

## **Latin America's South-South Engagement: The Potential of South-Atlantic Relations**

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When dealing with Africa's external relations the focus mainly remains on its connections with North America and Europe. While China's impact upon the region has also received growing interest lately, the relations with South America are usually only approached from a punctual point of view or even plainly omitted.

Therefore, the proposed contribution shall systematically scrutinize the south-Atlantic relations and their facilitating environment. First, three levels of cooperation will be distinguished and explained. Thereupon, an analysis of the altered internal and external conditions since 1989 and their impact on the evolution and shape of relations between Latin America and southern Africa will be provided.

The introductory outlining of three south-Atlantic levels of cooperation will differentiate the different underlying concepts of foreign policy. The *interregional* level refers to the relations between regional integration schemes such as MERCOSUR on the one side and SADC/SACU on the other one. Moreover, the IBSA dialogue forum has underlined a more institutionalized collaboration *between the regional powers* Brazil and South Africa. Finally, the *national bilateral* foreign relations remain in vigor. South Africa represents the favored partner for South American countries while Brazil also pursues an active cultural and technical cooperation in the lusophone countries.

The second part of the presentation will focus on the conditions for south-Atlantic relations, which have considerably changed since the Cold War. The restructuring of the bipolar world order has opened space for south-south relations. These have emerged in the context of new regionalisms, limitations of multilateral organizations, loss of credibility of the USA as a world power as well as the acknowledgement that global challenges in the areas of climate, energy and development require pragmatic alliance. Furthermore, the internal political and economic transitions of states in Latin America and southern Africa since the late 1980s enabled new options of diversifying their external relations. Major shifts in interests have been triggered by overcoming military dictatorships and the Apartheid, questioning prevalent economic paradigms and changing compositions of the political elite.