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The EU-Brazil strategic partnership and the United Nations Climate Change Conferences: media diplomacy from Durban to Lima

A parceria estratégica União Europeia – Brasil e as conferências das Nações Unidas sobre Mudanças Climáticas: a diplomacia midiática, de Durban a Lima

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Abstract

The European Union-Brazil Strategic Partnership highlights collaboration in the fight against climate change. The aim of this paper is to analyse whether there has been coordination or, at least, a convergence of positions of the EU and Brazil in the last four United Nations Climate Change Conferences (2011-2014). To this aim, there is a review of academic and official sources and an empirical analysis of the media diplomacy messages of both actors at the four conferences which are object of study.

Resumo

A Parceria Estratégica União Europeia-Brasil destaca a colaboração na luta contra as mudanças climáticas. O objetivo deste trabalho é analisar se houve coordenação ou, pelo menos, uma convergência de posições entre a União Europeia e o Brasil nas últimas quatro Conferências das Nações Unidas para Mudança do Clima (2011-2014). Para tanto, se faz uma revisão das fontes acadêmicas e oficiais e uma análise empírica das mensagens de diplomacia midiática de ambos os atores nas quatro conferências que são objeto de estudo.

Keywords: United Nations Climate Change Conferences; European Union; Brazil; media diplomacy analysis

Palavras-chave: Conferências das Nações Unidas sobre Mudanças Climáticas; União Europeia; Brasil; diplomacia midiática

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United Nations Climate Change Conferences: Historical Overview and Negotiating Groups

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was established in the Earth Summit of Rio de Janeiro (1992), and entered into force in 1994. The ultimate objective of this environmental treaty is “to achieve, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system” (UNFCCC 1992: 9). The text of the Convention, in its Annex I, includes both developed or industrialized countries and countries undergoing the process of transition to a market economy (Russia, Ukraine and some ex-soviet Eastern and Central European countries). Its Annex II only includes developed countries. Since 1995, the Parties to the Convention (currently 196, almost a universal membership) have met annually in the Conferences of the Parties (COP), in order to assess and advance progress.

The text of the Convention states, in its article 3, that cooperation and participation of countries in the international response to climate change should be in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and that developed country Parties “should take the lead”. Besides, article 4 (7) says:

“The extent to which developing country Parties will effectively implement their commitments under the Convention will depend on the effective implementation by developed country Parties of their commitments under the Convention related to financial resources and transfer of technology and will take fully into account that economic and social development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of the developing country Parties” (UNFCCC 1992: 14).

In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was added to the Convention, establishing legally-binding objectives for greenhouse gas emission reductions for the main developed or industrialized countries and for countries with economies in transition (Annex B countries)¹, with a calendar for fulfillment. The Kyoto Protocol entered into force in 2005. Greenhouse gas emissions from industrialized countries should be reduced by at least 5% compared to 1990 levels in the period 2008-2012 (known as the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol). The Kyoto Protocol was signed and ratified by all Annex B countries except the United States (which signed but did not ratify it). Parties not listed in Annex B (non Annex-1 Parties) are developing countries, which don't have legally-binding emission reduction targets in the Kyoto Protocol.

From 2005, the annual COP meetings also include the Conferences of the Parties serving as the Meeting Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP), where Parties to the Convention that are not Parties to the Kyoto Protocol can only participate as observers². In 2005, the COP 11/CMP1 in Montreal established

1 The same Parties included in Annex I in the text of the Convention (developed countries and economies in transition) are in general included in the Annex B of the Kyoto Protocol text (see UNFCCC 1998).

2 Currently, there are 192 Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The United States never ratified it and Canada withdrew in 2011.

the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex 1 Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP), to discuss future commitments for industrialized countries under the Kyoto Protocol.

The final aim of the COP13/CMP3 in Bali was to “launch a comprehensive process to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action”, up to and beyond 2012, “in order to reach an agreed outcome and adopt a decision at its fifteenth session”. With this aim, the COP13/CMP3 adopted the Bali Action Plan, divided into five main categories. These are mitigation, adaptation, technology, financing and a shared vision for long term cooperative action including a long-term global goal for emission reductions. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) was established to enable the full and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action. There were, therefore, two established work streams: the AWG-KP and the AWG-LCA.

In 2009, the COP15/CMP5 produced the Copenhagen Accord, which recognized that the increase in global temperature should be below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels. It provided for explicit emission pledges by all major economies, including for the first time China and other major developing countries. But there was no agreement on how to do this in practical terms, and the accord didn't establish a clear path towards a future treaty with binding commitments (Center for Climate and Energy Solutions 2009). The Copenhagen Accord was a failure for the EU's plans and leadership on climate change, since it was shaped by the United States and the BASIC countries without the EU involvement; and the focus shifted away from a top-down-oriented way of collaboration (preferred by the EU) towards a bottom-up approach that permitted countries to pledge how much emissions reductions they perceived as politically feasible by 2020 (Olmstead and Stavins, 2012). Besides, the Copenhagen Accord did not set out legally-binding targets for any country or reference to a peaking year for emissions from large developing countries, as desired by the EU.

In 2010, the COP16/CMP6 in Cancun reached the Cancun Agreements, as an outcome of the work of the AWG-LCA. The Cancun Agreements represented steps forward to capture plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to help developing nations protect themselves from climate impacts and build their own sustainable futures (UNFCCC 2010). These agreements elaborated on the five categories of the Bali Action Plan and included the item “Review”, which is the decision to periodically review the adequacy of the long-term global goal and overall progress towards achieving it (the first review should start in 2013 and be concluded by 2015).

In the United Nations Climate Change Conferences there are several negotiating groups, according to the Parties' substantive and political purposes (UNFCCC a). For the analysis made in this paper, the groups followed have been the European Union (EU), the G-77 and China, and the BASIC countries (to which Brazil belongs).

The 28 Member States of the EU agree on common negotiating positions and speak with one voice. The country holding the EU Presidency (a position that rotates every six months) and personnel from the European Commission (Directorate-General for Climate Action or DG Clima), including the European Commissioner for Climate Action, act as spokespeople. As a regional economic integration organization, the EU is a Party to the Convention, but it does not have a separate vote from its members.

The G-77 and China encompasses developing countries in general. The G-77 was founded in 1964 in the context of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and now functions throughout the UN system. Since the G-77 and China is a diverse group with differing interests on climate change issues, individual developing countries and groups within the G-77 also intervene in debates.

The BASIC countries group is composed of the members of the BRICS without the Russian Federation³. It was created in 2009 to act jointly at the COP15/CMP5 in Copenhagen. Led by China, the BASIC countries group brokered the Copenhagen Accord with the United States. Since then, they cooperate in climate negotiations, and their statements and positions are aligned with those of the G-77 and China. In fact, they would see themselves as a way to strengthen the voice of developing countries⁴.

Contrary to the EU, Latin America doesn't work like a regional group in climate change negotiations. In fact, there are eleven negotiating groups that include Latin American countries. Regional groups like ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance for the People of Our America), SICA (Central American Integration System) and the Pacific Alliance take part in the negotiations. Besides, many Latin American countries are part of other group, such as the G-77 and China and the BASIC countries group in the case of Brazil. There are also the Environmental Integrity Group-EIG (Mexico is part of it); the Coalition of Rainforest Nations (although Brazil is not part of it); the Alliance of Small Island States-AOSIS (Caribbean islands); the Least Developed Countries-LDCs (Haiti) and the Like Minded Developing Countries on Climate Change-LMDC (Argentina, Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Venezuela are part of it). The Independent Association of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC) was created in the COP18/CMP8, and is composed of countries with similar views in climate change negotiations: Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Peru, Guatemala and Panama. The group has been considered as a bridge in the North-South, developed-developing divide in climate change negotiations (Climate Finance 2013). Neither Mercosur nor Unasur are actors in climate change negotiations.

Climate Change in the EU's Strategic Partnership with Brazil

The European Union and Latin America have strong historical, cultural and economic bonds, as well as a bi-regional strategic partnership established in 1999 when the first EU-Latin America and the Caribbean summit (LAC) took place. From 2013, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) is the EU's counterpart in bi-regional relations. The EU is the main development partner in the region, the most important foreign investor and the second trade partner (EEAS 2015).

In 2003 the EU launched the European Security Strategy (ESS), which included the objective of promoting "effective multilateralism". According to Grevi (2008), EU bilateral relations with some countries would have been considered a precondition for the establishment of a multilateral

3 The Convention text considers Russia as an economy in transition and locates it in Annex 1. Currently Russia is part of the Umbrella Group, a coalition of non-EU developed countries which formed following the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol.

4 On the formation and positions of the G-77 and China and the BASIC group in climate negotiations, see Hochstetler 2012.

model of governance. These countries acquired the status of “strategic partners”. Therefore, although maintaining its commitment to integration and interregional relations, the EU began to establish strategic partnerships with countries considered as political and economic powers. In the case of its Latin American strategic partners (Brazil and Mexico), environment and climate change are especially prominent questions, as they are also in the framework of the EU-CELAC bi-regional strategic relations.

The signing of the strategic partnership with Brazil, in 2007, was defended by describing this country as a key interlocutor, a champion of the developing world in the UN and the WTO, a natural leader in South America and a key player in Latin America (European Commission 2007). Having Brazil as a partner allows for the institutionalization of a regular dialogue regarding bilateral, regional and global issues of common strategic interest: Brazil is the member of the BRICS that cooperates most with the EU in multilateral fora⁵. The strategic partnership includes collaboration on fighting climate change, both at the bilateral and regional level (dialogue and cooperation) and coordinating postures in global fora. Therefore, the joint statements of the EU-Brazil summits held after the establishment of the Strategic Partnership highlight climate change as a central topic of the partnership and as a key global challenge (Council of the EU 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014).

The EU-Brazil relations in this article’s period of study (2011-2014) were guided by the Joint Action Plans 2009-2011 and 2012-2014. In both plans, five axes of action are highlighted, one of these being “enhancing the economic, social and environmental partnership to promote sustainable development” (Council of the EU 2008, 2011). As part of this axis, the need for long-term collaboration in fighting climate change is stressed. In fact, there was a bilateral “Dialogue on the Environment Dimension of Sustainable Development and Climate Change” already in place since 2006. In 2011, climate change cooperation was reinforced by formally launching a self-standing EU-Brazil Climate Change Dialogue, adding senior and ministerial level talks to the already existing technical level (Stavoros & Stringer, 2012).

In addition, both the EU and Brazil have showed their compromise with climate change mitigation by adopting voluntary commitments to reduce greenhouse gases emissions. At the December 2008 European Council meeting, the EU approved the 2020 Climate and Energy Package, which aimed to contribute to a post-2012 climate regime and set three key targets: 20% cut in greenhouse gas emissions (from 1990 levels), 20% of EU energy from renewables and 20% improvement in energy efficiency. In October 2014, the EU complemented this package with the 2030 Climate and Energy Framework, which set three key targets for the year 2030: at least 40% cuts in greenhouse gas emissions (from 1990 levels), at least 27% share for renewable energy and at least 27% improvement in energy efficiency. In 2005, Brazil made a voluntary pledge to achieve an 80% reduction of illegal deforestation in the Amazon region by 2020 (compared with its average rate over the decade 1996-2005). This commitment was later made part of its national law. Brazilian emissions from deforestation decreased by 75% between 2004 and 2012 (Bang, Underdal & Andresen, 2015). From 2009, the

5 Interview with Erik Von Pistohlkors. Political, Economic and Communication Section, EEAS, Brasilia, 08/08/2014.

Amazon Fund (a coalition of states in the Amazon region created that year) increased the pressure on the Brazilian government to curb deforestation by including the UN Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD+) within its Clean Development Mechanism and other market mechanisms (Viola, 2013). In addition, in 2009 Brazil adopted a National Policy on Climate Change with specific mitigation targets: cutting emissions by 2020 between 36.1-38.9% in relation to Business as Usual.

According to Pavese (2013), the EU policy of forging bilateral “strategic partnerships” with key global players to promote “effective multilateralism” would be a great example of a foreign policy that assumes the linkage between bilateralism and multilateralism not only exists, but can be strategically manipulated. However, and based on her study of EU-Brazil positions at the climate change conferences in the period 1997-2009, she states that the EU and Brazil have not succeeded in projecting their bilateral partnership onto the multilateral arena. Pavese affirms that the pattern of engagement between the two partners in the studied period can be considered very irregular, with convergence and divergence on several key issues of climate negotiations (see table 12, Pavese 2013). She stresses that Brazil is very loyal to the G-77 and China and the BASIC group, and that in most of the opportunities in which the EU and Brazil sided with each other it was due to the EU strategic choice in aligning with developing countries, not the other way around.

Methodology

The empirical analysis of this paper aims to see the positions of the EU and Brazil in the United Nations Climate Change Conferences 2011-2014 and to evaluate whether there is evidence of coordination or at least a coincidence in their stances, as foreseen by their strategic partnership.

The analysis is performed from the perspective of media diplomacy, which highlights the importance of information and strategic communication actions, mainly carried out by political leaders and diplomats, in order to convincingly convey political messages to the media and public opinion (Azpíroz 2013, 2014). Authors like Eytan Gilboa (1998, 2000, 2008); Leonard, Small and Rose (2005); Joseph Nye (2008); or Robert Entman (2008); have also addressed the concept and activities that characterize media diplomacy, producing different nuances but in a compatible manner.

In order to perform the analysis, there is a thorough review of the proposals and postures defended by the two actors in the last four Conferences of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in Durban (2011), Doha (2012), Warsaw (2013) and Lima (2014). The analysis is based on the speeches and statements pronounced in the COP and CMP plenary sessions, as well as on the Parties’ press briefings. In the four years of study, there are 26 press conferences offered by the EU and 23 offered by Brazil (plus 4 with the BASIC group). Both the EU and Brazil offer detailed explanations of its stances regarding the numerous issues that climate conferences covered. The analysed audiovisual material is available on the UNFCCC website, in the form of webcasts (see UNFCCC webcast archive, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014).

COP17/CMP7 in Durban: The Roadmap for a Legally-Binding Agreement in 2015

The COP17/CMP7 in Durban has been described as a turning point in climate change negotiations, since governments recognized the need for a universal and legal agreement to deal with climate change beyond 2020 (UNFCCC 2011). The main decision of Durban was to “launch a process to develop a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties” (UNFCCC 2012). This would be done through a subsidiary body under the Convention called the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (AWG-ADP), in charge of elaborating a draft negotiating text. The AWG-ADP shall complete its work no later than 2015, so that the resulting protocol, legal instrument or agreed outcome with legal force could come into effect and be implemented from 2020. The AWG-ADP would also be in charge of the conduct of a work plan to increase pre-2020 mitigation ambitions.

The EU described the result of Durban as a success for the EU, since it had determined objective of leaving Durban with a roadmap for a legally-binding global climate framework. The future agreement should be negotiated by 2015 and enter into force no later than 2020. Moreover, the EU had linked its support for a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol (the first period ending in December, 2012), to the achievement of an agreement on the roadmap⁶. The EU highlighted that the future global agreement should cover 100% of emissions under one legal umbrella with the same legal value, which didn't mean that commitments should be the same. This way the agreement would respect the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities enshrined in the Convention, although the EU also emphasized that the changed realities of the world between 1992 and the present should be taken into account. The EU also highlighted the need to operationalize the Cancun Agreements. In order to reduce the pre-2020 ambition gap in mitigation (a gap between what would be necessary to put the world on a below 2 °C trajectory and the actual pledges made by Parties), the EU proposed to increase its emission targets from 20 to 30% for 2020, as long as other Parties did their fair share. The EU also proposed to look at sectors like agriculture, renewables, fossil fuels, emissions from aviation and maritime transport, and fluorinated gases.

The EU's proposal of taxation of emissions from aviation and maritime transport and its proposal on fluorinated gases were two points of conflict with the G-77 and China, the BASIC group and, by extension, with Brazil, during the period of study. On the first proposal, opposition stemmed from the fact that developing countries considered the inclusion of emissions from international aviation and maritime transport in the EU Emissions Trade System (EU ETS)⁷ as a unilateral measure that would violate the principles and provisions of the Convention (in reference to articles 3 and 4 of the

6 Canada withdrew from the Kyoto Protocol in December 2011, while Japan and Russia declared they would not join a second commitment period. Only the EU and a few developed countries would join it. Therefore, the permanence of the EU in the second commitment period was critical.

7 For years, the European Union had signaled to the international community that it would place unilateral restrictions on aviation emissions if the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) didn't take action and commit to a plan to reduce aviation emissions. Therefore, the EU decided that starting from 2012 all flights arriving to and flying from the EU would have to account for their emissions and be included in its cap-and-trade scheme (EU-ETS)(see Carbon Market Watch.org; Domingos 2012).

Convention) and jeopardize the effort of international cooperation to address climate change. They defended that these types of emissions should be addressed in a multilateral context. On fluorinated gases (hydrofluorocarbons-HFCs), developing countries were of the view that HFCs are greenhouse gases covered under the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol, and therefore should be addressed in accordance with the principles of the UNFCCC. In the subsequent years, the EU defended that it was legally possible to deal with this issue in the context of the Montreal Protocol, in order to have a faster process and because the expertise was there. But the G-77 and China disagreed, stating that an authorization from the UNFCCC process would be needed⁸.

The G-77 and China and the BASIC countries denounced a historical imbalance that should be addressed in the finance of mitigation in detriment of adaptation. They also proposed to address the issue of intellectual property rights-IPR, equity and unilateral trade measures (related to the imminent EU tax on aviation and shipping). And, like the EU, called for the operationalization of the Cancun Agreements. Regarding a future legally-binding commitment, the BASIC countries showed different attitudes, with India and China (in the beginning) showing more rejection and Brazil and South Africa showing a favourable attitude. Anyway, Brazil warned that a legally-binding agreement in the end could be more of an obstacle than an advantage for having an ambitious outcome. It recalled the Kyoto Protocol and its signing but non-ratification by the United States: Which country would ratify something before the United States? In addition, Brazil warned about previous non-fulfilment of legally-binding commitments adopted in the Kyoto Protocol.

As authors like Pavese and Torney (2012) have already suggested, the fact that the EU was able to play a successful role at the Durban conference, achieving an agreement for a roadmap for a legally-binding global climate framework, was facilitated by the more favourable circumstances provided by the shifting interests in the global politics of climate change. It is noteworthy that China announced, for the first time, its willingness to be bound by a binding international climate agreement from 2020. In this sense, Viola and Franchini (2013) recall that, in Durban, Brazil changed its previous years' conservative stance and got to bring China to that different position. But, although assuming a compromise of emission reduction, Brazil would not have given up the division between Annex 1 and non Annex-1 Parties, since it considered that compromises by developing countries should only be voluntary.

COP18/CMP8: The Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol

The main aim of COP18/CMP8 in Doha was gaining the adoption of the Doha amendment to the Kyoto Protocol (which expired on December 31, 2012), in order to have a second commitment period from 2013 to 2020 (when the new global framework would enter into force). A very controversial issue

⁸ The Montreal Protocol is an international treaty negotiated in 1987 and in force since 1989. It was designed to protect the ozone layer reducing the production and consumption of substances that were responsible for the depletion of the ozone layer (like chlorofluorocarbons-CFCs, halons or carbon tetrachloride). The Kyoto Protocol, for its part, covers six greenhouse gases, including CO₂ and HFCs. The Montreal Protocol has been ratified by all members of the United Nations and dealing with HFCs in this context would imply that all countries have binding phase-out obligations, which doesn't happen in the context of the Kyoto Protocol.

in this sense was what to do with the so-called “hot air”, in reference to surplus Assigned Amount Units-AAUs⁹ that some Annex 1 countries (mainly ex-communist countries like Russia, Ukraine and Poland) had from the first commitment period and wanted to carry over to the second commitment period. In November 2012 New Zealand announced that it would not join the second commitment period, as Russia, Japan and Canada did in 2011 (this last withdrew from it). Besides, Doha was the scene of the conclusion of the work of the AWG-KP and the AWG-LCA, since their work would be replaced by the AWG-ADP.

For the EU, the priorities in Doha were the adoption of the amendment for a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, the successful conclusion of the AWG-LCA and the preparation of a work programme for the negotiations under the AWG-ADP.

The EU showed its disposition to adopt and ratify the amendment to the Kyoto Protocol, which would include new and more ambitious QELROs (quantified emission limitation and reduction objectives) for the EU and its Member States. The EU reminded Parties that the totality of emissions covered by the second commitment period would be 14% maximum (11% from the EU), and that it was necessary to focus on what would be done to increase mitigation ambitions for the other 85%. For the “hot air” issue, the EU proposed three criteria: to ensure environmental integrity, that there was the reward for early action for those who had done better in the first commitment period, and non-discrimination between the Parties around the table. Besides, the EU explained that in EU law AAUs could not be used for compliance in the second commitment period, and that within the EU very few AAUs could be used in practice, since emissions were already on track.

Regarding the conclusion of the AWG-LCA, the EU advocated to achieve concrete results on the issues that had been mandated in Durban (like the new market mechanism) and admitted that not all of the issues could be resolved with a substantive conclusion, although they would be part of climate negotiations in the future (in reference to some issues raised by developing countries, like IPR, unilateral trade measures, and equity).

For the EU, the key benefit of the AWG-ADP was that it would be a system with just one track (although divided in two work streams), in the sense that all countries would be participating equally. The ADP would be in charge of the adoption of the new global agreement by 2015 and of addressing the platform’s tasks on raising ambition before 2020. The EU stated that finance (to be discussed under the AWG-LCA and under ADP) was key to bringing developing countries on board for the new deal in 2015. On the 100 billion US\$ per year by 2020 promised in Copenhagen to finance developing countries efforts, the EU declared that it fulfilled its duties on finance, and that it was crucial to involve the private sector, since in no way could it be done only through public money. Regarding the EU aviation carbon tax (as a way of raising ambition), after the ICAO’s statement in November 2012 saying they would look into global measures to address international aviation emissions and for a decision in September 2013, the EU decided to “stop the clock” in Europe on the inclusion of international aviation into the EU ETS.

9 AAUs are units of greenhouse emissions as defined by the Kyoto Protocol. An AAU is equivalent to one metric ton of carbon dioxide equivalence (CO₂e)(see Carbon Market Watch.org).

For Brazil, priorities in Doha were the same as for the EU. But, as part of the G-77 and the BASIC group, the Brazilian message included denouncements of unfulfillments (mainly related to scarce funding from developed to developing countries in order for them to undertake actions on mitigation and adaptation) and lack of ambition by Annex 1 Parties, as well as insistence of the need to respect the principles of the Convention.

Regarding the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, Brazil asked Annex 1 Parties for more ambition, and stated that the second commitment period should work as the basis for comparable reduction commitments by those Annex 1 Parties that chose not to be in the second period (these Parties were criticized for their reduced political will to cut their greenhouse gas emissions). Those Annex 1 Parties should no longer benefit from the flexibility mechanisms¹⁰ of the Kyoto Protocol. The second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol was considered a priority because it was a reference for environmental integrity and equitable treatment of climate change. On the AWG-LCA, Brazil asked for a balanced result, although the key issue to solve would be finance (ensuring implementation of the financing commitments by developed countries), in order to also negotiate on technology, adaptation and mitigation. On the Green Climate Fund (which would be the main source for funding from developed to developing countries), the BASIC group stated that a pre-condition was that public resources should be the largest part to support it. The AWG-LCA should be closed in a satisfactory manner for all, and the pending issues be put somewhere (Brazil accused developed countries of not wanting to deal with issues like IPR or unilateral trade measures). Finally, Brazil bet on limiting the carry-over of AAUs from the first into the second commitment period¹¹.

COP19/CMP9 in Warsaw: An Implementation COP

The United Nations Climate Change Conference COP19/CMP9 in Warsaw was conceived as an implementation COP. The main aim was to take further decisions to stay on track towards a universal climate change agreement in 2015. Closing the pre-2020 ambition gap and implementing measures of the agreed (of the Bali Action Plan, the Copenhagen Accord, the Cancun Agreements, the Durban outcomes and Doha Climate Gateway) were also important goals. In 2013, Japan and Australia (the latter had entered the second commitment period) backtracked from their emission reduction pledges. Japan's reduction targets for 2020 were reduced from 25% compared to 1990, to 3.8% compared to 2005. In Australia, the new government announced its intention of repealing the national carbon law.

¹⁰ The Kyoto Protocol included three "flexibility mechanisms" (Clean Development Mechanism, Joint Implementation, and Emissions Trading) designed to lower the overall costs of achieving its emission targets. Parties could access cost-effective opportunities to reduce emissions, or to remove carbon from the atmosphere, in other countries (UNFCCC b).

¹¹ Finally, in Doha, it was decided that Annex 1 Parties participating in the second commitment period could carry over AAUs without limit from the first to the second commitment period, but with restrictions in the use of these carried over AAUs for the second commitment period and quantitative limits on how many of these units could be acquired from other Parties (UNFCCC 2012b).

The EU noted three main aims for Warsaw, which were shared in general terms by Brazil. The first was to decide on the process for the 2015 agreement. The second, increasing ambition pre-2020. Finally, implementing the agreed measures.

On the process for the 2015 agreement, the EU proposed a step-up approach including: a timetable for Parties to prepare their commitments in 2014; agreement on upfront information that Parties should provide with their proposed commitments, which should satisfy a number of criteria (be ambitious, transparent, comparable, quantifiable, and verifiable); and agreement on the need for a robust assessment of the proposed commitments before they were inscribed in the 2015 agreement, in order to ensure that the collective level of ambition was high enough. The EU stressed that these conditions applied not only to mitigation, but also to other key elements like adaptation or finance.

Regarding mitigation commitments for the 2015 agreement, Brazil proposed a technical process under the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to guide Parties' choices. This proposal later became a proposal from the G-77 and China. The Brazilian proposal received criticism from the EU, which stated that it focused entirely on using historical emissions as the only indicator, leaving out other important indicators (like current and future emissions, projected GDP, or the projected population or population growth). The EU also argued that this proposal risked politicizing the IPCC, and that procedurally it could imply a delay for the new 2015 agreement, because of the time that would actually be needed to develop the indicator and then apply it to the Parties' commitments. Brazil replied that historical emissions (as part of the discussions on equity) were not proposed as the only reference to be taken into account. Also, that developed countries were blocking the discussion with rejection on the procedural terms. Regarding other indicators proposed by the EU, Brazil stated that they should be discussed but that scientific methodologies are about facts, not about futurology.

Regarding the 2015 agreement, the G-77 and China, the BASIC countries and Brazil insisted on the need for prompt ratification of the Doha amendment by Annex 1 countries. They also emphasized that the 2015 agreement should reaffirm the principles and provisions of the Convention and show a balanced treatment of the four pillars of the Convention: mitigation, adaptation, finance, and technology.

In order to increase the ambition pre-2020, the EU insisted on the possibilities of an improved international cooperation and of addressing the HFCs issue, promoting renewable energies and energy efficiency, and reforming fossil fuels and subsidies. The EU also reminded Parties that the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol only covered about 14% of global emissions, so more ambition was needed from all Parties.

Regarding the pre-2020 ambition gap, the G-77 and China, the BASIC countries and Brazil highlighted that the ambition gap was not only in mitigation, but also in adaptation, finance and technology. They reminded Parties of the need to ensure the implementation of the 2014 Revisit Mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol, and the need for Annex1 Parties to revisit their pre-2020 ambition in 2014: they should submit information in this regard by April 30, 2014.

In relation to implementing agreed measures, the EU noted the need for all Parties to enhance the transparency of reporting, to progress on the issue of loss and damage¹² and to build consensus toward scaling-up of climate finance up to 1 hundred billion US\$ per year by 2020. On developing the institutional arrangements for loss and damage, the EU stated that the challenge was bringing the climate element into the institutional framework and trying to find the way to reinforce the climate component in the functioning of the many bodies and mechanisms already existing, not deciding on a new institutional body. The EU advocated focusing on functionality, on adding value to all of the work that was already going on. In addition, the EU warned that it was not feasible to have a system where there would be automatic compensation whenever something happened in one place around the planet.

On scaling-up climate finance, the EU highlighted the need to publicly mobilize private finance, to use public finance to give more leverage to private investments, and the need to make sure that the expenditure environment in developing countries was further stimulating both the uptake of public finance and the mobilization of private finance. The EU said that donor cooperation and involving the private sector was key to raise pre-2020 ambition. Also, the EU warned that sometimes the recipient countries didn't have the capacity to absorb funding or implement projects, and that sometimes there were not enough projects prepared to receive funding. Regarding the IPR issue raised by developing countries (linked to technology transfer), the EU showed its disagreement with them, defending IPR protection as vital to make sure that there were sufficient incentives for the private sector to develop new technology and to bring it to the market. The EU stated that what holds back the distribution of climate technology is not IPR protection, but precisely the lack of protection. The EU also showed satisfaction for the set-up of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ action package, which represented a milestone in the effort to reduce deforestation and promote sustainable management of forests. In this regard, as had the G-77 and China, Brazil warned that REDD+ had to ensure environmental integrity: therefore, result-based payments were not to be used to offset mitigation commitments by Annex 1 Parties.

Regarding implementing agreed measures, the G-77 and China, the BASIC countries and Brazil emphasized the need to operationalize agreed institutions and decisions, the need for adequate financing coming primarily from public financial resources, and the need for a balanced treatment of all items (not just focusing on mitigation).

COP20/CMP10: The Lima Call for Climate Action

The COP20/CMP10 in Lima represented a crucial moment to reach the 2015 climate agreement. The Parties elaborated the elements of the new agreement and agreed the ground rules on how countries could submit contributions to the new agreement during the first quarter of 2015. These contributions, called Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), would form the foundations for

12 As part of the Cancun Adaptation Framework, in 2010, the COP16 started consideration of approaches to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. In COP18 in Doha, a mandate was established to have a decision on the institutional arrangements for loss and damage in Warsaw (UNFCCC c). Finally, the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage was established in 2013 (UNFCCC d).

climate action post-2020. Countries also made significant progress in elevating adaptation onto the same level as mitigation. With the agreement, named “Lima Call for Climate Action”, Parties agreed on loose arrangements for bringing forward their INDCs and on the elements for a draft negotiating text to be produced by May 2015 (UNFCCC 2014). Finally, the 2015 agreement would follow a bottom-up strategy, in opposition to the top-down strategy of the Kyoto Protocol. Progress to boost adaptation would take place recognizing that National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)¹³ offer an important way of delivering resilience.

Before Lima, the EU committed to an emission reduction of 40% compared to 1990 by 2030. China committed to peak its emissions by 2013 and to have a 20% target for renewable energy by the same year. The United States committed to an emission reduction of 26-28% compared to 2005 by 2025. With these pledges from the major economies, a good result was expected.

For the EU, the 2015 agreement should be an international legally-binding treaty involving all countries, reflecting evolving national responsibilities in the world economy, current geopolitical realities and the capacity of countries to contribute. It should also have a dynamic component, requiring countries to regularly review and strengthen their commitments over time. The 2015 agreement should be for ten years, although the EU showed flexibility on the possibility to have regular reviews on a five year basis.

To speed the negotiating process for the 2015 agreement, the work of the AWG-ADP would be split into two parallel negotiations, one on the INDCs and the other on pre-2020 ambition. The EU considered that INDCs were only for mitigation purposes, because mitigation goals can be quantified, compared, and are transparent. Nevertheless, adaptation and finance should be taken into account in the 2015 agreement. Therefore, again, the EU left the decision on issues that were important for developing countries for the future: differentiation between countries' obligations in the new regime (as demanded by developing countries according to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities) and how financing would be addressed in the 2015 agreement were, for the EU, unlikely to be resolved in Lima.

Since INDCs would reflect different national circumstances, the United States started pushing for “self-differentiation”, while developing countries worried that this would eliminate the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. In this regard, Brazil proposed a “concentric differentiation” approach, where developed countries would be in the middle with absolute economy-wide emissions targets, emerging economies in the next circle with different types of economy-wide targets (economy-wide intensity targets, economy-wide per capita targets and economy-wide Business-As-Usual/BAU deviation), and least developed countries would be in the outer circle with non-economy wide actions. All countries would move to the centre over time, but on voluntary basis. The EU, although recalling evolving economic and geopolitical circumstances and defending the freedom to select the level of ambition in mitigation, stated that the Brazilian proposal seemed to be worthy of study, since it built

13 The national adaptation plan (NAP) process was established under the Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF). It enables Parties to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs) as a means of identifying medium- and long-term adaptation needs and developing and implementing strategies and programmes to address those needs (UNFCCC e).

bridges between very different positions: those favouring “self-differentiation” (the US) and those favouring the 1992 divisions and obligations (G-77 and China).

Regarding pre-2020 ambition, the EU reminded Parties that the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol only covered a small fraction of global emissions. Developing countries, for their part, complained that MRV (monitoring, reporting, and verification) was more extended with respect to mitigation, but was weak with respect to finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity building. They also complained that in addition to the ambition gap regarding mitigation pledges, there was a “funding gap” on the part of developed countries for the mitigation and adaptation needs of developing countries.

Conclusions

The research done and the analysis of the last four United Nations Climate Change Conferences from the perspective of media diplomacy analysis, with the EU and Brazil’s messages as the object of study, produces several conclusions. First, in agreement with the conclusions of Pavese’s thesis, the EU-Brazil strategic partnership doesn’t seem to result in any established coordination of positions in the global fora on climate change, although coordination is foreseen in the official documents analysed. Second, both the EU and Brazil seem to see themselves as an example for others, since they consider they are going beyond their duties to fight climate change. Both are very active as media diplomacy actors, try to build bridges between the most opposing stances¹⁴ and often take the lead in climate change negotiations.

The EU is the biggest of the few developed Parties significantly committed to tackling climate change: sometimes it manages to insert its objectives into the conferences (as happened with the Durban roadmap) and sometimes it doesn’t (as happened with the proposal on HFCs). Brazil puts forward concrete proposals to advance climate change negotiations (like the indicator to guide parties’ choices of mitigation commitments proposed in Warsaw or the “concentric circles” proposed in Lima). In spite of its aim of building bridges, Brazil aligns itself with the classical North-South/rich-poor divide that prevails inside the G-77 and China and the BASIC group. This results in disagreements with the EU (as in the case of the EU’s proposal of taxation of emissions, the issue of HFCs or the role of private finance). The EU acts more freely and its stances sometimes converge and sometimes diverge from those of other northern parties, since it pushes more for ambition and legally-binding commitments. The EU’s good reception of the Brazilian proposal of “concentric circles” in 2014 provides a glimpse of the possibilities of future convergence.

Methodologically, media diplomacy analysis proves to be a reliable, precise and useful tool to distinguish political stances, nuances and details. Finally, this research follows and complements previous studies, and contributes to create a base of results from which future researches may depart.

¹⁴ Those of the Umbrella Group (notably the United States) and the G-77 and China (notably India).

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