



NEW GLOBAL
PARTNERSHIP OF
UKRAINE



UKRAINE X BRAZIL

FROM "STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIP" TO
"RESETTING
RELATIONS"



INTERNATIONAL
RENAISSANCE
FOUNDATION

Nataliya SHEVCHENKO, Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism"

UKRAINE - BRAZIL: FROM "STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP" TO "RESETTING RELATIONS"

© Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism", 2024

The publication is prepared within the project within the framework of the "New Global Partnerships for Ukraine: Expert Diplomacy and Advocacy". This publication was compiled with the support of the International Renaissance Foundation. Its content is the exclusive responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the views of the International Renaissance Foundation.

UKRAINE - BRAZIL: FROM "STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP" TO "RESETTING RELATIONS"

Nataliya SHEVCHENKO

Summary

The relations between Ukraine and Brazil, spanning over three decades, have been dynamic and as emotionally intense as one would expect from such a socio-cultural phenomenon as a Brazilian soap opera. They have undergone a complete evolution: from a stage of acquaintance, mutual respect, intensification of bilateral political and economic contacts, and close cooperation in certain areas, culminating in the proclamation of a strategic partnership in the first 15 years, to disappointment in the early 2010s, and a gradual cooling of relations in 2014-2019.

Describing the first stage of Ukrainian-Brazilian relations, one can conclude that they had a successful start and dynamic institutional development. At the same time, 2010-2013 was the last relatively successful period of Ukrainian-Brazilian cooperation. During that time, the biggest problem in bilateral relations was the implementation of the joint space programme, which formed the basis of the strategic partnership. An analysis of Ukrainian official documents that defined its foreign policy strategy in 2014-2021 shows that in the short term, Latin America and the Caribbean were not mentioned among potential priorities. Ukraine's interest in this region was related to searching for new export markets and intensifying cooperation with the diaspora, while the political dialogue at the highest level actually decreased. It can be stated that initially, there was no systematic work to restore and enhance cooperation with Brazil. Cooperation took place at the level of individual contacts, although, compared to Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole, it received the most attention.

Brazil abstained from voting on the UN General Assembly resolution on the territorial integrity of Ukraine of 27 March 2014. Since then, the Brazilian authorities have deliberately avoided political dialogue with the Ukrainian leadership, ignored Ukrainian UNGA resolutions condemning Russian aggression by systematically abstaining from voting on them, and instead focused on bilateral trade.

Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine, Brazil has taken an ambiguous position. Repeated contacts between the Brazilian and Russian leaders in early 2022 were accompanied by harsh statements about the Ukrainian leadership or suggestions to surrender. But at the same time, unlike in 2014, Brazil supported the UN General Assembly Resolution of 2 March 2022 condemning Russian aggression against Ukraine. Nevertheless, Brasília was not consistent in further voting on resolutions in support of Ukraine. President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva does not consider the Ukrainian Peace Formula as a framework for ending the war and renewing the global security system.

Today, mirroring the classic style of TV series, Ukrainian-Brazilian bilateral relations have reached the stage where both sides are emotionally arguing about mutual expectations and attempting to chart a future course for their relationship. However, Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine has transformed the situation into a decidedly non-cinematic drama, presenting Brazil with an existential choice: whether to assert itself as a prominent global player with responsibility for international security or reveal itself as a country that, despite the right rhetoric about the need to reform global structures, adhere to international law and the UN Charter, and promote multipolar international relations, is unprepared to shoulder responsibility for the future of humanity in the face of real threats, and thus is incapable of transcending its regional focus and dependency on other nations' positions.

The future of both states largely hinges on their next steps in bilateral relations. Will Ukraine be able to expand the coalition of countries that strongly oppose Russian aggression and fight for independence and the sovereign right of nations to choose their own development path? And will Brazil be able to establish itself as a heavy-weight global leader by supporting Ukraine rather than "losing face" by flirting with the aggressor? Whilst Ukraine enjoys interregional support in its fight against Russian aggression, bolstering its chances of successful resistance, Brazil's indecision in backing Ukraine could prove far more costly, potentially resulting in serious reputational damage. Both countries, as well as the world at large, are at a pivotal moment in history.

Content

DEVELOPMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS (1991-2013)	5
RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE AND CHALLENGES TO UKRAINIAN-BRAZILIAN RELATIONS IN 2014-2021	10
UKRAINE AND BRAZIL AFTER THE FULL-SCALE INVASION	17
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	26

DEVELOPMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS (1991-2013)

The Federative Republic of Brazil was one of the first countries to recognise Ukraine's independence on 26 December 1991 (the sixth among Latin American countries), with diplomatic relations established on 11 February 1992. Currently, Ukraine is represented in Brazil by its Embassy in the capital (opened in 1993), a Consulate in São Paulo, and Honorary Consulates in São Paulo and Curitiba. Conversely, Brazil's interests in Ukraine are represented by its Embassy (opened in 1995) and Honorary Consulates in Dnipro, Kharkiv, and Lviv.

Ukrainian government and business elites showed immediate interest in building cooperation with Brazil following the establishment of diplomatic relations. This was primarily driven by the need to strengthen Ukraine's position in the international arena amid the transformation of the global system of international relations and the search for new trading partners, particularly in the defence industry. A notable "Ukrainian breakthrough" in Latin America and the Caribbean occurred after President Leonid Kuchma participated in the 50th anniversary meeting of the UN General Assembly in 1995. This led to the first Latin American tour by a head of state in the history of independent Ukraine, during which he visited Brazil. As a result of the visit, the Treaty on Friendly Relations and Cooperation between Ukraine and the Federative Republic of Brazil was signed on 25 October 1995,¹ outlining the main areas of future cooperation, including efforts in the global arena. Article 2 of the document referred to the coordination of efforts to "maintain and strengthen peace in the world". The agreement was the first treaty of this level concluded by Brazil with a European country and the first comprehensive treaty between Ukraine and a Latin American country.

Since then, political circles in both countries have viewed Ukrainian-Brazilian relations as highly promising and dynamic. Cooperation in space technology was identified as a priority, facilitated by a framework agreement between the space agencies of both countries signed in 1999.² Subsequent high-level contacts, such as visits to Brazil by Ukraine's Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk in 1996 and 1999 and the launch of the Ukrainian-Brazilian intergovernmental commission in 2001, aimed to intensify this cooperation. During Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso's visit to Ukraine in January 2002, discussions focused on the use of the Brazilian Alcântara launch

¹ Treaty on Friendly Relations and Cooperation between Ukraine and the Federative Republic of Brazil, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 25.10.1995, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/076_657#Text

² Framework Agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 18.11.1999, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/076_008#Text

centre. This was envisioned as the first large-scale joint project to satisfy Brazil's space ambitions and attract investment to one of the country's most depressed northeastern regions while providing contracts for the Ukrainian defence industry, particularly aerospace companies, in the face of growing competition from Russia, the United States, and the EU (notably France). The parties also considered the global trend of intensive development in telecommunications and Internet technologies, emphasising future cooperation on commercial satellite launches. During this visit, a Joint Declaration on Deepening Friendship and Cooperation between Ukraine and Brazil was signed on 17 January 2002, along with several agreements on cooperation in space technology and power engineering.

The momentum of political cooperation continued and deepened during Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma's state visit to Brazil in October 2003. It took place against the backdrop of deteriorating Ukrainian-Russian relations, particularly the first attempt to violate Ukraine's territorial integrity by its neighbouring state (the conflict over Tuzla Island in the Kerch Strait). Due to this Russian provocation, the duration of Kuchma's Latin American tour had to be curtailed. Analysis of the final Joint Declaration shows that issues of international security, state sovereignty, and territorial integrity had already become priorities in bilateral relations between Brazil and Ukraine. The parties emphasised strict adherence to the UN Charter and international law. Concurrently, Ukraine supported the need to reform the UN, in particular the Security Council, to ensure that its renewed representation reflected erstwhile global realities.³ The latter point became the "cornerstone" of the Brazilian foreign policy strategy under the Lula da Silva administration in the context of transforming the global system of international relations, and remains so to this day.

However, the visit's main outcome was the signing of the Agreement between Ukraine and the Federal Republic of Brazil on Long-Term Cooperation on the Use of the Cyclone-4 Launch Vehicle at the Alcântara Launching Centre.⁴ This agreement regulated relations between the states regarding the launch of the Cyclone-4 rocket and the use of space technology through the established international company Alcântara Cyclone Space. It stipulated joint ownership of the ground complex and set a deadline for testing and commissioning the project (rocket and ground facilities) by 30 December 2006.

³ Joint Declaration on the results of official negotiations between the President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma and the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Liga: Zakon, 21.10.2003, <https://ips.ligazakon.net/document/MJ03183?an=2>

⁴ Agreement between Ukraine and the Federal Republic of Brazil on Long-Term Cooperation in Utilisation of the Cyclone-4 Launch Vehicle at the Alcântara Launching Centre, LIGA: Zakon, 21.10.2003, https://ips.ligazakon.net/document/view/mu03140?an=107&ed=2003_10_21 (expired 16.07.2016).

The following year, in May 2004, on an invitation from the Ukrainian side, Brazilian President Lula da Silva visited Ukraine. Although it was only a three-hour stopover en route to China, special attention was paid to the distinguished guest. President Kuchma personally accompanied the Brazilian leader to show him the capital's historical and architectural delights.⁵ As Lula da Silva's visit to China was scheduled to last five days, he was accompanied by a large ministerial delegation, who used the time in Kyiv for a meeting of a joint intergovernmental commission.

The in-depth cooperation in the space sector during President Lula da Silva's first administration defined the strategic relations between the two countries, which was reaffirmed during the Brazilian president's visit to Ukraine in December 2009. During this visit, the Presidents signed the Joint Declaration,⁶ proclaiming a strategic partnership between the two countries. However, for the Brazilian side, the concept of a strategic partnership serves as a kind of pressure valve designed to reduce tensions with other, stronger international partners. Brazilian foreign policy has employed this practice since the 1970s when, in the context of the Cold War, it sought an alternative to relations with the United States and found it in deepening "strategic" cooperation with European countries. In essence, the appeal to the idea of strategic partnership implies that the Brazilian diplomatic establishment recognises the existence of global confrontation. To avoid being entangled and forced to choose sides, Brazil resorts to the idea of "strategic partnership" with "third countries". In practice, for the Brazilian ruling elites, "strategic" equates to "important" (in terms of political or economic benefits). Brazil's list of such "strategic partners" is quite extensive.⁷

Thus, in the new geopolitical and technological realities of the early 21st century, marked by the transformation of the global system of international relations, a kind of "pressure" felt by Latin American governments from the United States in the context of supporting the fight against terrorism, the rejection of traditional American hegemony by the left and centre-left governments of several Latin American countries, and the rapid development of telecommunications technologies, the course towards strategic partnership with Ukraine became a sort of pressure valve allowing Lula da Silva's administration to actualise its geopolitical and economic interests. Nevertheless, Ukraine appreciated President Lula da Silva's contribution to the deepening of Brazilian-Ukrainian relations. He is the only Latin American president to have received

⁵ Lula se reúne com presidente da Ucrânia durante escala em Kiev, Folha de S.Paulo, 22.05.2004, <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/folha/brasil/ult96u61084.shtml>

⁶ Declaração Conjunta do Presidente da República Federativa do Brasil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, e do Presidente da Ucrânia, Vítor Yushchenko, Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 02.12.2009, https://concordia.itamaraty.gov.br/detalhamento-acordo/6579?TipoAcordo=BL_TL_ML&TituloAcordo=ucr%25C3%25A2nia&page=3&tipoPesquisa=1

⁷ N. Shevchenko, A. Kosenko and I. Fechko, "How to understand Lula da Silva's foreign policy?", Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism", 2023, p. 9 <http://prismua.org/26457987-2/>

two high state awards from Ukraine: the Order of Prince Yaroslav the Wise, first class (2003), awarded by Leonid Kuchma, and the Order of Freedom (2009), awarded by Viktor Yushchenko.

The years 2010-2013 marked the last relatively successful period of Ukrainian-Brazilian cooperation. Statistics still showed an increase in bilateral trade, with Brazilian imports growing from USD 344 million in 2010 to USD 624 million in 2012 (an 81% increase), thus overcoming the negative balance in trade with Ukraine. Ukrainian exports during this period also demonstrated a gradual growth trend: from USD 294 million in 2010 to USD 666 million in 2011.⁸ However, this growth trend still did not reach the record volume of bilateral trade of almost USD 1.2 billion achieved in 2008.⁹ Steel and rolled products accounted for more than 25% in the structure of Ukraine's exports.

Nevertheless, the most significant challenge in bilateral relations was the implementation of the joint space programme, which formed the basis of the "strategic partnership". To fulfil its part of the obligations (the development of the Cyclone-4 launch vehicle), Pivdenne Design Bureau secured loans under state guarantees: USD 150 million in 2004 and USD 260 million in 2011. However, the project never materialised despite the launch date being postponed to late 2012-early 2013.¹⁰ The debt obligations under state guarantees amounted to almost UAH 2.3 billion in 2004-2013 (around USD 287 million).¹¹ Moreover, the Brazilian side was also hesitant to fulfil its part of the obligations to build the ground complex caused by the economic priorities of the time: Brazil had been preparing to host the FIFA World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016, which determined the focus of public funding.

Challenging issues surrounding cooperation in the implementation of the joint space project were to be addressed during President Viktor Yanukovich's visit to Brazil on 23-25 October 2011. However, this visit had been prepared under stressful circumstances, as meetings in Brussels regarding the final details of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement were scheduled for 20 October. The European side subsequently cancelled Yanukovich's visit until "progress is made in ensuring the rule of law and independence of the judiciary", particularly in relation to the case of Yulia Tymoshenko's conviction. In response, Ukrainian diplomacy expedited the

⁸ Ucrânia. Relações econômico-comerciais, Ministério das Relações Exteriores, https://www.gov.br/mre/pt-br/assuntos/relacoes-bilaterais/todos-os-paises/ucrania?set_language=pt-br

⁹ Intercâmbio Comercial Brasil-Ucrânia 2004 – 2008, Ministério das Relações Exteriores, <https://web.archive.org/web/20120209114104/http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/temas/temas-politicos-e-relacoes-bilaterais/europa/ucrania/pdf>

¹⁰ Yanukovich Considers Brazil Ukraine's Key Trade Partner in Latin America, Ukrainian News Agency, 24.10.2011, <https://web.archive.org/web/20111027084623/http://un.ua/eng/article/356840.html>

¹¹ N. Leshchenko, "Ukrainian-Brazilian Space Programme: Failure, Debts and Crime", *Ekonomichna Pravda*, 17.11.2016,

organisation of a six-day Latin American tour, which included visits to Cuba and Brazil, set to commence on 20 October 2011. The hurried preparations were evident in the list of discussion topics, which included, notably, the deepening of cooperation in sports, an area that was not a priority in bilateral relations. Moreover, the order of cities visited by Yanukovych placed the capital as the last stop on his itinerary. He also met the Ukrainian diaspora, which celebrated its 120th anniversary in 2011, in São Paulo, despite its centre being located in the state of Paraná and the city of Curitiba. Ultimately, the meeting with then-President Dilma Rousseff took place in the capital on the last day of his visit.¹² Given these circumstances, the effectiveness of this trip for advancing Ukrainian-Brazilian relations was limited. This is further supported by the fact that, despite a statement indicating the signing of several bilateral agreements following the visit (paragraph 20 of the Joint Declaration¹³), there are no documents in the current legal framework of Ukrainian-Brazilian relations, which includes nearly 80 documents (agreements, memoranda, protocols) dated by that period.¹⁴

The first stage of Ukrainian-Brazilian relations (1991-2013) was characterised by a significant intensity of contacts at both ministerial and parliamentary levels. During this period, the Prime Minister of Ukraine had a conversation with Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff in China in 2011, alongside four working visits by the heads of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Brazil (in 1996, 1999, 2005, 2012), and one visit by the Brazilian Foreign Minister to Ukraine in 2013. Additionally, there were exchanges of visits between the Defence Ministers of Brazil and Ukraine in 2010 and 2011, respectively, as well as a visit by the Ukrainian Minister of Economic Development and Trade in 2013, and a working visit by the Brazilian Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation in 2011.

The dynamics of inter-parliamentary cooperation between Ukraine and Brazil have also been positive. Since 1996, the National Congress of Brazil and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine have maintained inter-parliamentary cooperation groups. Brazilian MPs visited Ukraine in 1996, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2008, while return visits by members of the Verkhovna Rada took place in 1997, 2000, and 2003.

In summarising the first stage of Ukrainian-Brazilian relations, we can conclude that they commenced positively and developed dynamically during the first decade of the

¹² Visita de Estado ao Brasil do Presidente da Ucrânia, Viktor Yanukovych – São Paulo e Brasília, 23 a 25 de outubro de 2011, Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 24.10.2011, https://www.gov.br/mre/pt-br/canais_atendimento/imprensa/notas-a-imprensa/visita-de-estado-ao-brasil-do-presidente-da-ucrania-viktor-yanukovych-sao-paulo-e-brasilia-23-a-25-de-outubro-de-2011

¹³ Joint Statement of President Viktor Yanukovych and President of Brazil Dilma Rousseff, Press office of President Viktor Yanukovych, 25.10.2011 <https://web.archive.org/web/20140127210218/http://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/21711.html>

¹⁴ Current international agreements between Ukraine and Brazil // Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine. http://ukrexport.gov.ua/ukr/ugodi_z_ukrain/?country=bra

21st century, although there was a gradual decline in activity between 2010 and 2013. Several factors influenced the effectiveness of these bilateral relations. Firstly, Ukraine's foreign policy priorities shifted towards European and Euro-Atlantic integration, moving away from the multi-vector approach of the 1990s-2003. The political transformations in Ukraine, including the Orange Revolution of 2004 and the Euromaidan protests of late 2013-early 2014, were received with ambivalence among Latin American political elites at the time, particularly those on the left of the ideological spectrum. They saw the events in Ukraine as further evidence of the so-called "hegemony" of the United States on the world stage, as asserted by Russian narratives. Tensions in Brazilian-US relations during this period were highlighted by the fact that during the first visit of a US president to Brazil in several decades in March 2011, the two leaders did not even hold a joint press conference. Also, one should not underestimate the economic resistance to Ukrainian business and direct pressure from Russia regarding a joint project in the space sector, as reported by the leadership of the State Space Agency.¹⁵

The intensification of regional integration also contributed to a diminishing interest among Brazilian authorities in developing a strategic partnership with Ukraine. With the establishment of associations such as UNASUR (Union of South American Nations), ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America), CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States), and the emergence of the G20 – through which Brazil could assert its geopolitical interests, such as multipolar international relations, transformation of global governance structures, including the UN – the urgent need to seek extra-regional partners diminished.

Simultaneously, Ukraine was losing its attractiveness to Brazil as a partner in the development of space technology, particularly because it required investment. Brazil was in need of substantial funds for the costly social projects initiated by the administrations of Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff. It is also important to consider that Ukraine's defence industry, along with its security sector, was gradually deteriorating due to the systemic influence of Russian agents and corruption, or was being reoriented towards cooperation with Russia, thus losing ground in the Latin American market.

¹⁵ "Russia forced Brazil to abandon the construction of a spaceport with Ukraine, says the head of the State Space Agency", LB, 25.05.2020, https://lb.ua/world/2020/05/25/458337_rossiya_vinudila_braziliyu_otkazatsya.html

RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE AND CHALLENGES TO UKRAINIAN-BRAZILIAN RELATIONS IN 2014-2021

Despite closely following the Euromaidan events in Ukraine in 2013-2014, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs only on 19 February 2014 voiced its official position in a brief statement, expressing hope for an internal Ukrainian settlement of the situation.¹⁶ The Brazilian media covered the political processes and protests in Ukraine during the autumn of 2013 and winter 2014, but mostly in the context of Brazilian football players in Ukrainian clubs.

With the outbreak of Russian aggression and the annexation of Crimea in the spring of 2014, Ukraine anticipated Brazil's unconditional support for the inviolability of its territorial integrity and sovereignty in accordance with international law. This expectation was based on Brazil's previous positions regarding international security and the use of force in international relations, issues on which it had sought solidarity on the world stage, including from Ukraine. However, Brazil's abstention from voting on the UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/68/262 of 27 March 2014 on Ukraine's territorial integrity came as a shock. In the run-up to this UN vote, some Brazilian media reported on alleged pressure from European G7 member states and the United States on the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to condemn Russia's actions.¹⁷ Later, commenting on Brazil's position during the UN vote, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Luiz Alberto Figueiredo stated that the "Ukrainian internal crisis" could not be resolved through sanctions, as they "reproduce the logic of the Cold War".¹⁸

This position was not solely a product of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) played a significant role in its formation. The Brazilian leadership had high hopes for multilateral cooperation within this organisation, with the sixth BRICS summit scheduled to be held in Brazil in July 2014, where the launch of a Development Bank was to be discussed. This bank was to offer an alternative to the global financial dominance of the United States and Western countries. At the time, Brazil likely anticipated additional financial opportunities to implement its ambitious projects in the space industry and the construction of an

¹⁶ Situação na Ucrânia, Notas à Imprensa. Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 19.02.2014, https://www.gov.br/mre/pt-br/canais_atendimento/imprensa/notas-a-imprensa/situacao-na-ucrania

¹⁷ Paraguassu L. G-7 cobra posição firme do Brasil na crise ucraniana, Estadão de S.Paulo, 15.03.2014, <https://www.estadao.com.br/internacional/g-7-cobra-posicao-firme-do-brasil-na-crise-ucraniana-imp/>

¹⁸ Teles de Menezes G. O. O Brasil e as questões do Kosovo e da Crimeia, G. Teles de Menezes, NEIBA, SimpoRI. – vol. VII. – 2018, p. 11, 26. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12957/neiba.2018.39095>

inter-ocean railway corridor (connecting the Brazilian Atlantic coast and the Pacific coast of Peru). The growing international tensions greatly harmed Brazil's interests, and aligning with the United States and Western powers on the Crimea issue would have called into question, from the Brazilian perspective, its status as a regional and global centre of power opposing US "hegemonic" intentions.¹⁹ Consequently, Brazilian officials often invoked the "principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of states" and the "futility of the sanctions policy" employed by Western powers against violators of international order.

The influence of Russian diplomacy on this issue should not be underestimated. A leak from the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs revealed that Russia used its participation in the preparatory BRICS meeting in March 2014 to "request", through Foreign Minister S. Lavrov, that BRICS members "not support the draft resolution presented by Ukraine at the General Assembly".²⁰ Notably, this meeting occurred during the Nuclear Security summit in The Hague (24-25 March 2014), where the BRICS countries issued a joint statement condemning Western sanctions as "not contributing to a sustainable and peaceful solution, according to international law, including the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter".²¹ It is worth noting that Brazil subsequently benefited financially from Western anti-Russian sanctions, gaining broader access to Russian markets.

Shortly after, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in its brief overview of bilateral relations with Ukraine, identified Euromaidan and "the beginning of the conflicts in Crimea and Donbas" as a watershed moment determining their future.²² Without delving into the analysis of the domestic and international situation, it stated that these events led to "profound changes in the Ukrainian economy and politics", and the economic crisis significantly reduced bilateral trade. At the political level, "Ukraine has started to focus on the above-mentioned conflicts". Meanwhile, the Brazilian government decided to withdraw from the bilateral space project, effectively dismantling the foundations of the strategic partnership. This overview was first published on the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs website on 9 July 2014, coinciding with Brazil's hosting of the FIFA World Cup, which Vladimir Putin, the leader

¹⁹ N.I. Shevchenko, "Positions of Latin American and Caribbean States on the Annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014", *American History and Politics: Scientific Journal*, 2021. - P. 107, <http://www.americanstudies.history.knu.ua/uk/2021-12-shevchenko-ukr/> DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17721/2521-1706.2021.12.10>

²⁰ Moura M. O desastre aéreo de Putin, *Época*, 18.07.2014, <https://epoca.oglobo.globo.com/tempo/noticia/2014/07/o-bdesastre-aereob-de-putin.html>

²¹ Media Statement on the Meeting of the BRICS Foreign/International Relations Ministers Hague, Netherlands, March 24, 2014. BRICS Information Centre. University of Toronto, 24.03.2014, <http://www.brics.utoronto.ca/docs/140324-hague.html>

²² Ucrânia, Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 2024, https://www.gov.br/mre/pt-br/assuntos/relacoes-bilaterais/todos-os-paises/ucrania?set_language=pt-br

of an aggressor state, also attended as part of his Latin American tour. Evidently, talks with Putin "helped" the then President of Brazil, Dilma Rousseff, to determine her foreign policy stance on the "Ukrainian issue". Since then, in our opinion, the Brazilian authorities have deliberately avoided political dialogue with the Ukrainian leadership, ignored Ukrainian UNGA resolutions condemning Russian aggression (concerning the human rights situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, 2016-2021, and on the problem of the militarisation of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, 2018-2021), systematically abstaining from voting on them, whilst focusing on trade between the two countries. This stance was generally supported by Brazilian society.

A significant responsibility for the further development of bilateral relations lies with the Ukrainian side as well. Ukraine accepted the imposed model of bilateral relations and did not do enough to influence the position of Brazilian power elites. This was due to both diminished financial and economic capacities against the backdrop of Russia's continuing aggression and the search for stable allies in countering Russia's invasion plans, such as Europe and the United States.

An analysis of Ukrainian official documents defining Ukraine's foreign policy strategy in 2014-2021 shows that in the short term, the entire LAC region was not mentioned among potential priorities. Interest in it was related to finding new export markets and intensifying cooperation with the diaspora, whilst political dialogue at the highest level actually decreased. However, some documents occasionally mentioned Brazil as a country of priority interest for Ukraine, as stated in the Analytical Report to the Annual Address of the President to the Verkhovna Rada (2015, 2017), etc.

When Volodymyr Zelenskyy's administration came to power in 2019, it initially pursued a course of economisation of foreign policy, indicating the priority of the G20 markets, which includes Brazil.²³ This was reiterated in statements and documents of 2020 and 2021, particularly in the National Security Strategy (2020) and the Economic Security Strategy of Ukraine until 2025 (adopted in 2021). During the presentation of credentials by the newly appointed Ambassador of Brazil in spring 2021, President Zelenskyy reaffirmed Ukraine's commitment to further develop strategic cooperation with Brazil, primarily in trade and investment, agriculture, energy, and pharmaceuticals.²⁴ However, these intentions were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to a global drop in business activity. In 2020 and 2021, the Latin American direction was supposed to have a more pronounced political dimension, including through the organisation of President Zelenskyy's tour of the region, as

²³ Decree of the President of Ukraine No. 837/2019 "On urgent measures to implement reforms and strengthen the state", <https://www.president.gov.ua/documents/8372019-30389>

²⁴ "The President receives credentials from the ambassadors of Vietnam, Brazil and Italy", 04.03.2021, <https://www.president.gov.ua/news/prezident-prijnyav-virchi-gramoti-u-posliv-vyetnamu-brazilij-66957>

discussed by Foreign Minister Vadym Prystaiko and Deputy Head of the Presidential Office Ihor Zhovkva.²⁵ However, this never materialised due to the pandemic.

The Foreign Policy Strategy of Ukraine, approved in August 2021, emphasised the need to intensify cooperation with several regional international organisations, including Mercosur and the OAS, of which Brazil is also a member. However, the position set out in the Strategy did not correspond to the actual state of affairs in bilateral relations as of 2021, particularly the lack of support for Ukraine in the UN General Assembly. The Strategy stated: "Partnership relations with the Federative Republic of Brazil are based on the Joint Declaration of the Presidents of Ukraine and the Federative Republic of Brazil of 2 December 2009, which proclaimed a strategic partnership between the states. The Ukrainian-Brazilian dialogue includes political and security issues, in particular cooperation in combating hybrid threats, international terrorism and cybersecurity, as well as further development of trade and economic cooperation, in particular in the pharmaceutical, energy, transport, scientific and technical sectors, implementation of infrastructure projects, and disaster management."²⁶

Moreover, the development of a strategic partnership seemed doubtful in the context of Brazil's denunciation of a key agreement on cooperation in the space sector in 2015, which effectively cancelled a significant part of the regulatory framework on this issue.²⁷ The losses incurred by Ukraine as a result of the unilateral termination of the agreement may exceed USD 800 million. The Ukrainian side, represented by the State Space Agency, did not challenge Brazil's actions, hoping to find new partners. The issue of unresolved relations regarding the ownership of property remaining after the unilateral termination of the agreement by the Brazilian side was raised at the Verkhovna Rada's committee hearings on international legal support for Ukraine's foreign policy in the space sector (16.12.2020).

Another misrepresentation occurred when the then Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada, Dmytro Razumkov, met a member of the Chamber of Deputies of the National Congress of Brazil, Eduardo Bolsonaro, who visited Ukraine in July 2021. Razumkov specifically noted Brazil's role in supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, which clearly did not correspond to Brazil's actions within international organisations.

²⁵ "Deputy Head of the Presidential Office Zhovkva: President Zelenskyy's foreign policy priority is economy", 18.06.2020, <https://interfax.com.ua/news/interview/669585.htm> |

²⁶ Decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine of 30 July 2021 "On the Strategy of Foreign Policy of Ukraine", 26.08.2021, <https://www.president.gov.ua/documents/4482021-40017>

²⁷ F. Oryshchuk. "How Ukraine 'sent' 4 billion into space. Without a rocket", 13.09.2016, <https://glavcom.ua/publications/yak-ukrajina-vidpravila-4-milyardi-v-kosmos-bez-raketi-372261.html>

Analysing Ukraine's practical steps in 2014-2021, it can be stated that initially, there was no systematic work to restore and build cooperation with Brazil. Cooperation took place at the level of individual contacts, although, compared to Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole, it received the most attention.

A potential breakthrough in relations with Brazil could have been made at meetings between Ukrainian Presidents Petro Poroshenko and Volodymyr Zelenskyy with Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro. Both took place in 2019: in January on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos (P. Poroshenko) and in October at the enthronement of the new Emperor of Japan (V. Zelenskyy). Both Ukrainian leaders were invited to visit Brazil the following year. Although the visit could not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of important foreign policy events occurred: President Zelenskyy's telephone conversation with his Brazilian counterpart Bolsonaro (4.11.2020), videoconference meetings at the level of the Foreign Ministers (18.11.2020) and their deputies (5.05.2020), and a meeting between Deputy Foreign Minister Yevhen Yenin and the then Brazilian Ambassador to Ukraine Oswaldo Biato Junior as part of an expert discussion on the prospects for Ukraine's Latin American policy (13.07.2020).

The anticipated visit of Brazilian President Bolsonaro to Ukraine in 2021 did not happen. Attempts to restart the political dialogue at the highest level were preceded by political consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and Brazil in Kyiv (October 2017), the first Ukrainian-Brazilian consular consultations (October 2019), the inaugural meeting of the Ukrainian-Brazilian advisory committee on agriculture by video link (2016), and the visit by a delegation from the Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry of Ukraine to Brazil (June 2019).

To date, there has been no cooperation within the framework of the joint Ukrainian-Brazilian Intergovernmental commission on trade and economic cooperation and the Subcommittee on trade and investment. The first meeting of the Ukrainian-Brazilian advisory committee on agriculture was held as early as 2016 via videoconference. The first interagency consultations on cybersecurity in the history of bilateral relations were held in 2021. In 2018, a delegation of Ukrainian educators participated in the "Recruit Higher Education Students from Brazil" exhibition in Brazil. In May 2021, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Hennadii Udoenko Diplomatic Academy and the Rio Branco Institute at the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The wife of former Brazilian President Bolsonaro took part in the Kyiv Summit of First Ladies and Gentlemen, held online in August 2021. This was preceded by a

videoconference between the First Ladies of Ukraine and Brazil in April of the same year.

Although 2021 marked the 130th anniversary of Ukrainian emigration to Brazil, and during a 2020 telephone conversation, the Foreign Ministers of Ukraine and Brazil decided to commemorate this with a series of events, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only one online event was dedicated to this milestone – an international scientific videoconference with the participation of the ambassadors.

Interregional cooperation, which began in 1997 through mutual exchanges of delegations of local business and government officials, has continued. Since then, delegations from the Brazilian states of Rio de Janeiro, Paraná, Amazonas, Santa Catarina, and Goiás have visited Ukraine, whilst delegations from Kyiv, Lviv, and Kharkiv regions, as well as the city of Kyiv, have visited Brazil. This resulted in the establishment of sister-city relationships between the capitals of both countries in September 2000.

Inter-parliamentary cooperation between Ukraine and Brazil has shown positive dynamics. The respective friendship group of Ukrainian parliamentarians has held the most meetings with their Brazilian counterparts over this time, compared to other groups of friendship with the LAC parliaments (including online meetings since the beginning of the pandemic). The corresponding friendship group in the Brazilian parliament was established in April 2019,²⁸ whilst in the Verkhovna Rada of the IX convocation, the group was formed in December 2019, consisting of 19 MPs (currently 16). During this period, there were several visits of MPs to Brazil in 2015, 2016, and 2017, and a videoconference in 2020.

In 2021, Ukraine was visited by Eduard Bolsonaro, the Chairman of the Committee on International Relations and National Security of the Chamber of Deputies and son of the then President of Brazil. During the last visit to Brazil, the head of the Ukraine-Brazil Interparliamentary Cooperation Group held talks at the National Congress, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovation and Communications. The meetings emphasised the need to intensify bilateral dialogue. In response to the Verkhovna Rada's appeal regarding the so-called local elections held by the Russian Federation in the temporarily occupied territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol in September 2019, the Foreign Affairs and National Defence Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of the National Congress of Brazil adopted a statement in support of Ukraine.

²⁸ CREDN instala grupos parlamentares com Coreia, Turquia, Azerbaijão e Ucrânia, 11.04.2019, <https://www2.camara.leg.br/atividade-legislativa/comissoes/comissoes-permanentes/credn/noticias/credn-instala-grupos-parlamentares-com-coreia-turquia-azerbaijao-e-ucrania>

We should also highlight a certain "breakthrough" in defence cooperation between the two countries, which occurred in 2020-2021 under the Bolsonaro administration. This was preceded by a statement from the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs against the backdrop of the escalating situation in the Black Sea due to Russia's provocation in the Kerch Strait (2018). At the time, Brazil was the only South American country to express its position ("concern") and call for avoiding an escalation of the conflict and finding a peaceful solution to the crisis in accordance with international law.²⁹ Cooperation in the field of military and defence technologies during this period resulted in an international videoconference on key areas of collaboration in the defence industry between Ukraine and Brazil (24.09.2020).³⁰ The First Defence Industry Dialogue (DID) was held in person in Kyiv on 1-2 December 2020 with the participation of the Prime Minister of Ukraine, high-ranking officials of both countries, representatives of the military, defence enterprises and companies in the field of biosecurity and biotechnology. The forum resulted in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on the development of defence production and commercial use for four years and a Memorandum of Understanding on scientific and technical cooperation in the defence sector.³¹

To continue cooperation in this area, an initial online meeting was held in March 2021 as part of the DID, and a Ukrainian delegation consisting of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, the head of the State Space Agency of Ukraine, and representatives of several defence companies visited Brazil in May. The Brazilian conglomerate Embraer took part in the XVII International Specialised Exhibition "Arms and Security - 2021" held in Kyiv and was granted the status of a strategic partner of the AVIASVIT-XXI aerospace show. Brazil's participation in the Sea Breeze 2021 multinational military exercises in the Black Sea was a landmark event in security cooperation.

Military cooperation was primarily due to the change in Brazil's foreign policy priorities under the administration of President Bolsonaro, who represented right-wing forces. At that time, Brazil reconsidered its place in the system of regional relations, suspended its membership in several organisations, and intensified cooperation with the Trump administration, becoming a major non-NATO ally of the United States (2019), which implied strategic and military relations. Additionally, one should not forget the growing role of the military in Brazil's public administration under President Bolsonaro, who himself received a military education and enjoyed respect in the

²⁹ Incident in the Kerch Strait, Ministério das Relações Exteriores. 29.11.2018, <https://www.gov.br/mre/en/contact-us/press-area/press-releases/incident-in-the-kerch-strait>

³⁰ Ukraine - Brazil: dialogue on cooperation in the defence industry launched, 25.09.2020, <https://spetstechnoexport.com/uk/news/ukraina-braziliya-rozpochato-dialog>

³¹ Ukraine and Brazil sign Memorandum of Cooperation in Defence, 01.12.2020, <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/ukrayina-ta-braziliya-pidpisali-memorandum-pro-spivpracyu-v-oboronnij-sferi>

country's military circles. Sea Breeze 2021 was also useful for Brazil in terms of its involvement in maritime counter-piracy operations in the Red Sea. For Ukraine, Brazil's participation was symbolic at the time, as it demonstrated coordination of military cooperation in the face of growing tensions and aggression from Russia six months before its full-scale invasion, the threat of which had been reported by several countries' intelligence agencies in advance.

Trade and economic cooperation. In 2014, Ukraine's exports of goods to Brazil totalled USD 110.2 million, while imports were USD 261.2 million. Between 2015 and 2017, there was a significant drop in trade between Brazil and Ukraine, primarily due to a decline in Ukrainian exports. As a result, in 2017, Ukraine faced a negative trade balance of over USD 148 million. Brazilian exports to Ukraine, on the other hand, gradually increased in volume, with raw materials and agricultural products forming their basis.

According to the Observatory of Economic Complexity, the main commodities in Brazilian exports to Ukraine from 2013 to 2022 were machinery, metals, livestock products, and fruits and vegetables.³² Conversely, the top commodities in Ukrainian exports to Brazil from 2017 to 2022 included malt, clothing, pipes, polymeric materials, rolled steel, electrical products, and medicines.³³

³² What does Brazil export to Ukraine? (2013-2022). The Observatory of Economic Complexity. <https://oec.world/visualize/line/hs92/export/bra/ukr/show/2013.2022>

³³ What does Brazil import from Ukraine? (2017-2021). The Observatory of Economic Complexity. <https://oec.world/en/visualize/stacked/hs92/import/bra/ukr/show/2017.2021>

Ukrainian exports of goods to Brazil from 2014 to 2021 (USD million)³⁴

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
110.2	33.5	20.5	9.5	44.8	73.9	64.3	181.3

Ukrainian imports of goods from Brazil in 2014-2021 (USD million)³⁵

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
261.2	166.1	193.1	210.4	195.1	218.3	266.8	384.5

The most successful example of bilateral cooperation is a project carried out by the state-owned enterprise Indar (Kyiv) and the Brazilian state-owned pharmaceutical company FioCruz (Rio de Janeiro) to establish insulin production in Brazil using Ukrainian technologies. The private joint-stock company Farmacia has been gradually expanding into the Brazilian market since 2020.

³⁴ Geographical structure of Ukraine's foreign trade in goods. State Statistics Service of Ukraine. <https://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>

³⁵ Ibid.

UKRAINE AND BRAZIL AFTER THE FULL-SCALE INVASION

The beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 marked a separate chapter in Ukrainian–Brazilian relations. Given the trends towards improved political cooperation and expanded contacts that have been evident since the beginning of Jair Bolsonaro's administration, Ukraine counted on Brazil's unconditional support in countering Russian aggression. Even before the outbreak of hostilities, when Russia was deploying forces on the border with Ukraine, Bolsonaro defiantly visited Moscow not to take on the mission of an impartial negotiator who could potentially influence Putin's plans but to "express solidarity" with Russia.³⁶ He reiterated this phrase several times in his speeches during his visit to Russia. On one occasion, he elaborated, specifying his desire to cooperate with Russia in several areas, including "defence, oil and gas, and agriculture". The Brazilian leader expressed confidence that his visit would be indicative for the whole world, and that it would allow for a significant development of their bilateral relations. A press release by the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also stated that both sides reaffirmed their commitment to the UN Charter and "the promotion of peace and democracy".³⁷

Bolsonaro's visit took place on 16 February 2022, the day that intelligence had previously indicated as a potential date for a full-scale invasion. The details of the talks between the heads of state remain secret (despite the promise of his successor, Lula da Silva, to make them public). There was only one signed document as a result of the visit – a short Protocol on Amendments to the Agreement on Mutual Protection of Classified Information. Upon the president's return, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs decided to close access to information about the trip for five years, citing the fact that it was not authorised to make public data relating to the interests of third countries.³⁸ On the eve of the visit, the Ukrainian diaspora appealed to the Brazilian President to support Ukraine and to show solidarity and visit Kyiv on his way to Moscow, but Bolsonaro ignored this request and visited neighbouring Hungary instead.

³⁶ Gielow Igor Bolsonaro: "We are in Solidarity with Russia". Folha de S.Paulo. 17.02.2022. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/internacional/en/world/2022/02/bolsonaro-we-are-in-solidarity-with-russia.shtml>

³⁷ Press Release N. 24 Joint Statement by President of the Federative Republic of Brazil Jair Bolsonaro and President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. 16.02.2022. <https://www.gov.br/mre/en/contact-us/press-area/press-releases/joint-statement-by-president-of-the-federative-republic-of-brazil-jair-bolsonaro-and-president-of-the-russian-federation-vladimir-putin>

³⁸ Mendes G. Brazil puts five-year seal on data about Bolsonaro's Russia trip. The Brazilian Report. 20.04.2022. <https://brazilian.report/liveblog/2022/04/20/five-year-bolsonaro-russia-trip/>

Since the beginning of the invasion, Brazilian President Bolsonaro has publicly condemned his Vice President Hamilton Mourão for condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine, stressing that it was not up to him to talk about the "crisis in Eastern Europe".³⁹ In his comments to journalists, Mourão suggested that now it would not be enough for the West to support Ukraine with anti-Russian sanctions alone, and that use of force might be needed. In his Twitter post on 24 February 2022, Bolsonaro did not comment on Russia's full-scale invasion of a sovereign state but only expressed concern about the protection of Brazilian citizens in Ukraine. In addition to "serious concern", the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and "the start of negotiations based on the Minsk Agreements",⁴⁰ although Putin himself, having launched unprovoked aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, stated that "the Minsk Agreements do not exist" due to Russia's recognition of the self-proclaimed entities in Donbas.

Subsequently, Bolsonaro also made unacceptable remarks about Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, calling him in his interview on 27 February 2022 "a comedian to whom people entrusted the fate of the nation".⁴¹ In a dialogue with Putin in June 2022, Bolsonaro praised further cooperation with Russia and criticised Western sanctions, which he called ineffective. Nevertheless, the Presidents of Brazil and Ukraine had their first telephone conversation after the start of full-scale Russian aggression in July 2022, during Brazil's interim presidency of the UN Security Council.⁴² A few days before the call, in an interview with local media, Bolsonaro claimed that during the upcoming conversation, he would advise the Ukrainian President to do what Argentina did with the Falkland Islands in 1982: accept defeat and surrender.⁴³ The Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not publish an official communiqué on the results of the conversation.

Despite the harsh statements made by President Bolsonaro, Brazil (unlike in 2014) supported the UN General Assembly Resolution of 2 March 2022,⁴⁴ which condemned Russian aggression against Ukraine (at that time, none of the Latin American states voted against and only four countries abstained). However, in subsequent votes on

³⁹ Bolsonaro regaña a vicepresidente de Brasil por condenar la invasión de Rusia a Ucrania, Latinanoticias, 24.02.2022, <https://latinanoticias.pe/noticias/latina-noticias/bolsonaro-regana-a-vicepresidente-de-brasil-por-condenar-la-invasion-d-rusia-a-ucrania-rt>

⁴⁰ Nota À Imprensa Nº 30 Situação na Ucrânia. 24.02.2022. https://www.gov.br/mre/pt-br/canais_atendimento/imprensa/notas-a-imprensa/situacao-na-ucrania-2

⁴¹ Coletiva de Imprensa - 27/02/2022, Jair Bolsonaro. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eedXI-QEEb4>

⁴² <https://twitter.com/ZelenskyyUa/status/1549029704199462913>

⁴³ Magalhães Leandro, Vou dar a Zelensky a solução para a guerra, diz Bolsonaro. CNN Brazil, 14.07.2022. <https://www.cnnbrasil.com.br/politica/vou-dar-a-zelensky-a-solucao-para-a-guerra-diz-bolsonaro-a-cnn/>

⁴⁴ Brazil votes to condemn Russia's aggression against Ukraine at the UN General Assembly. (onyбл. 02.03.2022). Ministério das Relações Exteriores. <https://www.gov.br/en/government-of-brazil/latest-news/2022/brazil-votes-to-condemn-russia2019s-aggression-against-ukraine-at-the-un-general-assembly>

resolutions supporting Ukraine, Brazil was inconsistent: it supported resolutions on Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, compliance with the principles of the UN Charter, a just and sustainable peace in Ukraine, and the humanitarian consequences of the aggression. Nevertheless, it twice abstained from voting on resolutions concerning the human rights situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine and Crimea, on reparations for Russian aggression, and on ensuring the safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine, including the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant occupied by Russia. Additionally, Brazil, along with 11 other states (including Argentina and Mexico), did not support the resolution of the Organisation of American States "Continued support for an end to Russian aggression in Ukraine" (2022).

What are the reasons behind Brazil's "neutral" position on Russia's full-scale aggression in 2022? Firstly, it is an economic calculation. Brazil had been recovering its GDP after the pandemic downfall, so it had an opportunity to take advantage of Western anti-Russian sanctions to boost economic cooperation with Russia, which was looking for new markets for its raw materials to replace European ones. While the volume of bilateral trade between Ukraine and Brazil decreased as much as ten times due to the hostilities and risks in the Black Sea, Russia increased its diesel exports to Brazil by 6,000% during the same period, and the volume of bilateral trade with Russia exceeded the USD 11 billion mark for the first time.⁴⁵

Secondly, Russian aggression destabilised global markets and could have affected Brazil's cooperation with China, given both the political and economic "dividends" that China received from the confrontation in Europe, including a reduction in tension in the trade war with the United States and additional favourable opportunities for promotion in Latin American markets. Under the Bolsonaro administration, Brazilian business elites were sort of caught in the middle between China and the United States.

Thirdly, the Brazilian phenomenon of "foreign policy caudillismo" should be taken into account, where, despite the existence of democratically elected institutions and a whole cohort of professional diplomats, foreign policy issues still remain the responsibility of the president and/or his personal advisers. Fourthly, one should consider the tense relations with the United States after the Joe Biden administration came to power, in contrast to the friendly relations with former President Donald Trump. For instance, in January 2021, Jair Bolsonaro's son Eduardo and his family paid a private visit to Washington at the invitation of then president's daughter Ivanka

⁴⁵ Petrovna J. Na contramão das sanções, Lula amplia comércio com Rússia de Putin em aposta arriscada no Sul Global, Estadão de S.Paulo, 25.04.2024, <https://www.estadao.com.br/internacional/na-contramão-das-sanções-lula-amplia-comércio-com-rússia-de-putin-em-aposta-arriscada-no-sul-global/>

Trump.⁴⁶ In our opinion, Jair Bolsonaro extrapolated his problematic relations with the United States, which supported Ukraine in countering Russian aggression, to Brazil's official position.

Fifthly, in 2022, Brazil held the presidential election in which citizens had to choose not just between the candidates but, in effect, between the opposite socio-economic models they represented. The only thing that united the two main contenders for victory – Lula da Silva and Jair Bolsonaro – was anti-Americanism: for Lula, it was innate; for Bolsonaro, it was recently acquired. Consequently, US support for Ukraine became an additional element in the tense election race, possibly due to incitement from Russia.

With Lula da Silva's victory in the presidential election, the Ukrainian leadership hoped for increased support from Brazil at regional and global levels. Such illusions were prompted by previous achievements in bilateral relations (up to the proclamation of a strategic partnership), which occurred during the first two presidential terms of the twice-re-elected Brazilian president. However, Lula da Silva's comments on Russian aggression, which he made during the election campaign, were already alarming. For example, he made disrespectful comments about Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, criticised Joe Biden for his "indecision" in denying Ukraine's accession to NATO, and generally expressed complete disregard for the global threat, saying that "the war will be decided at the table over a beer".⁴⁷

Ukraine's leadership demonstrated its intention to "reset relations" with Brazil by sending a delegation to Lula da Silva's inauguration, headed by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy Yuliia Svyrydenko. President Zelenskyy repeatedly invited his Brazilian counterpart to visit Ukraine and expressed his willingness to come to Brazil. Although the two leaders had a telephone conversation via video link and met twice (at the G20 summit in May 2023 and on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in September 2023), no substantial dialogue was established. The brief meeting in New York took place in a tense atmosphere, likely influenced by the United States, as Lula da Silva arrived following negotiations with President Biden. Despite visiting Europe several times in 2023 and participating in the EU-CELAC summit in Brussels, Lula never expressed a desire to visit Ukraine. He also did not find an opportunity to meet

⁴⁶ Kranish Michael, Stanley-Becker Isaac Brazil's riot puts spotlight on close ties between Bolsonaro and Trump. The Washington Post, 09.01.2023.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2023/01/09/bolsonaro-riots-us-election-deniers-trump-bannon/> ; Eduardo Bolsonaro visita a Casa Branca e se encontra com Ivanka Trump, Poder 360, 06.01.2021.

<https://www.poder360.com.br/congresso/eduardo-bolsonaro-visita-a-casa-branca-e-se-encontra-com-ivanka-trump/>

⁴⁷ Lula and Bolsonaro on Ukraine and Sanctions Against Russia. TeleSur, 30.09.2022.

<https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Lula-and-Bolsonaro-on-Ukraine-and-Sanctions-Against-Russia-20220930-0015.html>

Zelenskyy when the latter stopped in Brazil on his way to the inauguration of Argentine President Javier Milei.

As for Ukraine's expectations from Brazil, among other things, it hoped for it to join the Peace Formula and impose sanctions against the aggressor. Also, in the summer of 2023, in an interview with Globo, Zelenskyy expressed hope for a potential opportunity for Brazil to demonstrate its true regional leadership by organising and holding a summit of the leaders of Latin America and the Caribbean and Ukraine, where the Ukrainian peace plan, humanitarian support for Ukraine, and the grain initiative could be discussed.⁴⁸ However, on all these points, Brazil has its own alternative proposals.

Regarding the grain initiative, in 2023, the Brazilian Ambassador to Ukraine took part in several consultations chaired by the Presidential Office on overcoming the grain crisis and delivering food aid expected from Ukraine, for example, to Africa. Lula da Silva, taking advantage of the opportunities that have opened up for Brazil due to this year's G20 summit, put forward the idea of launching a Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty.⁴⁹ Currently, Brazilian diplomats are busy seeking support for this initiative in different regions of the world. At the same time, according to Brazilian media reports, Lula's administration intends to renegotiate the debts of some African countries totalling USD 280 million.⁵⁰ Obviously, it is waiting for a good moment for this, for example, to ensure positive results from the G20.

As far as humanitarian support for Ukraine is concerned, Lula uses the war in Ukraine to once again highlight the ineffectiveness of the UN Security Council, noting that "the invasions of Iraq, Libya, Ukraine and the 'massacre in Gaza' did not go through the Security Council".⁵¹ Nevertheless, Brazil is in no hurry to provide humanitarian support to either Palestinians or Ukrainians: the annual contribution paid by Brazil to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) over the past four years has not changed and amounts to USD 75,000. Officially, the Brazilian government did not provide humanitarian or financial assistance to Ukraine in connection with the full-scale Russian aggression.

⁴⁸ A. Dolomanzhy. "Zelensky spoke about 'warming' in relations with Asia and Latin America". UNIAN, 04.08.2023, <https://www.unian.ua/politics/u-zelenskogo-rozpovili-pro-poteplinnya-u-vidnosinah-z-krajinami-aziji-ta-latinskoji-ameriki-12350394.html> ; Volodymyr Zelenskyy's interview with the Brazilian broadcaster Globo. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSO7Fex8xNE>

⁴⁹ Lula: "Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty is the main theme of the G20". Planalto. 24.07.2024. <https://www.gov.br/planalto/en/latest-news/2024/07/lula-global-alliance-against-hunger-and-poverty-is-the-main-theme-of-the-g20>

⁵⁰ Machado Renato, Lula planeja renegociar dívidas de países da África como trunfo no G20, Folha de S.Paulo, 16.02.2024, <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mundo/2024/02/lula-planeja-renegociar-dividas-de-paises-da-africa-como-trunfo-no-g20.shtml>

⁵¹ Machado Renato Lula compara ação de Israel em Gaza à de Hitler contra judeus. Folha de S.Paulo, 18.02.2024. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mundo/2024/02/lula-compara-acao-de-israel-em-gaza-a-de-hitler-contra-judeus.shtml>

Despite his shocking interview with The Time magazine during his election campaign (May 2022),⁵² in which he shifted the "blame for Russian aggression" to the United States, NATO and Europe, after his inauguration, President Lula did not rush to make decisions on how to deal with Russian aggression, exploring the situation. As for the peace plan, he does not consider the Ukrainian Formula for Peace as a framework for ending the war and renewing the global security system. On the one hand, he aimed to return Brazil to the global arena as an influential player on his own, so he was immediately wary of the Ukrainian initiative. On the other hand, the Ukrainian and Russian visions of the conditions for ending the war are diametrically opposed, which, in his view, puts Brazil in a situation of choosing sides, which Brazilian diplomacy is trying to avoid under any circumstances.

At the end of January 2023, Lula da Silva formulated a proposal for mediation by a group of countries to achieve peace in the war between Russia and Ukraine.⁵³ In April 2023, he took this proposal to China, where he discussed it with Xi Jinping, stressing that China should definitely join the so-called "mediators' club".⁵⁴ Subsequently, the issue of war and peace was handed over to the special adviser to the president, Celso Amorim, who had headed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during Lula da Silva's previous term and who also frequently visited Russia, where he was respected as an influential "left-wing intellectual". In March-May 2023, Amorim paid working visits to Russia and Ukraine (in that order), studying the positions of the parties. The meeting with Putin was only reported by Russian sources a week after the visit, while the atmosphere during the meetings in Ukraine was conveyed by Ukrainian sources. Although Brazil had promised to release this information later, it ultimately did not do so.

The very status of Amorim as a special adviser does not provide for communication with the press, as is the practice for officials, or reporting to legislators (Brazilian parliamentarians paid serious attention to this only in the summer of 2024 in the context of Amorim's "special mission" to Venezuela and are trying to summon him to a special meeting to provide information). Thus, the involvement of such a person in the dialogue with Ukraine is a deliberate step on the part of Lula da Silva, a kind of shield that will protect the president from serious geopolitical consequences.

⁵² Lula Talks to TIME About Ukraine, Bolsonaro, and Brazil's Fragile Democracy. Time (23-30 May, 2022). <https://time.com/6173232/lula-da-silva-transcript/>

⁵³ Lula suggests group of nations to negotiate peace for Ukraine, Russia. Agência Brasil, 31.01.2023. <https://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/en/internacional/noticia/2023-01/lula-suggests-group-nations-negotiate-peace-ukraine-russia>

⁵⁴ Savarese M., Wang Fujiyama E. In China, Lula seeks help to build back Brazilian industry, AP news, 15.04.2023. <https://apnews.com/article/china-brazil-lula-xi-jinping-91c34b4a9fb78f263d6f81f1e9a16f49>

For Ukraine, it is preferable to communicate with Brazil on the issue of Russian aggression through official foreign policy channels rather than resorting to the tools of one-and-a-half track diplomacy, such as a dialogue through the special adviser to the President of Brazil, as Amorim is not impartial on this issue, given his previous contacts with the Russian leadership. Also, it is important for Ukraine and the international community to know the official position of Brazil in order to draw proper conclusions about its real intentions and role on the world stage. Nevertheless, in 2023, this diplomatic tool allowed Brazil and Ukraine to engage in a telephone dialogue (three conversations took place between the head of the Presidential Office of Ukraine, Andriy Yermak, and the adviser to the President of Brazil, Celso Amorim). In addition, in 2023-2024, Amorim took part in four meetings of national security and foreign policy advisers on the principles of peace in Ukraine and the world, held in Denmark, Saudi Arabia, Malta, and Switzerland.

Amorim's activities allowed Brazil to "win" a year to assess the global situation. President Lula suffered certain reputational losses due to his scandalous statements, in which he either accused Ukraine's Western allies of fomenting the war or equally blamed Putin and Zelenskyy for it, or "advised" Ukraine to give up Crimea and the occupied territories, or even claimed that "the world is tired of Russia's war in Ukraine".⁵⁵ These statements were replicated by the global media, which caused additional tension, with the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs being forced to respond. In the end, Brazil's position was outlined by Amorim: "Brazil seeks attainable – rather than perfect – peace".⁵⁶

The year 2023 allowed Brazil to assess the prospects of its "mediation efforts" and step aside, handing the initiative over to China. The Sino-Brazilian "peace plan", which was unveiled during a visit of a large Brazilian delegation to China, appeared in late May 2024. The joint Sino-Brazilian "peace" initiative⁵⁷ actually repeats the provisions of the Ukrainian Peace Formula in terms of updating the principles of the world order but has a fundamental difference in the issue of Ukraine's territorial integrity: the Sino-Brazilian "plan" aims only to "freeze" the conflict, while the Ukrainian side

⁵⁵ Guerre en Ukraine : le porte-parole de la diplomatie ukrainienne dit à Lula qu'elle ne renoncera pas à la Crimée. Le Figaro avec AFP. 07.04.2023. <https://www.lefigaro.fr/international/guerre-en-ukraine-lula-suggere-a-kiev-de-renoncer-a-la-crimee-pour-mettre-fin-au-conflit-20230407?fbclid=IwAR0ttPy-O93I2DlxB9LHMikMq55pV73cwnGpAxxNlfHqXyoDxqJAEODqGCc> ; Lula sees global fatigue over Ukraine as he pushes for peace. Buenos Aires Times. 19.07.2023. <https://www.batimes.com.ar/news/latin-america/lula-sees-global-fatigue-over-ukraine-as-he-pushes-for-peace.phtml>

⁵⁶ Frazão Felipe, Lula fala em 'desescalada' na Ucrânia e defende inclusão da Rússia em negociações de paz, Estadão de S.Paulo, 03.06.2024, <https://www.estadao.com.br/internacional/lula-fala-em-desescalada-na-ucrania-e-defende-inclusao-da-russia-em-negociacoes-de-paz/>

⁵⁷ Brazil and China present joint proposal for peace negotiations with the participation of Russia and Ukraine. Planalto. 23.05.2024. <https://www.gov.br/planalto/en/latest-news/2024/05/brazil-and-china-present-joint-proposal-for-peace-negotiations-with-the-participation-of-russia-and-ukraine>

emphasises the liberation of all the territories of Ukraine occupied and annexed by Russia as the basis for peace negotiations. On 1 August 2024, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that this joint Sino-Brazilian initiative was supported by more than 110 countries,⁵⁸ and in an interview with the influential Brazilian publication *Folha*, Li Hui noted that China cannot force Putin to stop his aggression against Ukraine, but China should work with Brazil to make the UN adopt this "plan" as an official position to bring the parties to the negotiating table.⁵⁹

The timing of the Sino-Brazilian "initiative" was not chosen by chance: it was unveiled on the eve of the Global Peace Summit, which was held in Switzerland in mid-June. China itself did not participate in this forum, while Brazil was represented by its Ambassador to the Swiss Confederation, which did not sign the final communiqué. However, Brazil did not show consistency in complying with the points of the "plan" it had agreed with China, in particular, by violating the provisions on the safety of nuclear facilities. In July 2024, Brazil abstained from voting on the relevant UNGA resolution.

An analysis of Ukraine's efforts with regard to Brazil shows that since the beginning of 2024, it has remained a priority: in January, the Strategy for the Development of Relations between Ukraine and Latin America and the Caribbean, the first in the history of Ukraine's foreign policy, was reported completed, and in May, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented the Communication Strategy "Ukraine - Latin America and the Caribbean". Both documents systematise and streamline activities in Latin America and the Caribbean, taking into account the experience gained, including in relations with Brazil.

A special meeting between President Zelenskyy and the Servant of the People faction in February 2024 provided an incentive to intensify inter-parliamentary diplomacy, including in Latin America. In early April, according to the chairman of the parliamentary foreign affairs committee, groups of friendship with Latin American and Caribbean countries held a meeting to discuss ways to intensify inter-parliamentary diplomacy. It should be recalled that groups of friendship with Ukraine were set up in the new Brazilian parliament in the first months of its work after the 2022 elections: on 2 February 2023 in the lower house, consisting of 12 deputies, and on 23 May in the Senate, consisting of seven people. These groups included deputies from different

⁵⁸ Li Hui, Special Representative of the Chinese Government for Eurasian Affairs, visits Brazil, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 01.08.2024, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/wjdt_674879/sjxw_674887/202408/t20240801_11465024.shtml

⁵⁹ Gielow Igor, China não pode forçar Putin a parar guerra, diz negociador à *Folha*, *Folha de S.Paulo*, 02.08.2024, <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mundo/2024/08/china-nao-pode-forcar-putin-a-parar-querra-diz-negociador-a-folha.shtml>

political forces and regions of Brazil; however, it is noticeable that a significant number of them are deputies from the state of Paraná, the centre of the Ukrainian diaspora.

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine has also been busy with regard to Brazil, with First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy of Ukraine Yulia Svyrydenko acting as Ukraine's negotiator. In particular, a Ukrainian delegation she led met representatives of Brazil on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2024.⁶⁰ In April, she held a video meeting with the Vice President and Minister of Development, Industry, Trade and Services of Brazil, Geraldo José Rodrigues de Alckmin Filho,⁶¹ and in May, a video meeting with the Minister of Labour and Employment, Luiz Marinho.⁶² Brazilian businesses were invited to participate in the International Conference on Ukraine's Recovery, which was scheduled to be held in Berlin in June.

At the beginning of the year, there was interest in reviving cooperation in military-technical matters. In particular, in January 2024, Ukrainian Defence Minister Rustem Umerov held a video call with his Brazilian counterpart, José Múcio Monteiro Filho, to discuss strengthening cooperation and developing defence technologies.⁶³

Over these six months, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine has retained the dynamics of contacts with the Brazilian side. In January 2024, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba spoke with his Brazilian counterpart Mauro Vieira. In June, Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine Iryna Borovets visited Brazil⁶⁴ as part of her tour of Latin America and the Caribbean, where she held a number of meetings, and in early August, she spoke with a Brazilian parliamentary delegation visiting Ukraine⁶⁵. The dialogue also continued at the level of presidential advisers.

This year's G20 summit in Brazil may become a certain challenge for Ukraine due to several circumstances. Firstly, because of the Brazilian President's stated intention to see Russian President Putin at the summit. Secondly, because of expectations that Ukrainian President Zelenskyy may also be invited, although Brazil has not yet

⁶⁰ In Davos, the Ukrainian delegation held meetings with representatives of Asia, Africa, Latin America and Oceania. Office of the President of Ukraine. 15.01.2024.

<https://www.president.gov.ua/news/u-davosi-ukrayinska-delegaciya-provela-zustrichi-z-predstavni-88345>

⁶¹ Ukraine and Brazil plan to increase trade turnover between the countries - the Ministry of Economy. 23.04.2024. <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-economy/3855689-ukraina-ta-brazilia-planuut-zbilsiti-tovaroobig-miz-krainami-mine-ekonomiki.html>

⁶² Ukraine is interested in strengthening economic cooperation with Brazil and cooperation in labour relations. Government portal. 08.05.2024.

<https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/ukraina-zatsikavlena-v-posylenni-ekonomichnoho-spivrobitnytstva-z-brazylieiu-ta-spi-vpratsi-v-sferi-trudovykh-vidnosyn>

⁶³ Rustem Umerov twitter, 10.01.2024, https://twitter.com/rustem_umerov/status/1745132054612693068

⁶⁴ Iryna Borovets paid a working visit to Brazil. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. 13.06.2024.

<https://mfa.gov.ua/news/irina-borovec-zdiisnila-robotnyy-vizit-do-brazyliv>

⁶⁵ Iryna Borovets discussed the intensification of bilateral dialogue with the Brazilian parliamentary delegation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. 08.08.2024.

<https://mfa.gov.ua/news/irina-borovec-obgovorila-aktivizaciyu-dvostoronnoho-dialogu-z-parlamentskovu-delegaciyev-u-brazyliv>

expressed such an intention. However, the Brazilian side has already voiced the most unfavourable scenario for Ukraine: in early July, after the meeting of the G20 "sherpas" in Rio de Janeiro, Lula's special representative Mauricio Lyrio said that Brazil would present a "formula" under which geopolitical issues would be moved beyond the final G20 Declaration and included in a so-called "presidential document", the wording of which is the president's "responsibility", i.e., it does not require approval by the participants.

This year's session of the UN General Assembly may also pose a challenge for Ukraine, given China's stated intention to present the Sino-Brazilian "peace plan" at the meeting. President Zelenskyy has twice since September 2024 publicly criticised this initiative as one that does not provide for a just and sustainable peace, but is a "political icebreaker" in favour of Russia. Earlier, he called the plan a "political statement", "destructive" and the one that is coordinated with the Kremlin, and expressed regret that the Brazilian President was, in fact, engaged in political "appeasement".⁶⁶ On 16 September, Lula da Silva, de facto responding to the statement of the President of Ukraine, but without mentioning it, said that it was "important for Brazil not to participate in the war between Ukraine and Russia".⁶⁷

Obviously, an important task for Ukraine will be to formulate a dialogue with the newly appointed Brazilian Ambassador to Ukraine, Rafael de Mello Vidal, whose term of office began in September 2024. Answering questions at the Brazilian Senate Foreign Relations Committee in July 2024, he outlined his understanding of current geopolitical realities, noting that the world is living in a "second Cold War", but unlike the first one, it is more threatening, as "the parties to the conflict do not have clear ideological differences, but are seeking global economic and political hegemony". He pointed out that the issue of territorial integrity is essential for Ukraine in the negotiation process and added that the current "balance of power" creates opportunities for peace talks.⁶⁸ However, in mid-September, in an interview with the Brazilian newspaper Metr p les, responding to the Ukrainian President's criticism of Brazil's pro-Russian position, he sharply stated that "Brazil is not pro-Russian, Brazil is not pro-Ukrainian, Brazil is for peace". He emphasised that historically, Brazil's position has been one of "neutrality",

⁶⁶ Exclusivo: Zelensky diz ao Metr p les que o governo do Brasil   pr -R ssia. 12.09.2024. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5Fw5o5V31c&ab_channel=Metr%C3%B3p les; A. Kolesnikova. "This is a political icebreaker - Zelenskyy sharply speaks about the peace initiatives of China and Brazil". Channel 24, 21.09.2024, https://24tv.ua/mirniy-plan-kitayu-braziliyi-zelenskiy-vistupiv-iz-kritikoyu_n2646553

⁶⁷ Santos Daniela, Salom o Mateus Lula ap s fala de Zelensky: "Poderia ter conversado antes da guerra". Metr p les. 16.09.2024.

<https://www.metropoles.com/brasil/lula-apos-fala-de-zelensky-poderia-ter-conversado-antes-da-guerra>

⁶⁸ Silva, Cede Ambassadorial nominations advance in Brazilian Senate. The Brazilian Report.10.07.2024. <https://brazilian.report/liveblog/politics-insider/2024/07/10/senate-committee-new-ambassadors/>

which is a way to "help Ukraine".⁶⁹ The diplomat also insisted that Brazil had not "consulted" with Russia on its peace proposal.

Trade and economic cooperation. With the outbreak of full-scale Russian aggression in February 2022, the supply of Ukrainian products to Brazil became more difficult, both because southern Ukraine and its port infrastructure were in the war zone and because of the range of products it supplied. According to the State Statistics Service, exports to Brazil totalled USD 18.4 million in 2022, while imports from Brazil amounted to almost USD 231 million.⁷⁰ At the same time, according to the Observatory of Economic Complexity, Brazilian exports to Ukraine in 2022 amounted to USD 173 million, while Ukrainian exports were USD 47.1 million. In terms of goods, in 2022, Brazil exported special-purpose vehicles (USD 28.5 million), liquid dispersing machines (USD 26.2 million), and ground nuts (USD 9.76 million) to Ukraine. For its part, Ukraine exported to Brazil electric heaters (USD 10.8 million), vaccines, blood, antiserums, toxins and cultures (USD 7.94 million), and packaged medicines (USD 6.71 million).⁷¹ In 2022, Ukraine did not export any services to Brazil.

The results of economic cooperation remained disappointing in 2023. According to the State Customs Service, there was a further decline in trade between the two countries: Ukrainian exports to Brazil totalled only about USD 10 million, while imports amounted to USD 205 million.⁷²

In the first half of 2024, according to the State Statistics Service, Ukrainian exports to Brazil totalled USD 10.2 million, while Brazilian exports to Ukraine reached almost USD 10.4 million.⁷³

⁶⁹ Samuel PanherJunio Silva Exclusivo: embaixador rebate Zelensky e nega que Brasil é pró-Rússia. Metrôpoles.12.09.2024. <https://www.metropoles.com/mundo/governo-brasil-rebate-zelensky-russia>

⁷⁰ Geographical structure of Ukraine's foreign trade in goods in 2022. State Statistics Service of Ukraine. <https://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>

⁷¹ Brazil / Ukraine. The Observatory of Economic Complexity. <https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-country/bra/partner/ukr>

⁷² Geographical structure of Ukraine's foreign trade in goods in 2023. State Statistics Service of Ukraine. <https://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>

⁷³ Geographical structure of Ukraine's foreign trade in goods in H1 2024. State Statistics Service of Ukraine. <https://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This analysis allows us to draw conclusions about the priority of relations with Brazil for Ukraine in the context of a full-scale Russian invasion despite the scandalous statements of the previous and incumbent presidents of this country, as well as the intensification of their cooperation with Russia. From 2014 to 2024, Ukraine and Brazil went from "strategic relations" to "reset"; from the highest levels of trade to a rapid decline with extremely slow recovery; from declarations of commitment to the UN Charter and support for international security to the realities of Russian aggression, with the countries ending up on opposite sides with regard to the issue of territorial integrity and sovereignty. However, Ukraine continues to try to convey to Brazil's ruling elites that the two countries have matching goals in building a sustainable, just peace and renewing the global security system, as well as shared positions on multipolarity in international relations.

In order to develop bilateral relations in the current environment, the Ukrainian authorities and the expert community should:

- Not focus exclusively on the personality of Brazilian President Lula da Silva and his adviser Celso Amorim, their positions, statements, comments, etc., but give them a public assessment, primarily through official diplomatic channels.
- Rely on international law and the support of partners to explain to Brazil the international legal and geopolitical consequences of Putin's invitation to attend the G20 summit Brazil will host in November 2024. One can also recall the historical precedent when, in 2014, after the annexation of Crimea, Putin arrived at the G20 summit in Australia accompanied by Pacific Fleet warships. Obviously, Brazil would like to avoid a similar military provocation and escalation in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Consistently and delicately establish contacts with representatives of the Brazilian opposition, who currently control Congress and are already criticising the foreign policy of the Lula da Silva administration, including the specific role of his adviser.
- Despite the absence of an official reaction from Brazil to the blowing up of the Kakhovka Reservoir dam last June, Ukraine should not give up trying to cooperate on global environmental security issues and, based on Brazil's intention to maintain global leadership in this area, convey the need for closer cooperation, including within the framework of the Ukrainian Peace Formula.

- Despite Brazil's political position of not providing Ukraine with weapons (of its own or foreign production), the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine should seek opportunities to establish official cooperation with its Brazilian counterparts to share the battlefield experience of the Ukrainian army and consider resuming consultations on a programme of cooperation with the Brazilian defence industry. At the very least, we can take into account the fact that Brazil is not giving up its status as a major non-NATO ally of the United States and is also looking for opportunities to implement joint projects for NATO (including cooperation with Portugal in aircraft construction for the needs of the organisation).
- Critically assess Ukraine's production capacities and export opportunities, having previously studied the Brazilian consumer market, in order to provide state support to promising Ukrainian projects in promoting goods and services to local markets.
- Convey that Ukraine has good prospects for Brazilian investment, including in post-war reconstruction, and that Ukraine's geographical proximity to the EU and its potential membership offer good conditions for Brazilian business.
- Establish cooperation with think tanks and universities with a view to holding joint events, including roundtables on the common historical past and the role of the Ukrainian diaspora in the formation of Brazilian statehood, as well as on the prospects for bilateral relations in various fields.
- Identify attempts by Russian propaganda to cause image damage to Ukraine in the Brazilian media space and social media and foil them by engaging NGOs, influencers, etc.

WITH THE FINANCIAL
SUPPORT OF:



INTERNATIONAL
RENAISSANCE
FOUNDATION



Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism"
1 Kotsubynskogo, of. 202, Kyiv, Ukraine
www.prismua.org
info@prismua.org