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DESENVOLVIMENTO DA AMÉRICA LATINA

**BEYOND MERCOSUR AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS: THE EUROPEAN
UNION IN BRAZILIAN FOREIGN POLICY DURING LULA DA SILVA'S THIRD
ADMINISTRATION**

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What is the role of the European Union (EU) in Lula da Silva's third government foreign policy? Although negotiations for the Mercosur-European Union Agreement have been the focus of media and political observers, Brazil-EU relations are structured around a broad agenda that - since the signing of the Cooperation Framework Agreement in 1992 - involves areas such as political relations, human rights, energy, climate change, among others. This article analyses the agenda of EU-Brazil relationship, mapping its priority items and discussing the importance of the EU in Lula da Silva's third government foreign policy. We argue that systemic factors, stemming from transformations in the economy and international geopolitics, increase the importance of bilateral relationship's in both parties' international strategies. For Brazil, the relations with the EU offer an important alternative to economic and political disputes between China and the United States in South America. For the EU, in a

scenario where China and the US lead the agenda in trade, military, and technological development, relations with Brazil provide an opportunity for the EU to assert itself internationally on issues that are important to its international strategy, such as the environmental agenda, promotion of democracy, and defence of multilateralism. Furthermore, we state that the bilateral relationship can potentially strengthen the Atlantic axis, which is central to both international engagement strategies.

Palavras-chave: brazil; european union; interregionalism; eu-brazil relations.