

ABSTRACT

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Title: Brazilian Policy Towards the Palestinian Issues During the Lula Period

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The Middle East in general and the Arab region are important strategic area for global powers since the ancient times. Its importance relates to its geographical location, which links the various continents and controls important straits. In addition, the availability of natural resources in the region has increased its importance. This has attracted the attention of the super powers.

The Brazilian foreign policy makers consider the Arab region as one of great interest since the last two decades; Brazil opened its foreign policy to the Arab World during the tenure of President Lula. The opening of foreign policy took different forms such as economic relations connected with political interest at high levels. Brazil took up a campaign on behalf of Latin American countries to recognize the State of Palestine based on 1967 borders.

On this basis, the argument to be defended by the research comes from the fact that Brazil's relationship with Palestine was not governed by external interests, but was governed by the moral principles that the Brazilian Republic believes in, and had been focused on by the Brazilian Constitution. It is true that Brazil's foreign policy is governed by Brazil's own interests, which are based on participation in regional alliances and expansion of its economic activities with the aim of making an enhanced role of Brazil among the countries of the world.

The reason why I choose to work on this area is because I am a Palestinian, married to a Brazilian woman, who familiarizes me with the developments of the Brazilian political and economic life, in addition to my extended family in Brazil. Moreover, I witnessed the importance of the role of Brazilian leadership in the Middle East during the era of President Lula, when I was serving in Ramallah. Unfortunately, that era has not been researched upon and studied about adequately in Brazil and Palestine, in a way commensurate with its importance.

The gravity of the topic and lack of research in the area together worked as motivational force for the current research. Moreover, the Palestinian issue occupied an important space in the foreign policies of Brazil in the last two decades.

The study consists of six parts: Introduction, four main chapters and Conclusion. The introduction includes a short summary prepared as a background for the whole research. An endeavor has been made to highlight the significance of this research. It includes the following parts: the background study, research methodology, objectives, research questions and hypotheses. It concludes with the structure of the work.

Chapter I, *Foundations of Brazil's Foreign Policy towards Palestinian Issues*, discusses six foundations on which the Brazilian foreign policy was established in its interactions and international relations. The foundations are: upgrading the position of Brazil in the international arena, the reformation of the UN, especially the SC, South-South Cooperation, solidarity and humanitarian aid, Brazil's constitution of 1988, and finally the enhancement of human rights. Chapter II, titled, *Brazilian Foreign Policy until 2002*, discusses the historical background of foreign policy towards the Palestinian cause until 2002. It discusses three different periods where the foreign policy of Brazil followed a different policy in each period depending on its interests; it analyzes Lula's personality, then deals with the stand of the PT toward the Palestinian issue and then discusses the PT Program and Conferences.

Chapter III, *First Presidential Period: 2003 - 2006*, discusses and analyzes the circumstances that accompanied the arrival of the PT to power in Brazil, and its impact on the Palestinian cause. It then discusses the Brazilian views toward Middle East and its reinforcing relationships. The end of the chapter deals with the ASPA Summit and its role in Brazil's engagement in the Middle East.

Chapter IV, *the Second Presidential Period 2007 – 2010*, deals with the Brazilian proposals to end the conflict in the Middle East. Then, it discusses the Brazilian recognition of an independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its Capital.

The thesis concludes with the conclusions which include summary of major research findings. It also includes recommendations for the scholars and the Palestinian leadership; it must adopt the proposal of President Lula regarding the convening of an international peace conference and insists on the return of the Palestinian issue to the UN.