



# **Alternatives to the development**

*The debate is opened*



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# Summary

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FOTOS MARCUS VINI



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# Alternatives to the development: The debate is opened

*Since its establishment in 1979, the Instituto de Estudos Socioeconômicos (Inesc) has worked in initiatives that aim at enhancing the Brazilian democracy. Currently, all the projects developed by Inesc deal with two main lines of action: Strengthening the civil society and expanding the social participation in forums to debate public policies. In a dispute of ideas and the public debate, whether through publications or social interventions, the budgetary tool is the basic axis to enhance and promote citizenship.*

If on one hand the discussion about economy, budgetary revenue and the monitoring of public investments under the social light is not a new action for Inesc, one can identify that along its path Inesc bets on a development model capable of ensuring to Brazil opportunities for the sustainable growth. That is its main strategy, although such concern is spread among different projects and initiatives. From 2003 on, when the country renewed its hopes in a Government that seemed to have power enough to promote structural changes, Inesc succeeded in gathering, in different events - seminars, workshops and deeper studies with other organizations - all the debates held about a way to reversing the logic of “growing first and distributing later.”

In that sense, and trying to expand the impact of its action on the debate, Inesc held the seminar “Thinking an agenda to Brazil: Challenges and perspectives.” The document was conceived to foster discussions and generate inputs about alternative development models that could serve as a counterpoint to the current hegemonic neo-liberal model. A model that places more and more emphasis on economic aspects, in detriment to social aspects.

The meeting was held in Brasilia, from June 26 to 27, 2007, and was divided into four blocks: Development models; participation and social control; human rights and imbalances; and international policy. It rested on the participation

of academics and representatives of the civil society organizations with renowned experience in the matter<sup>1</sup>.

Inesc also wants to fight the false idea that there is no feasible proposal to a different development model. Publications, meetings held and others yet to be held are some tools that help expanding and bringing other voices to the debate. Nonetheless, those tools cannot be perceived as mere new means of formulating models. It is not about replacing a given model by another. Inesc - and its partner organizations and networks, as well - intend to formulate as many models as required to ensure the country's growth with economic sustainability and, above all, social sustainability.

Following are some articles presented in the seminar, which were gathered in a publication<sup>2</sup> organized by Atila Roque and Luciana Costa. The publication is a mandatory reading to whoever wants to know, beyond the news in the press, the path of the debate on development at different spaces in the Brazilian society. By providing a tool capable of expanding the debate, Inesc also wants to build awareness among the society, letting it know "what can be changed in real life". To reach that goal, Inesc wants to hear the voices and bring to the debate those sectors that are typically left aside the real forums of decision in public policies.



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<sup>1</sup>The lecturers were João Sicsú, of the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Célia Lessa, of the Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), Lucia Avelar, of the Universidade de Brasília (UnB), Chico de Oliveira, of the Universidade de São Paulo (USP), Sueli Carneiro, of the NGO Geledés, Sílvia Ramos, of the Centro de Estudos de Segurança e Cidadania da Universidade Cândido Mendes (CESeC/Ucam), Paulo Carbonari, of the Movimento Nacional de Direitos Humanos (MNDH), Maria Regina Soares, of the Instituto Universitário de Pesquisas do Rio de Janeiro (IUPERJ), and Adhemar Mineiro, of the Rede Brasileira pela Integração dos Povos (Rebrip). Inesc was represented by Eliana Graça, José Antônio Moroni, Atila Roque and Iara Pietricovsky de Oliveira, who served as moderators.

<sup>2</sup>The book is homonymous to the seminar and gathers the key issues of the debates held during the meeting. It will be released early next year, and will be accessible at Inesc site: [www.inesc.org.br](http://www.inesc.org.br)

## The history

It was early in the first Lula government, in 2003, that the Brazilian civil society started challenging the neo-liberal model of development in a more open way. Hoping to promote real changes in the national economy that experienced for a long time the neo-liberal policies (1994–1998/ 1999–2002)<sup>3</sup>, institutions such as Inesc<sup>4</sup> and some others started preparing papers, meetings and debates on the topic. Although the discussions used to be restricted to some organizations and academic means, one cannot deny that when the Party of Workers took office - despite the alliances with different political views - it fostered new ideas. The characteristics and problems of the development model that used to guide the economic and social policies of the Brazilian government in the last few years could finally be changed. But, which would be the alternatives? Is a change in the economic model really capable of “including” and fighting

imbalances? In a country with such different characteristics, would it be enough to rest on “a model”? Maybe the best logic would be not following the existing models.

The public debate used to place the economic-financial stability as the main gain of the Brazilian economy. The population at large could not accept anything that could somehow bring inflation back. By the way, during his presidential campaign Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva always signaled that he would keep inflation under control. Despite the link among the issues, the public opinion in general started believing that nothing different could be done. That is to say that the prevailing idea was that even in the government of the Workers’ Party, nothing could be changed in the economic rules, under the penalty of having the inflation monster gobbling up the sacred salaries of those in formal jobs.

### 1 - DEVELOPMENT MODEL

In the first term of President Lula (2003–2006) one could observe the repetition of a well known recipe: A monetary policy based on high interest rates and financial opening of the Brazilian economy, which started in the 1990’s by other governments. To the economist João Sicsú, professor at the Economy Institute of the Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), although the main focus

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<sup>3</sup>Terms of the President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, of the Political Party PSDB, state of Sao Paulo.

<sup>4</sup>The Instituto de Estudos Socioeconômicos, for example, released the publication “Inesc and the 2003/2006 Brazilian Agenda”. Brasília, 2003.

of the public debate is on the high interest rates, the financial openness was more harmful to the Brazilian economy. According to him, the exchange rate is more and more subject to the humor and expectations of the big international and national financial institutions.

Among the many measures adopted to expand the Brazilian economy's openness, two of them stand out. The first one was the exemption of taxes to foreign individuals regarding the financial gains through the acquisition of public bonds. That, according to experts, increases the attractiveness of federal public bonds, brings foreign capital to the country and values the exchange rate. The second measure was the end of the integral exchange coverage on exports. That allows the exporting entrepreneurs to leave up to 30% of the revenues ensuing from commercial transactions invested abroad.

The consequences are felt in the event of a new escape of capitals to abroad with well known effects: Sharp exchange devaluation, inflation, high interest rates, cut on public expenses and recurring to the conditionalities of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). And is exactly what João Sicsú points out when he says: "If event the financists take resources from the country, why should the exporting entrepreneurs do different?" That is to say that undoubtedly the exporting entrepreneurs will exercise their right of keeping 30% of their sales revenue abroad.

### *1.1 - Two trends*

According to Sicsú it would be impossible not to perceive that the Government Lula, which entails from so many political coalitions, is the stage of a dispute for two economic-social models: On one hand, a developmental-distributive model, and on the other hand a stagnation-concentrating model:<sup>5</sup>. The second model is noticeably hegemonic. Its "truths" became news in different medias and are also repeated at universities, in graduation and post-graduation courses, with great influence on different fronts whether among intellectuals or on the thinking of the ordinary or little informed individuals. The ideas are consistently repeated, until becoming a thought. According to João Sicsú, that movement is so strong that it takes most of the workers to feel guilty for being unemployed, since they were not capable of being qualified. That movement also leads many people to belief that sterilizing the poor women would be enough to put an end to poverty. Hindering the procreation of poor people becomes the solution, instead of the building of mechanisms aimed at improving and providing higher stability to the income and social aspects.

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<sup>5</sup>Model composed of two axes: (i): That working on the financial system, where the main actors are the Banco Central do Brasil and the national and international financial institutions; and, (ii) that working on the actual economy, whose main players are the exporting agriculture and mining corporations.

The developmental-distributive model, in turn, pursues fostering both the domestic market and the exports of manufactured products, thus universalizing the Brazilian society's access to consumption goods. The bet is that such growth supported by industrialization - which allows for formalizing the labor links, increasing the tax collections, generating more skilled jobs with higher remunerations, the technological development and need for innovation - is the only way to move towards reducing imbalances and increasing the income ensuing from work.

If the great doubt is not about which model could ensure more social inclusion, what in fact exists is a lack of clear perception on the options adopted by President Lula and his closest collaborators. The Government keeps developmentalists in key offices at the public administration, but keeps stagnationists in many others. The government presents a schedule to hasten the developmentalist growth but also keeps a stagnationist policy of high interests, over-valuated exchange rate and limited social expenditures.

## Social Protection

The developmental-distributive model aims at setting an economic growth path with high and continuous rates, under proper environmental management conditions and deeper social development. Social development should be understood as: (i) Full job; (ii) universalization of formal waging; (iii) social protection to citizens – children; housewives; students;

unemployed individuals; formal or informal rural or urban workers; retired individuals; holders of specific needs and so on.

Social protection embraces full and high quality access to the formal educational and health system, to traditional social security benefits, to unemployment insurance and to the social assistance programs.

### *1.2 - Integration of Policies*

Professor of Economics at the Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), Célia Lessa advocates that a developmentalist model should rest on social policies conceived in articulation with the economic policies. During the meet that Inesc held in Brasilia, the researchers emphasized the integration between active policies of the labor market and unemployment policies practiced in the Scandinavian countries. According to Célia in those countries the reinsertion of workers in the labor market takes place jointly with programs of professional qualification and re-qualification, and a generous unemployment insurance, with high rates of replacement and long-lasting. The professor explains that the unemployed individuals are qualified when they are granted

the unemployment insurance, and when they joint public programs to train the labor force. A major differential is that the public intervention is not limited to ensuring income and qualification, but is also found in the labor market coordination, gathering supply and demand, based on the information about the qualification needs by the potential employers.

Another example found in the Scandinavia is the policy for expanding the rate of women's participation in the labor market, jointly with the care policies - full time daycare nurseries with qualified professionals and public assistance to elderly people. The expansion of those public services allowed women to expand their participation in the labor market and to improve their qualification. Célia also brings to the debate the experience of expanded public jobs in the sector of welfare provision - care, education, health, etc. Currently, about 20% of the jobs in Sweden is public and is mainly found in the provision of services related to the social welfare. Part of the welfare state's financial support therefore ensues from taxes paid by its own employees.

Additionally to the integration between the economic policies and those dealing more directly with social aspects, the development model selected could also set some general guidelines to the macroeconomic policy, fixing thresholds to interest rates, exchange valuation and the inflation rates. Such thresholds would be compatible to the short-term objectives of reducing poverty and imbalances.

## **2 - PARTICIPATION AND SOCIAL CONTROL**

Inesc believes that there is no way of thinking a development model that disregards the society's participation and the social control. Brazil abounds in institutional mechanisms and processes of social participation and control. But how are those instances effectively serving to expand the participative democracy? How effective are they to the elaboration, implementation, monitoring and assessment of public policies?

Lúcia Avelar, director of the Political Science Institute of the Universidade de Brasília (UnB) is another researcher who has actively participated in the debates promoted by Inesc. And she helps us thinking about the social control's effectiveness or the citizen's control. The media provides an interesting example. According to her, in a country where the traditional elites find tools to control the media, it becomes highly committed to them, thus bringing about serious doubts about its impartiality. Is the right to opinion effectively guaranteed? Is there anybody who does not know the difficulties to publishing news on topics that disagree to the editorial line and policy of most of the newspapers, magazines, and radio and TV stations, among others? Moreover, if the right to association - a reality that strongly expanded in Brazil in the latest 40 or 50 years - exists, to which extent have the players reached the required visibility? Quite the opposite, the social movements are

not well seen. The “popular power” is considered obscure, remainders of a “retrograde Marxism”. The NGOs won space when they became focus of the political corruption of some governments that have unduly transferred resources to their cherished groups.

### *2.1 - Lack of control, excess of impunity*

One can say that in Brazil the political class has full independence in their mandates. There is no effective punishment to corrupt politicians, employees, judges and advisors. Those who are subject to some sort of public execration are those who do not represent an effectively strong politician. They are typically “newcomers” and considered as belonging to a different caste. With an almost inexistent social mobility, the country specialized in punishing “those who do not belong.” Lúcia Avelar emphasizes that one of the social control’s duties should be ensuring independence to the courts regarding the political class, avoiding “agreements” between the political class and the law enforcers. But that is far from being a reality.

That can be evidenced by the findings of a study on the auditing of towns, held by the Federal Government’s General Comptroller Office (Controladoria Geral da União - CGU) - a body of the central government in charge of monitoring the use of resources transferred to municipalities with less than 450 thousand inhabitants. The study points out that the civil society organization’s density is inversely proportional to the corruption rates. At the smallest and poorest towns, with low quality of life, clientelist political leaderships and low association’s density, the deviation of public resources embraces almost all the cases. At towns where the Participative Budget became an actual tool for budgetary control, the advances were evident. But in most of them the authoritarian clientelism that usually resists to the pressures of the organized society still prevails.

But the major insufficiency in the social control is found in the Judiciary Power. Out of all the Powers, that is the one that most rejects the external control. Moreover, its members believe that they belong to a Royal class. The Brazilian Bar (Ordem dos Advogados do Brasil - OAB) itself refuses the external control. And regardless the intensive debates on the Judiciary reform, it remains as a distant objective. Another relevant data is the inexistence of civil society’s representatives with enough corporative power to control it. The only hope rests on the pressure of international human rights entities that demand for effective actions against the violation of rights; the police’s violence; the execution in prisons, hills and rural areas.

## Strategies to the civil society

There are many challenges to converting the social control in an effective accountability tool, which is crucial to a development model capable of fighting the historic Brazilian inequalities. Should the civic organizations focus on any key point? Could we think about practical strategies to the citizens' control on the public institutions to have them responding the populations' needs?

Some organized groups and NGOs – among which Inesc stands out – monitor the budgetary execution in some towns, contributing to the democratization and to increase the Public Power's transparency. By the end, the accountability culture is built in a pedagogical way. If some groups have started that work, why should we not disseminate their actions? Why should we not work on the repercussion of good examples?

To Lúcia Avelar it is not about a recipe. It has to do with converting the civil society into a real and effective civic society. She points out several issues that should serve as food for thought to the social organizations: To which extent has the social control been effective regarding the

municipal, state and federal budgets, notably concerning social investments such as the education and health policies? Every candidate to elections promises priority on those policies. But which has been the real priority of investments in those areas? Have the respective executives by any chance waived the monopoly of decision over such policies? If the legislators perform a role of relative influence, how has that relationship been?

Another issue: Why should we not gather efforts carried out by different organizations to discuss the data produced in the field of implementing the public policies? An why should we avoid establishing partnerships among the organized society's groups, research groups and foundations interested in assessing what has been done at the different levels of the public administration?

Lúcia states that the citizen's control, when built for that purpose, could provide the most essential collection tasks, because all investments would become more transparent and we would finally know the real preferences of the governors and the political class.

### 2.2 - *The Capitalism Wins*

When thinking a new agenda to Brazil, Chico de Oliveira, who is a sociologist and one of the founders of the Workers' Party, raises historic elements regarding the national imbalances and their links to the social policies. One of the hardest critics to the Lula Government, so that he left the PT in the first term of Lula - argues that no one could challenge the affirmative policies such as quotas to the Afro-descendants at the universities or the Bolsa Familia policies, when it is evident

that the Brazilian system will never reach the required increases in the actual wage, so as to give up the governmental charity, and since the Afro-descendants are almost hindered from entering public universities.

As an attentive observer, Chico warns that entities born as a voice to what the system used to interdict, even because the political lexis could not reach them, are now becoming producers of a negative consensus about the way of institutionalizing the so-called affirmative social policies. Still according to the sociologist, in Brazil like in South Africa, ethnic is understood as class, but the fight against ethnical differences is worthless. He believes that when policies are driven by bio-power statutes the class's poverty is not abolished. What happens is nothing more than a new division between Afro-descendants and mulatos. The South African movie *Tsotsi*, that is located in Johannesburg, depicts a gang of poor, Afro-descendant persons kidnapping a person, obviously from a rich family... Afro-descendant! Discrimination is not vanished. It has only changed the classification: Now the class determines the hierarchy, rather than the color, he states.

In Brazil, the discrimination against class is full of prejudice against color and religion: To be a Afro-descendant woman from the Northeast is the Brazilian theological summary. According to studies carried out by the Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada (Ipea) the Bolsa Família<sup>6</sup> succeeded in reducing imbalances. However, according to Chico de Oliveira that reduction does not inform is that it reduces the work remuneration and that they are losing room to the capital incomes in the functional income distribution. He emphasizes: "Which reduction of imbalances are we talking about? Any statistician knows that the upper decile is always more open because it can only be closed through conventional criteria. In such an uneven society as the Brazilian, the open upper decile hides any possibility of effectively measuring the imbalance. That is true for the Latin America and Brazil, since we now know, thanks to Forbes - a pernicious foreign publication that exalts the lowest bourgeois ideology - that the richest man in the world is a Mexican." (Free translation.)

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<sup>6</sup> Bolsa Família is a program of direct income transfer upon conditionalities that benefits poor families (average income per capita worth R\$ 60.01 to R\$ 120.00) and extremely poor ones (average per capita income worth up to R\$ 60.00)

## Global City

The onetime spatial discrimination so well depicted by the districts in Sao Paulo no longer segregates neither idealistically tries to separate the rich from the poor ones. All urban spaces demand for the labor force. The new discrimination tries to get them spatially closer and socially farther. Housekeepers, waitress, drivers, office boys are necessary and should live nearby – and the poor population wants to live near they work. But they must be socially far.

Then, the “global city” is repre-

sented by the self-sufficient, smart new buildings, where that population can only enter through the garage, after being dully identified: “Smile, you are being filmed.” There are bank and even Post Office branches in the buildings. An example of “global city” is a building in Sao Paulo with not only one heliport, but a true airport for helicopters, where the executives traveling to abroad or other states can check in, with no need of passing at the counter of the airlines in the airport.

### 3 - HUMAN RIGHTS AND IMBALANCES

Notably after 1988, when Brazil enacted its new Federal Constitution, several public policies were established to provide institutionalism to the rights. Two decades have gone since then. No one can deny the advances in the human rights policies. However, even if the Dhescas have been incorporated to the debate on the development model, the political power to effectively implementing those rights remains relatively weak. A consistent concern of Inesc deals with the monitoring of recent advances and retreats regarding the human rights, pointing out the challenges posed to the social organizations, movements and NGOs when trying to advance the agenda.

Many times neglected as minor issues, racism and police’s violence are also part of that complex agenda. To assist in building a new Brazil in the light of human rights, Sueli Carneiro, the Director of the NGO Geledés/Instituto da Mulher Negra, Silvia Ramos, from the Centro de Estudos de Segurança e Cidadania of the Candido Mendes University (CESec/Ucam) and Paulo Carbonari, member of the National Movement for Human Rights (MNDH, in Portuguese) bring their arguments to the debate on the development model.

It is worth having in mind that in Brazil the left thought has always placed priority on the class fight to understand the social contradictions, leaving the race imbalances at the backstage. The fact that the socially and culturally built race is a determinant in the setting of the class structure in our country is another issue ignored by the contemporaneous Brazilian thought. It was only recently that some economists started to qualify the dimension of such imbalances and we now can state that we live in a country with social apartheid. Sueli

Carneiro has consistently affirmed in the debates that the disparities in the Human Development Indexes (HDI) found to white and Afro-descendant people point out that the Brazilian population's segment that states to be white presents in its social and economic indicators, such as income, life expectancy and education, human development standards compatible to those for countries such as Belgium. Meanwhile, the Brazilian population that states to be Afro-descendant, including Afro-descendant and colored ones, according to the classification of IBGE<sup>7</sup> reports a HDI lower than that for developing countries such as South Africa that has eradicated the apartheid about two decades ago.

Nonetheless, the country has advanced in the way how it and its legal spheres start to fight racism. Among the main accomplishments, we could mention the Law 10639/03 of January 2003, which sets new guidelines and bases to the national education and introduced to the national curriculum the topic Afro-Brazilian History and Culture, as mandatory. Undoubtedly, that is a milestone in the effort of bringing to the Brazilian education a way of appraising the participation of Afro-Brazilians in the country's history, and rescuing the African cultural values. Besides introducing the topic in the curriculum the Decree also includes in the school calendar the November 20th as the National Day of Afro-descendant Consciousness. However, President Lula vetoed the article that set that the subjects Brazil's History and Arts should devote at least 10% of their programmatic content to the Afro-descendant theme. That article was considered unconstitutional because it failed in observing the social and cultural values of the different regions in the country.

Another advance is found in the health area: The enactment of the National Policy on the Afro-descendant Population's Integral Health. Such decision represents the Brazilian government's acknowledgment of the racial inequities found in access to health and that unevenly expose the Afro-descendants to mortality and morbidity from preventable and avoidable causes. Among them, are outstanding: Infant mortality of children one year old or less; disregard to the prevention and care to diseases prevailing among the Afro-descendant population, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, sickle cell anemia and myomatosis; the higher number of maternal mortality among Afro-descendant women, ensuing from the differences observed by the experts in the theme, evidencing worse care to pregnancy, delivery and puerperium. As happened to Law 10639/03, the implementation of that policy is due to the actions developed by social movements - notably of Afro-descendant women - to build awareness among the health professionals.

It is also worth mentioning Lula Government's recognition of the institutional racism as a key issue to combat racism and race imbalances. The project Combate ao Racismo Institucional - a partnership between the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the United Nations Development

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<sup>7</sup>Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics.

Programme (UNDP), in cooperation with local governments and the civil society organizations in the Northeastern Region, was a successful experience developed during the first term of President Lula. Sueli Carneiro explains that the program allows the public institutions to qualify to overcome the ideological, technical and administrative impairments that prevented them from facing the combined effects of racism and sexism - powerful obstacles to access the development. Sueli regrets that the agreement has been terminated.

She emphasizes that other significant governmental programs oriented to the Afro-descendant population have failed. She mentions the unsuccessful Primeiro Emprego program that provided incentives to the companies as a tool to fight the discrimination against youngsters belonging to discriminated groups, such as Afro-descendant, women and disabled individuals. Moreover, she states that in the field of public security the young Afro-descendants are more exposed to massive killings - like genocide - with absolute inaction by the government.

## Occupying spaces

Fernando Henrique Cardoso was the first president in the Brazilian Republic history to state, in his inauguration speech, the existence of a racial problem in Brazil that should be faced with political boldness. It was during Cardoso's government that the very first policies on racial inclusion were managed and implemented, highly fostered by the process of constructing Brazil's participation in the Global Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Similar Forms of Intolerance - held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001.

In line with the continuity and complemented by the proposals organized in the document *Brasil sem Racismo*, President Lula enhances that commitment towards eradicating racial imbalances. However, the first term of Government Lula was characterized by far-reaching symbolic gestures in the implementation of concrete measures to promote the racial equity. No other government rested on that number of Afro-descendant people

holding offices in the upper echelon of the government. That was a clear signal to the society of a policy of recognition and inclusion of Afro-descendants in the spheres of power.

But regarding the first term of Lula's Government, one of the most significant examples of the advances and retreats is found on how the 2004 – 2007 Multi-Year Plan (PPA) approached the racial issue. The Plan is a kind of federal budgetary estimate. In the article "O recorte de raça no Plano Plurianual 2004–2007 com transversalidade de gênero e geração", by Iradj Egrare, the author promptly observes the general lack of race cross-cutting in the Brazilian public policies. Egrare's work points out the confinement or restriction of the racial imbalances issues to the item 9 (challenge) of the 12 guidelines comprised in the Mega-objective I: Social inclusion and reduction of social imbalances. In the author's view, that confinement is translated into the inexistence of any cross-cutting perspective to approach the topic.

### *3.1 - Right to Security*

In Brazil, 50 thousand people are killed a year. For over two decades, the rates of violent deaths have been ranked among the highest ones worldwide. Of the 11.7 homicides per 100 thousand inhabitants, in 1980, to 26.9 in 2004. The Western Europe countries report rates lower than three intentional deaths per 100 thousand inhabitants, while the United States report from five to six deaths. A notable characteristic in the Brazilian panorama is the concentration of homicides among the young population. For the age group 15 to 24 years old the rates are extraordinarily higher than those observed to the population as a whole. That is a national trend and the situation is the same at states with lower rates of lethal violence. Among the non-young individuals 9.6% of the total number of deaths is related to external causes. Among the youngsters, the external causes account for 72.1% of the deaths. In some states, the homicide rates among youngsters is higher than 100 per 100 thousand young inhabitants.

When we analyze some poor urban areas focusing on youth, we find rates equivalent to more than 200 intentional homicides per 100 thousand inhabitants. The homicide rates for male Afro-descendants are significantly higher for all age groups above 11 years old, although they are much sharper from 18 to 26 years old. For example, the rate for white youngsters of 24 years old is very high, reaching almost 50 per 100 thousand inhabitants. However, the rate for young Afro-descendants of the same age is high, almost twice that for the white ones: 90 per 100 thousand inhabitants.

Gender is another important factor to understand the lethal violence characteristics in Brazil. Women are more frequent victims of domestic violence and the main victims of body injuries. Simultaneously to age and gender, studies have found the existence of a dramatic concentration of violent deaths among the Afro-descendant population (summing up those classified as Afro-descendant and the colored ones). That points out the uneven distribution of wealth and social resources (education, health, sanitation) among whites and Afro-descendants in Brazil that leads to another kind of unevenness, i.e., the distribution of violent deaths. Thus, the major victims of lethal violence are the Afro-descendants and, among them, the younger ones are the most victimized. The aforementioned data were a contribution by the researcher Silvia Ramos, from CESeC/Ucam to the debate promoted by Inesc on the development model to Brazil. They are scaring and accurately translate the situation of the Brazilian young Afro-descendants.

When combined, the variables of age, gender, color and social class are another risk factor to be considered as a suspect by the police. The poor youngsters, mainly the Afro-descendants living in slums and around the big centers, are the main suspect to the police. A research carried out by CESeC/Ucam in the city of Rio de Janeiro in 2002 disclosed that 57.9% of the persons approached by the police when walking on the street are of 15 to 29 years old. Considering the persons approached by the police, the Afro-descendants are subject to police search 55% of the times in comparison to the 32.6% of white ones (Ramos;

Musumeci, 2005). The distribution of police operations varies according to the districts, with approaches on streets with body search carried out in poor areas, and several checkpoints, almost always with no body search, at richer areas.

## Distribution of violence

In the Brazilian metropolitan regions the violent criminality has increased mainly at slums and poor districts at the urban vicinities. Since the 1980's those areas have faced drug trafficking and conflicts between rival factions. Along the years, the violence and corruption of policemen have equally increased. In those territories that are poor and lack public services, we find the highest rates of lethal violence: The main victims are the young and poor Afro-descendants.

The uneven distribution of lethal violence among the different districts in the municipality of Rio de Janeiro is expressive. The districts in the South area of the city (Co-pacabana, Ipanema, Leblon, Lagoa, Jardim Botânico and Barra da Tijuca) that house those with higher purchase power, report the lowest rates of homicides. There the rates typically range from 4.7 to 10 homicides

per 100 thousand inhabitants, which are close to the North-American standards. On the other hand, the districts at the East zone and vicinities that gather poor regions full of slums (Acari and Santa Cruz, Complexo do Alemão, Vigário Geral and Parada de Lucas, for example) report rates of up to 84 homicides per 100 thousand inhabitants.

According to Silvia Ramos that distribution discloses the presence of two extremely different standards in the very same city: 40 minutes from the poorest to the richest districts, from those best served by the state and those left aside for long years, to the point of having armed groups total controlling entire territories at the slums areas. She affirms that in practice there are two countries living together in the same city. Still according to her, there are also two different police forces and security policies.

### 3.2 - *New ideas*

Mobilized around culture and using different languages such as music, theater, dance and movies, some groups coordinated by the youngsters emerged in the scenario of the Brazilian metropolitan regions expressing their ideas and the perspectives of the youth living in slums. They also try to produce alternative images to the stereotypes of criminality usually associated to that society's segment, and "fight" with drug trafficking to win the youth in those areas, exercising a sort of seduction associated to the glamour of arts, visibility and success.

Most of such initiatives oscillate from denouncing the police's violence on one hand, to pursuing autonomy regarding the despotism of armed

groups of traffickers, on the other hand. Some of those groups try to serve as mediators in the war among factions of the drug trafficking and openly undertake the mission of “withdrawing youngsters from drug trafficking”. Nonetheless, that is not necessarily a common rule to all groups. Other initiatives, in turn, assume postures in face of the crime world that could be considered even ambiguous. That is true to the hip hop groups that identify themselves to the “prisoner brothers” and are focused on denouncing that criminality as a stereotype is associated to young Afro-descendants living in the outskirts.

Identified as new mediations in the response to violence, one cannot say that those are the only or the most efficient initiatives to take youngsters away from drug trafficking. Sílvia Ramos recalls the countless religious groups, mainly of Pentecostal orientation, devoted to the religious conversion of youngsters involved in crime. According to her, there are also the football schools and sports programs developed at slums and poor districts, aiming at fighting the idleness, discovering talents and building professional alternatives.

Moreover, the research reminds that the same cultural field hosts countless projects on dance, circus, music and theater, both governmental and private ones, aimed at leisure and the professionalization of adolescents. According to her, the specific marks of the new mediators are: The groups are headed by youngsters from slums that produce a speech in the first person; the capacity of expressing signs to which the slum’s youth identify itself while creating models that reject the traditional image of the slum’s youth; the creation of new metaphors by the history of lives; the capacity of moving around the media and the community, different social classes, factions and governments, moving between the local and the universal. In such a complex panorama, Silvia also highlights that the young mediators cannot be considered examples of contemporaneous spirits in tune with the modernity’s values. She affirms that they are heterogeneous groups where males prevail. One can find clear traces of misogyny or homophobia in the practices and discourses of those groups.

## The youth and the police

Despite the obstacles, the young groups at slums have served as the main source of denunciations, reflection and discussion, at the national level, about the relationship youth/police, the police's racism and the daily discrimination against youngsters from slums and outskirts, not only in their relationship with the police, but also with employers, the great media and all those that associate the youths living outskirts to criminality and dishonesty.

The project Juventude e Polícia, developed by AfroReggae in the state of Minas Gerais, in partnership with the Centro de Estudos de Segurança e Cidadania da Universidade Cândido Mendes (CESeC/Ucam), is an example of the possibilities opened through the direct interventions of social movements in the process of adopting democratic and contemporaneous security policies, and in the police's reform processes.

In 2002 the AfroReggae Band produced a video clip to the music "Tô Bolado" with successive images of police violence, clearly disclosing the

AfroReggae's opposition to the police. In that same year one of the founding member of the group was shot during a police operation headed by the Battalion of Special Operations of the Military Police (Bope) in Rio de Janeiro.

By the end of that year, the entity's coordination searched the CESeC/Ucam to prepare a project with the police (and not against the police). A project on "cultural invasions" in the battalions was then submitted to the Ford Foundation that promptly approved it. The negotiations with the Military Police in Rio de Janeiro were frustrated after months of negotiations, and the proposal could not be developed in that state. In 2004 the Secretariat of Social Defense and the Military Police of the State of Minas Gerais invited AfroReggae and the CESeC to develop the project with the battalions of Belo Horizonte. The project was developed in the following years and in 2007 is about to be institutionalized by the Military Police of Minas Gerais that intends to convert it into a regular program of the police.

### 3.3 - *The civil society's actors*

The Brazilian civil societies' organizations, mainly those bound to social movements, played a decisive role to constructing the public policies of response to the Aids, the women's health and the psychiatric reform, to mention some examples in the field of health. Also concerning the environmental policies, NGOs and social activists have played and still play key roles in the constructing of Brazilian responses in the area. But when it comes to public security issues, the participation of the organized civil society's actors in the debates about the polices' reform, disarmament, security policies and other crucial topics to the Brazilian democracy remains insufficient.

According to Sílvia the big Brazilian NGOs that play a core role in the establishment of the national policies agenda should be less defensive in what regards the issues related to public security. In her view, the path is being built by other groups. She states that as new mediators, some groups seem to evidence, although at local level, that one can provide creative responses in a field where the civil entities almost never participate. In that same line, she affirms that whoever intends to monitor the ways that the Brazilian society is expected to build in the next years to face violence and reach security and justice should not despise those novelties.

Additionally to the organizations of youngsters living in slums, some segments of the social movements as the homosexual movement have reached relevant progress by demanding policing and respectful and proper protection against the specific characteristics of the homophobia. In April 2007 entities pertaining to the homosexual movement, supported by the Special Secretariat of Human Rights (Sedh) and the National Secretariat of Public Security (Senasp), held in Rio de Janeiro the first National Seminar on Public Security and Combat to Homophobia. The meeting gathered police officers from 27 states, public security managers, experts, academic partners and gay, lesbian and transgender activists from all corners of the country. As the first step towards approximating the homosexual movement's agenda to the police reform's agenda, the meeting was extremely positive and represented a historical step. Silvia Ramos believes that the homosexual movement employed a method that can be further used by other movements.

The Afro-descendants' movement should be also directly engaged to the topic of violence, considering that racial variables are massively present in the identification of young Afro-descendant living in the outskirts with the main victims and authors of violence. Sílvia adds that the Brazilian police contingent is mainly composed of Afro-descendants and that the institutional racism is even more complex among the Afro-descendant police officers.

### ***3.4 - Unevenness and contradictions***

Paulo César Carbonari, coordinator of the National Movement of Humana Rights (MNDH) recalls that unevenness is not a circumstantial phenomenon in Brazil, whether in the social, economic, political or cultural light. According to him, it seems to be structuring options of the Brazilian life that is reproduced as a social integration - or disintegration - policy. Poverty and misery are generalized expressions of unevenness and of the systematic violation of human resources and, therefore, cannot be viewed only in a generic way, he adds. Brazil has color and gender. Any attempt to overcome it - and in the last few years the effort in that sense has been obvious - proved to be insufficient since they usually reach positive results in reducing unevenness in general indicators, but remain almost untouched when dealing with color and gender.

In Carbonari's opinion one can hardly believe that Brazil has taken a crucial decision of overcoming the imbalance, keeping the liberal expression that all individuals are equal in face of the Law as an empty expression. He affirms that "The imbalance issue remains a problem to weaker persons who have never left the site where they were born (not even to be registered), who have never gone to the United States or Europe. That is their problems! In the end, their lack of initiative and their congenital laziness are visible. They seem to have a natural vocation to poverty. When they raise their voices to demand their place in the society they do it in the wrong way - they use force, occupy private properties, they want to remain where they jeopardize huge and necessary developmental projects; they want quotas, indemnity, prison to their husbands and spouses. That is the reason for the legitimacy of their repression, criminalization... elimination." (Free translation.) And he adds: "Impudence and hypocrisy are on the grounds for choosing for imbalance, which is another option against the human rights, as universal rights - they even exist, but not to some kinds that are only supposedly human beings. That is such a significant discourse and is exactly the same that grounded the Auschwitz's rationale".

## More action, less rhetoric

The human rights can become rhetoric content, easily spoken by different voices, either to promote them or to criticize them. Different agents have different speeches. Not everyone speaking about human rights refer to the same content. The practice belongs to the political area and that is where its truth can be checked. In that sense, only by acting one can overcome the contradictions. Policy is not exhausted in the technique of composing interests. It goes much farther: It is the practice of facing the conflicts and building consensus based on arguments. Therefore, more than rhetoric, it demands for political action.

In the last few years emerged a lot of proposals, suggestions, and analyses. But it still misses the sympathetic courage to convert intentions into actions.

Following a programmatic reflection on the challenges that could strengthen the fight for human rights in Brazil.

### 1 – Strengthening the popular organization

The popular organizations keep alive the process of resisting to the excluding development model, proposing the expansion of human rights contents and participatory rooms, providing visibility to subjects whose rights are ignored and who are made vulnerable by the society. Strengthening the popular organization means, above all, expanding the conditions to attain the human rights. It means expressing the structural contradictions that mark societies that are very uneven and asymmetrical. It means building the conditions to deal with conflicts mediation in a participative

and programmatic way. It means believing that all human beings are subject of rights and only they can know the best way to effectively achieve them.

## **2 – New strategies of fight**

The participation of the popular organization of fight for human rights in the Brazilian society is of high significance. However, some social organization's segments are still far from incorporating the human rights agenda, like the trade union movement in general, for example.

Maybe the major challenge to constructing new strategies of fight rests on expanding the capacity of social mobilization around the human rights agenda, facing the conservative cultural impairments existing in the public opinion.

Popularizing the positive adhesion and the broad population's recognition of the human rights then become a strategic challenge, whether towards expanding the supporting basis to the fight or to expand the enforcement of rights. The new strategies of fight for human rights demand building a differentiated agenda that passes through the reflection about the human rights' meaning – the concepts entailing from them – and, above all, the explicit statement of new contents and strategies. That is to say that to fulfill the tasks it would be necessary to expand the dialogue capacity and the joint construction of different agents and organizational processes.

## **3 – New institutionalism of protection**

Brazil has taken significant steps to furnish the society and the State with the required conditions to handle the human rights, taking on the responsibility of achieving them and repairing any violation. In that sense, commit to the deliberations of the IX National Conference of Human Rights (2004) that gathered a set of concrete proposals to effectively implement the National Human Rights System is the first great challenge. That proposal, besides providing a diagnosis on the background institutional problems, presents a set of measures to face the situation, whether by improving the existing tools, mechanisms, institutions and actions, or to implement others.

Another challenge is the effective incorporation of human rights in the set of public policies, accompanied by the improvement and expansion of specific public policies oriented to human rights. Among others, the building of a national human rights policy demands updating the National Human Rights Plan (PNDH). But it goes farther. The major effort is to effectively understand and implement human rights actions at all public action forums, overcoming the idea that the government body (federal) of human rights (the Sedh) should do it by itself. Either the process ensues from a joint effort by the government and the public power, or it will remain

as an important action left aside, which is punctual, residual and isolated. One of the main political efforts of the public agenda is to understand that the commitment to human rights is among the priority duties of the state. Carrying out that exercise upon the broad and qualified participation of the civil society's organizations is a core step towards converting the human rights' subjects into authors of the measures to be implemented aiming at achieving their rights.

#### **4 – Facing the excluding development model**

Without the broad and strong action to distribute income and wealth that cannot be achieved only through policies of income transfer as public programs, one can hardly change the process and ensure the sustainable and solidarity-based development capable of embracing the Brazilian population at large. The enhancement of the neo-liberal model of the state's and economy's organization and the insertion of the country in the globalization process has contributed more to worsen the situation than to face it. The compliance to the commitments followed by the structural adjustment does not depend on agreements with international institutions such as the IMF, since it seems to have been incorporated to the political practice. Brazil has not yet succeeded in building its own development alternative based on the self-de-

termination of its people and built as a right rather than an initiative exclusive to the free trade initiative, as set out in the international human rights tools. Thinking it based on those assumptions and within the regional integration context with increased globalization, adopting a sovereign posture, is a must. Building a broad process capable of generating new grounds to the development understood as a human right and a means to achieving the human rights to all is an urgent matter that should be translated into commitment by the social, political, economic and cultural agents.

#### **5 – Security as a right**

To face the violence that deeply marks the social relationship it is necessary to build public security policies basically oriented by the human rights. Above all, it requires the challenge of finding strategies and alternatives to face violence through practices of conflicts mediation, like the initiatives that have already been developed in some parts of the country; an integrated approach of different policies; expansion of basic public utilities (presence of the state); all of the supplemented by the incentive to the social and community organization process in different initiatives. The reconstruction of the social grid that is torn apart by poverty, by imbalances and violence, demands more than actions on detention or containment. Those actions are

applicable to fight the organized crime but are insufficient in face of the daily violence that entails more suffering and deaths. The implementation of training programs to public agents and the civil society's organizations to work with conflicts mediation emerges as a consistent alternative that could assist in the construction of processes to promote the community organization and social protection.

#### **6 – Promotion of equity and social justice**

To face the imbalance agenda it is necessary to consistently and deeply gather the aspects that cross cut the debate, above all the gender, ethnical-racial, generational and class issues, among others. The measures to be adopted cannot

challenge those aspects and lead the society to have to choose one of them. It means to find out social integration measures that overcome the mere accommodation of interests and the recurring filching of the debate. In the light of human rights, the social inclusion (synonymous to facing imbalances) demands an approach capable of preserving diversity and promoting and generating rooms to develop the popular creativity. But that means consistently facing the issue of property and wealth concentration (both rural and urban); expanding job offers in different ways; and, above all, expanding the supply and access to universal and quality public utilities to be implemented as public human rights policies.

#### **4 - INTERNATIONAL POLICY**

The Brazilian foreign policy stability is another myth that was so repeated that became true, validated by a competent diplomatic discourse that consistently links the tradition to eventual conceptual innovations and new postures of the country's international policy. But to which extent has the government of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva effectively renewed the foreign policy? Maria Regina Soares de Lima, professor at the Laboratório de Pesquisas em Comunicação Política e Opinião Pública (Iuperj) will help us to think over the question. "Maybe a distinctive trace is the higher assertiveness in the international plan, expressed in the break of some dogmas of the Brazilian diplomacy such as the inclination to activism in South America, overcoming the conventional frontier between domestic and international affairs. By daring more, it naturally become more exposed" (free translation) she states.

A good example of that audacity was the candidacy to a permanent seat in the UN Security Council that was placed as a strategic priority to the foreign policy and fostered broad attack to the Southern countries. But it brought about negative impacts to the regional coordination capacity. The Brazilian candidature to leading offices in the WTO and the IADB missed support. One

could say that when the left party governments took office in South America they have not necessarily generated automatic alignments. In fact, the difficulties in reaching the regional cooperation were expanded since those governments, in opposition to the conservative governments, tend to be more sensitive to meeting their society's demands regardless the effect of their actions on the regional cooperation.

Maria Regina says that the most significant case was the election of Evo Morales in Bolivia and the nationalization of hydrocarbons in May 2006 that directly affected the interests of Petrobras in that country: "The Brazilian response seeking dialogue rather than confront, as some sectors of the public opinion wanted, was one of the peaks of Lula Government's foreign policy, since it preserved a relationship that is strategic to the country." (Free translation). The event disclosed the untidiness between the regional weight of the country and its effective influence, worsened by the structural asymmetry that brought about old fears of hegemony in the South America.

Despite some innovative measures, in some cases the government of President Lula faces some problems ensuing from the lack of more audacious actions. Maria Regina reminds us that Lula's foreign policy took a long time to recognize the need for measures to soften the structural asymmetry between the minor partners to Mercosur (Uruguay and Paraguay) and the greater ones (Brazil and Argentina). The establishment of the Structural Convergence Fund in 2006 aimed at softening that asymmetry in times when the block was almost blowing out. The Brazilian absence during the crisis between Uruguay and Argentina aiming at preserving the strategic relationship with the latest, in the dispute entailing from the installation of cellulose processors nearby the Uruguayan frontier, is another element of the missing foreign policies decisions. Similarly, the government of President Lula maintained a sort of sovereign legacy of short willingness towards assigning and establishing institutions and rules of supra-nationality nature.

## The Weak and the Strong ones

Most of the Brazilian negotiating power was oriented to changing rules, whether in the commercial area or within the UN Security Council scope. The establishment of the G-20 during the meeting held in Cancun, Mexico, in 2003, stood for the rebirth of the Third World coalition that is now focused on the agricultural interests of the developing countries and on disclosing the hypocrisy of the developed countries' negotiating posture. Its establishment recovered the role previously played of "intermediary" between the "weak" and the "strong" ones. On the other hand, the novelty in Doha's negotiation was the demanding role of the liberalization of the US and European agricultural markets, due to the high competitiveness of the Brazilian exports, besides the maintenance of the traditional agenda of negotiations on the access to markets and strengthening of multilateral rules. Nonetheless, the leadership in the South coalition obliged the country to give up the maximum demands in benefit of the coalition, due to the structural differences among the partners.

When postulating a permanent seat in the Security Council the foreign policy reiterated the historical will of the national foreign policy's community. The innovation, partially fostered by the set of obligations implied by that postulation, was materialized in the Brazilian leadership of a peace force in Haiti. Here, the country accepted to exercise a more

interventionist role in face of a situation of chronic instability that could have effects on its security perimeter. In the 1990's the things were different, when we had to abstain from supporting the dispatch of a multinational mission to that country, within the scope of the UN Security Council. Nonetheless, there were few debates about the innovation in the domestic scope, despite the reasonable degree of uncertainty in relation to the history of success of that kind of operation.

Continuity has reigned in the relationships with the USA and the European Union: Strong economic content and pragmatic direction in face of the evident importance of both areas to the Brazilian exports and to investments in the country. The difficulties in reaching an agreement FTAA-Mercosur and European Union-Mercosur ensue, on one the Brazilian side, from the complexity and diffuse costs of such agreements due to the impact of eventual commitments made in different areas and domestic policy-related issues. The FTAs negotiated with the USA are free trade agreements on in the name and in the liberal rhetoric. The rigidity in the origin rules and the concessions in many disciplines and topics, such as governmental purchases, investment rules and intellectual property, have direct impacts on the partners' capacity of developing industrial policies. And it is surprising to see that Brazil misses an active industrial policy. With the European

Union the future liabilities are such that would demand not only specific laws but a change in the constitution as well.

During the second term of President Lula, at least up to now, the approximation to the USA regarding the cooperation on biofuels and alternative energy programs caused some surprise

to some South American partners, notably Venezuela and Argentina. But that was followed by positive gestures of reinforcement to the alliance with both countries. Once more we could observe the conciliating style of the current government's foreign policy towards avoiding worsening any dispute with our South American neighbors.

#### *4.1 - Commercial Negotiations*

Since late 2006 the Brazilian government, particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has made strong efforts to restart the Doha's Round negotiations at the World Trade Organization (WTO). The core deadlock is about the attempt of opening markets and reducing subsidies to agricultural products in the countries with biggest markets, notably the USA and the European Union, in exchange to the opening of industrial products and services in the developing countries. According to Adhemar Mineiro, and expert from the Departamento Intersindical de Estatísticas e Estudos Socioeconômicos (Dieese) and advisor to the Executive Secretariat of the Rede Brasileira pela Integração dos Povos (Rebrip), that equation has already happened in old times during the now suspended negotiations to build the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and during the frozen negotiations between the Mercosur and the European Union. Adhemar states that in all of those events the position of Brazil was to pursue expanding the opportunities of business to the big commercial agriculture of the Brazilian exports, with some limits to protect elements that could allow for the industrial development policies and the internal regulation capacity in the services sectors and topics related to industrial property, competitiveness and investment that, despite being loose and/or restrict, were challenged by the negotiators.

In his view that is an interesting contradiction, mainly when the internal debates in Brazil are oriented to the economic growth issue, mainly fostered by the launching of the Growth Acceleration Plan (PAC, in Portuguese). "On one hand we find the economic growth objective and on the other the idea of placing priority to the expansion of the preferential selection of the foreign market and commercial balances that are unable of guaranteeing the accelerated growth, as evidenced in the last four years. No matter the dimension of the exporter sector in that period, it was limited to support the economic growth." When it comes to commercial negotiations, those limitations are translated in an ambiguity found in the current government since its beginning: Between maintaining the monetary and financial orthodoxy in the macroeconomic policy management implying high interests, valuated exchange and a huge exporting effort to try to

minimize the foreign accounts weakness ensuing from the financial liberalization and capital movements, and the dreams of an accelerated economic growth and reduced unemployment rates that would imply active industrial policies and emphasis on the domestic market.

#### *4.1 - Dialogue Rooms*

One of the main novelties in the government of President Lula was the greater openness concerning information and participation in the establishment of the Brazilian negotiating position in different processes where the country was involved. It opened integration and dialogue rooms - sometimes formal ones, other times still informal ones - with the society's organizations and the entrepreneur sector. Moreover, it has also set formal participation room in the negotiation delegations, particularly in the negotiation process dealing with the attempt of establishing the FTAA.

Nonetheless, the extent of formalization and transparency seems to be inversely proportional to the interests of the Brazilian negotiators of - headed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - quickly move towards an agreement. Comparing the processes, the transparency and formalization were pretty broad in the debate to the establishment of the FTAA, with the formal participation of negotiating delegations, since the meeting of the FTAA Commercial Negotiations Committee meeting in Trinidad and Tobago, in September 2003.

Transparency was far-reaching but the mechanisms to the informal participation in the negotiating process between Mercosur and the European Union were hastened along 2004. In what regards the negotiations in the WTO scope, during the Doha Round, the general level of information and transparency was satisfactory. However, the negotiation process was suspended by middle 2006, when Brazil actively tried to restart the negotiations and reach an eventual agreement through the direct and active involvement of the minister of Foreign Affairs, Celso Amorim. From then on, the information provided to the public about what was effectively being negotiated became more and more scarce and the participation, even the informal one, became unfeasible.

According to Adhemar Mineiro, another important novelty was the fact of not assuming directly the liberal dogmas and the reasonable pragmatism during the negotiating processes where Brazil was involved. "The same hegemonic liberal economic thought that led to the establishment of the WTO agenda in the 1990's and to the negotiation processes to establish the FTAA or between Mercosur and the European Union permanently restated the conviction that together, the free trade and free flow of capital can generate an economic environment capable of fostering the development and meeting the social demands. Generally speaking, the pressure over the less developed countries is in the sense of enhancing their integration to the international flow of trade and allowing for financial transfers related to the payment of debts and other foreign liabilities, and to the international flow and reflow of financial capitals", he adds.(Free translation).

Apparently, the Brazilian government has not passively accepted as a negotiation scenario, the automatic achievement of the liberal model. The belief was then that in the short time the commercial liberalization would yield fruits like efficiency gains and a positive insertion for all. In opposition, accepting the position imposed by that model of a commodities export, the government tried to negotiate the gains yielded by that position, adopting a much more pragmatic position that the mere ideological agreement to the model's assumptions and consequences, with general orientation towards the participation in the negotiating processes to which the country was or is involved.

#### *4.2 - Exports as a project*

The emphasis on the international trade and, above all, in areas that seem to be favorable to short-term gains, like the commodities market, can determine the outlining of an economic development project event if it is not clearly drafted. That view brings about three questions: What is the nature of an economic process ensuing from that sort of leverage? Which are the long-term effects of that process on the Brazilian society? Which would be the pace of that process in a country like Brazil? Probably there is no safe answer to those questions. Nonetheless, some elements should be considered to assist the reflection, mainly about the social effects.

The first one, very important, is the contradiction between the production of exportable surplus of food products and a population living in nutritional deficiency. We are not talking about a basket of exportable products made of exotic fruits, wines or sumptuous meats. We are talking about basic food like soy, corn, meat, poultry, citric fruits and others. Moreover, the conversion of almost all the major commercial agricultural production into exportable commodities yields a link between price (in national currency) in the domestic market and price (in foreign currency) at the international market.

Another consequence of the international insertion based on products of low technological content is the pressure for a "spiral" of reduction in the labor force costs comprising remuneration, other achievements and/or legal rights of workers, which are perceived only as cost. If on one hand, in an economy less dependent on the international trade dynamic and more exposed to the movements of that trade the increments on the waged workers' remuneration is translated in an increase on the sales volume and consequent increase on the production, in a virtuous path, on the other hand, an economy exposed to other countries' exports and depending on exports, the increase on the worker's class income and/or rights and achievements are mainly faced as new increases on costs that would hinder the corporations' competitive capacity.

What would seem a complex discussion of economists is translated into an entrepreneur speech about the "Brazil cost" increase, as an additional argument against the labor achievements. In a country with disastrous con-

centration of the national income, such as Brazil, the international insertion through the expansion of trade flows introduces an additional element against the improvement of the workers' population at large and the achievement of new rights at the more organized sectors with higher negotiation power: The reduction of the so-called competitiveness of our products, notably those with lower technological content, due to impact of the labor force cost on the products' final price.

Here, one should also consider the environmental issue and the effects of the exporting strategy on the natural resources. That strategy is, to some extent, based on the possibility of intensive use of the country's natural resources. Large lands, with high potential of being cropped; availability of low cost lands; abundant water in most of the territory; sun all over the year; few or no occurrence of natural catastrophes surely are a Brazilian competitive advantage, besides the mineral resources found in its territory.

The damaging effects ensuing from the building of dams to produce cheaper energy; the mining exploitation in vast areas in Brazil are some examples. Maybe the most visible in the recent years is that of the commercial agriculture expansion over areas of parks and forests, on the most traditional ways of producing and living in the Brazilian inlands. That expansion is fostered by the country's international commercial insertion standard, particularly when dealing with products such as soy, cotton and cattle and sheep farming that bring about negative aspects in the environmental and public security view - such as increase in violence ensuing by the expansion of those crops at the agricultural frontier of the North, Mid West and Northeast regions. That not to mention the long-term effect of the big commercial agriculture expansion on the land concentration, and the worsening of social problems and violence in the Brazilian rural area.

The insistence in an exporter insertion with low technological content should also be considered in the light of its potential effects on the educational priorities and the fostering to the development and generation of technology and knowledge in the country. Adhemar Mineiro has no doubts that: "In fact, although it can be considered a strategy, its nature is absolutely harmful in the light of priorities and the setting of an educational strategy to the country. And that is so not only because that kind of growth option depends a little on the population with higher education, since it does not intend to develop its own intensive capacity of generating knowledge and technology, since that kind of strategy is not demanding in that area and part of the technological "packages" is imported. That is also because its own dynamic reports low capacity of including the national population in the formal educational system. However, that could be achieved through a political decision."

## Agenda to a feasible future

The selection of the exports' strategy is gradually outlining the growth policy that could be short lasting in a country with the dimensions of Brazil. However, that strategy is of utmost importance to define the Brazilian negotiating positions in the processes where the country is involved, notably within the WTO scope. Crystallized as agreements, they may entail long-term effects on the economy and the Brazilian society. According to Adhemar Mineiro, "the consequences can be very complex in the light of thinking a less imbalanced and fairer society and economy. The same would happen in relation to the predictable effects on the future of environmental, educational, remuneration, labor links and health indicators in the country, among others".

The dynamism of an international commercial insertion based on low technological content products and intensive

in natural and environmental resources contradicts the outlining of a development project capable of generating its own dynamics, based on the domestic market and social inclusion expansion. That kind of thought allows the identification of serious potential problems concerning the current definitions in the negotiating processes involving Brazil, notably the WTO, and its dramatic consequences on the future of the country and its development indicators.

If perceived in that way, this strategy seems to bring in it strong contradictions with an explicit social agenda of the new government. Therefore, it would be necessary to replace the agenda's points in the heart of the concerns and the international commercial insertion as a component to implement that social agenda in the future rather than impairing it.

## Know More about It

Inesc believes in the networked job and participates in several networks and national and international social articulations. The institution's intervention aims at fostering the public debate and contributing to build a new concept of citizenry that gathers expanded public participation, social accountability and solidarity. Overcoming poverty and social imbalances; reaffirming the concept of Human (both political and civil ones), Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural Rights – Dhescas, as a parameter to building the contemporaneous citizenship and fight the persistent social exclusion of large portions of the Brazilian society, are permanent challenges posed to the institution's political action.

To expand the impact of its proposals and actions, Inesc works in partnership with other organizations and social groups and is politically placed among the organizations in the democratic field of the Brazilian Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (Abong) where it currently occupies the Institutional Strengthening Board.

Additionally to its work at national level, Inesc intervenes in international public rooms of pressure to the democratization of global governance institutions, as well as in regional spaces, aiming at the expansion and full recognition of human rights.

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