Brazil and Norway: building partnerships in areas of strategic importance

NorLARNet analysis, 15 March 2012*
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At first glance, Norway is not an obvious partner for building partnerships, but an examination of the evolution of the bilateral diplomatic dialogue and the economic and financial presence of the Nordic country in Brazil reveals possibilities of strengthening and expanding the relationship in areas of special relevance to the Brazilian foreign policy and in areas considered strategic for national development.

In recent years, governmental and business leaders in Norway have shown greater awareness of the importance of Brazil in regional and international arenas. Growing Norwegian interest in Brazil is explained in part by the importance of direct investments in the Brazilian market in sectors such as energy - oil and gas -, shipbuilding and maritime services, among others (mining, fertilizers and bioethanol). More recently, the Norwegian government has sought to establish with Brazil channels for political rapprochement and dialogue on global issues such as climate change, combating deforestation, the promotion of the Millennium Development Goals and peaceful settlement of conflicts, whether by the exchange of ministerial visits or the convening of thematic meetings, such as the seminars on Peace and Reconciliation.

At the same time, it has been gradually recognized in Brazil the important role that Norwegian capital and technology can play in overcoming the challenges of economic and social development, in the exploitation of the vast fossil resources of the continental shelf, in the expansion of the productive chain in shipbuilding, in accordance with the goals set up by the Growth Acceleration Program (PAC), as well as in the sustainable development of the Amazon.

In the international arena, the two countries are already key partners in initiatives to combat hunger and poverty and to provide better health care and well-being for humankind. Brazil and Norway have set forth their first efforts of triangular cooperation in Africa, which aim at technical assistance to the Portuguese speaking countries of Angola and Guinea-Bissau.

In this context, the State Visits of King Harald in 2003, and President Lula in 2007, were not only historic landmarks of the bilateral relationship, but also opened up real prospects for deepening the political and diplomatic dialogue between Brazil and Norway on issues of common
interest. As underscored by the Brazilian Head of State ‘the two countries are considered powerhouses in the energy field, dedicated to helping to solve some of the major challenges of the international agenda such as climate change and energy security.’

On the basis of these developments, the Norwegian Foreign Ministry is preparing a strategy document to guide its government’s relationship with Brazil, as has been done recently in relation to China and India.

Norway: essential characteristics of the country and its foreign policy

Some main political, social and economic aspects of Norway are essential for understanding the standing of the country in the world. The local variant of social democracy has been a dominant force in the political arena since the 1930s and throughout Labour governments elected for successive terms, only interrupted by interstices of relatively fragile coalitions of centre-right parties. Over time, the Labour Party managed to represent a national and not just a class movement. This hegemony, especially during the second half of the 20th century created the conditions for implementing a model of social welfare grounded in the pursuit of full employment, the central role of the state in the provision of social services (health, education and welfare benefits) and the distribution of wealth through high taxation. Norway’s wage structure stands out as one of the most egalitarian in the world.

The Norwegian social democratic model has been gradually adapted to new circumstances of the country’s insertion in the globalised economy, but seems to have been significantly weakened. The basic structures of the model remain valid, especially the system of universal social security, the principle of solidarity and the highly centralized system of wage bargaining, based on tripartite dialogue between government, business confederation and the national union network.

One cannot, however, consider the welfare state in Norway without mentioning an important factor, outside the sphere of political and economic theories, and simply characterized by ‘luck’. Income from oil exports has allowed the country - which was once the 3rd and is today the 5th worldwide exporter of crude - to implement counter cyclical policies in times of recession and maintain the level of investment in education and technology, seeking to ensure future increases in productivity.

Despite its limited population, Norway has a GDP of about US$ 450 billion, which places it among the 25 largest world economies, with the 2nd highest level of income per capita, the top Index of Human Development and the highest level of labour productivity among the OECD countries. Norway also holds the 2nd largest sovereign fund of the planet - the Government Pension Fund - Global (GPF-G), with a total capital estimated at US$ 455 billion and originated in the revenues from the exploitation of oil and gas on the continental shelf.

The GPF-G holds more than 1% of the shares listed in the world’s stock exchanges, plus a portfolio of government bonds. It operates more as an investment fund, but its denomination reflects the fact that one of the main goals of the fund is to provide long-term savings to cope with

1 Toast by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva at the Gala Dinner hosted by HM King Harald. Royal Palace, 13 September 2007.
3 Regjeringens strategi for samarbeidet mellom Norge og India. Utenriksdepartementet, august 2009.
future financial commitments of the welfare state, after the exhaustion of oil reserves in the North Sea.

The social democratic tradition and the oil wealth have had an influence on the structure of society and the way Norwegian public opinion perceives the role of the country should play in international relations. They are reflected in the Norwegian foreign policy’s search for a balance between the traditions of realpolitikk and idealpolitikk. Norway’s diplomacy is based on the principles of international law, as a guarantee of sovereignty, equality among states and peace. Priorities in foreign policy are aimed at the development of the international legal system, strengthening and reform of the UN system, strengthening relations with strategic allies (within NATO) and with economic and political partners (within the European Economic Area and the EU, with its Nordic neighbours and ‘influential’ partner such as Brazil, China, India, South Africa and Indonesia) and the promotion of peace and sustainable development.

Beyond its regional environment, the Foreign Ministry underlines that ‘the fight against poverty and climate change pose the greatest challenge facing the world today and therefore must play a central role in Norwegian foreign policy.’

Norway stands out for not being a member of the European Union, following clear expressions of popular will in the referenda of 1972 and 1994. Such relative autonomy in foreign policy allows the country to play a leading role in certain fields of international diplomacy - as in peace facilitation, in which Norway tends to be seen as an impartial mediator -, and to coordinate initiatives with global reach, with a group of selected partners, as in the areas of health, innovative financing for development and eradication of certain types of weapons.

In this endeavour, Norwegian diplomacy has sought to build on its reputation of ‘utility’ earned in the facilitation of peace processes, in the manner of discrete and methodical search for consensus as well as a means to influence public opinion and the world powers, thus contributing to ‘creative solutions’ where it perceives that multilateral efforts are not enough. In this context, the main strategy of the country’s foreign policy seems to be epitomised in the words of Minister Jonas Gahr Støre that ‘we must look for areas where we can make a difference, where the Norwegian initiative, vision and resources can help achieve new goals’.

Along these lines, the Norwegian Foreign Ministry considers essential the development of bilateral relations and special partnerships. In Latin America, Brazil stands out as the main partner in the foreign policy, economic and financial spheres. Norway’s trade with Latin America is concentrated in certain products and countries, and Brazil accounts for two thirds of exports and half of Norwegian imports from the region, values well above the exchange with Chile (6% and 17% respectively) and Argentina (2% and 4%). Trade flows with China, India and also with Brazil are among the most dynamic. Between 2000 and 2008, imports from China increased by 268%, Brazil 178% and India 98%. During the same time, Norwegian exports increased 407% to the Indian market, 352% to China and 133% to Brazil. Investments by the Government Pension Fund - Global (GPF-G) in Brazil of about US$ 2 billion are superior to those made in South Africa (US$ 1.2 billion), China (US$ 1.1 billion) and India (US$ 0.3 billion).

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Situation of the relationship between Brazil and Norway

Consolidation of democracy, economic liberalization, monetary stabilization and the increasing role played by Brazil in international relations have generated new opportunities for bilateral dialogue. The exchange of State Visits in 2003 and 2007, and the Official Visit of Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg to Brazil in 2008 highlighted the intensification of political dialogue at the highest level on both bilateral and global issues, i.e. climate change, poverty reduction, health, international trade, peacekeeping, United Nations system and the international financial architecture. They also reflected growing Norwegian presence in strategic sectors for the economic development of Brazil, energy and shipbuilding in special, in the light of the Growth Acceleration Program (PAC), Petrobras’ Investment Plan 2020 and the Fleet Modernization Program of Transpetro (PROMEF).

The State Visit of King Harald V and Queen Sonja in October 2003 opened a new chapter in bilateral relations. Since his coronation, the king has made only eight official visits to non-European countries, and only one to Latin America: Brazil. He travelled in the company of hitherto the largest Norwegian high level business delegation, whose leaders had meetings with five Ministers in Brasilia.

In turn, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva made the first State Visit to Norway of a Brazilian Head of State in September 2007. The visit reflected the expansion of the diplomatic agenda and the convergence of positions and interests between the two countries, observed during the meeting in Oslo in February of that year between Foreign Ministers Celso Amorim and Jonas Gahr Støre. It also helped to strengthen bilateral economic relations and signal the prospects for increased Norwegian direct investment in Brazil. In the talks between President Lula and Prime Minister Stoltenberg, the two leaders agreed to extend cooperation on the global issues of climate change, the Millennium Development Goals and the efforts for peace. Thus began the process that led to the signing, a year later, during the visit of the Head of the Norwegian Government to Brazil, of the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development. Cooperation agreements were signed between the National Confederation of Industry (CNI) and the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO), for the promotion of corporate social responsibility, and between Petrobras and Statoil on strategic partnership in the exploration and production of oil and the development of biofuels.

The visit of Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg to Brazil in September 2008 gave continuity to the dialogue at the highest level, in a frequency never seen before in the history of bilateral relations. The program and agenda of the visit mirrored concrete advances of the conversations held a year earlier in Oslo. On the economic side, the presence of the Prime Minister in the Rio Oil & Gas Fair symbolized the potential that Norwegian direct investments in the shipping and offshore sectors could give a new economic and technological dimension to the relations between the two countries. Norway’s was the largest delegation in the event with a record 53 companies. In that year, Statoil announced the acquisition of the operatorship of the giant Peregrino field for US$ 1.8 billion. At the diplomatic level, the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Issues Related to Global Warming, the Protection of Biodiversity and the Strengthening of Sustainable Development, followed by the announcement by Prime Minister Stoltenberg of Norway’s support to the Amazon Fund, worth up to US$ 1 billion by 2015, launched an important and innovative partnership on issues of the environmental agenda. Indeed, Norway’s contribution to the Amazon Fund was the first voluntary contribution by a country to the sustainable national development program managed in a sovereign manner by Brazil. It demonstrated the recognition of
the Brazilian government's political will, institutional capacity and technology for monitoring and combating deforestation.

Between the two visits of state, and especially after the presence in Oslo of the Brazilian president in 2007, there has been an increasing exchange of missions by ministers and high level delegations. Besides their political and diplomatic significance, these visits show that a growing number of themes reached higher status in the foreign policy agendas of both countries and have the potential to further expand bilateral partnerships.

Norway stands out as the main destination of Brazilian exports to the Nordic countries, and the main source of direct investment originating from the Scandinavian countries in the years 2006 to 2008. In turn, Brazil represents the 2nd source of Norwegian imports after China, among developing countries. In 2008, Brazil was placed in the 5th position among the non-European suppliers and 18th overall. The country's participation in Norwegian total purchases from developing countries increased from 5.3% in 1992 to 9.1% in 2008.

With regards to direct investment, the Norwegian Foreign Ministry pointed out in the Message to Parliament on Foreign Affairs that, after the US and EU, Brazil is the country where Norway invests most. The cumulative total of FDi in the years 2006-2008 (US$ 770 million) placed Norway among the top twenty countries of origin of foreign investment in Brazil during this period.

With the expansion of Statoil, the early implementation of the Fleet Modernization Program Transpetro (PROMEF) and Petrobras' investment plans for the exploitation of oil and gas in the pre-salt layer, the number of Norwegian companies in the country increases for the operation of vessels, rigs and special equipment, production of goods and services or supply of offshore technology.

Given the convergence of interests in foreign policy and the complementarities between Brazil and Norway in the economic sphere, some areas stand out as the most promising for strengthening bilateral relations: energy, shipbuilding and offshore, climate, environment and sustainable development, and peaceful conflict resolution.

**Partnership in Energy: Oil and gas**

Norway is the 5th largest oil exporter and the 2nd gas supplier to Europe, with a mastery of advanced technologies for shipbuilding, including offshore vessels and related services. Statoil, in which the Norwegian State holds a controlling stake, recognizes the expertise of PETROBRAS in complex operations in deep waters and develops important joint activities for the exploration of oil and gas on the Brazilian continental shelf.

The company's portfolio includes the operatorship of the giant field of Peregrino in the Campos Basin, after investments of US$ 1.8 billion for the acquisition in 2007 of the interest held by the North American company Anadarko. It is expected that production of oil will start in 2010, with a volume of at least 100,000 boe/day (of one of the heaviest crude in Brazil, as well as natural gas). Once in operation, Peregrino will be responsible for an increase of 15% of Statoil's international production. In turn, Statoil could become the 2nd oil producing company in Brazil. Projected investments over the next three years range between 5 and 10 billion dollars for the drilling of 37

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7 UD opcit ‘Brasil [...] er i dag det landet utenfor EU og USA hvor Norge har de største investeringene’. p 35.
production wells and 6 other exploration wells in order to expand the productive capacity of the field. The company also holds a portfolio of 7 other blocks located in areas up to 2700 meters deep.

Cooperation between both state oil companies opens the possibility for other long-term investments in the exploration of new fields in the pre-salt area, for significant transfers of offshore technologies (where both companies are recognized as world leaders), as well as for further cooperation between the two companies in the operational of oil fields, trade experience and environmental issues. Such activities should increase Norwegian participation in the Brazilian economy and, in future, the Norwegian-Brazilian partnership, led by Petrobras and Statoil, may be extended to other regions of the globe, especially in West Africa.

The so-called ‘Norwegian model’ was subject to studies and discussion during the drafting process by the Brazilian government of the proposed regulatory framework for oil exploration in the pre-salt area (draft legislation PL 5398-5341/2009). From the start the Norwegian model established mechanisms to attract the best international companies, financial capital and foreign industry professionals, while maintaining full sovereignty over oil resources. At the same time and through Statoil the Norwegian State has sought to control the development of exploration and production on the continental shelf, to develop autonomous technical and operational skills as well as to promote growth and diversification of the local production chain. The last key element of the model was the sovereign investment fund created in 1991 with the oil revenues. Beyond the implications for fiscal discipline and anti-inflationary policy, the fund consolidated a pact between government and society whereby a substantial part of the oil wealth should be saved and used to finance future and increased social spending, caused by the pressures of an aging population, as well as to ease the transition to a knowledge-based economy in the days when the reserves in the North Sea will be over.

Brazil also has achieved its goal of developing a state oil company strong financially strong and advanced technologically, while attracting major foreign oil companies and suppliers of equipment and related services. Following the conquest of self-sufficiency, the country now faces the challenges of exploiting the huge reserves of the pre-salt layer and of transferring to Brazilian society future tax revenues. In this endeavour, the development of new technologies will be an even more essential element of the strategic partnership between Petrobras and Statoil. This has led the two companies to develop important collaborative projects both within and outside Brazil, and the exchange of technical knowledge and expertise, under the General Agreement of Cooperation in Technology (2003), the Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Cooperation in Oil, Gas and Biofuels signed during the State Visit of President Lula to Norway in September 2007 and the Memorandum of Understanding for the Exchange of Technology, of December 2007. In addition to the priority areas of expansion for both companies - Brazil, Angola and Nigeria - partnerships were set up in exploration and production of oil and gas fields that are ‘technologically complex in the South Atlantic, the Norwegian continental shelf, [...] Venezuela, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, Tanzania, China and India’9, as well as for the ‘joint development of new technologies’.10

Norwegian experience in the development of its innovation system in the petroleum industry is internationally recognized as a success story of ‘absorption capacity’ of technology and of ‘participatory competence’ in knowledge generation. Largely seen as the result of public policies directed at expanding the participation of companies and research centres in the exploration of the Norwegian continental shelf, it also benefited from large transfers of public money to the universities and research institutions.

9 Memorandum of Understanding, 14 September 2007.
10 Memorandum of Understanding, 03 December 2007.
It seems that the offshore environment in Brazil is conducive to the use of Statoil’s comparative advantages. Its state-ownership, good relationship with Petrobras and their combined expertise should be an increasingly important factor for joint action in third markets, particularly those in developing countries, where the reputation for long-term commitment and social responsibility of the two companies provide a differential with regard to the interests of the oil majors.

**Partnership in shipbuilding and maritime services**

Norway, a traditional maritime power, has the 2nd largest fleet of offshore vessels and the 5th largest merchant fleet in the world. However, because of its small population, the high cost of manpower and heavy taxation, the Norwegian shipbuilding industry needs to expand operations in third markets and faces the challenge of establishing key partnerships in different regions of the world.

The Brazilian market, boosted by Petrobras’ Strategic Plan and the Program for Modernization and Expansion of Transpetro’s Fleet, is attractive and should generate substantial proportion of future contracts for operation, maintenance and expansion of shipyards, offshore vessels and equipment. The full potential of exploitation of the Brazilian continental shelf will require the development of a local supply chain to provide Petrobras and others with vessels, equipment and services, technologically advanced and under competitive costs, so that the country can achieve its ultimate goal of transforming oil wealth into higher welfare for the whole population.

High investment plans by Petrobras in the coming years offer opportunities for industrial development that go well beyond the offshore sector, and should contribute effectively to the creation of a chain of local suppliers of ship parts, covering a wide range of small and medium companies, with positive impacts in terms of innovation and employment generation.

These plans should also foster the formation of clusters of companies, universities and research centers, which should be able in the future to expand the production of local knowledge in the maritime sector. In this context, Norway’s experience with public policies to stimulate interaction between private enterprise and universities, aiming at new levels of innovation and international competitiveness of its shipbuilding industry is of special interest to Brazil.

Despite the dominant position of Southeast Asia in the construction of large transport ships, Norwegian shipbuilding industry exports 60% of the production of goods and services in the country, or circa 20% of total Norwegian exports in value terms. Clusters have proven to be essential factors for the distribution of oil wealth and investments over the Norwegian territory. Above all, the requirement that operators establish research and development contracts with companies, universities and research institutions in Norway has been regarded as a decisive element of the strategy for the development of technology in its shipbuilding and offshore industries. Today and to a large extent, technological innovation represents a key factor in the competitiveness of shipbuilding and offshore services in this Nordic country, compared to the UK, Singapore or South Korea, even in an environment of high production and labour costs.

Norwegian industry maintains a strong participation in the Brazilian shipbuilding market, with 24 locally-established companies and 12 production facilities such as Aker Solutions, Frank Mohn, K. Lund Offshore, Kongsberg and Nexans, leaders in equipment for floating platforms, integrated systems and drilling modules. Even multinationals such as ABB, Siemens and Rolls Royce
Marine develop their business in Brazil through affiliated companies based in Norway, where they benefit from technological advances worked out in its clusters. For example, Aker Solutions and the Norwegian branch of the U.S. National Oilwell Varco are the two companies selected by Petrobras as ‘preferred suppliers’ of drilling packages. Similarly, devices known as christmas-trees are provided to Petrobras by the Norwegian companies Aker and FMC Kongsberg, besides VetcoGray (owned by GE Group) using technology developed at its unit in Stavanger.

In light of the priority given by the Brazilian government to shipbuilding and the offshore industry, opportunities to strengthen cooperation with Norway are present in three areas: at the institutional level, through knowledge of the successful Norwegian experience of clusters in the maritime sector; in the economic sphere, by attracting investment from Norwegian companies interested in establishing plants in Brazil; and through collaboration between universities and research institutes of both countries for the development of technology and innovation.

**Partnership in climate, forest and sustainable development**

Brazil and Norway have found innovative ways to cooperate on issues related to global warming, protection of biodiversity and sustainable development. The launch at the Bali Conference in December 2007 of Norway’s Forest and Climate Initiative coincided with the announcement by Foreign Minister Celso Amorim and Environment Minister Marina Silva of the creation of the Amazon Fund, which immediately received public support from Government of Norway.

The Norwegian initiative was structured in March 2008 by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of the Environment. Contributions to various projects derive mostly from the budget of international cooperation: a record sum of US$ 700 million in 2009 that represented an increase of 25% compared to 2008. Circa US$ 250 million were earmarked for the forest initiative.

One of the basic assumptions of the Norwegian project is that measures to combat deforestation and forest degradation generate a ‘triple advantage’: in addition to reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, they contribute to biodiversity conservation and help to promote sustainable development. It recognizes the challenges related to reducing deforestation in tropical countries where forest management is poorly developed, and the complexity of developing systems for monitoring, analysis, reporting and verification of emission reductions from deforestation and forest degradation. Therefore, the initiative encompass technical cooperation activities under bilateral and multilateral programs.

Dialogue between the Brazilian and Norwegian delegations during the Bali Conference was followed by exchanges of missions in order to prepare the text of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation on Issues Related to Combating Global Warming, the Protection of Biodiversity and the Strengthening of Sustainable Development, signed between the two governments during the visit to Brazil in September 2008, of Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg. The Norwegian Head of Government pledged in that occasion financial contribution to the Amazon Fund of up to US$ 1 billion until 2015. In April 2009, Norway became the first country to contribute financially to the Fund.

The promotion of dialogue on issues related to global climate change, environment, biodiversity and sustainable development is the cornerstone of the Memorandum and expands the level of bilateral cooperation beyond financial support to the Amazon Fund. In the domestic arena,
the cooperation with Brazil on climate and forests has enjoyed a high degree of approval in the entire spectrum of Norwegian politics and public opinion.

The agreement also defines an area of cooperation in advanced technologies to improve the Brazilian system of monitoring, communication, assessment and verification of emissions of greenhouse gases from deforestation and forest degradation, as an essential tool to ensure the operation of the system established by the Amazon Fund with regards to the amount of contributions based on the calculation of the annual deforestation rate. Although Brazil has one of the most efficient and reliable systems for monitoring forest cover, which has been developed and operated by the National Institute for Space Research (INPE), the complexity of satellite data processing and the need to increase efforts to control and supervise in real time requires the development of ever new technologies.

In the field of remote sensing, INPE and the Norwegian Space Centre (NSC) began in late in 2008 an institutional partnership with a view to exchange expertise in remote monitoring technology, with emphasis on forest areas. Two areas for cooperation were defined initially: evaluation of vegetation in the Amazon by radar waves (L-band SAR) and the use of stations receiving signals from satellites in the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard (Svalsat) and Antarctica (TrollSat), which monitor global climate change from data received, on an ongoing basis, from pole to pole.

Developing the ability to integrate the radar signals to optical images already available in the Brazilian system allows the mapping of areas obscured by clouds, in a forest region characterized by high precipitation. Norwegian technology has been recognized by INPE as one of the most advanced, having been Norway the first country after the US to develop L-band radar imaging. In addition, access to stations in Svalbard and Troll might be useful to capture data from Brazilian satellites depending on the time needed to download the images transmitted and the evolution of the orbits, or to transfer images obtained by other satellites in the event technical failures.

Current discussions between the two space institutes with a focus on monitoring of the Amazon may open, in turn, opportunities for future cooperation on projects of greater complexity. INPE has expressed an interest in partnership with NSC for the construction of a Brazilian satellite for radar remote sensing.

**Partnership for the peaceful settlement of conflicts**

The Foreign Ministers of Brazil and Norway have presided over two seminars on peace and reconciliation that were organised, it is worth noting, during the State Visits of King Harald (2003) and President Lula (2007). The seminars allowed for the exchange of information on both countries’ activities in peacebuilding in the Middle East and Haiti. These meetings showcased the priority of the dialogue for peace between the two governments, based on mutual recognition of the value of experience accumulated in their respective efforts. They also revealed the potential for cooperation with the Norway with a view to strengthening the structure of research in Brazil on topics related to peace, in the Ministry of External Relations and in the university.

Brazil and Norway share principles and values in the international order based on the rule of law, peaceful conflict resolution and solidarity. Furthermore, their attitudes in relation to peacebuilding complement each other, with an emphasis on the political process in the case of Norway, and attention on social and economic development in the Brazilian case. Both countries cooperate at the highest level of Heads of State and Ministers of Foreign Affairs to help achieving the
Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in the Global Campaign for the MDGs and in the Global Health and Foreign Policy Initiative - goals and actions that are essential to prevent the emergence of new conflicts.

There is a belief that ‘Brazil and Norway may, together, contribute greatly to peace and reconciliation in different regions of the world’. Norway is considered a pioneer in research on peace and brings together the largest number of thematic institutions among European countries. The degree of interaction between governmental and academic spheres is considered especially high, due to the intense use of information and analysis prepared by the institutes as well as the researchers themselves in diplomatic efforts for peace and reconciliation in complex situations and distant countries. Thus, research capability has been recognized as an important and unique asset of the Norwegian model.

As Brazil raises its international profile and consolidates its leadership in peacekeeping missions, there grows interest and demand for theoretical and practical knowledge on peaceful conflict resolution and mediation for peace. This is one area where Brazilian diplomacy, the military and the academy have long since recognized the benefit of Norwegian experience and its contribution to peace processes and staff training. More intensive cooperation in this area will not only strengthen the Brazilian Foreign Ministry but will help expand and consolidate in academic institutions knowledge about the performance of the country in peacekeeping operations, for the mutual benefit of government and civil society, whose organisations are increasingly present in Haiti, the Middle East, East Timor and Guinea-Bissau, among others.

Prospects

The recent evolution of the relationship with Norway indicates that there are converging interests in areas of particular relevance to the Brazilian foreign policy and the development policy of the country, as seen in partnerships in oil and gas, the maritime sector, environment and peace, based on complementarities and comparative advantages that are of special interest in relation to other partnerships between Brazil and developed countries.

This relationship involves some of the most promising fields for political dialogue on key bilateral aspects, and also on global issues which represent some of the biggest challenges in today’s world.

The opportunities arising from more intense relations with Norway are significant and complement Brazil’s national efforts with a view to exploring the resources of the pre-salt layer, developing the shipbuilding industry, combating deforestation in the Amazon and contributing to conflict prevention and peace building. In the four areas mentioned above, the partnership with Norway is desirable not only because of the substantial resources available – both financial and technological – but of the political will expressed by both government to give priority to bilateral relations in a sustainable and long term perspective. More than in any other sphere, the Norwegian pioneering commitment to the Amazon Fund, without conditionality, reflects the feeling of mutual trust between the two countries at the highest level.

Given the scope of the priority areas in the relations between Brazil and Norway and their potential for growing, mechanisms should be established to enable and institutionalise the

different modalities of bilateral contacts, in a systematic way. On such important and complex issues, related to public policies that are considered strategic for Brazil’s development, the establishment of a systematic coordination channel of dialogue between the two governments should not only facilitate the search for joint solutions but also help to solve issues that may arise from misperceptions or ill-founded external sources. For Brazil, a positive evolution of the relations with Norway should bring favourable results from a kind of partnership that do not represent a political liability.

*This article is written as an introduction to a book by Paulo Guimaraes on cooperation between Brazil and Norway: “Brasil-Noruega: construção de parcerias em áreas de importância estratégica” (2011). The book is presently (March 2012) under translation to Norwiegan, and will be presented in an event in Oslo on 28 March 2012 – see: http://www.norlarnet.uio.no/events/events-in-norway/2012/book-guimaraes.html*