

*Submission for presentation  
(Extended abstract)*

**Brazil in BRICS after the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff:  
economic crises and sudden modifications in the external policy**

Bruno De Conti  
Marco Antonio Rocha<sup>1</sup>

The development of BRICS was relatively quick. In 2001, Goldman Sachs analyst Jim O'Neill proposed this acronym to make reference to the “emerging stars” of the financial markets. In 2009, the group was officially created by the governments of Brazil, Russia, India and China, in a summit in Ekaterimburg (Russia). Five years later, the group had already approved the constitution of a joint Development Bank (the New Development Bank).

This quick success was due to the explicit priority all countries were giving to the group. In Brazil, it is clear that the governments of the Workers' Party (Luís Inácio Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff) were very much involved in the effort to develop a group with potential to change the international order. This attitude was even criticized by some analysts who claimed that these governments were giving more priority to BRIC (and later BRICS) than to the integration of Latin America.

In May 2016 however, president Dilma Rousseff was submitted to a parliamentary process that resulted in her impeachment. She was hence replaced by Michel Temer, who has sharp differences in his view of the role of Brazil in the world economy. One of the outcomes was a sudden change in the Brazilian external policy, with the explicit claim that Brazil should re-connect to the United States of America and Western Europe, instead of prioritizing BRICS or the countries of the so-called “Global South”. Simultaneously, Brazil was facing a very deep economic crises, loosening its appeal in the eyes of the world community.

In this context of economic, social and political chaos, Jair Bolsonaro was elected as the Brazilian president. More than Temer, he is obsessed in deepening the relationship with the USA. On the other hand, he made sharp declarations against China during the

---

<sup>1</sup> Professor at the Institute of Economics, University of Campinas, Brazil.

electoral campaign. His government is pragmatically trying to keep good relations with China – the most important commercial partner for Brazil –, but it clear that his foreign policy is totally Western-oriented. Moreover, the country's economic crisis is still very deep.

Given this whole context, it is important to analyze the role of Brazil within BRICS. In spite of all the discourse, is Brazil still working for the development of this group? It is possible to see a decline in the involvement of the country in the construction of a new international order? The long and deep economic crisis is loosening the attraction of Brazil for the other BRICS countries?

In order to answer to these questions, the current research makes an analysis of the official documents and the speeches of the President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Besides this analysis, it looks also to the concrete initiatives Brazilian government is developing to strengthen the group. In this sense, it is particularly interesting to analyze the differences between the attitude of Rousseff's government in the two last summits held in Brazil, Fortaleza 2014 and Brasília 2019.

The conclusion is that Brazil is respecting the commitments with BRICS – funds for the New Development Bank, organization of the BRICS summit – and is gradually adopting a discourse that praises BRICS. Nevertheless, it clearly lost the protagonist it had during Lula and Rousseff's governments in the development of the group and the effort to build a new international order.