



*Lula 3 and the Revitalization of the Strategic Partnership
with China*

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III and the Revitalization of the Strategic Alliance with China*

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes Sino-Brazilian relations under the Lula III administration, focusing on the revitalization of the strategic alliance that celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2024. The intensification of disputes between the United States and China and their repercussions in Latin America is one of the factors that often influence Brazil's strategic decisions. The overall objective is to examine how Brazil has sought to balance its relations with these two major world powers. Since Trump's rise to the U.S. presidency, pressures in the commercial and geopolitical spheres have posed an additional challenge to the Lula administration's foreign policy. At the regional level, Brazil persists in its pursuit of regional integration. To this end, we utilize bibliographic research, documentary analysis of Brazilian federal executive agencies, and statistics from the Comexstat platform on trade and foreign direct investment (FDI). The findings indicate that the Lula III administration adopts a pragmatic diplomacy, using initiatives such as the Brasilia Consensus and the South American Integration Routes Program to bolster its regional leadership.

Keywords: Sino-Brazilian Relations; Brazilian Foreign Policy; Lula; South American Regional Integration.

1. Introduction

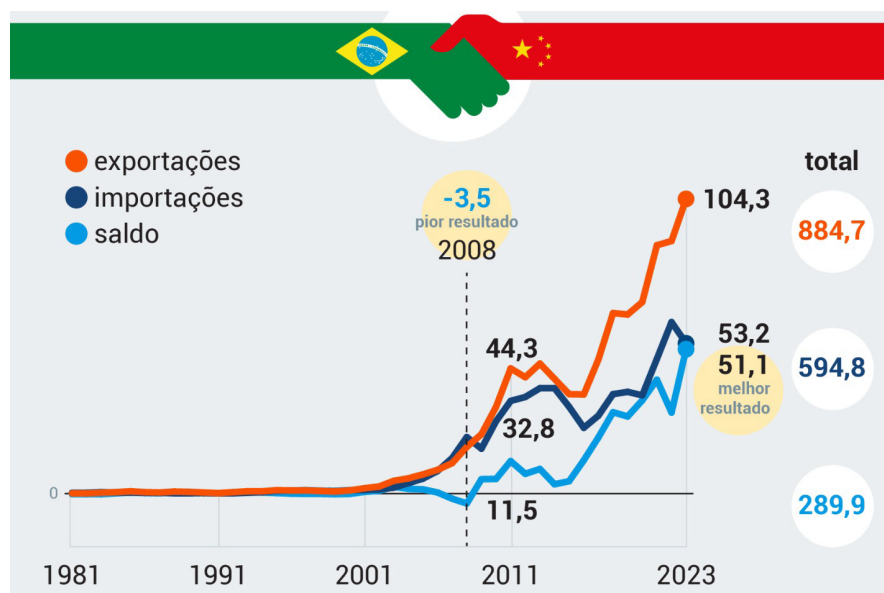
Following the 2008 crisis, China took the lead in international trade and became the world's leading exporter of goods. During his two terms in office, then-U.S. President Barack Obama (2009–2017) treated China as a challenger. But with Donald Trump's arrival in the presidency in 2017, the nature of relations between the two countries shifted. He began to openly antagonize the Asian giant and, from 2018 to 2021, imposed high tariffs on Chinese products (Fiori, 2018). His successor, Joseph Biden (2021–2025), generally maintained the policy adopted up to that point to contain China's economic and technological advance, and in *the National Security Strategy* published in October 2022, China was elevated to the

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status of a strategic and economic rival of the U.S. The goal is to curb China's technological development as well as its global influence (United States, 2022).

Since then, the increasingly intense rivalry between the world's two largest economies has had a direct impact on Latin America and the Caribbean, and on Brazil in particular. In 2023, China imported \$104.3 billion worth of Brazilian goods—an amount greater than the combined imports from the United States and the European Union. Chinese investments in the Brazilian economy are significant: since 2012, the Chinese have invested approximately US\$66 billion in the country (Cariello, 2023). In recent years, the sectors attracting a portion of China's foreign direct investment have diversified, although the primary sector still predominates. During his visit to China in May 2025, President Lula returned with the promise that the Asian giant will invest approximately R\$ 27 billion in new projects, with a focus on electric vehicles, clean energy, and service sectors. At the same time, Brazil seeks to balance its relations with the two global powers (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Brazil's trade balance with China has historically shown a surplus



Source: MDIC and IBGE. Portal 360, August

16, 2024 Under the Lula 3 administration, diplomatic relations have been reworked

following a period of rhetorical hostility that caused some institutional strain - though not commercial - in relations between Brazil and China during the administration of Jair Bolsonaro (2019–2022). In November 2024, following the G-20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, President Lula welcomed President Xi

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Jinping and part of his delegation in Brasília. Among Beijing's points of interest was Brazil's possible accession to the Belt and Road Initiative (*One Belt One Road*), launched by China in 2013. Lula proved pragmatic. At that time, with Trump already elected and anticipating turbulent times for global geopolitics during his second term in the U.S., Brazil did not move forward with negotiations with the Chinese regarding infrastructure investments under the Belt and Road Initiative (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024).

The fact is that, over the past decade, Brazil has come to rely on China as a key economic partner for generating trade surpluses. This has increased the country's dependence on China. Meanwhile, the U.S. has no policy in place to counterbalance China's growing presence in the region. And the new Trump administration, with its aggressive foreign policy, has intensified disputes with the Asian giant, thereby creating turbulence in the global economy (CNN Brasil, 2025). According to Haskel and Slaughter (2025), the measures announced by Trump in the trade arena represent "strategic uncertainty" and inhibit investment by U.S.-based companies, since the new circumstances of political uncertainty caused by the U.S. government primarily impact U.S. companies with global connections, in addition to consumers, of course.

This article is organized into four sections, in addition to this introduction, which constitutes the first section, and the concluding remarks that bring the text to a close. In the second section, we present the methodology used in the research, highlighting the main procedures, sources consulted, and indicators. In the next section, we address the evolution of Sino-Brazilian relations over two decades (2003–2023), from the strengthening of the strategic partnership under the Lula-Dilma administrations, through the stagnation during the Temer period and the ideological friction under Bolsonaro, to the current rapprochement and resumption of Brazil's diplomatic leadership in Lula's third term. In the fourth section, we analyze the economic and commercial dimensions of Sino-Brazilian relations, highlighting Chinese direct investment in Brazil, Brazil's trade surplus, and the asymmetrical relationship between commodity exports

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and the import of manufactured goods. And in the fifth and final section, we assess Brazil's strategies for South American integration, focusing on the South American Integration Routes Program and its alignment with Chinese interests, highlighting the pursuit of synergies without formal adherence to the project in order to maintain a diplomatic balance between China and the United States.

2. Materials and Methods

The methodology employed for this research utilized bibliographic research procedures, including the search for articles, dissertations, and theses, as well as consultation of public documents, reports, and newspaper articles. Also noteworthy is the analysis of partnerships, bilateral agreements, projects, and press releases published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE), the Ministry of Planning, Budget, and Management (MPOG), and the Ministry of Development, Industry, Trade, and Services (MDIC).

Also important was the search for and analysis of statistical data on the trade balance between Brazil and China, with import and export data broken down by product type and export value extracted from the Comexstat/MDIC platform. To capture the dynamics of Chinese capital's operations in Brazil and its qualitative aspects, the primary indicators used were the flow of foreign direct investment (FDI), the presence of financing, loans, and infrastructure projects funded by China.

3. Two Decades of Sino-Brazilian Relations: Alignments, Tensions, and Rapprochement

During Lula's first two terms in office (2003–2010), Brazilian diplomacy sought to forge strategic partnerships with countries in the Global South (Oliveira, 2006; Braga, 2020). Lula's presidential diplomatic activism was a defining feature of this period, aimed at diversifying strategic partnerships (Vigevani; Cepaluni, 2007). These diversified partnerships gave Brazil the opportunity to position itself as a bridge between developed and

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development (Borges, 2013). In 2004, Brazil was one of the first countries in the world to recognize China as a market economy, a milestone of extreme importance for China, as it signified recognition by the most important regional actor in South America (Oliveira, 2006). Later, in 2009, the institutionalization of what would become the BRICS, the first summit in 2010, and South Africa's accession to the bloc also marked the period (Silva, 2015).

This foreign policy, which sought autonomy through the diversification of partnerships and forums, was one of the main characteristics of the Lula I and II administrations. The Dilma administration played a less prominent role internationally in leveraging the presidential image and sought to maintain the traditional goals of autonomy and development established by the Lula administration (Cornetet, 2014). During her administrations (2011–2016), in an international landscape quite distinct from that of her predecessor, Dilma faced international shocks such as the delayed effects of the 2008 crisis, the Arab Spring, the euro crisis, and the waning effects of the *commodities boom*. The outlook for Brazil's president during that period was one of a less coherent foreign policy, lacking a long-term vision (Saraiva; Gomes, 2016). This external landscape during her first term and the domestic crisis that followed in her second term demonstrated the shifting international landscape and the internal difficulty in coordinating policy (Berringer; Belasques, 2020).

The Sino-Brazilian strategic partnership was strengthened through the development of the BRICS agenda, notably the Contingent Reserve Arrangement and the New Development Bank (Bastos & Hiratuka, 2017). Dilma's first administration (2011–2014) was marked by initial visits with politicians and business leaders in April 2011, the signing of agreements on defense, science and technology, sports cooperation, and industry, and efforts to attract Chinese capital in the technology sector (Pires, 2015). In 2015, President Xi Jinping's visit also resulted in the signing of 35 bilateral agreements representing a total of \$53 billion.

Sino-Brazilian relations during the Lula and Dilma administrations evolved beyond economic and commercial aspects. In 2004, the Sino-Brazilian High-Level Commission for Coordination and Cooperation (COSBAN) was established with the aim of fostering dialogue between Brazil and China to coordinate and deepen bilateral cooperation.

In the wake of President Dilma Rousseff's *impeachment*, Brazilian foreign policy experienced a period of relative stagnation and President Temer's isolation. The parliamentary coup was not viewed favorably abroad; the Temer administration's disrepute was the defining feature of Brazil's international image between 2016 and 2018, thus sealing a reduced international role, one that was largely uncritical of global governance and marked by a timid attempt to build closer ties with developed countries (Silva; Holleben, 2022; Bressan, Menezes, and Ribeiro, 2021).

From the outset, the administration of former President Jair Bolsonaro was marked by constant friction with Brazil's main trading partner, namely China. Bolsonaro's unconditional alignment with Donald Trump's United States (2017–2021) was reflected in certain attacks against China and seemed to ignore that country's importance to various sectors of our economy. Thus, Bolsonaro's foreign policy represented, in a way, a break with Brazil's international conduct since the return to democracy in 1985 (Bressan, Menezes, and Ribeiro, 2021). This ideological alignment generated significant friction between China and Brazil during his administration; the pragmatism of economic groups served as a buffer to prevent this friction from turning into commercial losses. These groups oscillated between pragmatism linked to the economy and ideology (Sousa, Abrão, and Porto, 2023; Guimarães and Silva, 2021). Former Vice President Hamilton Mourão began working on Brazil-China relations to defuse tensions and maintain high-level dialogue between the two countries. Mourão played this role throughout the Bolsonaro administration, having visited the Asian giant in May 2019. The hostilities of Bolsonaro and his former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ernesto Araújo (2019–2021), had no impact on investments and Brazil-China trade relations.

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In 2022, Lula's victory already signaled that relations with China would return to political normality: Chinese President Xi Jinping emphasized the importance of relations between Brazil and China and the readiness to elevate the strategic partnership between the two countries (Qi, 2022). The period of harsh ideological criticism of China and Brazil's international isolation was coming to an end.

The end of the Bolsonaro administration marked what Brazil's new foreign minister would come to call "Brazil's return to the world stage of international relations" (Vieira, 2023). Lula's presidential diplomacy began even before his third term, with his attendance at COP 27 in 2022, signaling that environmental policy would be a hallmark of his new term. His first 100 days included 16 working meetings with heads of state and government, confirming agendas for the rest of the year and a visit to China that was postponed due to the president's health issues (Sousa, Abrão, and Porto, 2023). The visit to China resulted in the signing of commercial, technological, agricultural, and space-related agreements, as well as the deepening of the Global Strategic Partnership.

At the regional level, this marked Brazil's return to the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), as well as the reactivation of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO). However, relations with Venezuela have not flourished since the beginning of the Lula administration, although Brazil's diplomatic efforts are evident. Lula invited Nicolás Maduro to the Brasília Summit in May 2023. One of Brazil's objectives was to bring Venezuela out of its relative political isolation in the region. In October 2023, Brazil was one of the signatories to the Barbados Agreement, which stipulated that the suspension of some U.S. sanctions against Venezuela was conditional on the holding of elections in the country. After attempting various maneuvers to avoid complying with the Agreement, Maduro eventually held the elections in July 2024. Brazil did not recognize the victory of any candidate, and since then the Lula administration has gradually distanced itself from the Maduro regime. Added to this is Venezuela's claim to two-thirds of Guyana's territory, corresponding to the Essequibo region.

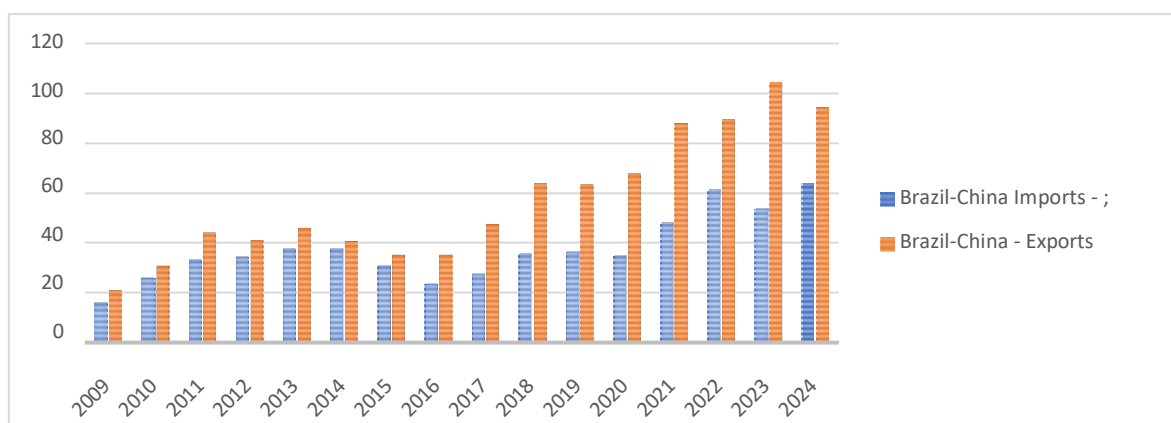
4. The Economic Dimension of the Brazil-China Partnership

China's economic importance to the Brazilian economy is undeniable. However, the asymmetry between the two countries is significant, and this is the subject of intense debate regarding the true meaning of the strategic partnership between them. If we look solely at the trade dimension—which, on the Brazilian side, is concentrated in primary products—it is not difficult to conclude that this asymmetry leaves Brazil in a position of relative economic dependence on China.

Although Brazil maintains a trade surplus with China, it is pursuing a path of productive specialization driven by the agribusiness sector, which is dominated by products with low technological complexity and low added value. On the other hand, China has an extensive list of products exported to Brazil with medium and high technological complexity.

In 2024, China purchased approximately 28% of all Brazilian exports. This resulted in a trade surplus of \$30.73 billion in Brazil's favor. Since the People's Republic of China became Brazil's top trading partner in 2009, Brazil has recorded a trade surplus every year, as shown in Figure 2 (Comexstat, 2024).

Figure 2 – Chart showing the evolution of Brazil's exports and imports to China, 2009–2024, in billions of dollars



Source: COMEXSTAT (2024), own compilation

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In 2024, Brazil's top five exports to China accounted for 87% of the total value of all goods sold. Chinese imports are quite different; there is a diversification of products from the Chinese partner, requiring 65 items to reach the same proportion of value. While Brazil's top five products are commodities (soybeans, crude oil, iron ore, beef, and pulp), China exports higher-value-added products such as machinery, automobiles, and technology items.

Brazil was the leading recipient of Chinese investment in Latin America between 2008 and 2017 (American Enterprise Institute, 2025;). And between 2018 and 2023, Brazil fell to fifth place in the region (Cariello, 2023). In recent years, China's foreign direct investments have diversified and are present in nearly all Brazilian states. The establishment of Chinese automobile factories in the country is a significant sign of this diversification. At the same time, it poses a challenge to the country's reindustrialization process, as Chinese competition may weaken parts of the Brazilian industrial sector. The debate on Brazilian deindustrialization in the 21st century is one of the most important issues and gains even greater relevance as China advances into different sectors (Rosales, 2021; Menezes and Bragatti, 2020).

This dispute has transcended bilateral relations between the United States and China and, through influence, trade flows, and investments, has affected neighboring Latin American countries as an alternative to Sino-U.S. bilateral flows. One of the effects has been investment aimed at restructuring production chains in China, reducing risks associated with China, and diversifying business operations (Rosales, 2021). This scenario is marked by the U.S.'s ongoing efforts to shape the global economy (Bojikian; Menezes, 2023). Thus, investments have become a tool used in different ways by these powers.

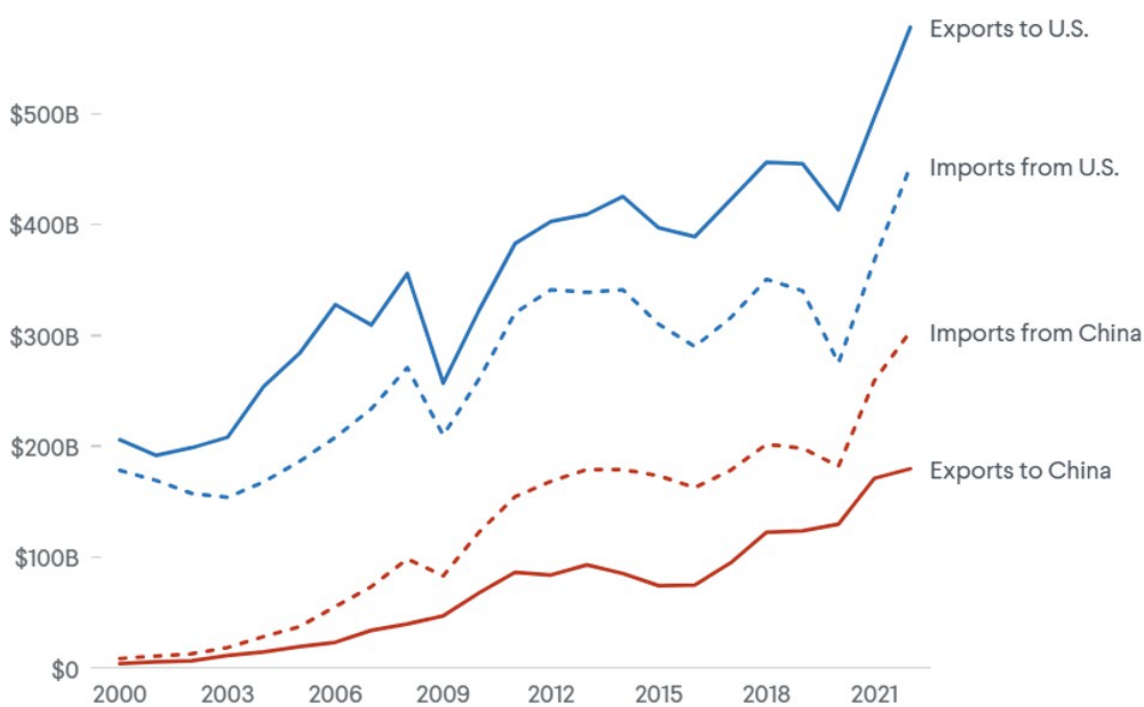
Of all foreign direct investment made worldwide between 2018 and 2022, 12.41% was made by the United States and 11.92% by China. In proportion to their Gross Domestic Product (GDP), China invested 0.97% while the United States invested 0.64% (Dussel Peters, 2024). Both are the

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major trading partners for several Latin American countries. In South America, the Asian giant has made the most headway (Roy, 2025).

Recent geopolitical tensions between the United States and China have intensified competition for influence in Latin America, and in South America, Brazil occupies a central position on this chessboard (Menezes and Bragatti, 2020). The significant presence, over the years, of both powers as major importers and exporters of goods from Latin American countries is shown in Figure 3. China's rise has been occurring in the region, but the United States remains the commercial leader in Latin America and the Caribbean. Following the pandemic, there appears to be a marked intensification of the region's trade with both countries.

Figure 3 – United States and China – Imports and Exports to Latin America and the Caribbean in billions of dollars



Source: Diana Roy, *Council on Foreign Relations*, 2025

The cumulative total of foreign direct investment from China in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2023 was \$147.85 billion. In the same year,

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investment in 33 projects totaled \$8.7 billion and created 26,000 jobs, representing a decrease of 43% and 37%, respectively, compared to the previous year. China accounted for 10.60% of FDI in the region from 2020 to 2023 (Dussel Peters, 2024).

In the region, Brazil remains one of the main recipients of FDI, and the number of transactions shows that between 2000 and 2023, Brazil was the second-largest recipient (with 163 transactions), after Mexico (with 166 transactions), of FDI from China. This investment dynamic in Latin America's two largest economies was concentrated in the U.S. between 2005 and 2009, with 11 projects, in contrast to Brazil, which had 9 projects. Mexico's return to the top three destinations for Chinese investment occurred between 2020 and 2023, when it received 54 projects and Brazil 28 (*ibid.*, 2024).

Brazil has \$1.3 trillion invested in the country by foreign companies. Of this total, the People's Republic of China accounts for 4.28% of foreign direct investment in Brazil, representing \$44.9 billion invested by 2023. The breakdown of Chinese investments is presented in Table 1 and shows the concentration (in 2023) in two sectors: the first is the extractive industry, and the second is the electricity and gas sector.

Table 1 - Chinese Direct Investments in Brazil in 2023 in billions of dollars

Investment Sector	Amount Invested in millions of dollars	%
A - Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, and Aquaculture	\$ 769.95	1.71%
B - Extractive Industries	\$ 23,213.84	51.69%
C - Manufacturing	\$ 2,510.52	5.59%
D - Electricity and Gas	\$ 13,869.47	30.88%
F - Construction	\$ 315.17	0.70%
G - Retail, Vehicle Repair Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	\$ 1,625.69	3.62%
H - Transportation, Warehousing, and Mail	\$ 146.32	0.33%
I - Lodging and Food	\$ -	0.00%
J - Information and Communication	\$ 347.47	0.77%
K - Financial, Insurance, and Related Services	\$ 1,723.03	3.84%

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L - Real Estate Activities	\$	177.79	0.40%
Other	\$	210.19	0.47%

Source: Direct Investment Report – Central Bank of Brazil (2024).
Own analysis

China is a major investor in Latin America and, above all, in the region's largest economies. In Brazil, it concentrated its investments in extractive and energy industries in 2023. This importance is also reflected in Brazil's trade balance, where the Asian partner has held the top position since 2009.

Lula's return to the presidency in 2023 is also marked by a very different global standing for China. In 2003, China was the 6th largest economy, while Brazil was the 14th; today, China ranks second and Brazil 10th (International Monetary Fund, 2024). China's GDP grew from three times that of Brazil's to nine times between 2003 and 2025. These disparities mirrored the trade profile of the relationship during this period of growth (*commodity* exports to China and imports of industrialized products). Politically, both countries participate in multilateral forums and shared agendas and have strengthened their bilateral relations.

5. China and the Challenges for Brazil Under Lula 3

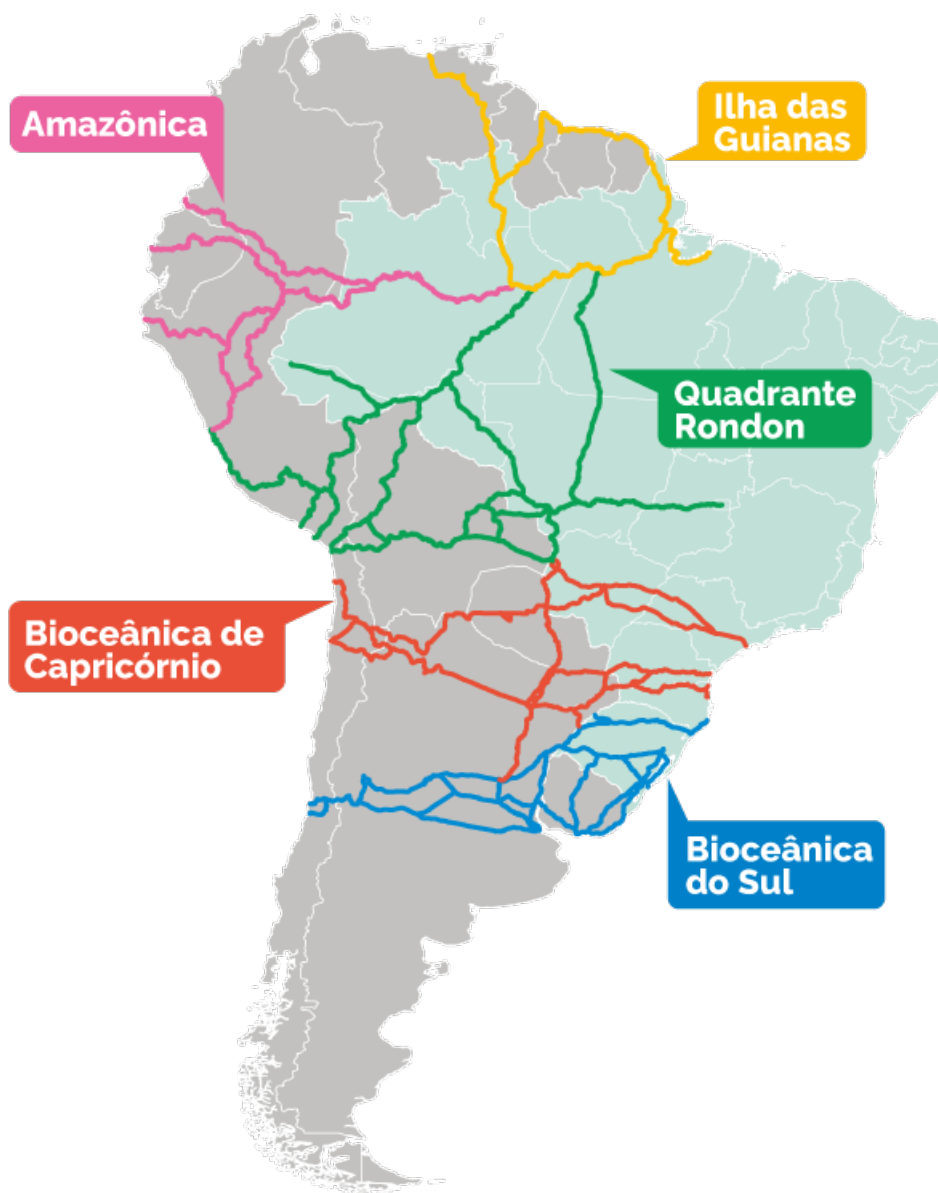
Twenty years later, the challenges facing Brazil are quite different from those of Lula's first term. These domestic and international challenges present both opportunities and difficulties for traditional approaches to Brazilian foreign policy. Regional integration and relations with neighboring countries; the rivalry between the United States and China; and China's infrastructure expansion strategies through the Belt and Road Initiative, among other issues, are at the center of Brazil's foreign policy concerns. In contrast to his predecessors, Lula has adopted an active and proactive stance and must navigate relations with the two major global powers—which are also Brazil's largest trading partners—amid an economic rivalry in the region.

The Summit of South American Presidents in May 2023 sought to exchange views on cooperation and integration on the subcontinent (MRE, 2023a).

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One of the outcomes for South American integration was the design of the five South American integration routes (MPOG, 2024a) (Figure 4). Following the launch of the routes, the Brazilian government, in the same year marking the 50th anniversary of relations with China, presented the routes in search of partnerships with the private sector and the Chinese government (MPOG, 2024b).

Figure 4 - 5 South American Integration Routes



Source: Ministry of Planning and Budget (2024)

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These routes serve a dual purpose: boosting trade with South American countries and reducing the cost and time involved in shipping goods to neighboring countries and to Asia (Agência Brasil, 2024a). The goal is to streamline and save time and money when shipping *commodities* to Asia and also higher-value-added Brazilian products to its neighbors, since they have a demand for industrial goods from Brazil—that is, the reverse of the relationship between Brazil and China (MPOG, 2024c; Menezes, Ribeiro, and Fingerhann, 2025).

The case of the Brasília Consensus is an example of the complex relations between Brazil and China in the context of South American regional integration. This strategic partnership, materialized through the creation of the 5 South American Integration Routes in conjunction with the Growth Acceleration Program (PAC), demonstrates how the country has systematically sought Chinese capabilities in investment and infrastructure construction to consolidate its regional leadership. Furthermore, China, in line with its development vision as an exporter of public goods, has been able to implement Chinese initiatives aligned with its national strategy—such as the New Silk Road—through a system of partnerships with neighboring countries.

The New Silk Road, or Belt and Road Initiative, is a Chinese international strategy for business and diplomatic expansion through infrastructure development. In South America, 9 of the 12 countries had joined the Chinese initiative by 2023 (Nedopil, 2023), while Brazil remained on the sidelines. Brazil was expected to join the initiative to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the strategic partnership, but this did not happen. The decision was made to avoid straining relations with the United States, thereby preventing the escalation of tensions between the two countries and maintaining Brazil's diplomatic stance of non-alignment.

Paradoxically, not joining the New Silk Road—which would have provided access to financial resources and infrastructure partnerships—did not prevent this Chinese strategy from aligning with other Brazilian agendas such as the Growth Acceleration Program (PAC), New Industry Brazil (NIB), the Ecological Transformation Plan, and the South American Integration Routes. This

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This alignment was characterized by the concept of “synergies” between the two countries (Agência Brasil, 2024b).

By sidestepping the New Silk Road, the Brazilian government preserves a certain degree of autonomy. At the same time, it averts the possibility of opening a new front of friction with the Trump administration. According to Vigevani and Ramanzini Jr. (2023, p. 22), “the possibility of Brazil using China as a counterweight to the United States” grew throughout the 2010s.

Internationally, this was a way to avoid escalating tensions between the United States and China, as was the case in the 5G dispute, in which the Bolsonaro administration took pro-U.S. and anti-China stances. By maintaining a balanced foreign policy (De Sousa, Abrão, Souza Porto, 2023) and aligning the two agendas—international and national—the Lula 3 administration signed agreements that bring the content of national agendas (PAC, NIB, and Routes of Integration) closer to China’s.

These integration routes align with regional integration policies, the reduction of transportation costs for industrialized products and goods with low domestic value added, and the shortening of logistics distribution times from Brazil to Latin America and Asia. This type of alliance is essential for plans for Latin American integration, for the expansion of Chinese projects, and for circumventing potential difficulties in the Brazilian government’s internal coordination (Menezes, Ribeiro, and Fingermaun, 2025).

On the other hand, China’s most recent economic reforms aim to increase investment efficiency, boost the internationalization of Chinese services, export more technological products, and incorporate environmental goals into the process of Chinese business expansion (Rosales, 2021). These reforms are taking place amid the technological rivalry between the United States and China, much like the 5G situation in Brazil (Bojikian; Menezes, 2023), and with the Lula 3 administration’s renewed focus, these technological benefits are expected to play a greater role, unlike during his first two terms, which were marked by *commodity-driven* trade.

The synergies go beyond mere rhetoric, as demonstrated by a series of understandings and commitments highlighted in the Joint Declaration on the

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the joint establishment of the Brazil-China Community of Shared Future for a Fairer World and a More Sustainable Planet, in which the two countries outline the interconnection between their agendas for the coming years. In addition to aligning their agendas, both countries are now engaging in significant exchanges on large-scale projects that are important to both, with the potential for joint technological development and without being pressured to choose sides in a geopolitical dispute. This is the result of a pragmatic Brazilian foreign policy that yields commercial benefits for both sides.

6. Final Considerations

The reinvigoration of the strategic partnership with China under the Lula 3 administration does not mean that the contradictions and challenges posed by the dynamism of the Chinese economy and its growing global influence do not give rise to concerns for Brazilian diplomacy. The strengthening of multipolarity in international relations is one of the objectives shared by Brazil and China. And BRICS+ has been a crucial forum for this.

To this end, certain crossroads lie ahead, such as the choice between a *commodity-export* model that ultimately undermines Brazil's socio-environmental agenda—a situation exacerbated by climate change and rising food prices—and, on the other hand, a path that ensures the country's repositioning within the technical and territorial division of labor. It is evident that the realm of political discussions does not always align with what the economic approach advocates, particularly given the unprecedented actions of the United States in the current tariff war, whose escalation has alarmed the world and the agents of financial capital themselves. Hence the challenge facing Brazilian diplomacy.

Among political, economic, and government actors, significant friction with China is unlikely, unlike what was observed in the previous administration. Tensions persist regarding the United States and its anti-China positions, given that political groups from the previous government, which acted as amplifiers of American narratives hostile to China, remain embedded within the state bureaucratic structure. Economic actors

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They recognize China's importance to the trade balance, while government officials see an opportunity to advance the current administration's priorities.

China's economic and political rise over the past decades demonstrates the Asian nation's strength. Brazil, although it has not experienced such rapid economic and technological advancements, has a history of alliances and navigates the international community quite well. As a result, Brazil has become an important partner, especially during times of international tension. Brazil is a major food supplier to the Chinese giant and has a track record of attracting Chinese capital in areas essential for maintaining global value chains, such as extractive industries and companies focused on clean energy, including solar and wind power. Another key point is the Brazilian consumer market, which is attractive, especially for the internationalization of Chinese companies seeking new markets, as in the case of the car manufacturer BYD.

The BRICS+ initiative now includes six countries in addition to the original five; it currently accounts for 39% of global GDP, and the countries in this bloc were the destination for 34% of Brazilian exports and 36% of imports in 2024. The multilateral initiative is one of the government's key priorities and a multi-level forum that is expanding to include partner countries in the region, such as Cuba and Bolivia. In 2025, under the Brazilian presidency, the BRICS Summit **took place** in Rio de Janeiro and was surrounded by international disputes originating from the United States under President Donald Trump. The imposition of exorbitant tariffs against Brazil in July 2025 and the opening of a trade investigation under Section 301 indicate that Brazil must continue to diversify its export destinations without neglecting the geopolitical tensions that will mark the third decade of the 21st century—a period characterized by the United States' attempt to reclaim its hegemony.

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