

CABO VERDE AND SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE: A NEW BRAZILIAN DEFENSE ARCHITECTURE IN THE GULF OF GUINEA?

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Abstract

Brazil, Cabo Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe are States that, with the deposit of the 60th State to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, on November 16, 1994, obtained greater jurisdictions over "their oceans". These increases, merely in their Exclusive Economic Zones, reached about 182% for Cabo Verde and 160% for São Tomé and Príncipe, in relation to their land jurisdictions. Their locations, in areas of high geopolitical relevance, at the confluence of Atlantic maritime communication lines and near the Gulf of Guinea, end up posing "new" and traditional threats. Thus, through aspects dear to strategic studies, in the search for greater induction of security in the region, this paper sought to analyze the bilateral and multilateral relations of Brazil and other relevant actors with these states in the area of defense. It was perceived that more assertive actions by Brazil, in the last two decades, have provided the creation of a defense architecture, composed of Embassies, Technical Support Groups and Naval Mission Centers. Finally, it was found that Brazil has become an actor of relative relevance in maritime security in the region, in face of the presence of other relevant states in the region, such as China, USA, India, Spain and Portugal, among others.

Keywords

Brazil, Cabo Verde, Cooperation, São Tomé and Príncipe, Security and Defense.

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Introduction

The Gulf of Guinea is located on the West African coast, bounded by the Equator and the Greenwich meridian. Therefore, it is not only limited to Cabo Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe, but also includes 15 other states: Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Republic of Congo³.

There are several countries with projections of hegemony in the region, such as Angola and Nigeria. At another level, one can also point to a new zone of contention for influence that involves the United States, China, and the EU in the incessant search for natural resources, and, on the other hand, Brazil seeking greater political leadership in its strategic surroundings (Nascimento, 2011).

The research is justified by the increasing importance of the South Atlantic, especially the Gulf of Guinea, in the geostrategy of the main actors of the international system, here represented by Cabo Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe. These are located at the confluence of Atlantic Maritime Lines of Communication and in jurisdictional areas privileged by living and non-living resources, being quite susceptible to transnational illicit activities, such as piracy, terrorism, human and drug trafficking, commonly called "new threats", without forgetting the traditional threats (state ones).

These states belong to the Portuguese-speaking African Countries (PALOP), presenting similar characteristics derived from their histories, such as colonization, independence and post-independence, and are distinguished by their political choices and levels of development.

Their maritime sovereignty increased with the entry into force of UNCLOS in 1994. Table 1 below presents the maritime territories of these countries in comparison to their land portions.

¹ Article translated by Cláudia Tavares.

² This paper is an extension of the research conducted by the author in the Master's Program in Strategic Defense and Security Studies (PPGEST) at the Institute for Strategic Studies (INEST) at the Fluminense Federal University (UFF), and that is currently being continued in the doctoral program at the same institution.

³ It is worth noting that it included states that, although not directly bordering the Gulf waters, are in its strategic surroundings, either for political cooperation in various areas, or for other regional interests.

**Table 1: EEZ, Territories, Sea/Land Factor**

Country	EEZ (km ²)	EEZ Territory (km ²)	Sea/Land factor
Brazil	3.500.000	8.500.000	0,43
Cabo Verde	734.265	4.033	182,06
São Tomé and Príncipe	160.000	1.001	159,84

Source: Updated by the author. CNUDM

Cabo Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe now have extensive EEZs, where there are good prospects of having large reserves of hydrocarbons and other minerals, as well as living resources. Observing the more specific geography of the Gulf of Guinea, one can perceive a strategic area for international maritime commerce, since there is no bottleneck in the region that could lead to large concentrations of ships or possible blockages in areas of high transit of vessels, such as the Strait of Malacca and the Suez Canal.

Since the 2010s, there has been an increase in piracy activities in Africa. If until recently the actions were restricted to its eastern coast, especially in the maritime vicinity of Somalia, they are now advancing in the west, even threatening the jurisdictional waters of Cabo Verde, further north, in the so-called "Atlantic Basin". These "new threats" generate interest and attention from extra-regional actors and also from Brazil. Many transnational illicit activities are already present in the vicinity and in the blue Amazon⁴, such as illegal fishing, drug and weapons trafficking, smuggling and embezzlement.

As a problematization of the research, new threats and traditional (state) threats - such as, for example, the interests of extra-regional powers that may diverge from the needs and political objectives of the states of the region - can relativize their maritime sovereignty through securitization⁵ of these marine spaces for the sake of international security. Thus, it is understood that the security and defense of these jurisdictional waters is becoming more and more of a priority, which requires strengthening not only the soft power, but mainly the military hard power of the Gulf of Guinea states, in surveillance and maritime patrol actions.

Therefore, this work, aiming to solve the problem presented in the previous paragraphs, regarding maritime security in the geostrategy of the Gulf of Guinea, had as its main objective to analyze Brazil's bilateral and multilateral relations in the area of defense, besides other relevant actors.

Through qualitative analysis, based on the historical and descriptive method, and the use of the Case Study methodology (which involved Brazil and these two African states), the creation of a Brazilian defense architecture in these states was perceived, aiming to increase the induction of security in the geostrategy of the Gulf of Guinea. This architecture could become a model to be expanded (if requested) as a cooperative policy to increase military hard power to the Gulf of Guinea states - if requested by them.

⁴ The Blue Amazon is represented by the marine areas under national sovereignty or jurisdiction, its interior waters, its 12MN Territorial Sea (TS), its 12MN Contiguous Zone (CZ), its 188MN Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and its 200MN Continental Shelf (CS), which can extend for another 150MN, corresponding, currently, to approximately 5.7 million km².

⁵ It can be said that the process from "non-politicized to politicized" until it becomes a threat to national, regional and international security requires public actions that are characterized as securitization (Violante, 2017).



1. Defense cooperation with Cabo Verde: Brazil and other relevant actors

Cabo Verde has many similarities with Brazil. Some of them are cited in the poem "You: Brazil" by the Cabo Verdean poet Jorge Vera-Cruz Barbosa⁶.

*I like you, Brazil,
because you are like my land.
I well know that you are a whole world
and that my land is
ten islands lost in the Atlantic
without any importance on the map.
I have heard about your cities:
The wonder of Rio de Janeiro,
dynamic São Paulo, Pernambuco, Bahia de Todos-os-Santos.
Whereas the ones here
are but three small towns.
I know all this perfectly well
but you are similar to my land.*

Brief Background

Cabo Verde has a land area of 4,033 km², a maritime coastline perimeter of 965 km and an EEZ of 734,265 km². Most of the population, about 530,000 inhabitants, is located on the islands of Santiago and São Vicente (the country's main islands). The main city in Santiago is Praia, the capital, seat of the government and of foreign diplomatic representations, with approximately 135,000 inhabitants; on the island of São Vicente is Mindelo, the second largest city with about 75,000 inhabitants.

Portuguese explorers discovered and colonized these 10 islands in the 15th century, which were then uninhabited. In 1475, the archipelago was seen as the first European settlement in the tropics. Starting in the 16th century, precisely in 1507, the islands began to serve as a warehouse for slaves brought from other African countries, which generated a multicultural nation, influencing its settlement (Foy, 1998).

Over time, Santiago Island became the political, administrative and economic center of the colony. The slave trade ended up structuring Cabo Verde socially and economically, which determined the economic hegemony of a white elite that ended up spreading, despite the perversity of slavery, new knowledge, technologies and cultures (Davidson, 1988 *apud* Madeira, 2014).

As a result of the miscegenation between the European and the African, the mestizo assumed an important role in the dissemination and affirmation of Cabo Verdean cultural identity, especially with the systematic abandonment of European settlers in the 19th century. The mestizos changed the existing structure of racial inequality (Seibert, 2014). This social ascension affirmed the cultural identity of the "sons of the land," especially

⁶ Poem You Brazil. Available at: <http://www.antoniomiranda.com.br/poesia_africana/cabo_verde/jorge_barbosa.html>. Accessed on: May 26, 2020.



after the abolition of slavery in 1876. In this way, society became divided more by economic aspects than by social ones.

The new Portuguese colonization period, which occurred with the introduction of plantation culture in the mid-18th century, did not reach Cabo Verde. Constant drought, water scarcity and arid soil did not provide the necessary conditions for this new commercial exploitation. The continuous abandonment of the islands and the lack of investments generated social dissatisfaction and poor income distribution among the local elite. Thus, in the 20th century, trade unions and sector associations favorable to modernization, liberalization, and Portugal's relative political and administrative autonomy were formed (Violante, 2017).

From there, clandestine political movements occurred on the islands. Perhaps the main one was the integrated pro-independence movement in Guinea-Bissau and Cabo Verde, under the leadership of Amílcar Cabral, Aristides Pereira, and Luís Cabral. This resulted in the creation of the African Party for Independence (PAI) in 1956, later renamed the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde (PAIGC). This party had as its basic guideline the "reaffricanization" of the two nations, in the face of the cultural assimilation movements they suffered (Rizzi, 2012).

After the independence of Portuguese Guinea, which occurred unilaterally on September 24, 1973, when it was renamed Guinea-Bissau, the Carnation Revolution, which overthrew the Salazar dictatorship on April 25, 1974, contributed to the acceleration of the independence processes in the other Portuguese colonies, which benefited Cabo Verde's negotiations abroad (Rizzi, 2012). Making an analogy with the independence of Brazil, in Cabo Verde relevant political movements were perceived that pressured the Portuguese political power to accept an independence in a negotiated way.

During the establishment of the nation state between 1975 and 1990, the one-party model prevailed. The PAIGC administered Cabo Verde until 1981, when a *coup d'état* took place in Guinea-Bissau, which led to the separation of the parties and the change of its name to African Party for the Independence of Cabo Verde (PAICV). The PAICV governed the country until 1990, with a socialist orientation, but without direct alignment with the former USSR. In this period, its international insertion was based on pragmatism, but in more assertive relations, firstly with Europe (Portugal) and secondly with countries in Africa and other continents. The absence of natural resources did not provide much choice for Cabo Verdean society, which became dependent on the resources of its diaspora and international development cooperation. Thus, according to Seibert (2014), its intellectual elites analyzed the benefits and challenges that regional integrations would provide, not leading to a process of a "Creole independence"⁷ based on an automatic "reaffricanization".

With the end of the Cold War, a broad process of democratization, political and economic openness was discussed peacefully and institutionally by society. A new constitution was promulgated in 1992, with the adoption of a multi-party system and the change from a parliamentary system of government (which was effectively headed by the president of

⁷ The consolidation of a Creole society, with its own culture and languages, originates from the interrelation of European culture and other African cultures, mainly due to the time lapse of colonisation by the metropolis (Seibert, 2014).



the republic) to a semi-presidential system, with a parliamentary bias. With this, foreign and domestic policy effectively became commanded by their Prime Ministers.

In concluding this brief background, it should be noted that Brazil has had strong ties with Cabo Verde for more than five centuries. The formation of the identity of the Brazilian people went through the arrival of the first slaves from Cabo Verde and the shipping companies, as well as a strong Cabo Verdean nationalist sentiment to join the Brazilian Empire on the occasion of the Brazilian independence in 1822 (Correia & Silva, 2015), and the rapid recognition of its independence in 1975 are good examples of this linkage (Violante, 2017).

The next section deals more specifically with the relations of Brazil and other relevant states with this strategically important country in the Gulf of Guinea.

Relations with Cabo Verde

The great challenge of today's Cabo Verdean society is to generate wealth where there are almost no natural resources and no large domestic consumption market.

Cabo Verde takes advantage of globalization, present since the great navigations of the 15th and 16th centuries, and, in a more accentuated way, since the 20th century. Its proximity to Europe, continental Africa and the American continent places the archipelago in a relevant strategic position.

This proximity to Europe has generated constant debate and criticism about its model of international insertion. In economic and social terms, Cabo Verde has stood out in sub-Saharan Africa. However, the transition from Least Developed Country (LDC) to Middle Income Country (MIC) at the UN has not reflected sufficient progress to solidify a relevant structural change in its development. There is still a lack of more concrete investments, specifically in infrastructure and in improving the provision of services for the country to become a logistics hub between the three continents. Many of these Cabo Verdean demands have been met by countries like China, the United States of America (USA), Portugal, Spain, and Brazil, among others, through cooperation actions, as will be seen below.

Regarding piracy, drug trafficking, and terrorism, the concern of the Cabo Verdean state has been with maritime traffic at the confluence of the North Atlantic with the South Atlantic and also with the Gulf of Guinea. Data from the EU and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in the last two decades have shown the increase in the number of these illicit activities, which are no longer restricted to the Strait of Malacca and the Gulf of Aden.

On the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the Armed Forces of Cabo Verde, in Praia, on 15/01/2012, and also on the occasion of the seminar "Security and Development: Connections and Challenges", in Praia, on 25/07/2012, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs and Defense, Jorge Tolentino, reiterated that:

[...] the government's option to reinforce the Coast Guard both in resources and equipment, so that it can fulfill its role as the State's authority on the Sea and can be a decisive piece in the development and success of the Sea cluster [...]. The strengthening of the Coast Guard, namely through the acquisition



of naval and aerial means and the creation of legal conditions for its affirmation as a guarantor of the State's authority at sea, as well as the development of the necessary links between the relevant institutions for maritime safety are undoubtedly concrete and decisive steps (Tolentino, 2016, pp. 103-116).

In a growing assertiveness, the participation of Cabo Verde could be verified as being more present in the sewing of partnerships, in the training of personnel and in the provision of means by means of its public policies.

On June 24-25, 2013, heads of states and commissions from ECOWAS, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) met in Yaoundé, Cameroon's capital, to discuss and agree on an important agenda in response to illegal maritime activities in the Gulf of Guinea (Violante, 2017).

On that positive line in the area of security, Cabo Verde assumed the presidency of ZOPACAS in 2014. In July 2016, the National Assembly began debates on the ratification of the security and defense protocols of the African Union (AU) and ECOWAS, signed in 2010, in view of the favorable opinion of the Cabo Verdean Superior Council for National Defense (CSDN). In the words of then-President Jorge Carlos Fonseca, "This would imply a fuller membership of Cabo Verde in the African Union and ECOWAS, and would open the legal possibility for the country to participate in intervention, peacekeeping and other forces that are constituted under the decisions [...] of the two organizations"⁸.

It is interesting to note that ECOWAS has focused in recent years on providing its own integrated maritime strategy to its member states, especially with regard to transnational illicit activities, as well as possible disputes over natural resources such as oil (ICG, 2012; Zucatto & Baptista, 2014).

These African international organizations, based on the understanding of the Yaoundé Summit, have sought, through cooperation among the states of the region and international partners, solutions against piracy, terrorism, smuggling, embezzlement, among other threats in these marine spaces.

Zucatto and Baptista (2014) also add that Cabo Verde has found as an alternative to combat piracy the hiring of private security companies. In 2012, the government granted a license to Cabo Verde Maritime Security Services (CVMSS) to hire, on an exclusive basis, private maritime security companies that could use the islands as bases for the embarkation and disembarkation of their armed security teams. According to the 2012 publication *Shipping News and Views*, the British company SeaMarshals Ltd. was the first to receive permission to use Cabo Verde as a base for security operations in the West African region. In an article by the authors in the journal "Cardo News" (2014), the country was confident in a new maritime strategy that should provide greater communication between regional and international Organizations for the training of qualified military personnel, especially in its Coast Guard.

⁸ Cabo Verde prepares accession to security and defense protocols. Available at: <http://www.portugaldigital.com.br/lusofonia/ver/20104583-cabo-verde-prepara-adesao-aos-protocolos-de-seguranca-e-defesa-da-ua-e-da-cedeao>. Accessed on: August 25, 2020.



On 02/12/2016, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Defense, Luís Filipe Tavares, expressed at the opening of the 2nd annual meeting of the G-7 plus Friends of the Gulf of Guinea group⁹, in Praia, Cabo Verde's willingness to host one of the maritime coordination and surveillance centers in the Gulf of Guinea sub-region, "provided that ECOWAS and international partners commit to assist in its operationalization, making available the necessary technical and financial support and requested technical and financial support for its assembly¹⁰".

Aiming to reform its Naval Power, Cabo Verde has sought more robust defense agreements and projects both multilaterally and bilaterally, mainly with China, USA, Portugal, Spain and Brazil.

Chinese cooperation has mostly taken place in the area of infrastructure. Since 2003, China has increased its cooperation and economic relations with the entire West African coast, especially in the Gulf of Guinea. There has been cooperation in the areas of health, training and qualification of personnel with the offer of scholarships for undergraduate and post-graduate studies, donation of equipment, including military equipment, help in food security and emergency events, and economic cooperation in the areas of construction, trade, ship repair, and electronic governance¹¹. This greater Chinese presence in Africa highlights its global geopolitical and economic interests, associated with the "One Belt, One Road" project¹². According to the Brazilian ambassador to Cabo Verde (2007-2010), the presence of Chinese technical cooperation would not be a competitor for Brazilian cooperation. In this regard, trilateral cooperation could be carried out in the area of health (HIV-AIDS), transport and science and technology¹³.

More specifically regarding defense, in December 2012, China and Cabo Verde signed an agreement to supply military equipment. This agreement was aimed at strengthening the Cabo Verdean Coast Guard, more precisely in the purchase of vessels to strengthen its surveillance and patrol capabilities in its jurisdictional waters. Over the past decade, military equipment has been delivered to the country to the tune of nearly €38.5 million, which included two Patrol Vessels, as well as two helicopters. In return, China has operated shipyards of the Cabo Verdean company CABNAVE, on the island of São Vicente. In 2016, a port complex, intended to support Chinese fishing vessels in the South Atlantic, was completed on the island of Santiago.¹⁴ This project is well regarded in Cabo Verde, as it can be used as a commercial and logistical support warehouse, in a cluster

⁹ The G7 friendliest countries in the Gulf of Guinea are: Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Interpol, European Union, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Kingdom, USA, Interpol, Canada, South Korea, Denmark, France, Italy, Japan, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Interpol, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), as well as other countries in the region and African regional organizations such as ECOWAS, CEEAC, CGG and AU.

¹⁰ Cabo Verde may host the Maritime Coordination Center for the Gulf of Guinea. Available at: <<http://www.expressodasilhas.sapo.cv/politica/item/51160-cabo-verde-pode-acolher-centro-de-coordenacao-maritima-do-golfo-da-guine>>. Accessed on: 04 Dec.2020.

¹¹ Brasemb Praia to Sere Telegram - 28/01/2006.

¹² This refers to a power project that involves cooperation in all areas, especially infrastructure, aimed at integrating the Far East with Western Europe from Russia by land and from the Indian Ocean by sea. See more in: Violante, Marroni and Maia (2020) - "Reflections on hegemonic warfare today: China and the United States of America". Geosul Journal, v.35, n 77, p 531-552. Available at: <<https://periodicos.ufsc.br/index.php/geosul/article/view/73966>>. Accessed on: 21Feb.2020.

¹³ Brasemb Praia to Sere Telegram - 04/06/2010.

¹⁴ Cabo Verde and China are highly fruitful. Available at: <<http://inforpress.publ.cv/cooperacao/126456-as-relacoes-entre-cabo-verde-e-china-sao-altamente-proficuas-ministro-jorge-tolentino>>. Accessed on: 28 Jun.2020.



of the sea, which can meet the demand from other countries, such as Europe and ECOWAS.

More precisely since 2014, the US has turned its attention more assertively to opportunities on the African continent. Investments to the tune of \$33 million were pledged at a summit that encompassed 45 heads of state in Washington in late 2014. This was one of the actions implemented to try to contain China's advance, concomitantly with the strengthening of trade partnerships and infrastructure activities. In the words of President Obama during the event: "we want Africans to buy more American products and Americans to buy more American products" (Africa 21 Magazine, 2014, p. 25). Cabo Verde was represented at this summit.

The U.S. has signed important cooperation agreements with the government of Cabo Verde. On March 24, 2014, two cooperation agreements were signed to combat illicit transnational maritime activities in order to obtain reciprocal logistical support in the region. According to a note from the Cabo Verde Ministry of National Defense, the first agreement was framed within the framework of strengthening joint response capabilities to so-called "new threats". The second concerned equipment procurement and mutual support between the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and the Cabo Verde Ministry of Defense, regulating joint exercises, training, deployments, port calls and other cooperative efforts in logistical support, supply and service needs¹⁵.

Portugal has been a major player in cooperation in several areas with Cabo Verde. Investments average around €10 million per year. In the last two decades, Portugal has been Cabo Verde's largest net donor, also standing out in the areas of education, vocational training and health. In 2014, 11 cooperation instruments in various areas were signed, including memoranda of understanding in the areas of higher and basic education and protocols in the fields of education, health, linguistics and economics¹⁶.

Portugal has increased its defense cooperation, especially in the training of military personnel, in exercises on Cabo Verdean territory and also at sea. The most relevant fact is the signing of a new defense cooperation agreement on 14/08/2013, which resulted in closer actions aimed at maritime security, as well as the integration of military personnel of the Armed Forces of Cabo Verde in Portuguese contingents in missions to support peace and humanitarian assistance (Diário Oficial de Cabo Verde - I Série nº 42, 2013, p. 1084).

Portugal and Cabo Verde signed an additional protocol to the treaty for the joint surveillance of maritime spaces under Cabo Verde's jurisdiction during the 3rd bilateral summit in December 2014. They also reinforced the closer training of military personnel of the Cabo Verde Coast Guard (GCCV), affirming that the sea is a strategic design of both countries¹⁷.

¹⁵ Cabo Verde and USA sign agreements. Available at: <http://brasilsobranoelivre.blogspot.com.br/2014/03/cabo-verde-e-eua-assinam-acordos-de.html>. Accessed on: 28 Jun.2016.

¹⁶ Portugal and Cabo Verde sign 11 cooperation agreements. Available at: <http://www.macauihub.com.mo/pt/2014/12/18/portugal-e-cabo-verde-assinam-11-acordos-de-cooperacao>. Accessed on: 28.jun.2016.

¹⁷ Portugal and Cabo Verde sign 11 cooperation agreements. Available at: <http://www.macauihub.com.mo/pt/2014/12/18/portugal-e-cabo-verde-assinam-11-acordos-de-cooperacao>. Accessed on: 28.jun.2016.



As for Spain, the visit of the Spanish Minister of Defense, Pedro Morenés Eulate, in March 2013, served to renew the main commitments of defense cooperation, with special emphasis on the following initiatives: fulfillment of the joint maritime patrol plan and the training of Cabo Verdean military within the scope of the formation of a future specialized unit in the fight against terrorism and the protection of strategic infrastructures. The Spanish MD also framed the ongoing bilateral cooperation within the framework of the initiatives undertaken by EU and NATO countries aimed at promoting security in the Sahel region. In this line, the training of African armed forces assures itself as one of the main objectives of the Western defense organization in the near future (Violante, 2017).

Brazil's bilateral relations with Cabo Verde, which began positively in the late 1970s/1980s, have been on the rise, despite a brief retreat from more assertive interactions with Africa during the Collor administration (1990-92) and greater prioritization of the so-called "Great PALOP countries" during much of the Cardoso administration (1995-2002) (Violante, 2017).

At the end of the Cardoso government (1995-2002), a greater interaction of Brazil with the horizontal axis of international relations was perceived, which reached Cabo Verde in cooperation in all technical areas, in addition to educational and humanitarian cooperation. Over the last two decades (2001-2020), the foundations of a defense architecture were established and have been continued in the present time, regardless of government ideological biases, which portrays a relative continuity of actions and of a State policy.

Brazil's technical cooperation in the area of defense is based, besides ethical and interdependence commitments, on its political objectives, namely: the safeguarding of national interests - threatened by maritime insecurity in its strategic surroundings -, regional stability, peace and security in the South Atlantic, and greater international insertion in multilateral forums.

Regarding the increased interest in the Gulf of Guinea, we highlight the understanding reached during the XIV Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), in July 2009, which aimed to strengthen multilateral cooperative ties between Brazil and the PALOP. Another moment to be considered was the visit of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010) to Praia on the occasion of the 1st Summit between Brazil and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), on 07/02/2010. This summit sought to bring Brazil closer to the countries of the West African coast, commercially and strategically. The scheduling of this special summit was a desire of Brazil that happened at the initiative of the Cabo Verdean diplomacy together with the other representatives¹⁸. At the end of the meeting, the Cabo Verdean press did not spare praise to Brazil for putting West Africa back on its priorities¹⁹.

¹⁸ Brasemb Praia to Sere Telegrams: 26/11/2009; 17/02/2010; and 30/04/2010 (Brasemb Praia to Sere means telegram sent from the Brazilian Embassy in Praia to the MRE and its respective Africa Division). This also applies to Brasemb São Tomé para Sere. These official documents are listed in footnotes to make the text clearer and with fewer interruptions, in view of their large appearances in the research.

¹⁹ Brasemb Beach to Sere 21/07/2010.



In 2013, the defense cooperation agreement with Cabo Verde, signed in 1994²⁰, was finally ratified by the Brazilian National Congress. The then Minister of Defense, Celso Amorim, emphasized, by letter No. 11422/2012/MD, that technical-military cooperation with Cabo Verde was one of Brazil's priorities for strengthening the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone (ZOPACAS) and the CPLP. Thus, the Commander of the Navy, by Ordinance No. 444 of 12/08/2013, created the Center of the Brazilian Naval Mission in Cabo Verde (NMNBCV), which has as main tasks:

- I. carry out a survey of the real needs of the Cabo Verde Coast Guard, in order to elaborate a proposal for a Cooperation Agreement between the two countries;
- II. manage the human, material and patrimonial resources under its responsibility;
- III. advising the Brazilian Ambassador in Cabo Verde on issues under the responsibility of the Center (BRASIL, 2013, p. 1).

Although Cabo Verde faces no international dispute or other contention over its jurisdictional waters, its maritime vocation is inexorable. Its Coast Guard includes the Coast Guard Command, the Operations Center for Maritime Security (COSMAR²¹), the Naval Squadron and the Air Squadron, and has as one of its tasks: to maintain control and patrol and oversee the country's jurisdictional waters.

This Center was inaugurated in Praia, on November 19, 2013, and is composed of a chief, in the rank of Frigate Captain, and an assistant in the rank of Petty Officer. During the visit, Minister Amorim praised the importance of training personnel, highlighted the challenges of maritime security and noted that transnational crimes have spread in the vicinity of the Brazilian strategic environment, factors that generate the need for "permanent concertation within ZOPACAS", but also through bilateral agreements with friendly countries (Violante, 2017).

Giving continuity to affirmative actions in defense, the Naval, Army and Air Force Defense Office was created on 03/20/2014. The main task of the Agency is to intensify bilateral ties between Brazil and Cabo Verde, especially in defense cooperation, within the context of strengthening the ZOPACAS and the CPLP.

The presence of Brazilian military personnel in Cabo Verde is relevant because Brazilian cooperation, unlike that of other countries, does not have a bias towards the imposition of norms or an interventionist character. Chinese cooperation can be considered complementary to Brazilian cooperation in other areas, but not in defense. Its most assertive actions portray a competition that is not only economic, but also geostrategic, mainly in the establishment of logistical support points/bases in the region. China has aggressively invested in this model, with the donation/financing of military means (Violante, Marroni & Maia, 2020).

²⁰ The agreement is available at: <http://dai-mre.serpro.gov.br/atos-internacionais/bilaterais/1994/b_96/at_download/arquivo>. Accessed on: 29 may.2016.

²¹ The creation of COSMAR is the result of a partnership with the US, which shows the interest of NATO's main partner in the Gulf of Guinea region. However, it seems that the diversification of Cabo Verde's partnerships with Brazil, China, Latin America and ECOWAS, in the area of defense, presented new alternatives with less relativization of its sovereignty, avoiding the concept of "shared sovereignty".



Such Chinese actions also occurred on the occasion of the increase in Brazilian defense cooperation with Namibia, after the establishment of a Brazilian Naval Mission in this state. Adding to the long-standing and consistent relations established in Brazil-Namibia cooperation, via the Naval Cooperation Agreement²², China has invested heavily in that country, by financing aircraft for its Air Force and, more recently, by acquiring the Logistical Support Ship "Elephant", which has become the largest ship of Namibia's Naval Wing. Therefore, although Brazilian cooperation in defense has included the transfer of material doctrine and the training of human resources, as well as the donation of means, these actions have not prevented the purchase of military hardware from China.

Patrol Captain, Pedro Santana, Commander of the GCCV in 2016, pointed out that the current Brazilian defense architecture marked "a very strong position on the part of the government of Brazil," bringing another "dynamic in terms of cooperation in the maritime area," especially in the training of Coast Guard cadres. However, other cooperative actions can be increased, such as investments in infrastructure, with "the construction of naval support points for their ships and boats²³" – that is, what China seeks to implement, based on the *one belt, one road* strategy.

A more assertive posture of the Brazilian state in financing projects of strategic interest to Brazil and Cabo Verde, by national companies, despite the economic crisis caused by COVID-19, are opportunities to be considered in the short and medium term. This has already occurred in other African countries, through the National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES) and other development agencies, in the 2000s and until the first half of the last decade (2011-2020).

Another positive factor of this Brazilian defense architecture concerns its value: it is low cost, especially when compared to other projects that reach the order of millions of dollars and euros, provided by the USA, China and, to a lesser extent, Portugal.

The establishment of port and airport facilities by Brazil, either permanent or temporary, in addition to meeting Cabo Verde's demands, would represent a factor of strength in case of crises or international conflicts, as it could provide control posts for Brazilian ships and those of other countries that send a good part of their exports by sea, using the main sea routes from South America to Europe.

Brazilian soft power is being intensified by this cooperation process. It is also noticeable that the Naval Mission Center established in Cabo Verde can be expanded, as happened in Namibia. As for support activities, many measures that helped the formation of the Namibian Naval Wing can also be implemented in Cabo Verde. The increase in the number of courses, especially with the sending of Brazilian military personnel to Cabo Verde, in addition to the financing/donation of naval and air assets would increase this model of cooperation.

This architecture inserted in the Cabo Verdean strategic concept of defense, placed Brazil in the list of countries and international institutions of security and defense that operated more closely in the region, such as NATO, ECOWAS, Portugal, Spain, China and the USA. Cabo Verde has transformed its defense guidelines into a state policy, given the good

²² The agreement seeks, among other things, support for the creation and strengthening of its "Naval Wing" (Violante, 2017).

²³ Violante, 2017 - Santana Interview, 2016.



governance and pragmatism of recent governments. Its proactive role in international organizations, in addition to strengthening international cooperation with traditional partners, establishes new partnerships in the face of the complex scenario of international maritime security.

2. Defense cooperation with São Tomé and Príncipe: Brazil and other relevant actors

Like Cabo Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe has strong historical ties to Brazil. A trading post for slaves coming to the Caribbean and to Brazil, many blacks from all over Africa and the residents of the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe helped develop not only the culture, but also the Brazilian nation-state, until the late abolition of slavery.

Below is the transcription of the Santomean Poet Olinda Beja, portraying the vocation to the sea, the suffering of slavery, in short, the origin of her people, who contributed so much to the formation of the Brazilian nation.

***WHO ARE WE?*²⁴**

*The sea calls us, we are islanders!
We carry salt and foam in our hands
we sing in the canoes
we dance in the mist*

*we are fishermen-sailors
of living tides where we hide
our ignored soul
our island people
our island sways to the taste of the waves
and brings to spread on the sands of history
the voice of gandu
in our memory...*

*We are the crossbreeding of a god who wanted to show
to the universe our tarnished color
we resist the voracity of time
to the appeals of nothingness*

*we will continue to plant cocoa coffee
and eat breadfruit for pleasure
children of the sun and the bush
torn from the pain of slavery.*

²⁴ Poem from the book "Aromas de Cajamanga", organized by Floriano Martins. Available in: http://www.antoniomiranda.com.br/poesia_africana/s_tome_principe/olinda_beja.html. Accessed on: 29.jun.2016.



Brief Background

Officially called the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, this island state, located in the Gulf of Guinea, consists of two main islands: (São Tomé Island and Príncipe Island) and several other islets, in a total of 1001 km², with about 190,000 inhabitants. Of the total population, about 185,000 live on the island of São Tomé and about 8,500 live on the island of Príncipe. They all descend from various ethnic groups that emigrated to the islands during the Portuguese colonial period. Like Cabo Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe belongs to the category of island microstates.

Between 1470 and 1471, the Portuguese navigators João de Santarém and Pedro Escobar discovered the islands of São Tomé, Príncipe and Anobom. The strategic importance of these islands was only appreciated by the Portuguese in 1482, when they initiated contacts with the Kingdom of the Congo. In 1485, Dom João II established them as a colony in order to begin sugarcane cultivation (Seibert et al., 2002).

From then on, according to Neves and Ceita (2004), the process of formation and socio, political and economic evolution of São Tomé and Príncipe began. Based, initially, on the planting of sugar cane and slave trade, it passed, later, to the cultivation and commercialization of cocoa and coffee. This development can be divided into three periods:

- I) 16th century to the first half of the 17th century - characterized by the arrival of the first inhabitants of the islands, the introduction of new species of fauna and flora, sugar production, slave traffic to Brazil and the Spanish colonies in South America;
- II) Second half of the 17th century and into the 18th century - period of relative commercial decadence with the end of the sugar cane cycle. The colony began to sustain itself through the slave trade and subsistence agriculture. In view of the colonizer's "abandonment", there was the beginning of the formation of autochthonous groups (blacks and mestizos), which gave rise to an embryonic nationalism; and
- III) XIX and XX centuries - when Portuguese interest reemerged with the introduction of cocoa and coffee cultures by plantation. This fact brought structural changes in the economy and society that, with the end of slave labor, resulted in the migration of several African ethnic groups, such as the Angolares, Tongas, servants, and Cabo Verdeans, which prevented the consolidation of a typical Creole society. Seibert et al. (2002) and Rizzi (2012) add that until 1961, forros, Angolares and Cabo Verdeans were considered citizens under Portuguese law, while other Africans were treated as natives, that is, considered second-class citizens.

It is interesting to note that Brazil had an active participation in its social formation process, directly influencing the main economic cycles of its history. First, in a negative way, when the Brazilian sugar, of better quality, productivity and price, caused the disappearance of the sugar cane mills of São Tomé; the second, also negative, on the occasion of 200 years of ostracism by the colonizer, when the islands became a mere



warehouse for slaves²⁵, destined almost exclusively for Brazil; and the third, now in a positive way, when Brazilians from the state of Bahia introduced the successful cocoa crop in São Tomé (Management Report - Brasemb São Tomé - 2015).

It can be seen that both São Tomé and Príncipe and Cabo Verde had their identity formed by Creole societies. However, São Tomé and Príncipe had its "creolité" modified²⁶ for this new stage of colonization. Cabo Verde did not have the plantation system implemented due to its climatic peculiarities and, for this reason, maintained a certain degree of autonomy in local administration (Violante, 2017).

This point is relevant to understand the dependence of the Portuguese in the administrative conduction of the former colony. Until the 1840s, the islands were practically self-governing. The forros, who belonged to the Creole elite, were employed in the administration, engaged in urban services, and were small owners, tenants, or subtenants of plantations. With the arrival of coffee and cocoa in the second half of the 19th century, this elite became politically and economically marginalized, losing the positions they had gained with the exhaustion of the sugar cane industry. Thus, the colonial hierarchy again prevailed (Seibert, 2014; Sanguin, 2014).

Taking a leap in time to discuss the process of independence, it is important to realize that it was not so peaceful. The autonomist movements in the Portuguese colonies in Africa, originated and established in Lisbon, marked the awareness of the organized struggle for political self-determination. In September 1960, the Committee for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe (CLSTP) was created. (Neves & Ceita, 2004).

Between comings and goings, it was only in July 1972 that the CLSTP was reconstituted under the name of Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé e Príncipe (MLSTP), strongly influenced by the Cabo Verdean PAIGC. In a crescendo of actions, the Carnation Revolution (April 1974) ended up encouraging greater political actions in the islands. As a result, negotiations between the MLSTP and the metropolis advanced. Thus, on 11/26/1974, the Algiers Agreement was signed, which set the date of 07/12/1975 for the independence of the archipelago (Rizzi, 2012).

With the relaxation of the autocratic regime and the arrival of multipartyism in 1990 and democratization in 1991, political disputes intensified and several parties were created. However, unlike Cabo Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe has been marked by political instability throughout its history, which has affected good governance²⁷. According to Seibert (2008), São Tomé and Príncipe was and still is characterized by dependence on foreign consultants and the distribution of power in a historical minority, which has hindered the implementation of satisfactory public policies to boost its development.

Despite the improvements shown by the São Toméan economy, this has not been enough to reduce the levels of unemployment and poverty. The discovery of oil deposits in its jurisdictional waters may be a path to a more accelerated development that will increase

²⁵ The island of São Tomé differed from the slavery entrepôt of Cabo Verde, since it aimed much more at preparing labor for work. Thus, when returning to Africa, some former slaves in Brazil preferred to return to São Tomé because of the family ties established there than to return to their countries of origin.

²⁶ Miscegenation in Cabo Verde was more present between white Europeans and blacks, while in São Tomé and Príncipe it was mostly Africans who worked there on the sugar cane, coffee and cocoa plantations (Seibert, 2014).

²⁷ Since its democratization in 1991, there have been two failed coup attempts. Regarding prime ministers, since independence, there have been 22 prime ministers up to the present (2021).



significant economic and social gains. Current technological advances have already made deepwater oil production possible in Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe's neighbors in the Gulf of Guinea.

Relations with São Tomé and Príncipe

São Tomé and Príncipe has an extensive maritime area under its jurisdiction – almost 160 times its land area (see Table 1), which requires attention to traditional and "new threats", as well as possible litigation in its jurisdictional waters, since there are intersections in its maritime borders with other Gulf of Guinea states.

Regarding maritime borders, Sanguin (2014) reminds us that one of the pragmatic and peaceful solutions to overcome these types of conflicts is the establishment of a joint development zone. In this way, states share disputed or intersecting areas rather than confronting each other for control of maritime resources. This solution is derived directly from article 83 of the CNDUM. This was done, in an agreement involving its neighbors and, mainly, Nigeria, with the establishment of a joint petroleum exploration area, called the Joint Development Zone (JDZ). It should be noted that the supervision of the JDZ would be carried out by a joint military force, which has not been put into practice to this day. The Coast Guard of São Tomé and Príncipe (GCSTP) is not yet fully capable of performing this task on a regular basis. Thus, maritime security in the JDZ has remained largely in the hands of Nigeria.

Within the security context, both CEEAC and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) started, as of October 2009, to work on a security strategy for the Gulf region, based on two elements: the creation of a Regional Maritime Security Coordination Center for Central Africa and the promotion of greater synergy between the GGC and ECOWAS countries. This strategy also has six objectives: sharing information and management; joint surveillance of maritime space; harmonizing actions at sea; introducing a regional maritime tax; acquiring equipment for common use; and institutionalizing a periodic maritime conference (ICG, 2012; Zucatto & Baptista, 2014).

CEEAC has divided Central Africa into three geographical zones: A, B, and D, covering a band from Angola to the maritime borders of Nigeria and Cameroon. Among these zones, "D" – which reaches Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and São Tomé and Príncipe – is seen as the one with the highest risk of maritime insecurity. Thus, in 2009, the member countries signed a maritime surveillance agreement called SECMAR, which provided for the opening of a multinational coordination center in their maritime operational centers (ICG, 2012; Zucatto & Baptista, 2014).

As major contributors to CID, we highlight, Taiwan (until December 2016), China (from 2016), Nigeria, Angola, Cabo Verde, France, Portugal and the USA.

It is estimated that Taiwan has invested more than US\$ 240 million since the establishment of diplomatic relations with São Tomé and Príncipe in 1997, namely in health, agriculture, infrastructure and education²⁸. More recently, in April 2015, Taiwan

²⁸ Taiwan signs new cooperation program with STP. Available at: <http://www.macauihub.com.mo/pt/2015/04/24/taiwan-assina-novo-programa-de-cooperacao-com-sao-tome-e-principe/>



and São Tomé and Príncipe signed a new cooperation program for the biennium 2015/16, which contemplated financial support of more than US\$ 15 million, the largest amount so far (Violante, 2017).

Figure 1 - ECCAS Maritime Areas



Source: ICG, 2012.; Zucatto and Baptista, 2014

It is worth noting that even after the rupture of diplomatic relations with China in 1997, the State of São Tomé has always maintained friendly relations with the Chinese political power. In October 2015, São Tomé and Príncipe signed an agreement with China Harbour Engineering Company for the construction of a deep-water port. This infrastructure project is valued at US\$800 million and the first of three phases should be completed in 2018²⁹. However, to date, this important project for the solidification of the São Toméan economy is still in its early stages. If completed, the deep-water port will offer an infrastructure that will meet not only its logistical needs, but those of the other countries in the Gulf of Guinea, transforming São Tomé and Príncipe into a logistical hub due to its strategic position in the region.

This further rapprochement, according to the news outlet "DW", resulted in the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between São Tomé and Beijing on 12/22/2016. This fact caused automatic rupture with Taiwan, by recognizing "only one China". As a counterpoint, the Taiwanese government claimed that São Tomé and Príncipe tried to "take advantage by swinging between the two sides of the Strait" and denounced that

²⁹ Chinese build deep-water port in STP. Available at: <<http://www.construir.pt/2015/10/13/chineses-constroem-porto-de-aguas-profundas-em-sao-tome-e-principe/>>. Accessed on: 29 Jul.2016.



the Santomean government had asked for "an astronomical amount in financial support" of around US\$100 million (about 96 million euros) to continue supporting Taiwan³⁰.

In the decade from 2011 to 2020, India has intensified projects and activities in the Gulf of Guinea region in order to counterbalance projects of greater Chinese political and economic insertion. India understands the Gulf of Guinea as key to decreasing dependence on oil imports from the Middle East, especially with Angola, Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea, which may result in future agreements for the exploration and exploitation of crude oil on the islands, as well as the sale of military equipment (Violante, 2017).

Although they have not yet jointly formed a military force for patrolling the JDZ, Nigeria has demanded greater participation from São Tomé and Príncipe. In 2013, an agreement was established for the training of São Toméan Officers at the Higher Institute of the Nigerian Military Academy. In 2016, there were about 20 Santomean military personnel in this cooperation program, which strengthens the partnership between the two countries that share a vast maritime border³¹.

Resulting from a return to greater assertiveness in relations with Angola, in June 2014 an agreement was signed involving internal and external security and civil protection between the two countries. These agreements aimed to adjust the level of cooperation already achieved in previous decades. Thus, the instruments allow both to cooperate in the areas of training of personnel, criminal intelligence, combating illegal immigration, illegal trafficking and sale of firearms, drug trafficking, combating terrorism, and technical advice in these areas³².

As part of a policy of greater rapprochement with the countries of the West African coast, there were two visits between the Heads of Government of São Tomé and Príncipe and Cabo Verde. The first in Praia, on 12/11/2015, and the second in São Tomé, in February 2016. On these occasions, cooperative actions were agreed upon in the following areas: agribusiness, professional training, health, maritime, water management, tourism, electronic governance, public administration, civil aviation, etc. The creation of a biannual summit between the two governments was also agreed upon. São Tomé approached ECOWAS with the intermediation of Cabo Verde. This resulted in the prioritization for the adoption of a new strategic vision of the CPLP for the oceans. The idea of both states is to act uniformly in the bloc of small African island states before international organizations and forums such as the PALOPs, the AU, the Gulf of Guinea Commission

³⁰ 19 years later, São Tomé swaps Taiwan for China - site. Taipei. Refused to give \$100 Million in aid. Beijing applauds rupture that leaves rebel island with only 21 diplomatic allies - DN News. Available at: <<http://www.dn.pt/mundo/interior/19-anos-depois-sao-tome-troca-taiwan-pela-china-5565650.html>>. Accessed on: 26 Dec 2016.

³¹ São Tomé wants Cabo Verde's support for further rapprochement with ECOWAS. Cabo Verde government webpage. Available at: <<http://www.governo.cv/index.php/rss/6358-sao-tome-quer-apoio-de-cabo-verde-para-maior-aproximacao-a-cedeao>>. Accessed on: 26 jun. 2019.

³² Angola and São Tomé and Príncipe sign security cooperation agreements. Available at: http://m.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/politica/2014/5/26/Angola-Sao-Tome-Principe-rubricam-acordos-cooperacao-dominio-seguranca,d5f9eaac-a7cc-4d93-bdf6-7bb4dee04fc5.html. Accessed on: 20 jul.2016.



and the EECAC, especially in the area of defense, so that their interests are not restricted to the regional powers of the region (Angola and Nigeria) ³³.

The closure of the French embassy in São Tomé on 24/08/2015 has caused surprise. According to the Head of Mission for cooperation and cultural action, Patrick Cohen, the financial crisis forced France to reduce its presence in countries with which the level of cooperation did not justify maintaining the operation of an embassy³⁴. This denotes the decline of French cooperation with São Tomé and Príncipe, which was one of the largest between 1980 and 2000 (Violante, 2017).

Portugal is also a very important partner. More than half of everything imported by São Tomé and Príncipe comes from this state. In all areas of cooperation, Portugal has remained one of the main providers of financing and donations. With regard to cooperation projects, Portuguese Official Development Aid to São Tomé and Príncipe was around 15 million euros per year (Violante, 2017).

Portugal has established a technical-military cooperation program for cooperation between the Portuguese Navy and its Coast Guard on the issue of surveillance and inspection of its jurisdictional waters. This agreement was intended to prevent the strengthening of criminal groups or groups linked to international crimes, such as piracy and terrorism. In 2015, Portugal donated two vessels to the Coast Guard in order to strengthen its capacity to respond to transnational threats (Violante, 2017).

Portuguese defense cooperation has also been responsible for training military personnel, through some Portuguese officers posted in the archipelago. In an interview with the African news website "Pana Express" in March 2015, the then defense minister of São Tomé and Príncipe, Carlos Stock, highlighted the gains of defense cooperation with Portugal, stating that the training of marines and the air surveillance patrol of São Toméan territorial waters by Portuguese Air Force aircraft is a clear sign of the excellent cooperation between the two states³⁵.

Since the 2000s, the U.S. has given Africa a new strategic status. This can be seen in the 2005 National Strategy for Maritime Security, which aimed to expand cooperation platforms in African states and regional organizations in order to prevent conflicts and create secure and favorable environments for regional and U.S. security. The creation of the *United States Africa Command* (AFRICOM) in February 2007 to promote U.S. national security objectives in Africa and its adjacent maritime space has been used as a tool of foreign policy, military cooperation, civilian and military technical training, and humanitarian aid.

³³ Cabo Verde and São Tomé strengthen cooperation. *Voices from the World-RFI-Portuguese*. Available at: <<http://pt.rfi.fr/cabo-verde/20160222-cabo-verde-e-sao-tome-reforcam-cooperacao>>. Accessed on 02 set. 2019.

³⁴ Available at: <http://www.vitrina.st/vitrina4029.htm>. Accessed on: 29 jul.2016.

³⁵ São Tomé and Príncipe and Portugal renew defense cooperation agreement. Available at: <<http://www.panapress.com/Sao-Tome-e-Principe-e-Portugal-renovam-acordo-de-cooperacao-no-dominio-da-defesa---3-630428658-47-lang4-index.html>>. Accessed on: 20 jul.2016.

**Figure 2 - US Regional Commands**

Source: Naval Power Site. Available at: <www.podernaival.com.br> Accessed on: 25 May 2016.

Thus, this new U.S. insertion strategy turned more intensively to Africa as a whole, but more specifically to the Gulf of Guinea. Under the guise of international maritime security, combating piracy and terrorism, the US Navy began to conduct a series of patrols and exercises in the region. Such actions even encompassed the reactivation of the Fourth Fleet at United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), as well as training of GCSTP military personnel throughout the decade (Violante, 2017) and continuing into the present day.

However, the largest cooperative defense action taken by the U.S. was the installation of radar on the islands in 2008. This project called Marine Domain Awareness³⁶ is a surveillance system to provide security to the country's jurisdictional waters and, consequently, to all maritime traffic in the Gulf of Guinea. Importantly, the information gathered from the larger vessels and ships is accessible to the U.S., and is available to neighboring countries³⁷.

This successful experience in maritime security by the US has fostered a greater sensitivity to the issue of maritime security in the archipelago. The "collaboration" with the security and "maintenance" of the sovereignty of the countries surrounding the Gulf of Guinea has even led to the possibility, reported by the national and international press, of the installation of a US military base in São Tomé and Príncipe. This attempt did not materialize, having been denied with some vehemence by the Santomean rulers and also by Washington³⁸.

There have also been more comprehensive defense initiatives in exercises with the Navies and Coast Guards of Gulf countries. In this regard, the U.S. Navy has regularly visited São Tomé and Príncipe, Nigeria, and other countries on the West African coast, such as

³⁶ The programme allows the detection of ships at sea that have transmitters to provide their positions, destination and cargo uninterruptedly. This device is called Automatic Identification Service (AIS). These detections allow littoral states to control maritime traffic in their areas of responsibility.

³⁷ This is not the first time that São Tomé and Príncipe has served as a base for military surveillance. After independence, the former USSR installed a radar system on the island of São Tomé (Nascimento, 2011).

³⁸ Brasemb São Tomé to Sere –Telegram, 14/11/2003.



Cabo Verde and Gabon, under the auspices of the "African Partnership Station" program. Together with NATO, the US also conducted the exercise "Obangame Express", which aims to promote interoperability and combined training, in order to increase maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea region. This exercise included the participation of West African Navies and Coast Guards, including the Brazilian Navy (Violante, Marroni & Maia, 2020).

But São Tomé and Príncipe demanded an increase in its Coast Guard, in order to perform surveillance and patrol activities in its extensive maritime area. Thus, in order to increase its deterrence and surveillance capacity, especially in the "protection of resources and to ensure tranquility in the oil exploration business," in the words of Defense Minister Elza Pinto, São Tomé and Príncipe requested Brazil's help.

Going back in time, Brazil's bilateral relations with São Tomé and Príncipe, especially in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, were almost non-existent. Despite being one of the first states to recognize its independence, in 1975, the ideological biases imputed by the Cold War caused São Tomé and Príncipe to prioritize its international relations in an almost automatic alignment with the socialist bloc (Violante, 2017).

Unlike Cabo Verde, which already had a history of cooperation in previous decades, bilateral relations occurred more intensely only in the late 2000s. The political and economic opening of both states ended up diversifying their international relations in the most diverse areas of cooperation. The training of personnel in the administrative and educational areas was prioritized, and, as a novelty, cooperation in defense.

Thus, in response to a request from São Tomé, in March 2009, the Brazilian Minister of Defense, Nelson Jobim, visited São Tomé and discussed support to strengthen GCSTP. It was decided, after signing a memorandum of understanding on defense on March 23, 2009, that Brazil would train professionals and provide its Coast Guard with the necessary equipment for the surveillance of its jurisdictional waters (Rizzi, 2012; *Correio da Semana*, 28/03/2009, p. 4 *apud* Nascimento, 2011).

In a cooperative *crescendo* in bilateral and multilateral relations, at the 12th Meeting of the CPLP Defense Ministers, held in Brasilia on November 10-11, 2010, a defense cooperation agreement was signed³⁹. According to the Advisor to the Director of National Defense, Lassalette Neto⁴⁰, such an agreement generated great expectations regarding the training of personnel and restructuring of the Armed Forces in the short, medium and long term.

Also at this meeting, Minister Jobim reiterated the need for the South Atlantic to remain free of nuclear weapons, and that it was essential to preserve the current environment of peace and stability without the interference of powers outside the region. Jobim was supported by the African participants. On the subject, the Portuguese Defense Minister pointed out that NATO could also play an important role in promoting stability and cooperative security under the auspices of the UN. The Minister said he was convinced that over time it would be possible to develop a regular defense dialogue between NATO

³⁹ The entire agreement is available at: <<http://dai-mre.serpro.gov.br/atos-internacionais/bilaterais/2010/acordo-entre-o-governo-da-republica-federativa-do-brasil-e-o-governo-da-republica-democratica-de-sao-tome-e-principe-sobre-cooperacao-no-dominio-da-defesa>>. Accessed on: apr.25, 2016. It is still in process for ratification.

⁴⁰ Violante, 2017 - Lassalette interview, 2016.



and other partners, including the African Union, with Portugal as an important partner in this connection⁴¹.

In a *crescendo* of meetings in the CPLP, a possible multilateral cooperation involving Brazil, Portugal, Angola, and São Tomé and Príncipe was ventured in November 2010. To this end, a joint exploratory mission was conducted between Brazil and Portugal. This mission intensified the exchange of information and jointly evaluated the possibilities of cooperation in the recovery of São Toméan military infrastructure. From this mission, the possibilities of cooperation in defense with São Tomé and Príncipe were perceived, as well as its obstacles, mainly due to the inexistence of local companies for the necessary logistical support in ship maintenance (Violante, 2017).

Between 2011 and 2020, São Tomé and Príncipe was one of the countries that benefited the most from projects developed in partnership with Brazilian institutions, in areas such as health, education, agriculture, the promotion of regulatory agencies, and defense. This does not mean that Brazil is on the same level as the largest collaborators, such as the countries presented here (Violante, 2017).

In the multilateral area, Brazil has achieved greater space in discussions on maritime security in regional bodies of which São Tomé e Príncipe is a member, such as the CGG, CEEAC, and the G-7 friendlier to the Gulf of Guinea. In the latter, Brazil was an observer for many years, becoming a permanent member in 2020. However, it is important to note that such an organization is under the leadership of the richest countries in the world, which may not directly contemplate the region's priority interests.

Brazil's more assertive stance in continuing its policy toward Africa resulted in the creation of the Marine Technical Support Group (GAT-FN), in 2014, and, in a *continuum*, with the creation of the Brazilian Naval Mission Center in São Tomé and Príncipe (NMNBSTP), by Ordinance No. 533 of the Commander of the Navy, dated November 10, 2014, with the following attributions:

- I. carry out a survey of the real needs of the Coast Guard of STP, in order to elaborate a proposal for a Cooperation Agreement between the two countries;
- II. monitor and support the activities of the Marine Technical Support Group in São Tomé and Príncipe, subordinated to the Core;
- III. manage the human, material and property resources under its responsibility; and
- IV. to advise the Brazilian Ambassador in São Tomé and Príncipe on matters under the responsibility of the Nucleus (Brasil, 2014, p. 1).

As a result of repressed demands from São Tomé and Príncipe, this initiative was activated on 05/06/2015. During the CPLP Defense Ministers Summit, on 05/26/2015, the Center was inaugurated by the Defense Ministers of Brazil and São Tomé and Príncipe, Jaques Wagner and Carlos Stock, respectively (Violante, 2017).

It was found, then, that the NMNBSTP, its GAT-FN and its Defense Attachment, even cumulatively to Luanda, are the main projects of defense cooperation between Brazil and

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.



São Tomé and Príncipe. This defense architecture has been considered as primordial by the Ministry of Defense and Sea of São Tomé.

In a political-strategic analysis, Ambassador Leitão comments on this cooperative architecture, implemented during his mission in São Tomé and Príncipe (2011- 2016)

The Brazil-São Tomé and Príncipe Naval cooperation project has been of undeniable magnitude and has been very well accepted in local circles. Sketched out since the first months of my administration, the result of talks between authorities of the two countries, the project under consideration is of singular relevance in view of the maritime security challenges faced by the countries of the Gulf of Guinea, including STP. International piracy and smuggling are real problems to be faced by a country that has only a precariously equipped Coast Guard. Thus, the Brazilian Navy has a notable role to play in this country (Leitão, 2016).

In this sense, the Director of National Defense himself, Colonel (Ref.) Alfredo Marçal Lima, added that the agreement with Brazil and with other countries, such as the USA and Portugal, are relevant for the country to explore all its potentialities, highlighting its particularities and complementarities. Additionally, he reiterated that for the security and defense of the South Atlantic, the agreement of Brazil and São Tomé and Príncipe is not sufficient, and that it is necessary to sign additional protocols and new understandings for the surveillance and monitoring of these jurisdictional waters, in light of the growing risks of transnational threats in the Gulf of Guinea⁴².

Ambassador Leitão and the Director of National Defense, Alfredo Lima, believe that a project to increase the surveillance of the South Atlantic, such as the Blue Amazon Management System (SISGAAZ), would meet the needs of Santomean maritime sovereignty. According to Alfredo Lima:

[...] Today STP faces a major challenge, which is the security of its national waters. That is why it has been developing its own efforts and with bilateral and multilateral partners, aiming to ensure the safety of navigation, the protection of living and non-living resources that contribute to the development of the country and global security (Violante, 2017 - Interview Lima, Alfredo, 2016).

Leitão adds:

The creation/implantation of a maritime surveillance system, based on the fundamentals of maritime situational awareness, along the lines of SISGAAZ, is an objective of any coastal state, and São e Príncipe is aware of its attributions in the management of the waters under its jurisdiction (Violante, 2017 - Interview Leitão, 2016).

⁴² Violante, 2017 - Interview Lima, Alfredo, 2016.



These ideas remain current. SisGAAz is a strategic project that can serve not only the interests of Brazil, but also of the countries of the West African coast, such as Cabo Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe. In this way, the US radars on the island of São Tomé, under the control of the US Department of Defense, would gain an alternative of greater integration and less interference in São Tomé's internal affairs. In addition, this system intends, in view of its greater complexity, to have a wider reach, serving the entire Atlantic.

As for the expenditures of this established defense architecture, the opinions highlighted in the analyses of Brazil's defense cooperation with Cabo Verde remain very small, compared to countries with a higher level of international development cooperation than Brazil, such as the U.S., China and Portugal.

Final Considerations and Perspectives

Even during the phase of prioritization of more sophisticated centers of power, there was always an African policy of Brazil in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE). The PALOP and the CPLP were part of the selective partnerships with Africa, besides Nigeria, Namibia and South Africa, mainly. However, within the proposed selectivity, the states with the greatest power capabilities have benefited more, to the detriment of other strategically important ones, such as Cabo Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe (Violante, 2017).

These States on Brazil's Atlantic eastern border have gained large maritime areas under jurisdiction with the entry into force of UNCLOS. However, they need the means and capacity to rationally exploit and protect their living and non-living resources in their EEZ, CDZ and CS, given the presence of "new threats" in the Gulf of Guinea region and, why not say, traditional state threats, mainly from extra-regional powers.

Cabo Verde's defense strategy, for political, economic and strategic reasons, is more in line with the European states, without, however, automatically or unconditionally aligning itself, which allows the opening of various fronts in its bilateral and multilateral relations.

Even political instability, present throughout the history of São Tomé and Príncipe, with the existence of 22 prime ministers in the last two decades, has not ideologically prevented the strengthening and growth of bilateral relations with Brazil. Both states have joint political, strategic, commercial, and diplomatic interests.

In the multilateral area, there were important interactions between Brazil, Cabo Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe, mainly in the area of maritime safety. In this context, meetings with the Gulf of Guinea Commission, CEEAC, ECOWAS, and the G-7 friendliest of the Gulf of Guinea have been highlighted. In the latest meetings of the G-7 friendliest, solutions to transnational illegalities in the region were proposed, including the creation of a Regional Maritime Coordination Center to be built, possibly, in Cabo Verde.

Brazil sought, in these two decades (2001-2020), the complementarity of win-win relations in defense cooperation with Cabo Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe. Soft and hard military power were combined in actions to strengthen their coast guards, so that they could provide, in the not-too-distant future, their own defense and maritime security without further interference or external dependence. The creation of Technical Support Groups and Naval Mission Centers in Cabo Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe, based on



the successful experience in Namibia (a project far less costly than others undertaken by the US and China, for example) formed an important "defense architecture" for the states involved. This project can be spread, in a more inclusive way, to the entire West African coast, if these states so desire. These Centers or Missions could function as logistical defense hubs for training personnel and providing military means to the entire region.

The search for integration of maritime spaces, such as in a network of land and maritime sensors, air and environmental monitoring can be implemented from this architecture. Cooperation agreements between Brazil's Integrated Center for Maritime Security (CISMAR) and Cabo Verde's COSMAR, through the Blue Amazon Management System (SisGAaz), when implemented, will provide greater strategic area mobility and prompt response to environmental disasters, maritime traffic control, and faster responses to maritime security threats.

Furthermore, the possibility of a more assertive role for Brazil in the region, through requests for Brazil to cooperate in surveillance and patrol actions in its jurisdictional waters, may raise international legal issues. The option of participating as a component of a Multinational Maritime Task Force, at the request of the countries in the region and endorsed by the UN, seems a more feasible solution in the medium term. However, such a plea, even if accepted, will demand the elaboration of an internal legal framework that legitimizes the use of Brazilian Naval Power, and an external one, by means of more specific bilateral and even multilateral cooperation agreements.

On China and US investments in the Gulf of Guinea, these ultimately generate gains and some trade-offs. Relationships are beneficial as they are understood by the recipient states as relative win-win relationships. However, they also become controversial by granting, for example, control of a large part of their strategic sectors and port infrastructure to these countries. These relations that mix horizontality and verticality end up deriving in relative interdependence in the region. The United States currently imports about 30% of its oil needs from the Gulf of Guinea. China, on the other hand, imports about 40% of its needs from the region, in addition to other important inputs for the development of its consistently growing economy.

Recently, since 2019, Portugal has been developing the idea of creating an International Organization or Agency, called "Atlantic Centre", to be established in the Azores, to mainly discuss issues related to Atlantic security and defense. It is worth noting, however, that in addition to Brazil, this forum would encompass the presence of other relevant extra-regional actors, such as the US, Spain, France, the UK, etc.

Brazil cannot dismiss the possibility of agreements with actors with greater political will, capacity, and resources, since these will always be present in the region. Portuguese foreign policy has sought to act as a link between the North Atlantic and the South Atlantic. Portugal and Brazil are important actors and cooperation partners in Africa. Their proposals are not mutually exclusive, since they do not necessarily involve belonging to one Lusophone or Brazilian nation. Thus, a possible combined development of a maritime security strategy for the region, aimed at the integration and promotion of sustainable development of the oceans, could go through the CPLP, as it is a forum that has always sought cooperation between the participating states. From these discussions, other forums such as the AU, CEEAC, ECOWAS, G7 plus friends of the Gulf of Guinea cannot be forgotten because of their political, economic and strategic importance on the West



African coast.

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