

EDITOR'S NOTE

2025 was *the* year of truly impactful events! The actions of President Donald Trump, in his new term, have shaken certainties, political narratives and certain academic theories within the field of International Relations. This has been particularly the case with those theories that constituted a *mental map*, devised in the Anglo-Saxon world to legitimise a hegemonic system, as noted by Williams Gonçalves.

The deafening noise of events — considered by many to be unpredictable — has advanced in parallel with the silence of interpretative analysis. Francis Fukuyama's notion of the End of History, proclaiming the triumph of political and economic liberalism and of globalisation, shaped the thinking of an entire generation. Even the less optimistic Clash of Civilizations, by Samuel Huntington, argued that Western Civilisation would be anchored on the two shores of the North Atlantic, with NATO as its foundational element. Where has this idealised world gone?

All of this has evaporated abruptly, generating a situation of profound strategic insecurity that converges with the concept of *Unstable Multipolarity*, which we formulated following the outbreak of the Russo-Ukrainian War. The first to be affected were the United States' own allies, such as NATO, the European countries and Ukraine. The narrative that Trump acts on impulse, is unpredictable and lacks strategy overlooks the fact that he is a businessman, skilled in bold moves aimed at reversing the systemic decline of the United States. He seeks to dismantle the existing multilateral system and acts with a focus on geoeconomics, aiming to destabilise competing nations and subordinate allied ones. He is constrained by the midterm election timetable, and whether his policy will succeed or not, only time will tell.

Many statesmen and scholars believe this to be an impossible mission, yet what they all reveal is a strategic confusion, marked by improvised actions and alliances that evolve continuously. This is the *Unstable* side of the new Multipolarity. Understanding the underlying reality—and its possibilities—is a complex and urgent task in a world where everyone fears calling things by their proper names. As a starting point, it is necessary to abandon the illusions and narratives generated by the end of the Cold War and to analyse political-military relations, the technological revolution and its social impact, ongoing demographic transformations and climate change, and, above all, the

new decision-making patterns in the political, military and economic spheres, as it was observed in Venezuela, in which the strategy of *Regime Change* was replaced by *Change inside the Regime*.

In this context, we present a set of articles on Brazil's international position, on Japan and East Asia, on West Africa, as well as a theoretical contribution, giving voice to authors from the Geopolitical South (the Third World). The contributors are scholar-researchers from leading universities in Brazil, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Japan, Indonesia, India, Nigeria and Cameroon, offering a broad range of approaches and themes.

The perspective of authors from the Geopolitical South helps to enrich academic and strategic perceptions of the issues analysed, giving concrete form to the enduring objectives of *AUSTRAL: Brazilian Journal of Strategy and International Relations*. This is crucial at a moment when the global landscape is evolving towards an accumulation of conflicts that are already taking the form of military tensions, within a context of profound unpredictability. Brazil, in turn, has been significantly affected by the changes underway, in a world where geoeconomic scenarios constitute the new reality. Therefore, more than ever, it is essential that the scholarly community urgently produce critical-realist analyses that consider the dynamics of the new global situation, with a view to generating the tools required by decision-makers and by society at large.

In this issue, we are delighted to inform the scholarly community that *AUSTRAL: Brazilian Journal of Strategy and International Relations* has been reclassified by CAPES as an A2-level journal, retroactively for the period 2021–2024. Another noteworthy development is the appointment of Professor Érico Esteves Duarte as Associate Editor, following Professor Marco Cepik's transfer to the University of Brasília; Professor Cepik nevertheless remains a member of the journal's Editorial Board.

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Disclaimer: *AUSTRAL* prioritises British English as the standard variety of the English written language. Some English translations, however, may be written under the American English dialect.