

FRENCH GUIANA AND THE FALKLANDS: THE MILITARY PRESENCE OF FRANCE AND THE UNITED KINGDOM IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC AND THE SOUTH AMERICAN CONTINENT

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Introduction

The continental dimensions of the Brazilian territory, with borders with 10 countries, as well as the 3.5 million km² of Brazilian Jurisdictional Waters (BJW)² are factors that configure South America and the South Atlantic as the area of priority interest of the Brazilian State, on issues related to national defense.

The South Atlantic allows access to the main ports of entry and exit of Brazilian foreign trade and is increasingly linked to national economic development, whether through the exploration of oil, gas and fishing, or as a way of national and international trade. The waters of the South Atlantic have the singular characteristic that, except for the Falklands³, they are usually perceived as free from the traditional threats arising from interstate military

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² The term “Brazilian Jurisdictional Waters (BJW)” is used in this article in line with the concept presented in the White Paper of National Defense (WPND), which is transcribed below: “It comprises the inland waters and maritime areas in which Brazil exercises jurisdiction, to some extent, on living, non-living activities, persons, facilities, vessels and natural resources found in the net mass, in the seabed or in the subsoil, for control and inspection purposes, within the limits of international and national legislation. These maritime spaces comprise the 200 nautical miles from the baselines, plus the waters overlying the extension of the Continental Shelf beyond 200 nautical miles, where it occurs” (Brazil 2016b, 15).

³ In Argentina, the term used to refer to those islands is “Malvinas”, in the English version “Falklands”. Both are accepted and refer to the same geographical set of islands in the South Atlantic. (translation note).

conflicts⁴.

Among the South American states, there are no disputes over sovereignty or jurisdiction over the South Atlantic. However, two exogenous states are present on both the South American continent and islands in the South Atlantic. These are: France and the United Kingdom.

France maintains a colony on the South American continent, with the *status* of an Overseas Department, with contingent and military facilities, usually ignored in the analysis of the military presence of extraregional actors in South America. The United Kingdom, with its island possessions on the north-south axis of the South Atlantic, including the islands of Ascension, St. Helena, Tristan da Cunha, Falklands, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands, emerges as the causal state of the main source of tension in the South Atlantic due mainly to the question of sovereignty over the Falklands with Argentina.

In this context, it is worth questioning: does the military presence of these extraregional actors generate current and potential tensions about the Brazilian vision of regional defense?

In order to answer the proposed question, this article aims to highlight the military presence of France and the United Kingdom in America and South Atlantic and to analyze the tensions arising from this presence, in relation to the Brazilian view of defense for the region.

The central argument developed and defended is that France's military presence in French Guiana and the United Kingdom in the Falklands have the potential to generate tensions and crises, in opposite to the Brazilian defense vision for South America and the South Atlantic.

The text is divided into three sections in order to answer the question raised and to support this argument, as well as to achieve the proposed objective. In the first one, what is the Brazilian defense vision for South America and the South Atlantic is identified. For this purpose, the highest level defense documents of the Brazilian State were analyzed, in its several updates, such as the National Defense Policy (NDP) and the National Defense Strategy (NDS).

The next two sections focus on the analysis of the military assets and facilities of the United Kingdom and France, their possession in South Amer-

⁴ The term inter-state conflict is used here in its broadest sense, as presented in the University of Peace *Glossary of Terms and Concepts in Peace and Conflict Studies* (Miller 2005, 22): "Interstate conflicts are disputes between states or violations of system of alliances between states" (Our translation). In the original: "Interstate conflicts are disputes between nation-states or violations of the state system of alliances." The term interstate military conflict is used here to mean this type of conflict in which military force is used or there is a threat of using it by one of the states involved in the conflict.

ica and the South Atlantic, as well as the purposes declared by these States to justify their presence in the region. In these two sections are also identified the existing and potential tensions arising from the British and French military presence in the Brazilian strategic environment. In Final Remarks it is evident how the tensions arising from the military presence of the two extraregional players analyzed interfere with the Brazilian defense vision for the region.

The Defense Vision of the Brazilian State for South America and the South Atlantic

Brazil has a set of documents related to defense policy and strategy emanated from the executive branch, approved by the Congress and periodically reviewed with the participation of politicians, military personnel, academics, diplomats and other representatives of civil society. In order of precedence, these documents are: the National Defense Policy (NDP), the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and the National Defense White Paper (NDWP).

As stated in the 2016 edition, “NDP is the country’s highest level document on defense issues, based on constitutional principles and aligned with aspirations and the National Fundamental Objectives, which consolidates the Brazilian state’s position and establishes the higher objectives in this theme.” (Brazil 2016c).

The document was originally conceived in 1996, and named Defense National Policy (DNP), and was updated in 2005 and 2012. In 2012, its title was changed to National Defense Policy (NDP). In 2016, the NDP, in accordance with current legislation⁵, had a new update. This version was sent in November 2016 for congressional appreciation, and was open to public consultation by the Ministry of Defense⁶.

The National Defense Strategy guides the segments of the Brazilian State regarding the actions that must be implemented in order to achieve the National Defense Objectives.⁷ Its first version was elaborated in 2008, being

5 Complementary Law (CL) nº 97/1999, as amended by LC nº 136/2010, in the third paragraph of its ninth article, requires that the Executive Power forward to the National Congress, every four years, from the year of 2012, the updates of the NDP, NDS and NDWP (Brazil 2010).

6 See Brazil 2016c

7 The NDP 2016 in its item 4.1, points out that the National Defense Objectives “must be interpreted as the conditions to be achieved and maintained permanently by the Brazilian nation in the sphere of defense” (Brazil 2016c).

updated in 2012 and in 2016.⁸

The White Paper on National Defense is the document that broadly contextualizes the National Defense Strategy, in medium and long term perspective, also allowing the monitoring of budget evolution and multi-year planning of the main defense projects of the Brazilian State (Brazil, 2010).

Having made these initial considerations on the main public domain documents concerning the Brazilian national defense, we will proceed to the analysis of the NDP and NDS editions, seeking to identify the Brazilian defense vision for South America and the South Atlantic. The central analytical axis consisted in identifying how South America and the South Atlantic are perceived in these documents, what are the National Defense Objectives for that region, and whether there are Defense Strategies to achieve them. In its four editions (1996, 2005, 2012 and 2016), in its respective chapters dedicated to the analysis of the international and regional environment, South America and the South Atlantic integrate the so-called Brazilian strategic environment.⁹

South America is perceived, in all four editions of the document, as a continent without serious interstate and relatively peaceful conflicts, as summarized in Table 1.

NDP Edition	Perception Relative to South America
NDP 1996 (Section 2.6)	“South America, far from the world’s stresses of tension, is considered the most demilitarized region in the world. [...] Regional disputes have been administered at tolerable levels. “
NDP 2005 (Section 3.2) and NDP 2012 (Section 4.2)	“South America, far from the main global stresses and free from nuclear weapons, is considered a relatively peaceful region.”

⁸ See Brazil 2008, 2012a and 2016a.

⁹ NDP 2016, in its second chapter, sub-item 2.1.6, delimits the Brazilian strategic environment as follows: “[...], without disregarding the global sphere, establishes as a priority area of interest the Brazilian strategic environment, which includes America South Atlantic, the countries of the West African coast and Antarctica (Brazil 2016c).

<p>NDP 2016 (Section 2.3.9 and 2.3.10)</p>	<p>“At the regional level, the period without serious conflicts and the convergence of interests could contribute to increased cooperation between the South American countries ...”</p> <p>“On the other hand, South America, the South Atlantic, Antarctica and West Africa hold significant natural resource reserves in a world already struggling with the scarcity of these assets. Such scenario could intensify the occurrence of conflicts in which the use of force prevails or its support for the imposition of political and economic sanctions, with eventual militarization of the South Atlantic, an area whose consolidation as a Zone of Peace and Cooperation proves fundamental to safeguard interference with unlawful interests. “</p>
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Table 1 - Perceptions Relative to South America Expressed in the Three First Editions of the NDP.

It should be noted that the latest update of the NDP (2016) continues to point to South America as well as to the South Atlantic as stable regions, without serious inter-state conflicts and with the possibility of increasing regional cooperation. However, the document, unlike previous NDP editions, contains the caveat that this stability situation can be broken as a result of conflicts involving the use of military force originated by the dispute over the significant reserves of abundant natural resources in the region and scarce in other parts of the globe.

With regard to the international and regional scenarios presented in the editions of NDP 2005 and NDP 2012 and 2016, it can be seen that, from these scenarios, the National Defense Objectives (NDO)¹⁰ were formulated. In the three documents, regional stability is identified as one of the NDO of the Brazilian State, as evidenced in Table 2¹¹.

¹⁰ As already mentioned, NDP 2016, in its item 4.1, points out that the National Defense Objectives “must be interpreted as the conditions to be achieved and maintained permanently by the Brazilian nation in the sphere of defense” (Brazil 2016c).

¹¹ The 1996 NDP does not have regional stability as one of the National Defense Goals. However, it establishes, as a guideline:

“f. Contribute actively to the strengthening, expansion and solidification of regional integration;
g. Acting in the maintenance of a climate of peace and cooperation along national boundaries, and for solidarity in Latin America and the South Atlantic region “(Brazil 1996).

NDP Edition	Regional Stability as NDO
NDP 2005	"Thus, from the assessment of the environments described, National Defense objectives emerge: [...] IV - the promotion of regional stability."
NDP 2012	"Thus, from the assessment of the environments described, the National Defense Objectives emerge: [...] IV - contribute to regional stability."
NDP 2016	"They are National Defense Objectives: [...] V - Contribute to regional stability and to international peace and security."

Table 2 - Regional Stability as NDO.

In summary, regional stability is part of the defense vision of the Brazilian State for South America and the South Atlantic. In this sense, it is pertinent to observe how the National Defense Strategy (NDS) establishes strategies, guidelines and actions to achieve this National Defense Objective.

First, however, it is worth noting the perception that the 2008 NDS is not a document directly aligned with the 2005 NDP and, therefore, does not present Defense Strategies and its subsequent Strategic Actions of Defense, specific to the Objectives National Defense Commissions listed in the 2005 NDP. Even so, its Guideline number 18, has as its theme the integration of South America and the construction of a South American identity as factors that would contribute to the defense of the Brazilian State.

National Defense Strategy Guidelines.

[...] 18. Stimulate the integration of South America.

This integration will not only contribute to Brazil's defense, but will also foster regional military cooperation and the integration of defense industrial bases. It will ward off the shadow of conflicts within the region. With all the countries, progress is being made towards **the construction of the South American unit**. The South American Defense Council, in the region's debate, will create a consultative mechanism that will prevent conflicts and foster regional military cooperation and the integration of defense industrial bases, **without involving a country outside the region**. (Brazil 2008). (emphasis added).

The NDS updated in 2012 presents, in its Directive number 18, almost the same content as the 2008 document, continuing to highlight the relevance of integration and the creation of a regional identity as part of the

Brazilian State's defense project.

One point to be highlighted is that in both the 2008 and 2012 NDSs, the aforementioned Directive makes explicit that the integration and identity construction project excludes countries exogenous to the region.

In this sense, the creation of the South American Defense Council (SADC), within the framework of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), represented a significant milestone in the consolidation of the Brazilian defense vision for the region. A brief reference to the creation of these two bodies is therefore appropriate.

UNSAUR had its constitutional treaty approved by the representatives of the 12 member states during the Extraordinary Meeting of Heads of State and Government held in Brasilia on May 23, 2008 (Brazil 2012c).

The Treaty presents, in article 3, the specific objectives of UNASUR, which stipulates in paragraph "s": "the exchange of information and experiences in the field of defense."

According to this Specific Objective, UNASUR member states created the South American Defense Council (SADC), whose Statute was approved on December 16, 2008, during the Special Summit of UNASUR held in Salvador. The Statute, in its Article 4, defines the General Objectives of the SADC in the following terms:

- a) Consolidate South America as an area of peace [...].
- b) To build a South American identity in defense, taking into account sub regional and national characteristics and contributing to the strengthening of Latin American and Caribbean unity.
- c) Generate consensus to strengthen regional cooperation in defense.¹²

With this brief reference to the creation of UNASUR and the SADC, the content of the revised NDP should be observed in 2016. This edition of the document is the one with the greatest adherence to the NDP that gave rise to it, that is, that revised in 2016. This follows from the clear alignment of the Defense Strategies (DS) presented in NDS 2016, in relation to the National Defense Objectives set forth in the NDP 2016. In addition, NDS 2016 presents the Strategic Defense Actions (SDA), deriving from each Defense Strategy, in order to guide the actions to be taken to achieve this Strategy and

¹² UNASUR. Archivo Digital de UNASUR. "Estatuto Del Consejo de Defensa Suramericano de La UNASUR". Available at:

<https://repo.unasursg.org/alfresco/service/unasursg/documents/content/ESTATUTO_DEL_CONSEJO_DE_DEFENSA_SURAMERICANO_DE_LA_UNASUR.pdf?noderef=ddb8870e-73fa-4573-bd12-ee3aaf67f55, accessed April 21, 2018

consequently the National Defense Objective to be achieved.

In this sense, for the National Defense Objective 5 (NDO 5) - Contribute to Regional Stability and for International Peace and Security - NDS (2016) presents three Defense Strategies (DS)¹³, of which we highlight the number 11, as well as the Strategic Defense Actions (SDA) to be undertaken to achieve them, summarized in Table 3.

Defense Strategies (DS)	Strategic Defense Actions (SDA)
DS-11 - Promoting regional integration These actions are aimed at consolidating a self-defense mentality in South America , aiming to increase the level of commitment of the countries of the Region in the joint efforts to solve common problems in this area. (emphasis added).	SDA-44 - Stimulate the development of a South American defense identity. (emphasis added). SDA-45 -Intensify strategic partnerships, cooperation and military exchanges with the Armed Forces of the countries of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR). SDA-46 -To increase Brazilian participation in the South American Defense Council - SADC / UNASUR.

Table 3 - Defense Strategies (DS) and Strategic Defense Actions (SDA) to achieve NDO-5 “Contributing to Regional Stability and International Peace and Security”.

In the light of the documents analyzed, it is clear that the defense objectives for the Americas and South Atlantic expressed in the various editions of the National Defense Policy, as well as the strategies for achieving them, expressed with greater or less precision and alignment in the editions of the Strategy have remained constant since 1996.

In summary, it can be inferred that the defense vision of the Brazilian State for South America and for the South Atlantic, has as its objective the increasing integration and maintenance of the peace and stability of this region, being also associated to the creation of a “South American identity”.

¹³ DS-11 Promotion of regional integration; DS-12 Promotion of international cooperation; and DS-13 Performance in international organizations (Brazil 2016a).

The project is embedded in the context that its consolidation will boost the autonomy and development of the states of the region, through cooperation and a perspective of its own, anchored in a convergence of historical, economic, social, political and military factors. On the whole, the desired final effect in terms of defense is to minimize the possibilities of inter-state military conflicts in the Brazilian strategic environment.

However, such a project has and will have to deal with States exogenous to the region that have territories, continental in South America and islands in the South Atlantic. France and the United Kingdom are the states that have these territories, in which are present military contingents that already cause tensions in the region, in the case of the Falklands, as they may generate future tensions in the case of French Guiana, as will be discussed below.

The United Kingdom and the South Atlantic

Throughout the 19th century, the United Kingdom built a strategic network of island possessions in the South Atlantic through the islands of Ascension, St. Helena, Tristan da Cunha, Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. Considering these set of islands, three of them are the subject of a sovereignty dispute with Argentina, being the main focus of inter-state political-military tension in the region.

The Falkland Islands, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands were part of the Spanish colonial possessions and have been claimed by Argentina since its independence in 1816. However, the British have dominated and colonized the Falkland Islands since 1833.

In April 1982, the Argentine government, then a military dictatorship, invaded and militarily occupied the islands, triggering the British military reaction and the conflict known as the Falklands War. After 73 days of military conflict (2 April to 14 June 1982), the islands returned to British rule.

A brief reference is made to the support that the United Kingdom had received, directly or indirectly, from certain States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The following events may be highlighted:

- the government of Portugal was willing to authorize the use of the Lajes base in the Azores, should the UK Government requested (Anguera, Ayuso, Toledo 1985, 44);
- the United States authorized the use of its aerodrome on Ascension

Island as well as providing *Sidewinder* (AIM-9L)¹⁴ air missiles for *British Harrier* and *Sea Harrier* aircraft even before declaring its unrestricted support to the United Kingdom (Woodward 1997, xviii, 82, 87 and 126); and

- the French government embargoed the delivery of the AM-39 *Exocet* Air-Surface missiles purchased by Argentina¹⁵ (Woodward 1997, 224).

In short, support from some NATO members was instrumental in enabling the UK military campaign during the Falklands War.

In the years following the end of the Falklands War, the two states began a slow rapprochement and normalization of diplomatic relations. However, relations between the governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom undergo recurring periods of political tensions. The governments of Nestor and Cristina Kirchner have staged several of them. However, the most recent were the British initiatives to exploit hydrocarbons in the Exclusive Economic Zone associated with the islands. It is also pertinent to recall that in 2012, with the 30th anniversary of the 1982 conflict, the two states began a diplomatic offensive defending their respective sovereignty rights in the islands.

In this context, even with the recurring tensions produced by both Nestor Kirchner and his successor Cristina Kirchner, Brazilian diplomacy clearly supported the claim of Argentine sovereignty, but maintained the prudent posture of not being involved in any crisis arising from positions assumed by the Argentine government. An example of this position occurred in 2011, when Itamaraty denied permission for the ocean patrol vessel *HMS Clyde*, which operates in the Falkland Islands, to be refueled in Brazilian ports. However, according to news published in the Brazilian¹⁶, Argentine¹⁷ and British¹⁸ media, the Brazilian Foreign Ministry clarified that permission

¹⁴ These last-generation missiles, then state of the art, were decisive in British aircraft engagements against Argentine attack aircraft, as their new infrared sensors allowed their launch, without the need to position themselves behind the target aircraft, providing a tactical advantage to the its user (Author's note).

¹⁵ It should be recalled that the five *Exocet* AM-39 missiles, which had already been received by the Argentine Navy, were used throughout the conflict and resulted in the sinking of *HMS Sheffield* and the *Atlantic Conveyor* (Author's note).

¹⁶ Folha de São Paulo. "In support of Argentina, Brazil Bar British vessel" (January 12, 2012), Available at <http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/fsp/mundo/ft1201201102.htm>, accessed April 30, 2018.

¹⁷ La Nación. "Confirman que negaron el ingreso a un buque inglés" (13 de enero de 2011), Available at: <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1341022-confirman-que-negaron-el-ingreso-a-un-buque-ingles>, accessed April 30, 2018

¹⁸ The Telegraph. "Royal Navy's Falklands ship turned away by Brazil" (10 Jan 2011), Available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/southamerica/falklandislands/8251130/>

for UK vessels to dock in Brazilian ports would be analyzed on a case-by-case basis. In other words, it was clarified that there was no determination for the decision on HMS Clyde to be extended to all Royal Navy vessels operating in the Falklands. The event had no major repercussions with the British government and a spokesman for the *Foreign Office* reported that the British government respected the Brazilian decision and the two countries continued to have positive relations.

In short, for the British government the Malvinas Islands are the Falkland Islands and have the status of “*overseas territory*”, being part of the United Kingdom and therefore protected by the armed forces of that State¹⁹. It is in this context that the *British Forces South Atlantic Islands*, a joint command with contingents of the army, navy and air force, are inserted. After the Falklands War (April - June 1982), successive British governments invested in the defensive apparatus of the islands, including the construction of an Air Base - *RAF Mount Pleasant* - about 40 km west of Port Stanley, which is operational since 1985.²⁰

The *Royal Air Force* (RAF) has four *Eurofighter Typhoon* aircraft, a C-130 transport aircraft and a VC-10 aircraft for in-flight refueling permanently deployed there. *Rapier* Surface-Air Missile (MSA) batteries are positioned by the two main islands and the British military contingent on the islands ranges around 1,200 men.²¹

Royal-Navys-Falklands-ship-turned-away-by-Brazil.html, accessed April 30, 2018.

19 The British government's website for British forces overseas: *Falkland Islands and Ascension Island* provides the following explanation for the British military presence on those islands: “Forces are based in the Falklands to demonstrate the government's continued commitment to the security of UK overseas territories in the south Atlantic. They include air defense assets, maritime patrol capability and infantry forces. There are also regular naval deployments to the region and temporary deployments for routine exercises. The exact force levels are kept under constant review and maintained at a level consistent with this policy.” (United Kingdom.Gov.UK) “British forces overseas: Falkland Islands and Ascension Island” Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/british-forces-overseas-falkland-islands-and-ascension-island>, accessed April 22, 2018.

20 United Kingdom.Gov.UK. “Mount Pleasant Defence Aerodrome Manual 2017,” Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/657078/20170427-Mount_Pleasant_DAM_V1.0.pdf, accessed April 22, 2018.

21 The following sources allowed a basic compilation of the British military presence in the Falklands: United Kingdom. Royal Air Force (RAF). *RAF Mount Pleasant*. “The Station”. Available at , <https://www.raf.mod.uk/our-organisation/stations/raf-mount-pleasant/>, accessed April 21, 2018; - BBC. “Britain to boost Falklands Islands defences,” Available at <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-32031342>, Accessed April 21, 2018; BBC. “Where are British troops deployed overseas?” Available at <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-34919954>, accessed April 21, 2018.

The *Wideawake* air base makes Ascension Island a valuable logistical support point for the British military deployed in the South Atlantic. In conjunction with the *Mount Pleasant* air base, the UK is in a position to militarily reinforce the Falklands at the slightest sign of movement or hostility by an eventual Argentine military force.²²

The *Royal Navy* maintains a patrol vessel, a logistical support vessel and a frigate or destroyer permanently patrolling the region. Occasionally, news surfaced in the British press that a nuclear submarine (SSN) is also kept on patrol in the South Atlantic.²³ Even without this last means, the military apparatus maintained in the region to defend the islands is significant and certainly acts as a deterrent to any Argentine claim of a new attempt to retake the islands by military force.

The UK Ministry of Foreign Affairs has repeatedly and repeatedly stated that the reason for the British military presence on the islands is to respect and ensure the self-determination of its inhabitants who wish to remain British citizens. This commitment was once again reiterated in the *Foreign Office Minister's* message - Sir Allan Duncan - on the 35th anniversary of the end of the 1982 military conflict. The minister said: "We remain committed and committed to upholding the right of the Falklanders to determine their own future and to remain British, according to their desires."²⁴(Our translation).

It is worth remembering that on March 10 and 11, 2013, a referendum was held among the inhabitants of the islands to express their views on the continuity or change in status of the "*British Overseas Territory*". Of an electorate of 1,653 people, 1,517 exercised their right to vote and only three voted against maintaining the current status. In other words, 99.8% of the votes were in favor of maintaining the islands as part of the United Kingdom.²⁵

22 United Kingdom. Royal Air Force (RAF). "RAF Ascension Island". Available at, <https://www.raf.mod.uk/our-organisation/stations/raf-ascension-island/>, accessed em June 8, 2018.

23 Daily Mail Online. "British nuclear submarine sent to Falklands in show of strength as tensions rise ahead of 30th anniversary of conflict". Available at: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2147045/Sub-way-Falklands.html>, Accessed April 21, 2018.

24 "We remain committed to upholding the right of the Falkland Islanders to determine their own future, and to remain British in line with their wishes" (United Kingdom.Gov.UK.gov.uk. Press release published 14 June 2017. "Foreign Office Minister Statement on the 35th anniversary of end of the Falkland Islands conflict," Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-office-minister-statement-on-the-35th-anniversary-of-end-of-the-falkland-islands-conflict>, accessed April 29, 2018).

25 Falkland Islands Government. "Results of the referendum on the Political Status of the Falkland Islands". Available at <https://www.falklands.gov.fk/results-of-the-referendum-on-the-political-status-of-the-falkland->

Thus, for the British government, the military presence on the islands is a commitment to the security and defense of the islanders, resulting from the self-determination of those who have legitimately and democratically opted to remain with the status of *British Overseas Territory*.²⁶

The cost for the maintenance of this military apparatus in the Falklands Islands corresponds to approximately 0.5% of the defense budget of the United Kingdom.²⁷ An advantageous “cost-benefit” ratio in any respect, given that the islands have a lucrative fishing industry as well as significant hydrocarbon reserves in their Exclusive Economic Zone. In addition, they constitute an important position in relation to the Antarctic continent, both in the present and in future negotiations involving that region.

In the light of the above, it can be seen that the British military presence in the South Atlantic is expressive and mainly based on economic, political and strategic interests, not configuring the possibility of changing this *status quo* in a short-and-medium-term time frame. In this context, the crises escalated by the two States involved, notably those possibly involving Argentina in relation to the sovereignty of the islands and / or exploration of the exclusive economic zone, may lead to a greater United Kingdom military presence in the region. At the limit, an active program of modernization of the Argentine Armed Forces, associated with discourses of recovery of the islands, can lead to a similar response of the United Kingdom, implying in a militarization of the South Atlantic and instability in the South cone of the South American continent. Such a scenario would be in direct disagreement with the Brazilian defense vision for the region.

The Falklands issue is a unique case for Brazilian foreign policy, since the Brazilian State supports the Argentina claims to sovereignty over the islands, but has as constitutional principle regulating its foreign policy the self-determination of peoples.²⁸ The situation poses a potential dilemma for Brazilian foreign policy since refuting support for a claim of sovereignty from its largest neighbor and regional economic partner would commit the NDO to

islands/, accessed April 22, 2018.

26 United Kingdom.Gov.UK. Policy. “Falkland Islanders’ right to self-determination”

Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/supporting-the-falkland-islanders-right-to-self-determination>, accessed April 22, 2018.

27 United Kingdom.Gov.UK. Policy Paper. “2010 to 2015 government policy: Falkland Islanders’ right to self-determination”. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-falkland-islanders-right-to-self-determination/2010-to-2015-government-policy-falkland-islanders-right-to-self-determination>, accessed April 22, 2018.

28 Article 4, item III, of the Federal Constitution of 1988 (Brazil 1988).

maintain stability in the region, as well as the Defense Strategies related to the integration project regional and creation of a South American and South-Atlantic mentality without states exogenous to the region. On the other hand, the aforementioned constitutional principle, as well as the strong economic ties with the United Kingdom, allow us to point out that maintaining the *status quo* is what, at the moment, least undermines the Brazilian State's defense vision for the South Atlantic.

France in South America

France is another European State present in South America, in a privileged position on both the continent and the South Atlantic, through the possession of French Guiana. This territory, with an area of approximately 86,000 km² and with a population of approximately 260,000 inhabitants²⁹, has the status of Department Overseas (*département d'outre-mer*)³⁰. Its strategic location, close to the Equator, provided France with the construction of an extremely profitable rocket launch base, as well as access to the region's natural resources.

The proximity of the French Guiana to the Equator line enabled France to begin the construction of the Kourou Center (*Centre Spatial Guyanais* – CSG) in 1964, approximately 500 kilometers north of the Equator. This position allows the use of satellite launch vehicles in an economically competitive way, since the closer to the Equator line the less fuel is required (for the same mass to be transported) for a rocket to leave the Earth's atmosphere. The European Space Agency is the main customer of the CSG, but other users also pay to use the facilities of the Center. Ukraine, Russia, Japan and China have already launched their respective rockets Zénith, Soyuz, H2 and Long March.³¹

Brazil is also a customer of CSG. In May 2017 the first Brazilian geostationary satellite was launched, destined for communications, including those in the area of defense. The satellite was launched from the CSG by an *Ariane 5* rocket and positioned in geostationary orbit at a distance of approxi-

29 France. Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques (INSEE). "Recensement de la population en Guyane." Available at <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3309060>, accessed April 28, 2018.

30 Collectivité Territoriale de Guyane. "Guyane française: situation géographique." Available at <http://www.axl.cefan.ulaval.ca/amsudant/guyanefr1.htm>, accessed April 29, 2018.

31 France. Centre Spatial Guyanais. "Politique Spatiale," Available at: <http://www.cnes-csg.fr/web/CNES-CSG-fr/9778-politique-spatiale.php>, accessed April 29, 2018.

mately 36,000 kilometers from the Earth's surface.³²

The CSG materializes the French ability to launch rockets for their own scientific and commercial purposes. In addition, it provides France with an excellent source of resources from the deployment of satellites in orbit to other States using the launch vehicles of the Ariane series or the temporary leasing of facilities for the launching of rockets from other States holding such means. These factors give French Guyana a unique political, strategic and economic importance. This perception is present in the content of the latest White Defense Paper of France, which is published in 2013 and presents the following insight regarding French Guiana:

The Antilles - Guiana area is a crossroad where multiple influences are expressed. The United States is very present, but also the countries of Central and South America (Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela...) and some European countries that retain interests in the region (Spain, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom). **This area represents a strategic challenge not only for France, but for Europe, because of the location of the Kourou Space Center in Guiana.** It is also an area of significant uncertainty that has seen the growth of transnational illicit trafficking: **drugs** (the region is the source of half the world's cocaine production), **money laundering, mining, immigration and illegal fishing**, etc. [...]. In addition, the risk of natural disasters is particularly high in the Caribbean. Finally, the presence of many French and European citizens in the neighboring countries reinforces the **need for France to be able to quickly locate means of escape and security.** Therefore, in addition to questions of sovereignty and protection of the French population living in these territories, **France must assume the responsibilities inherent to its presence in this complex region**³³ (France 2013, 50). (Our

32 The satellite operates in the X and Ka communications bands, the first being for use by the Ministry of Defense, corresponding to about 30% of the satellite capacity (Empresa Brasil de Comunicação - EBC.) "Launched in the Brazilian satellite space that will be used for communications and defense" Available at:

<http://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/pesquisa-e-inovacao/noticia/2017-05/lancado-ao-espaco-satelite-brasileiro-que-sera-usado-para>, Accessed April 29, 2018).

33 La zone Antilles-Guyane est un carrefour où s'expriment de multiples influences. Les États-Unis y sont très présents, mais aussi les pays d'Amérique centrale et du Sud (Brésil, Mexique, Venezuela...) et certains pays européens qui y conservent des intérêts (Espagne, Pays-Bas, Royaume-Uni). Cette zone représente un enjeu stratégique non seulement pour la France, mais aussi pour l'Europe, du fait de l'implantation en Guyane du centre spatial de Kourou. Il s'agit également d'une zone d'insécurité importante qui voit se développer de très nombreux trafics illicites transnationaux : drogue (la région est à l'origine de la moitié de la production mondiale de cocaïne), orpillage illégal, blanchiment d'argent, immigration clandestine, pêche illégale, etc [...]. Par ailleurs, le risque de catastrophes naturelles est particulièrement élevé aux Antilles. Enfin, la présence de nombreux ressortissants français et européens dans les pays voisins renforce le besoin de pouvoir y mettre rapidement en oeuvre des moyens d'évacuation

translation and emphasis added).

Consonant with the perception clearly expressed in its Defense White Paper, France maintains in French Guiana a military presence constituted by units and means of the three singular forces. This total makes a total of approximately 2,100 soldiers.³⁴

The French Navy is present through two patrol vessels of the P400 class, and two *Gendarmerie Maritime* vessels operate from the naval base of *Dégrad-des-Cannes*, located near Cayenne³⁵. The main tasks of the French Navy are focused on the monitoring of the territorial sea and jurisdictional waters, focusing on combating illegal fishing³⁶, as well as the maritime protection of the CSG.³⁷

The land force consists of two regiments: the *9th Régiment d'infanterie de marine* (9th RIMa) and the *3rd Régiment étranger d'infanterie* (3rd REI).

The *9e Régiment d'infanterie de marine* (9e RIMa), based in Cayenne, has the following missions: “to serve the Joint Chiefs of Staff and ground forces in Guyana; and to guarantee the exercise of French sovereignty over the western half of the department [...]”³⁸ (Our translation).

ou de sécurisation. Dès lors, au delà des enjeux de souveraineté et de protection de la population française vivant sur ces territoires, la France se doit d'assumer les responsabilités que lui confère sa présence dans cette région complexe (France, 2013, 50).

34 France. Ministère des Armées. “Les Forces Armées en Guyane,” Available at <http://www.defense.gouv.fr/ema/forces-prepositionnees/guyane/dossier/les-forces-armees-en-guyane>, accessed April 23, 2018.

35 France. Marine Nationale. “La Marine en Guyane,” Available at <http://www.defense.gouv.fr/marine/operations/zoom-sur-la-marine-en-oultre-mer/annee-de-l-oultre-mer-la-marine-en-guyane/la-marine-en-guyane>, accessed April 22, 2018.

36 In 2016, the French Navy's action against illegal fishing in French Guiana resulted in the seizure of 35 vessels and about 270 km of nets, in addition to 110 tonnes of fish (Brazil Ministry of Defense). “Brazil and France discuss possibilities for new cross-border cooperation actions” Available at <http://defesa.gov.br/noticias/30245-brasil-e-guiana-francesa-discutem-possibilidades-de-novas-aco-es-nas-fronteiras>, accessed April 29, 2018.

37 France. Marine Nationale. La Marine en Guyane. “Trois missions essentielles pour la Marine en Guyane,” Available at: <http://www.defense.gouv.fr/marine/operations/zoom-sur-la-marine-en-oultre-mer/annee-de-l-oultre-mer-la-marine-en-guyane/trois-missions-essentielles-pour-la-marine-en-guyane>, accessed April 22, 2018.

38 Le 9e RIMa, dont le PC est basé à Cayenne, assure une double mission : un soutien au profit de l'état-major interarmées (EMIA) et des forces terrestres en Guyane, et une mission de souveraineté sur la moitié ouest du département [...]. (França. Armée de Terre. “9e régiment d'infanterie de marine,” Available at: <https://www.recrutement.terre.defense.gouv.fr/regiments/9e-regiment-dinfanterie-de->

The *3rd Régiment étranger d'infanterie* (3rd REI) has as its main missions the protection of the CSG and the fight against illegal mining in French Guiana³⁹. It is interesting to note that until January 2018, in the official page of this military unit, where the “The 3rd REI is a Pre-positioned Operational Force capable of intervening at any time in the region of South America and the Caribbean, as was the case in 2004, when the *Carbet* operation in Haiti was launched”⁴⁰ (Our translation).

The Air Force operates from Air Base 367 - *Capitaine François Massé* - located next to Félix Eboué International Airport. The Transport Squadron 68 is based in this air base, having as means three *CASA CN 235* aircraft, five *Puma* helicopters and four *Fennec* helicopters. In addition, the Air Force operates the *Mont Venus* Radar station.⁴¹

According to the France Ministry of Defense, the military forces present in Guiana are intended to “contribute to the exercise of French sovereignty and the preservation of France’s interests in this region.”⁴² In this sense, France seeks a growing cooperation with Brazil, mainly in the actions aimed at dealing with mining and illegal fishing in French Guiana. In April 2017, for example, the Commander of the French Armed Forces in Guiana, Major-Brigadier Pierre-Jean Dupont, was on an official visit to the Ministry of Defense (MD) to discuss possibilities for expanding military cooperation in the border region.⁴³

marine, accessed April 22, 2018).

39 Illegal mining, particularly the extraction and smuggling of gold in the region, is a problem that has been actively faced by the land forces of the French Guiana. In 2016, for example, Operation Harpie, which represses this type of illicit, seized about 6 tons of gold (Brazil, Ministry of Defense. “Brazil and France discuss possibilities for new cross-border cooperation actions.” defense.gov.br/noticias/30245-brasil-e-guiana-francesa-discutem-possibilidades-of-new-actions-in-frontier, accessed April 29, 2018).

40 Le 3e REI est une force opérationnelle prépositionnée. Il est en mesure d’intervenir à tout moment dans la zone Caraïbes-Amérique du Sud, comme ce fut le cas en 2004, lors de l’opération Carbet, en Haïti (França. 3e Régiment étranger d’infanterie. “Les missions du 3e régiment étranger d’infanterie,” Available at http://www.legion-etrangere.com/mdl/info_seul.php?id=463, accessed January 22, 2018).

41 France. Ministère des Armées. “Les Forces Armées en Guyane,” Available at <http://www.defense.gouv.fr/ema/forces-prepositionnees/guyane/dossier/les-forces-armees-en-guyane>, accessed April 23, 2018.

42 The original text says: “Les FAG font partie des forces de souveraineté françaises basées sur les territoires d’outremer. A ce titre, elles contribuent à l’exercice de la souveraineté française et à la préservation des intérêts de la France dans cette région” (*Ibid*).

43 Brazil. Ministry of Defense. “Brazil and France discuss possibilities for new cross-border cooperation actions,” Available at: <http://defesa.gov.br/noticias/30245-brasil-e-guiana-francesa-discutem-possibilidades-of-novas>

The French interest in greater cooperation between the armed forces of the two countries, in actions against cross-border crimes, comes at a time when the Brazilian Army expands its presence in Amapá. The creation of the 22nd Jungle Infantry Brigade, with the command in Macapá, reflects the priority given by the Brazilian State to that border region and the greater military cooperation in that region could benefit both countries.⁴⁴

In summary, based on the analysis of the strength and composition of the forces present in French Guiana, it is clear that the military presence of France in the region is primarily intended for the defense of its overseas department. However, the existence of an European colony, in the XXI century, with a land, air and naval military presence, does not seems to generate discomfort for South American States.

A relevant point in relation to French Guiana and its status of overseas department of France refers to the question of autonomy and eventually independence. Although incipient, there is a political movement that defends the independence of Guiana.⁴⁵ As a way of demonstrating that it is not a colonial metropolis in the classical sense of the word, in 2010 France promoted, for the first time in French Guiana, a referendum to verify if the population wanted greater political and administrative autonomy.

In the referendum held on January 10, 2010, voters in French Guiana were asked to answer “Yes” or “No” to the following question: “Do you agree with the transformation of Guiana into an overseas community governed by Article 74 Constitution, with a particular organization that takes into account its own interests in the Republic?”⁴⁶ (France 2009). (Our translation).

acoess-nas- borders, Accessed April 29, 2018

44 The Brigade is subordinate to the Northern Military Command being constituted integrated by the Command Company of the 22nd Jungle Infantry Brigade; by the Amapá Border Command / 34th Jungle Infantry Battalion, both in Macapá; by the 2nd Jungle Infantry Battalion, in Belém, Pará; and by the 24th Jungle Infantry Battalion, in São Luís, Maranhão (Brazil, Ministry of Defense, Brazilian Army, Army News, January 26, 2018. “With the inauguration of the Foz do Amazonas Brigade, Brazilian military presence in the region is reinforced” Available at: http://www.eb.mil.br/web/noticias/noticiario-do-exercito/-/asset_publisher/MjaG93KcunQI/content/id/8569649, Accessed April 29, 2018.) .

45 See, for example, the following references that point to this movement: Fontes, Yuri Martins. “Guyana-Cayenne insists against French colonial exploitation,” Available at: <https://alemdarena.blogspot.com/2017/03/guiana-caiena-se-insurge-contr.html>, accessed April 29, 2018; BBC. “French Guiana: The part of South America facing a total shutdown”. (10 April 2017). Available at <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-39557670>, Accessed April 29, 2018.

46 “Approuvez-vous la transformation de la Guyane en une collectivité d’outre-mer régie par l’article 74 de la Constitution, dotée d’une organisation particulière tenant compte de ses intérêts propres au sein de la République?” (França 2009).

The official results of the referendum computed a participation of 48.16% of the electorate with 70.22% of the votes responding “No”, that is, refusing greater administrative and political autonomy.⁴⁷

The point to be highlighted is that, in fact, there is a movement, still minority, in favor of a greater autonomy with respect to France. If in the future, this movement gains strength, Brazil will be urged to position itself, supporting this eventual movement or being in solidarity with the possible interests opposed to this autonomy by France.

It should be recalled that, in the first decade of the 21st century, France became the main Brazilian strategic partner in the area of defense. However, as already mentioned, our foreign policy is constitutionally regulated to support the self-determination of peoples. Thus, the eventual realization of this scenario of a movement for greater autonomy in French Guiana can be configured as a focus of a potential future problem with France. In the limit, an opposition or denial of the metropolis the greater autonomy of French Guiana may result in a local conflict with unfolding about the Brazilian defense vision for South America, given that it may be a source of instability in part of the South- which runs counter to the already considered NDO, contained in the 2005, 2012 and 2016 issues of the NDP, regarding peace and regional stability.⁴⁸

Final Remarks

The research carried out is part of the field of international and regional security studies, from a Brazilian perspective.⁴⁹ The objective, as outlined in the Introduction, was to highlight the military presence of France and the United Kingdom in America and South Atlantic and to analyze the tensions arising from this presence, in relation to the Brazilian view of defense for the region.

The starting point was to identify and emphasize that the Brazilian State has a defense vision for South America and the South Atlantic. This view, which excludes the participation of exogenous players in the region, is embodied in the main documents related to the themes of defense powers

47 França Sénat. “Projet de loi relatif aux collectivités de Guyane et de Martinique.” Available at <http://www.senat.fr/rap/l10-467/l10-4677.html>, accessed April 23, 2018.

48 See Table 2 (Author’s note).

49 The collection published by Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV), entitled *International Security: Brazilian Perspectives* (Alsina, Etchegoyen, Jobim 2010) is an example of texts produced by Brazilian academics, military and diplomats and focused on international and regional security.

emanating from the executive power, and approved by the Brazilian legislature: the National Defense Policy; and the National Defense Strategy.

Based on the analysis of the editions of the NDP and the NDS, it was possible to infer that the defense vision of the Brazilian State, for South America and for the South Atlantic, has as objectives the maintenance of regional peace and stability, as well as its integration in the area of defense, and is also associated with the creation of a South American identity.

The project resulting from this vision of defense is embedded in the perception that cooperation will boost the security, autonomy and development of the States of the region. On the whole, the final desired state in terms of defense is to minimize the possibilities of inter-state military conflicts in the Brazilian strategic environment.

However, this project has and will have to deal with exogenous states to the region that have territories, continental in South America and islands in the South Atlantic. France and the United Kingdom are states that have these territories, in which are present military contingents that already cause tensions in the region, as in the case of the Falklands, as they may generate future tensions in the case of French Guiana.

French Guiana is a colonial enclave on the South American continent, where France maintains a military contingent, mainly terrestrial, capable of being projected in specific interventions in the Caribbean as well as in South America. The presence of the Space Center in Kourou confers even more political, economic and strategic value to French Guiana, as outlined in the French Defense White Paper.

The possibility that a movement for greater autonomy and even independence of French Guiana in relation to its colonial metropolis is a scenario that cannot be ignored in prospective analyzes. This possibility, if it materializes, constitutes a future challenge for the Brazilian vision of regional defense, since the Brazilian State has as a constitutional principle regulating its foreign policy the self-determination of the peoples and may find itself in the position of having to choose between supporting a movement of this nature and supporting the interests of France, which is now one of Brazil's main partners in the area of defense.

The British presence in the Falklands already emerges as a potential case of inter-state military conflict in the region, involving the United Kingdom and Argentina. As explained, the Brazilian State supports the claims of Argentine sovereignty over the islands, but there is also the constitutional principle regulating Brazilian foreign policy related to the self-determination of peoples. In this case, the inhabitants of the Falklands clearly expressed the

desire to remain British citizens. The situation poses a potential dilemma for Brazilian foreign policy, as refuting support for a just claim of sovereignty from its largest neighbor and South American economic partner would jeopardize the project of regional integration and the creation of a South American mentality without exogenous states to region. On the other hand, the aforementioned constitutional principle precludes a more assertive position on this support. This is a complex issue and for which, at the moment, maintaining the *status quo* seems to be the option that least undermines the Brazilian project.

One point to highlight is the fact that the two extraregional states analyzed are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. If the interests and causal factors of the military presence of France and the United Kingdom are distinct, there is a strong defense link between the two states, namely: NATO, the largest collective defense organization currently in existence.

Since its creation in 1949, NATO never had one of its member states militarily challenged, without the other members of the Organization directly or indirectly supporting the challenged ally. During the Falklands War this support was essential to the UK war effort.

Exceptions to such support between NATO member states occurred only when the military employment initiative was unilaterally started by one or more of its members, such as Suez in 1956 and the invasion of Iraq in 2003. In that sense, the military presence of France and United Kingdom constitutes an even greater challenge to the Brazilian vision of regional defense, and it should be remembered that the issue of the Falklands is still the greatest potential for inter-state military conflict in the South Atlantic.

Finally, it is hoped that the research carried out will stimulate and contribute to new studies on the military presence of exogenous players in the region and its reflections on the defense vision of the Brazilian State for South America and South Atlantic. Extraregional players and their present and prospective interaction with the Brazilian National Defense Objectives are presented as promising academic challenges in terms of research and potentially relevant to the constant improvement of the Brazilian defense vision.

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ABSTRACT

The issue of the Falklands catalyzes the attention of researchers in studies of the military presence of extraregional actors in South America. However, France, a state equally exogenous to the South American nations, is present in the region, keeping a colonial territory, where contingents and military installations are located, almost always ignored in regional security studies. In this context, this paper aims to highlight the military presence of France and the United Kingdom in America and South Atlantic, and to analyze the tensions arising from this presence in relation to the regional Brazilian view of defense.

KEYWORDS

Refugees, Syrian Civil War, Orientalism.

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