

PROUD AND ACTIVE FOREIGN POLICY

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The most important decision was to reject FTAA - Free Trade Area of the Americas – without coming into conflict with the United States

In an interview to the newspaper *Folha* (Nov. 15) minister Celso Amorim said that president Lula and himself had tried to make a “proud and active” foreign policy. Did they succeed? I am convinced that they did, but in order to answer this question we must consider that we are living in the era of globalization, in which the Nation-states experience an essential contradiction. The competition between them has never been so intense, but, in return, never was it so necessary for them to cooperate and coordinate their actions. The major countries are no longer threatening each other with wars, but, since the markets opened and the exports grew more than production, the economic competition between them has increased. And, in order to regulate this competition, and to solve a number of global issues such as global warming, drug cartels, global epidemic, catastrophes and tsunamis, cooperation between the nations is increasingly necessary.

On the other hand, the United States, the rich Europe and Japan (the Empire) continued to obstruct the economic development of the countries that had a late industrialization. Their weapons are their advices and pressures. The most harmful one is to say that those countries should try to grow based on “foreign savings” and, therefore, should increase their foreign indebtedness. This way, the rich countries get rid of their excess capital and, at the same time, they weaken us financially and make us dependent.

The decisions that developing countries must take in order to cope with those pressures are domestic, but a nationalist and cooperative foreign policy may help. The most important

decision was to reject FTAA - Free Trade Area of the Americas – without coming into conflict with the United States. When Brazil set out the acceptance of a number of principles of national autonomy as a condition for entering FTAA, the United States gave it up. The policies of strengthening the Southern Common Market, of creating the Unasul, and of active solidarity, but limited to the poor Latin American countries governed by nationalist and center-left parties were also successful. In the relationship with Bolivia, that needed to renegotiate unfavorable agreements, Brazil showed the difference between being imperial and being imperialist.

Critics maintain that, by negotiating with countries with authoritarian governments that do not respect human rights, Brazil would be strengthening those governments. However, no major country government establishes this condition to negotiate. It is simply brought up to justify pressure and intervention in countries with nationalist governments. They also affirm that Brazilian foreign policy failed regarding the candidacy to the UN Security Council. As a trade-off, Brazil is now part of the G20 and, after its attempt to intermeditate the Iran issue, it became obvious to everyone that its participation in the chief international forums is necessary. Naturally, the Empire did not accept the intermediation, but Brazil and Turkey scored a point. The fact is that, in these eight years, Brazil scored many points at international level