011 NATO-led intervention in Libya (9 occurrences) are particularly common. To illustrate:

> "And we also have a Security Council that consists of six permanent members [five in reality], and it's them who have atomic bombs, it's them who sell weapons, it's them who make war without consulting anyone. It is true that Russia invaded Ukraine without consulting anyone. It is true that the United States invaded Iraq without consulting anyone. It is true that England and France invaded Libya without consulting anyone." (P45, authors' translation)

THE QUARREL FRAME

Problem definition

As the name suggests, the quarrel frame conceives the conflict between Russia and Ukraine as a quarrel: "a heated argument or disagreement, typically about a trivial issue and between people who are usually on good terms"[21]. Russia and Ukraine entered into a conflict for which both share responsibility. However, this conflict interests neither of them, and both would like it to stop. It is a pointless conflict that causes loss of life, human suffering, and destruction, which requires an immediate solution and mediation of trusted parties.

[21] source: Oxford Languages (https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=quarrel).

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Diagnosis and solution

The quarrel frame argues that the belligerents entered the conflict more or less by accident, for reasons that are unclear or, at least, not explicit. In this view, pre-existing tensions may exist, but the involved parties do not know exactly what sparked the conflict. For this reason, they may want to, but do not know how to stop it, and none of the parties or their allies are talking about peace. In contrast to the Global South frame, therefore, war was not a result of an unjust system of anachronistic world order. A specific citation that illustrates this idea quite well is the following:

> "No one is interested in that war. No other country is interested. I don't even know if anyone else is still interested; it's only of interest to Ukraine because these things happen from time to time. People start, then they even want to stop, but they don't know how to stop." (P02)

To resolve this impasse, the conflicting parties must be persuaded to go to the negotiating table. Since they are unclear about the specific reasons that caused the war, a bilateral solution is unlikely, and a third party is needed to mediate. According to Lula, this party could be a group of countries, including or formed by Brazil, an idea that aligns with the broader Brazilian view (Motta and Succi Junior, 2023). Finally, for the war to end, both parties must make concessions. Regarding negotiations and mediation, the Brazilian president mentioned that:

> “You know, we are going to talk to everyone until we see if it's possible to say, ‘look, let’s stop fighting and start negotiating, which is cheaper, more convenient, more peaceful, and better for the human beings living in Russia’. That is what we will keep trying to do. Just so you know, now with the power of the President of the Republic, we are trying to establish all possible negotiations until we reach the two who are at war to see if they want to stop.” (P23)

And:

> “So, in my mind, the first thing to do was to convince them to stop the war. Once the war stops, sit down to talk. Sit down to talk and say the following: ‘Look, I won't give up this, I won't give up that. I want this, I want that.’ Until we find a common denominator.” (P33)

Finally, another quote that illustrates both the diagnosis and solution elements of the quarrel frame is the following:

> “Because I think that when a fight starts, we talk about war, but it could be a street fight or a strike. In other words, you need to know how to start and how to stop, and often we don’t know how to stop. I think we are in a situation where both countries are having difficulty making decisions. If both countries are having trouble making decisions, I think third countries that maintain good relations with both need to create the conditions for peace. You know, we don’t need war.” (P14)

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Key actors and their roles

Regarding the roles of the key actors, little distinction is made between Russia and Ukraine. According to Lula's discourse, the war interests neither of them, nor, as mentioned above, both would like to stop but do not know how, and need a credible, impartial mediator to find common ground. At the same time, both belligerents are convinced they are right and will win. These ideas seem contradictory, but both often appear together in the corpus of texts analysed. Finally, Brazil is willing and able to contribute to a negotiated peace and is part of the solution. In contrast to the Global South frame, Brazil is more clearly posited by its president as part of the solution, individually or through a group. The quarrel frame thus focuses more on the "how" of ending the war, emphasizing procedural elements for peace rather than portraying an overall criticism of the existing international order, as the Global South frame does. About the roles of Russia and Ukraine, as represented by Putin and Zelensky, for example, Lula mentions that:

> "What I feel is that neither Putin nor Zelensky are talking about peace at this moment. It seems to me that both believe, you know, someone is going to win and there is no need to discuss peace." (P27)

About the role of Brazil and corroborating the argument of the quarrel frame:

> "And we don't want Brazil to enter the war. We want Brazil to build peace. And Brazil has the political authority to discuss this issue with both Biden and Germany, France, and especially China, which I think is a key player for us to find a solution to this war." (P03)

Framing devices

The framing devices associated with the quarrel frame is the following. First, Lula compares the failed attempt by Brazil and Turkey to broker a deal concerning Iran's nuclear program in 2010 and the potential mediation of the Russo-Ukrainian war. This analogy is repeated several times to signal Brazil's experience in negotiating conflicts and to single it out as a plausible mediator.

> "And I told President Biden that we were willing to talk. We had already talked with the United States during the Iraq War. We had already talked with Iran about the uranium enrichment issue, which no one else could resolve. Brazil went there and did it. In other words, we need to put all our experience into practice to try to convince people that the only thing that doesn't matter is war." (P07)

There is also a series of frequently appearing motifs. The first of these is statements of the kind that Brazil, which is applying to the role of mediator, is a country of peace (13 mentions). A second motif is the need to find a "common denominator" to reach peace (5 mentions), as expressed in a quote in the above subsection 'Diagnosis and solution' (text P33), which emphasizes the need to find common ground between both parties. Third, statements that the war is unnecessary or senseless appear 4 times, and so does the motif that peace is only possible if both sides want it.

There is also an expression associated with the quarrel, which is mentioned in the title and introduction of this work: "where one doesn't want to, two don't fight." While this expression appears only twice in our sample, it is a very revealing one and has attracted significant media attention. It is used to emphasize the idea, inherent to the frame, that the war is a symmetrical conflict between two parties, each of whom bears responsibility for it. Also, they are unable to solve the spat.

Finally, key metaphors associated with the quarrel frame are those that frame the war as an interpersonal conflict, such as a bar fight (3 mentions) or other types of smaller scale conflict, such as a strike or social movement activism (9 mentions). Furthermore, countries are depicted as people (4 mentions), as seen in some of the quotes in the 'Diagnosis and solution' subsection. The function of these metaphors seems to be to informalize and simplify the conflict. This, in turn, underscores that the solution to the conflict is within reach and depends simply on both setting aside their differences to come to the negotiating table and find common ground.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

This paper set out to analyse the discourse of president Lula on the war in Ukraine. It identified two frames: a Global South frame and a quarrel frame. The Global South frame sees the war as a conflict with global consequences, especially for the Global South, which suffers from food and energy insecurity caused by the war. It traces the roots of the war to inequalities in the global governance infrastructure, especially the UN Security Council, which consists of a small group of countries that won WWII. These countries have been most active in warfare in the past couple of decades. Most of these wars were not discussed in the Council, and even the Council itself could not stop them or did not want to. The solution proposed by the Global South frame is primarily to expand the UNSC to make it more representative by including more countries, especially those in the Global South, and to make it more effective, for instance, by abolishing its members' veto rights. It assigns an important role to Brazil in brokering the redesign of global governance infrastructure (Krause, 2024). The main framing devices associated with this frame are oppositions posited between continuing the war and improving human well-being, comparisons with wars started by Western states in recent history, and statements of the kind "everyone is against the war"/"everyone wants peace".

Whereas the Global South frame takes a macro-perspective of the war and attributes it to long-term, structural, global causes, the quarrel frame takes a much more micro-perspective. It construes the war as an interpersonal conflict in which the causes are either unclear or, at any rate, not particularly important. On the surface, both parties believe they must or will win, but under the surface, they would actually like it to end, but do not know how to break out of the spiral of violence. The resolution of the conflict depends on the explicit willingness of both parties to stop the war, because "where one doesn't want to, two don't fight".

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Since the belligerents do not seem to be able to come to terms by themselves, they need third-party mediation to establish a rational dialogue in which both parties lay their cards on the table and make concessions. While Lula nominally condemns Russia's invasion a number of times, in practice, he makes little distinction between the roles of Russia and Ukraine, neither in what they are to blame for nor what their responsibilities are going forward. Brazil is posited as a potential mediator, or a broker for a group of countries that would act as mediators, and its 'curriculum vitae' in mediation is frequently brought up to underline this claim. Specifically, Lula's role alongside Turkey in brokering a 2010 agreement with Iran about its nuclear program (which was afterwards rejected by the United States and other Western powers) is mentioned a number of times. Aside from this comparison with the Iran deal, other framing devices include the slogan "Brazil is a country of peace", metaphors of smaller-scale conflicts such as interpersonal quarrels, bar and street fights, and strikes, and motifs invoking the idea of 'both sides' willingness to end bloodshed.

While these frames seem rather distinct, they may have a degree of complementarity. As we mentioned above, the Global South frame is set at the macro level, sketching the structural context in which the problem occurs and the reforms necessary to prevent similar conflicts in the future. On the other hand, the quarrel frame is located at the microlevel and relates to the particular conflict between Ukraine and Russia – and their leaders - and how that should be resolved in the short term. Thus, while the Global South frame is more about prevention, the quarrel frame focuses on procedural elements leading to a resolution.

A number of questions now arise about Brazil's and Lula's roles in the Ukraine war. First, there often exists a discrepancy between Brazil's self-perception on the one hand and its external perceptions and limitations in its capacity to act on the other (Buarque and Mikelli, 2023). This also appears to be the case in the Ukraine war (Znojek, 2023). A major issue is that some affected parties do not see Brazil or Lula as a competent mediator for this specific situation. Most importantly, the Ukrainian government's reaction to Lula's attempts at mediation has been at best lukewarm and at times hostile, while the Russian government has been more enthusiastic (Jornal da Gazeta, 2023). Lula's statements attributing partial blame to Ukraine, for instance, have not been well received by Kyiv ("Zelensky lembra a Lula que 'a guerra não é no Brasil' e afasta concessões territoriais", 2023). The question remains about how Lula – and consequently Brazil - could act as a mediator in a conflict where one of the belligerents feels at least uneasy about his positions.

Another difficulty for Brazil to be considered a reliable mediator relates to its position in world affairs. While the country is commonly seen by its developed partners – namely the EU and the US – as a leader of the Global South, it avoids explicitly positioning itself in that role. On the one hand, Brazil expects to be seen as a benign and cooperative player, sharing a common background and practical solutions to ongoing problems. By doing so, it wishes to distance itself from the former colonial powers, present alternative views on related socioeconomic development, and avoid potential resistance. On the other hand, Brazil expects to be recognized

for its contributions to global affairs, which could take the form of a permanent seat on the UNSC and/or greater decision-making power in multilateral forums.

This strategic, although contradictory, foreign policy approach is reflected, for instance, in Brazil's relationships with its regional neighbours. Whereas it advocates regional cohesion and seeks to foster common views, Brazil often advances multilateral proposals without first discussing their content with regional partners, as explored by Albuquerque (2020) in the multilateral negotiations on climate change and peace and security. At the same time, while it sometimes faces regional opposition (Malamud, 2011), Brazil is not fully backed by Washington, London, or Paris to exert a decisive role in intricate matters, as exemplified by the Tehran agreement and attempts to mediate the wars in Syria and Ukraine. As for the Global South, the situation is more nuanced, with Brazilian initiatives frequently receiving backing, but mostly the ones made through multilateral institutions.

As a result, Brazilian international inroads can lose strength. For its "identitarian clash" (Tabosa, 2023) or unresolved overlapping and antithetical identities (Guimarães, 2020), Brazilian proposals can more easily lose momentum, making the country be seen as punching above its weight (Burges, 2024), denying a "fence-sitting" strategy (Schenoni, Leiva and Carvalho, 2024) or acting in a specific manner for the influence of changing dynamics within the Global South with the BRICS (Belém Lopes and Vázquez, 2024; Pimenta and Teixeira, 2023). All in all, Brazil expects to be considered a leader without openly assuming that role and hopes to gain international prestige by assuming it could bear greater responsibilities and act in a constructive manner.

Lastly, this study is subject to certain limitations. The most significant is the limited historical distance between our analysis and the unfolding events. At the time of writing, the outcome of the Russia–Ukraine war remains uncertain, as does President Lula's ultimate role in its diplomatic developments. It is also unclear whether the conflict might escalate into a broader confrontation, developments that could reshape Brazil's positioning on the global stage. Furthermore, by the time the war concludes, Lula may no longer be in office, making retrospective assessments of his diplomacy even more complex. Another important limitation is the scarcity of secondary literature specifically addressing Brazil's engagement with the war, largely due to its recent nature. Future research should continue to monitor the evolution of both the conflict and Brazil's stance. One compelling avenue for further inquiry concerns the potential implications of a second Trump presidency on Brazil's opportunities for international mediation. Scholars of Brazilian foreign policy may also benefit from comparative analyses of other states' mediation efforts and how these intersect with Brazil's actions.

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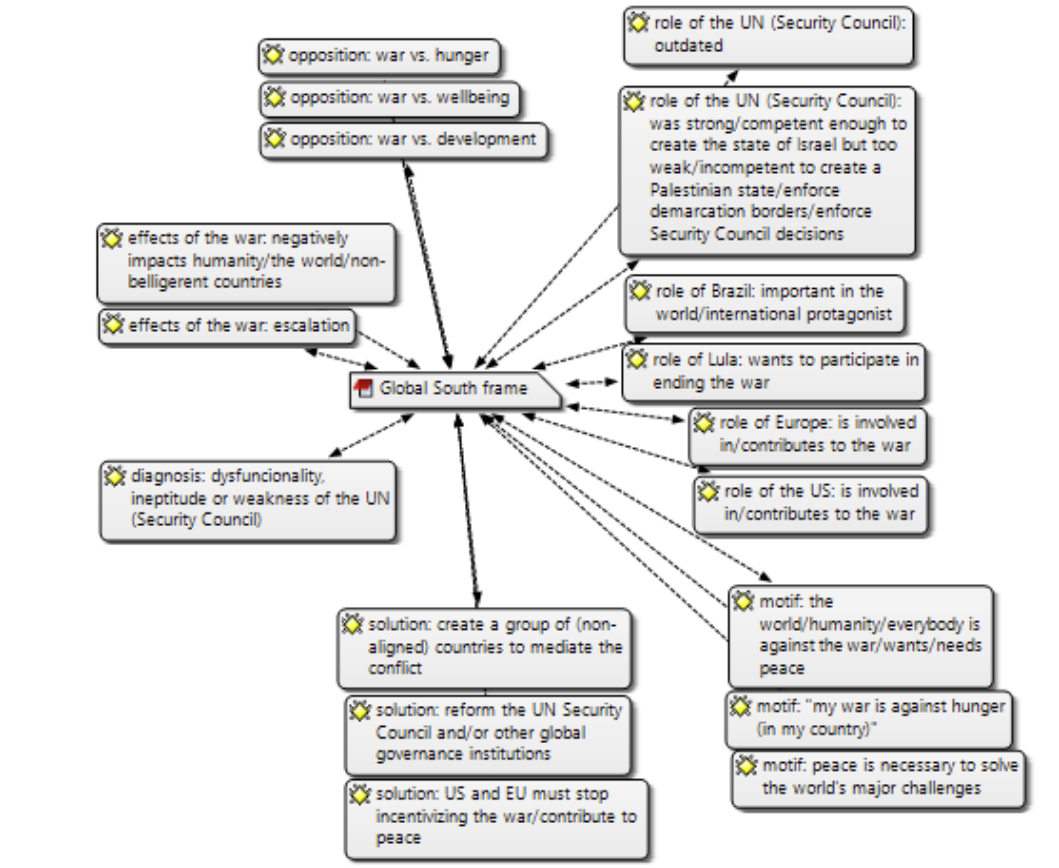
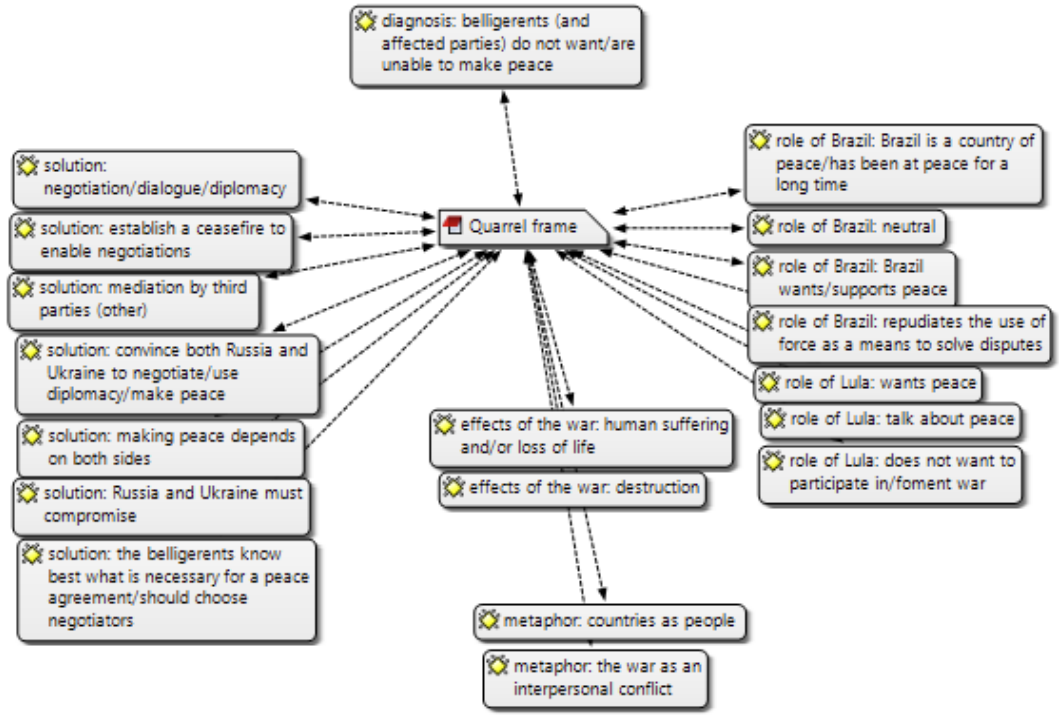
APPENDIX I: ATLAS.TI NETWORK VIEW





APPENDIX II: LIST OF CORPUS TEXTS

P01. Press conference with Argentinian president Alberto Fernández. Buenos Aires, Argentina, 23/01/2023. YouTube Casa Rosada. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BXWEiANJoRw

P02. Meeting with German Chanceler Olaf Scholz. Planalto, Brasília, Brazil, 30/01/2023. YouTube Workers' Party. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cnLJc_xBHos

P03. É Notícia, RedeTV (interview). 02/02/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevista-do-presidenteda-republica-a-kennedy-alencar-na-redetv-em-02-de-fevereiro-de-2023

P04. Breakfast with journalists at Planalto (1). Planalto, Brasília, Brazil, 07/02/2023. YouTube Poder360. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8150s5hdOQQ

P05. Interview after meeting with Biden. Washington DC, USA, 10/02/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-oplanalto/entrevistas/entrevista-do-presidente-lula-apos-encontro-com-o-presidente-dosestados-unidos-joe-biden

P06. CNN (interview). Washington DC, USA, 10/02/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevista-do-presidente-da-republica-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-a-cnn-internacionalem-

P07. TV Globo (interview). 11/02/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevista-dopresidente-da-republica-a-correspondente-raquel-krahenbuhl-tv-globo

P08. CNN Brasil (interview). 17/02/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevista-dopresidente-da-republica-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-a-ancora-daniela-lima-da-cnn-brasil

P09. BandNews (interview). 02/03/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevista-dopresidente-da-republica-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-a-reinaldo-azevedo-da-bandnews

P10. Virtual meeting with Zelensky. Planalto, Brasília, Brazil, 02/03/2023. Planalto website – Notícias. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/noticias/2023/03/lula-conversa-com-presidente-da-ucrania-sobre-guerra-e-busca-pelapaz

P11. Portal Brasil 247 (interview). 21/03/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevista-dopresidente-da-republica-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-ao-portal-brasil-247

P12. Breakfast with journalists at Planalto (2). Planalto, Brasília, Brazil, 06/04/2023. YouTube Poder360. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRwo64MJKos

P13. CCTV (interview). Beijing, China, 13/04/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevistaconcedida-pelo-presidente-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-para-a-tv-chinesa-cctv

P14. Press conference. Beijing, China, 15/04/2023. YouTube CanalGov. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ElX-cJtn2FU

P15. Press conference. Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 16/04/2023. YouTube UOL. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIzD_r_XOqA

P16. Press conference with Romanian president Klaus Ioannis. Itamaraty, Brasília, Brazil, 18/04/2023. YouTube Lula. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilvoQkgLrEc

P17. Press conference with Portuguese president Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. Belém Palace, Lisbon, Portugal, 22/04/2023. YouTube Workers' Party. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jm7NRn2hRJA

P18. RTP (interview). Portugal, 24/04/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevista-dopresidente-da-republica-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-a-emissora-rtp-em-24-de-abril-de-2023

P19. Speech at the Assembleia da República, Lisbon, Portugal, 25/04/2023. Planalto website – Discursos e Pronunciamentos. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/discursos-e-pronunciamentos/2023/discurso-do-presidente-da-republica-na-assembleia-da-republica-portuguesa

P20. Fórum Empresarial Brasil–Espanha. Madrid, Spain, 25/04/2023. YouTube UOL. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhAbbET3Hyw

P21. El País (interview). Hotel Palace, Madrid, Spain, 26/04/2023. YouTube El País. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQjtfjCALkM

P22. Speech during lunch with King Felipe VI of Spain. Palácio Real, Madrid, Spain, 26/04/2023. Planalto website – Discursos e Pronunciamentos. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/discursos-e-pronunciamentos/2023/discurso-do-presidente-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-durante-almoco-com-o-rei-felipe-vi-daespanha

P23. Press conference with Spanish prime minister Pedro Sánchez. Madrid, Spain, 26/04/2023. YouTube Lula. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLaK50XVtE4

P24. Press conference after the coronation of British king Charles. London, United Kingdom, 06/05/2023. YouTube UOL. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDp_fXoB2dQ

P25. Press conference with Dutch prime minister Mark Rutte. Planalto, Brasília, Brazil, 09/05/2023. YouTube Lula. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=og4mFXOmM8Q

P26. G7, Session 8. G7, Hiroshima, Japan, 21/05/2023. Planalto website – Notícias. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/noticias/2023/05/discurso-presidente-lula-em-sessao-8-do-g7

P27. G7 final press conference. G7, Hiroshima, Japan, 22/05/2023. YouTube CNN Brasil. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4M-YoxCIEo

P28. Meeting with South American presidents. Itamaraty, Brasília, Brazil, 30/05/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevista-do-presidente-da-republica-luiz-inacio-lulada-silva-em-ocasiao-da-reuniao-com-presidentes-dos-paises-da-america-do-sul

P29. Meeting with Finnish president Sauli Niinistö. Itamaraty, Brasília, Brazil, 01/06/2023. YouTube Poder360. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fWC4_QMItW8

P30. Meeting with European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen. Planalto, Brasília, Brazil, 12/06/2023. Planalto website – Discursos e Pronunciamentos. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/discursos-epronunciamentos/2023/declaracao-a-imprensa-do-presidente-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silvaapos-encontro-com-a-presidente-da-comissao-europeia-ursula-von-der-leyen

P31. Interview with Marcos Uchôa. Palácio da Alvorada, Brasília, Brazil, 19/06/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/conversa-com-o-presidente-live-do-dia-19-jun.23

P32. Corriere della Sera (interview). Rome, Italy, 21/06/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevista-do-presidente-da-republica-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-para-o-jornal-italianocorriere-della-sera

P33. Press conference. Rome, Italy, 22/06/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevistacoletiva-do-presidente-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-em-roma-apos-serie-de-agendas-na-italia

P34. Speech at the Power Our Planet Festival. Paris, France, 22/06/2023. YouTube Lula. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zszd9tt3Fac

P35. Press conference after the Summit for a New Global Financial Pact. Paris, France, 24/06/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevista-coletiva-do-presidente-luiz-inaciolula-da-silva-em-paris-na-franca

P36. Speech at the opening of the EU–Latin America Business Forum. Brussels, Belgium, 17/07/2023. Planalto website – Discursos e Pronunciamentos. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/discursos-e-pronunciamentos/2023/discurso-do-presidente-da-republica-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-durante-a-sessao-deabertura-do-forum-empresarial-uniao-europeia-america-latina-em-bruxelas-na-belgicaem-17-de-julho-de-2023

P37. Speech at the opening of the third CELAC–EU Summit. Brussels, Belgium, 17/07/2023. Planalto website – Discursos e Pronunciamentos. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/discursos-e-pronunciamentos/2023/discurso-dopresidente-da-republica-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-na-abertura-da-iii-cupula-celac-ue

P38. Press conference after the CELAC–EU meeting. Brussels, Belgium, 19/07/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevista-coletiva-concedida-pelo-presidente-luizinacio-lula-da-silva-em-bruxelas-na-belgica-apos-reuniao-celac-uniao-europeia-1

P39. Press conference with foreign correspondents. Planalto, Brasília, Brazil, 03/08/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/entrevista-do-presidente-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-emcafe-da-manha-com-correspondentes-estrangeiros

P40. Conversation with the president (Amazon Summit). Belém, Pará, Brazil, 08/08/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/conversa-com-o-presidente-live-do-dia-8-ago-23

P41. Conversation with the president. 14/08/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/conversacom-o-presidente-live-do-dia-14-ago-23

P42. Conversation with the president (BRICS Summit). Johannesburg, South Africa, 22/08/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/conversa-com-o-presidente-live-do-dia-22-ago-23

P43. Press conference after the BRICS Summit. Johannesburg, South Africa, 24/08/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/coletiva-de-imprensa-concedida-pelo-presidente-luizinacio-lula-da-silva-apos-a-cupula-do-brics-em-joanesburgo-na-africa-do-sul

P44. Conversation with the president. Brazil, 29/08/2023. Planalto website – Entrevistas. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/entrevistas/conversa-com-o-presidente-live-do-dia-29-ago-23

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