

TRANSCRIPT

"BRAZIL, FOREIGN POLICY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS"

A Conversation With Pedro Abramovay and Lucia Nader

Interviewers: Heloisa Griggs And Maria Teresa Rojas

ANNOUNCER:

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HELOISA GRIGGS:

Welcome, everyone, to the second (CLEAR THROAT)-- event in-- the Brazil series, which is a jointly sponsored series between the Fellowship Program's Ideas Initiative and the Latin America Program-- (CLEAR THROAT) following on-- the last Ideas Initiative on India. Which was last year?

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

And earlier this year, too.

HELOISA GRIGGS:

And earlier this year. We had our first event on Brazil-- in August around the protest. And this is our second event looking at foreign policy. (CLEAR THROAT) And the series will be going on-- later this year and early next year. I'm gonna-- for the format today, I'm gonna do a very brief intro of Lucia Nader, who many of you know well.

And also an introduction for our new regional director Pedro, who many of you have

met. And some haven't yet but will be meeting soon, I'm sure. And then Lucia's (CLEAR THROAT) gonna do a short presentation (UNINTEL PHRASE) remarks. Pedro's gonna comment on that presentation. And then we'll just open for questions and discussion.

A quick bio for those who don't know Lucia, where's the director of Conectas-- which is an organization that was I think very prescient in starting to look at influencing foreign policy issues in Brazil-- with-- with a particular human rights focus. And Lucia (CLEAR THROAT) built and managed the foreign policy work of that organization before becoming director. So has a long-standing experience in this area.

Pedro, our new director who started last week, (LAUGHTER) is-- come-- comes-- comes to us with-- many years of experience in Brazil's Ministry of Justice, having served in a number of key posts-- (CLEAR THROAT) between 2004 and 2011. And most recently was a professor at the Fundação Getulio Vargas Law School in Rio. As well as campaign director for Avaaz-- working on a series of corruption and human rights issues in Latin America as campaign director. Welcome to you both.

LUCIA NADER:

Thank you.

HELOISA GRIGGS:

And I'll Lucia get started. (CLEAR THROAT)

LUCIA NADER:

Perfect. So hi, everyone. Thank you. Good to-- thanks for coming. (LAUGH) It's a pleasure to be speaking here-- as O.S.F. is-- one of our main partners and-- donor but mostly partner, to think through such different-- activities (CLEAR THROAT) like how can we mon-- monitor Brazil's foreign policy and emerging powers role in the international sphere?

So-- so many, many thanks. I see Jerry Fowler is there as well. Jerry has been-- hi, Jerry. (LAUGHTER) Jerry has been one of the main supporters of this work. And I would like to thank him and the Latin American program. Now with Pedro-- old friend-- (UNINTEL) hi, Pedr-- (COUGH) for-- for this invitation.

But mostly for all the long-term and standing support you have been giving to-- to Conectas and to this foreign policy work. Very, very briefly, Conectas was created in 2001. So we have been working (COUGH) for the last-- 12 years. We started with a project. One of our main goals at the beginning was to connect. (COUGH) And Jill's working in the global in the Global South with human rights. So to strengthen

South-South cooperation among human rights groups working in new democracies or-- I mean-- with human rights.

Today, we have two other areas. One is to strengthen emerging powers'-- role in the international human rights protection. And also to work at the national level with some pressing issues in Brazil such as the criminal justice (CLEAR THROAT) system. And also some other emblematic human rights cases at the supreme court and police violence. We-- we have been diversifying international work in the last years.

But Conectas was born with this international D.N.A. of connecting the-- the south. And this (CLEAR THROAT) ten years, 11 years ago was something new to be created and based in the south doing an international work. You know, this was mainly what-- N.G.O.s based in New York-- based in the U.S. and Europe were doing. But not really an N.G.O. with the-- the compass that is our logo pointing to the south.

Regarding the-- the foreign policy of Brazil. What we-- the main-- basis of our work with foreign policy that started seven, eight years ago is that emerging powers (CLEAR THROAT) could-- especially Brazil, could play a better and a stronger role in international-- protection of human rights.

And one of the key factors for this to happen is for them to be more accountable at home about this policy that they de-- de-- develop abroad about the foreign policy. So to say it very-- very-- in a very simple way, is to deal with foreign policy at the national level in a more similar way we do with any public policy in a democracy.

To have a more transparent budget. To have a more transparent modus operandi. To-- to be accountable, to have a role for the Congress that in Brazil doesn't have the role of the Congress that you have in international affairs. To have eventually a role for the judiciary and foreign policy. How we could check and balance the role of the executive that is the big power in foreign policy in Brazil. (CLEAR THROAT)

So this is the main assumption. You know, if we have more (UNINTEL) society groups and citizens paying more attention to what Brazil is doing abroad when it comes to human rights. And by this I mean how Brazil is voting at the U.N. and how are Brazilian companies behaving in Angola? This could be-- a key factor for Brazil to be a more responsible international player. And this would be key for the international human rights protection to be more effective with all the problems that we know this has today. Just, I mean, looking at Syria now.

What is the legal framework for this work? The Article IV of the Brazilian Constitution, it states ten principles that should guide Brazil's international relations. And the second of it-- thank you. The second of it is the prevalence of human rights. The first is sovereignty, and we never mention it. (LAUGHTER)

So-- and (UNINTEL PHRASE) determination. Sorry. But the second of it is how human rights should prevail. And sometimes we disagree how-- how to work for them to prevail or not. But this-- this is so-- we have a legal basis for our work. (KNOCKING) So when needed, even if I'm not a lawyer, but when needed, we go to the Constitution and we say, "Be careful. The way you voted regarding North Korea

at the U.N. is not in alignment with the Article IV of the Constitution."

We did this. They were mad with us. The judiciary questioned them. The Ministero Publico is one branch of the judiciary, to be simple. Not really but it could be. And with the-- (RUSTLING) in addition to the legal framework, there is a long history of Brazil believing in multilateralism. Brazil creating one of the-- the countries that was there when the U.N. was created.

Brazil wanting to be an honest broker and putting people (CLEAR THROAT) to sit together to dialogue. This-- was really strengthened with Lula that in my opinion did a great work in international-- relations. Also with-- I mean, I will-- I will say what I think. It was not that good. But, you know, Braz-- Lula traveling all over the world and shaking hands with dictators or not-- and trying to be an honest broker. Or to-- to find a new way, a Brazilian touch, to international human rights protection. And this (UNINTEL PHRASE) the new president-- the current president is not that strong.

Having been said that, this is the framework. Both historical and legal framework of it. But what-- every single time we meet with any official of the Brazilian government-- we have four arguments that appear on the table. And we-- we discuss every single meeting is-- is really a glo-- the glossary of the meetings. (LAUGH)

One is it doesn't matter if you're talkin' about Iran. If you are talking about Syria. Or if you are talking about Venezuela. Or about Paraguay or about, I mean, doesn't matter if it's a democracy. It's not-- the first argument that (CLEAR THROAT) it's-- on the table is Brazil believes that the international system is selective. And is not dealing with Bahrain as it dealing with Israel. And is-- is dealing with Guantanamo.

And as is dealing-- so is shame-- is-- is putting all the time in-- seven countries on the table. But not really-- not you-- really not fair. And non-selective way. The second argument is that-- the Brazilian government doesn't believe that naming and shaming is the best strategy to protect human rights. And they don't like to name and shame. Brazil likes to abstain (LAUGHTER), basically. But-- what they put on the table-- and then we have the track-- the vote tracking (CLEAR THROAT) of Brazil, it's really a country that abstains a lot. But Brazil puts on the table that corporation and dialogue is better than name and shame.

Third argument that for any kind of human rights resolution of the U.N. Human Rights Council to work, there is a need for regional support. So if we are talking about Sudan, we need South Africa on board. If we're talk-- and the fourth argument is that economic and social rights should have the same value (CLEAR THROAT) that city and political rights. It's impossible to say that these four arguments are wrong. I truly believe that the system is selective. I truly believe that name and shame is not enough. (KNOCKING) And I truly agree that regional cooperation is good and economic and social rights are important.

The problem is that is half glass full, half empty, no? Do-- (LAUGHTER) empty, full. So the other part of it, what we see is to what stand you denounce selectivity but you also practice it. For instance, Brazil has nev-- has never abstained in condemning Israel. What I think is great, by the way. (CLEAR THROAT) But how do you-- you

know, how-- what is Brazil doing to combat selectivity? Not only saying that the U.S. and Europe is selective.

Name and shame. Is there anything between naming and shaming and giving a blank check? You know, how do you measure if corporation and dialogue are having effect? Regional support, how many times I was in Geneva and I had some countries like (UNINTEL), Ghana or Zambia coming to us and saying, "Please convince Brazil to vote that way because then we can face South Africa." So it's a bit weird to think that one whole country will vote. You know, like-- this-- this regional support at the end become-- (FOREIGN LANGUAGE).

HELOISA GRIGGS:

Hostage.

LUCIA NADER:

He become hostage of the regional powers. You know, when (CLEAR THROAT) per-- perhaps Ghana and Zambia would support a resolution on Sudan but will not if South Africa is there pressing them. And Brazil could play a role. And economic and social rights, for sure they're important.

But they cannot be s-- used also as an excuse to violate other rights and-- and things like this. So again, I firmly believe that Brazil is right in putting this for argument on the table. And is being courageous to do so. And Lula-- (UNINTEL PHRASE) he did this bravely.

Another-- what is happening now with-- the change of Lula to Rousseff? I believe personally that Brazil is still an important player, even if the economy gives-- 14 page report (CLEAR THROAT) that month about Brazil. (LAUGHTER) And it's funny because the coverage of the economy here, it's-- the-- the economy is this one. And in s-- in Latin America, it's the-- the Christ from Rio de Janeiro going down to the floor. I mean, the--

HELOISA GRIGGS:

Crashing and burning.

LUCIA NADER:

It's a different one. Yeah. (LAUGHTER) Because there was a-- there was a coverage of the economies that-- some years ago was the Christ taking o-- you know, like, taking rock--

HELOISA GRIGGS:

Like a rocket going up.

LUCIA NADER:

Yeah, a rocket. And now he's the Christ going down. (LAUGHTER) I mean, but okay. And-- I think Brazil still plays a very important role and could play a very important role. But Rousseff wants to be much less protagonist at the international (UNINTEL) than Lula wanted.

And this has changed the way we deal with the government. The way the government behaves at the U.N. What is the priority for the government there. And how we can b-- and I think-- and I-- oh-- I was talking with Pedro about this and Heloisa. I think-- is it only an issue of the profile (?) of Rousseff?

I think there is an issue of her profile and put things in economic development first. And the way she's a big manager of the government and-- and control things. But there is also I think that the way that Lula was dealing and (UNINTEL PHRASE) somebody in the Minis-- the Prime Minister was dealing with foreign policy was at the end-- at its limit.

You know, Brazil was-- needed a new step on forgot policy. To be very concrete, we felt that, you know, Brazil was more or less a teenager. And now needs to go to adult phase. A concrete example of this is Brazil came and put on the-- on the U.N. agenda the concept of responsibility. Why protecting, you know, position to the-- in a position oh-- in addition to the responsibility to protect concept.

But they throw it there. And it's been, like, three years. And there is no substance to it. Like, you know, there's a-- this teenager very good on marketing. Very good on a good slogan. And very good on-- on-- on having a force fight with our full government.

But when he say, "Okay, but how concretely do you put this in place?" And, oh, no, this, you know, we cannot-- we are not that powerful. So it's powerful but it's not. And how do you deal with this? And I think this is-- Rousseff is now having to deal with this. If it was not her-- (CLEAR THROAT) another person will have to deal with this growing pain of an emerging power at the international level. Just-- very quick word about-- so what should we do?

I mean, the U.N. is in crisis. Let's say like this. If it-- I mean, (LAUGH) and for-- for a long time. But-- I mean, now is in a serial-- legitimacy crisis. We see that the emerging powers, some of them are not really emerging that strongly as we-- we were thinking. And new coalitions are appearing. So not that new in date. Like, BRICS, IBSA or (UNINTEL PHRASE).

But human rights are starting to be the agenda of this coalition such as BRICS and-- and IBSA. And-- the-- the rules for city society to participate in these coalitions and how human rights (CLEAR THROAT) will it's dealt with by these coalitions are -- is--

are not-- not clear.

We know how to work with the U.N. We know that. But we don't know how to be present in a IBSA summit. By the way, we went and I forgot-- this is one of the-- the things we did. For instance, in the BRICS sum-- we went to the BRICS summit in South Africa. And we launched a campaign at the national level saying this is the-- I mean, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs. (COUGH)

Say, "Minister, I want to know--" you know, and asking him. And the other one is a campaign we launched asking the presidents of the BRICS to say something on Syria. To say something about arm control. To say something about financing. And we did this together with all the groups in other countries. And it's always a challenge. We led this campaign to try to pressure Brazil by building a constituency and a public campaign around it to do so.

And we were successful the (UNINTEL PHRASE) Conectas was succ-- responsible for this. But Syria was on the final document here. So-- we think we had some influence. We don't know exactly what influence. Now we-- we will have a new bank-- BRICS bank. I don't know if you heard about it. This week there is a big fight that China wants to invest the first investment \$50 billion. Billions. (UNINTEL PHRASE). Billion-- billion dollars. And Brazil is saying that-- it's too much because Brazil can only put five at the moment. So they are-- the-- the power dynamics are already (UNINTEL PHRASE). But more than this, will this bank have (CLEAR THROAT) human rights safeguards?

How will the loans be done? Because the national bank-- the Brazilian National Bank for Development is giving today three times more loans than the World Bank. (CLEAR THROAT) And they'll have human rights safeguards. So this is also an emerging power issue. How public money finance the private sector of this emerging companies (LAUGH) to act abroad. And how we can deal with this in a BRICS and IBSA context. Finally, to end, I would say the for-- Conectas has four main strategies to try to tackle-- foreign policy issues.

One is gathering information. So it's a big issue for us, for instance, to know how Brazil is voting at the U.N. because this is not in Portuguese. This is not disseminated widely. So we publish every year a yearbook about how Brazil votes at the U.N. and Brazil behaves at the U.N. in Portuguese.

And this-- so information gathering in several levels is key for Conectas. And to put this in-- in our website to give people the-- the-- the information they need (SIRENS) to do work on forgot policy. The second one is working with others. Conectas really believe in the-- it's in the name, Conectas-- to work with other groups, to network and to be able to do it in a diverse way.

So we work with Human Rights and Amnesty and we work at the national level. We are the executive secretary (CLEAR THROAT) of a coalition working with foreign policy, for instance. So we really try not to do it alone, as we believe (NOISE) ma-- it's important to have a diverse (UNINTEL PHRASE) voices and organizations including different stra-- strategy sometimes on the table.

Third, advocacy. Pure advocacy such as these kind of things. Meeting with-- the government. (SIRENS) Yesterday we published an article-- on Sunday, we published an article in one of the-- the big Brazilian newspaper about Brazil aid to Syria.

So bet-- among the ten first economic powers in the world, Brazil was the last one on aid to Syria. And we mention is-- it gave 5,000 U.S. to the-- in the last month. And then we took this number from the U.N. website and yesterday the M.F.A. released the public notes quoting Conectas and saying we are completely wrong because a goo-- the right number is that.

And we have been using the access to information a lot to have this number. It's been six months and we-- of course, we used the U.N. number and now they are mad with us. So-- and there was a g-- we knew through gossip that maybe this was a wrong number but a gossip is a gossip. (LAUGHTER) And finally, check and balances. So really we try to foster the Congress engagement with foreign policy. And Pedro and Heloisa can-- can tell-- can tell this as well.

Sometimes we regret. I mean, oh, my God, why we are trying to put the Congress on this. Because the Congress d-- really doesn't know a lot about foreign policy.

(COUGH) Every single meeting you go to try to bring human rights (CLEAR THROAT) and foreign policy to the table, we hear from the Congressman that we have to save the Amazon. You know, it's-- (LAUGHTER) and-- and how do you deal with this kind of-- you know, somehow-- putting the Congress in a good quality on-- on the table to-- to balance what the executive is doing?

I mean, I stop here. But-- I would say that-- as-- both an advocacy player and a grantee, I think Open Society should continue to support the work with foreign policy in emerging powers. I know it's always a big-- contradiction because we still have prisons like this. And we have an image of the-- abroad of the World Cup and (UNINTEL PHRASE).

So how do you deal-- how do you balance? And this is a daily struggle for Conectas. How do you balance international work and national work? We had this huge protest in June in Brazil. Do you imagine talking about Syria (CLEAR THROAT) when millions of people are on the street? (MAKES NOISE) You know, like, who cares?

So how do you-- how do you balance this? And I would say that-- the support of Open Society financially and with knowledge with strategy and thinking together, it's key for-- emerging power. For organizations based in emerging power to continue to do this work. Very few groups are doing so-- today. We are working with some groups in India and South Africa now more closely. And a long-term support from O.S.F., it's really crucial for this-- both at the knowledge and-- and financial level. Thank you.

HELOISA GRIGGS:

Pedro?

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

Well-- thank you for (LAUGH)-- for (CLEAR THROAT) inviting me. (LAUGH) For-- (HELOISA GRIGGS: UNINTEL)

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

--for this. And-- it's-- it's really great to-- to talk to (UNINTEL PHRASE) of Lucia. Who's a very good friend and-- I mean, I've been admiring what he's-- what-- what she's doing in Brazil on-- on forgot policy a lot. And she's much more-- than me. And spec-- a specialist on-- on-- on this issue.

So-- I'd like to comment-- I mean, a little bit of this-- panorama that she-- she gave us. And-- talk about three episodes that I think is-- are-- are-- are key to understand what is happening with our Brazilian forgot policy. Recent episodes. So-- first commenting the panorama. I think there is-- I mean, this idea of Brazil having an autonomous-- forgot policy. I mean, independent from-- the biggest powers.

This was an-- an-- again, it's naming and shaming. This was built long time-- long time ago. And-- it was used by-- Brazil-- several times during the dictatorship as a way to hide its own-- problems on-- on human rights. And what I think is different-- since-- Cardosa's government, in fact, is that Brazil build an-- a new-- speech, still believing in economy. Still believing in corporation. But now-- with openness to-- to discuss its own problems. I mean, when I was in-- in government, I'm-- I-- I-- I went to peer reviews in Geneva. The--

(LUCIA NADER: UNINTEL)

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

Human Rights Commission in-- in-- in Geneva. And-- at the U.N. And, I mean, the instructions we-- we had is that we should talk clearly and-- address our problems clearly. So-- it wasn't-- I think what is different-- in Brazil from other countries that also have this speech of autonomy and not naming and shaming, at this-- that-- that this is not something to hide its own-- problem.

I think this is new on the-- the-- the international-- scenario to have the-- the independent-- speech. But not-- something to hide its own problem. But-- I think clearly I-- I agree with-- with-- Lucia that we are-- I mean-- what happened with-- Lula was a very, very special and unique-- moment in Brazilian-- foreign policy. And I think it's a combination of-- what-- using Machiavelli of-- Fortuna and-- virtue.

I think it's-- Brazil was a country that was-- growing 7.5% a year in-- context throughout the world-- were-- in recession. Brazil was maybe-- were-- was-- the-- the-- the-- the strongest-- maybe is still strongest-- democracy in-- among emergent or among the BRICS, at least. I mean, really strong democracy-- that-- have

a voice in the international-- debate.

From the south, this was something new. And-- virtue-- I mean, the-- so there was this context that were unique-- economic-- un-- at least-- unique context-- some years ago. But there-- there was also Lula. I mean, this is-- this is a virtue in the sense that you don't have-- a charismatic president-- this charismatic-- (UNINTEL PHRASE).

And-- and his interest on foreign policy and the way that-- his charisma and his-- personality could open space to Brazil at the-- global debate was something that, I mean-- this matters. (LAUGH) This-- personal-- image and-- and-- and charisma, this matters. And-- and-- I think some episodes-- help-- to-- to reshape-- what could be seen as, you know, this Brazil as a new really-- and then new-- global leader from the south. I think the first episode was-- the-- the Iran-- negotiation.

So, I mean, from the Brazilian perspective what happened and you have some evidence. But-- also I'm talking-- I've-- I've-- lived-- I'm not talkin' this as an academic. But I've lived this-- inside from-- inside the government. So-- what happened-- is that Brazil receives-- I mean, at the time it was secret. Now it-- it got public.

But received-- a letter from President Obama asking Brazil to be engaged in the negotiations-- President Ahmadinejad to get a deal on-- nuclear-- their nuclear production. And they more or less-- s-- in this letter was more or less said-- what-- a good agreement-- could be.

And Lula-- I mean, went-- with-- this-- you know, this idea that he was this new global leader from the south. And-- get-- together with Aragon (PH), (CLEAR THROAT) they-- they build this-- agreement. And the agreement they had at the end-- was-- I mean, say exactly what (LAUGH) was proposed by United States some months before. Of course, this was-- some months later. And-- and it was just-- some weeks before the-- the-- the-- U.N. meeting. The-- on-- on sanctions-- for-- for Iran.

And-- what happened-- is that the U.S. absolutely unrecognized the-- the agreement. And-- and the sanctions were approved just after. And-- and this was really hard for-- for (KNOCKING) Lula as-- view on the possibilities to-- to be-- a broken good faith. I mean, this-- so this was maybe the-- the biggest step on the hard (LAUGH) gain-- international know-- gain. And it was like a-- big deception to say, "Well, no, you cannot be-- a good-- a broken good faith because you-- when you are gain to the-- in this si-- this way, you can have, you know, this kind of response for-- United States and other-- powerful countries."

So I think this was the beginning of-- the retreat of Brazil of this-- of the-- the Brazilian leadership in-- in this. But then there was-- Rousseff's-- election. And she-- she has a complete different pro-- profile. I mean, she has-- (CLEAR THROAT) good-- qualities. But one of them is not charisma. I mean, (LAUGH) she's not charismatic (LAUGHTER) at all.

And-- and it's not-- and-- and she's not (CLEAR THROAT) interested in-- in foreign

policy. This is something clear to everyone who works with them. Her-- he-- she-- she-- they didn't have the relationship with her forgot pol-- foreign minister w-- foreign policy minister that Lula had with-- Celso Amorim. It was a completely-- different situation. And at the beginning of her eco-- government, there is another episode that I think is key to understand where Brazil stands now at-- with-- foreign policy. That is-- the International Human Rights (COUGH) Commission decision or on-- on Belo Monte that is this plant-- hydro-electrical-- plant that was-- that is being built in-- in the Amazon.

And this decision-- there is a provisional decision-- not really strong. But-- with a strong-- language. But the reaction-- so they-- they asked Brazil to stop the works-- in-- in Belo Monte. But the answer for Brazil was so unproportional-- disproportional. (CLEAR THROAT) Brazil-- called back and still we don't have-- an ambassador to O.E.S. Brazil called back the ambassador and still Brazil doesn't have-- it's been how many-- how long-- Lucia, two years, this?

LUCIA NADER:

One year and a half, two years. Yeah.

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

One year and a half. And still Brazil doesn't have an ambassador-- at--O.E.S. 'Cause-- because Belo Monte is Dilma's personal project, she is-- committed with this-- since she was minister from-- energy. So she took it on personal and her reaction.

So she's-- she's not really interested on-- on-- on foreign policy but she's really reactive. I mean, she-- when something is-- she-- she doesn't agree, she'll take this kind of reaction. And-- she was-- I mean, the advice that she received for her-- foreign-- foreign after minister or human rights minister was-- not to deal-- this way.

But she said, "No, this is-- question of honor. (CLEAR THROAT) And we have to be tough with them in this case." And so she had this-- this answer. (KNOCKING) After that, the-- the other episode that-- I mean-- (CLEAR THROAT) also reveals the kind of reaction that she-- she can have is the N.S.A. episode-- where-- (COUGH) I mean-- it was published that-- United States-- have and now Canada-- also have-- spied-- Dilma herself and her advisors.

And then it was also-- and-- and Petrobras and really economic sense-- sensitive-- information Brazil. And her reaction was very, I mean, so-- very strong on not coming-- to the U.S. So she was in this-- a state visit that-- she would do this year. So I think-- but, again, not planning as a-- as a more broad-- foreign policy vision. But more reactive and saying, "Well, no, we are not accepting that."

So what I see now-- to Brazil is-- I mean, if you don't take this-- I mean, episodes (KNOCKING) where Brazil can-- will try to have a strong voice-- (CLEAR THROAT) Brazil is not-- claiming-- the kind of role that it can have. That-- Brazil can have at

the international level-- (CLEAR THROAT) because-- mostly because-- I think the president doesn't feel this is important for-- for her-- agenda for-- Brazilian agenda.

So this is-- so what happened is-- if-- as Lucia said, Brazil was this teenager trying to have-- a voice-- before with Lula that got-- that-- have got-- some deceptions, for example, in the-- Iran case. I think-- now-- Brazil-- (UNINTEL) in the international debate is clear under-- I mean, under-- used. I think-- Brazil-- has still-- a unique-- possibility of-- being a democracy. A strong democracy with a strong instruction. And strong commitments with-- human rights (CLEAR THROAT) at the internal level.

But at the same time-- a break, a country that can be-- I mean, that-- that had-- can be a strong voice and-- in G-20 and-- the U.N. So I think-- at the moment I agree with Lucia that-- it's important to-- to make the international-- and the foreign policy an internal agenda to have accountability on that. Because I think-- the international debate and-- the-- the-- human rights debate at the international level needs a country like Brazil-- being much-- stronger at the public debate that-- what we are having.

HELOISA GRIGGS:

Thanks, Pedro and Lucia. I'm gonna use my-- moderator privileges (LAUGH) to ask the first question. And then-- (LAUGHTER) open up to folks. And I'm gonna try to-- pay attention and balance between D.C. and-- (CLEAR THROAT) and New York in terms of questions.

But my first question to both of you is to what extent does the broader public and then more specifically civil-- other s-- civil society organizations beyond Conectas care and engage on foreign policy questions in Brazil? What are the main obstacles to kinda such le-- engagement or-- or interest-- on these issues? And has this changed at all in the ten plus years that Conectas has been working-- on this issue?

LUCIA NADER:

Should we set?

HELOISA GRIGGS:

Sure. (LAUGHTER)

LUCIA NADER:

So-- I think-- I mean, and these are only feelings because we don't have a lot of good surveys or polls on what Brazil-- the Brazilian population in general wants Brazil to

do at the international level. I mean, we don't-- 'cause there's no culture of talking about foreign policy still. My perception is that the broader public doesn't care. And I understand, by the way, you know. (LAUGH) I-- I mean-- who-- it-- it's difficult to-- to care about what's going on in Iran if you still have so many national issues to deal with. If-- you know, if something new, if Brazil is still trying to be-- to-- trying to understand that we are now-- could be now a global player.

What is this? Well, the broader public in general, I think they don't-- they don't care too much. And this is-- in the academ-- in the academic world, there are some researchers that are-- have very-- very good quality research. And papers on-- foreign policy. But is it still also incipient?

We don't have-- I don't know if Pedro agrees-- with this or not. (CLEAR THROAT) But we don't have very good think tanks thinking about the issues. So this is a big issue because I-- I mean, when I come to speak about Brazil abroad, normally I read things in English for just abroad.

And I don't think this is a problem per se. I don't think all they are biased because they are in English. (CLEAR THROAT) Some of them are, some of them are not, as if they were in Portuguese as well. But there is not a lot of reflection and academic production and think tanks. And the general public, this one's in the-- the Power Point picture in the center of Sao Paulo.

I don't know what they would think. And we have the feeling-- we thought about, and we discussed this a lot with-- with Jerry Fowler, about doing a poll and a public research of-- of-- this. And survey. (CLEAR THROAT) And we fear about the results. You know, it's (LAUGHTER) the same about asking Brazilians, "Are you in favor of-- that penalty?" (LAUGHTER) I mean, yeah.

So-- how do you ask this becau-- because I think that's some. And we see this from N.G.O.s we work with that are really good N.G.O.s. That-- some of them, they support position-- some positions of Brazil that we don't. You know, they think like-- they-- they really have this ideology of the south against the north in-- perhaps-- I think some of this criticism is really important. (CLEAR THROAT) But in perhaps some-- over-estimated way. Regarding organizations, and-- and I started already to-- to talk about this.

I think in the last year-- I think that-- some organizations in Brazil historically and before Conectas played a role in international-- (SIRENS) arenas such as in the environment. In the-- in the other field. But the human rights group-- they were not playing-- a big role at the U.N. or O.E.S. or-- or in monetary-- at home how the-- the M.F.A. was behaving ad-- and building its policy. And the other ministries. (SIRENS) Now I think it's (COUGH) improved. But there is a big-- there-- there is a crisis of the human rights groups now in Brazil. (SIRENS) And it's also related to a financial crisis of-- some international donors leaving the countries. Some way of giving of the-- the Brazilian government to N.G.O.s changing also. And not having a national philanthropy. (SIREN)

So-- the human rights groups are a bit in a crisis. And this is a bit-- a luxury to work

with international (UNINTEL PHRASE). I have to think and I-- (LAUGH) I mean, I-- that Conectas-- work with this foster other in-- in-- N.G.O.s engagement.

We created a coalition that-- today 13 organizations are part of. And we ran, like, the-- produce information every single day for them. We send this to them. We convene meetings to discuss this. But there is-- still a long, long way to go.

(JERRY: UNINTEL)

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

No, I-- I-- I agree with Lucia that-- that-- I mean, it's not really important for the broader public opinion in Brazil. Although I think the image of-- you know, being tough. The U.S. and everything can count. I mean, it's something that-- it-- it's be-- it's-- it's seen as positive.

You know, oh, Dilma-- (LAUGH) she should really be tough with the U.S. or (UNINTEL PHRASE) they are spying us. You know, this-- but-- in terms of-- I think-- one thing you touch is the-- the lack of-- think tanks-- on this in Brazil. I think it's-- doing Lula's govern, there were-- there was a little bit of reflection.

But I-- I remember once when I was at Avaaz. And people just-- asked me-- "I mean, who-- who is thinking-- foreign policy now in Brazilian government?" I said, "Oh, a good question." (CLEAR THROAT) And-- and I begin to talk to people at the government really, you know, people really close to the president and everything.

And-- I think the answer is nobody. I mean (CLEAR THROAT) there is nobody really producing. And of course they're doing foreign policy. There is a lot of-- agendas on the table. But there's no-- one really formulating and having a long-term agenda and thinking and discussing that-- for-- for-- Brazil right now.

Which is-- I mean, during Lula's government we had a little bit of that. There was key people that-- I mean, could be influenced. And-- that were-- or could influence the-- the internal debate. I think now, it's-- it's really unclear. And I think-- it's also because we don't have this-- tradition-- in Brazil to-- to take-- foreign policy as something, you know, serious.

And-- so-- I mean, to-- to-- to debate it more, to-- to have more people formulating what-- the consequences of-- our-- (CLEAR THROAT) our foreign policy. Or what are the goals of our foreign policy, I think this is (CLEAR THROAT) something that-- it's really important for Brazil now.

MARIA TERESA ROJAS:

Well, thank you both again for your comments. This is Maria Teresa Rojas. I'm-- the director of the International Migration Initiative here at O.S.F. So therefore I wanted to-- to, like, bring up migration within the context of-- of foreign policy and the role of Brazil. Certainly migration, first and foremost, everybody think of it.

And-- and the-- the starting point is as national policy. And I know, Pedro, you have had a hand in-- in shaping some of that-- in Brazil. But I'm much more interested in-- in your thoughts. And finding out w-- how much opening there might be-- in the administration. The current-- administration about migra-- the role Brazil plays regionally and also even world-wide in terms of as an emerging economy and a country-- that is, of course, now-- attractive to-- for-- (CLEAR THROAT) to migration.

Again, not just within the-- the context of what it-- it means t-- to Brazil. But what Brazil's-- w-- what we fear in the migration world often is-- the proliferation of bad practices and bad laws and that-- we wanna be a kind-- ahead of the game there. And-- and-- a tar-- target possibly Brazil in the future-- to engage with it in terms of-- it also having a voice on migration-- at the global level.

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

Yes. I'd-- I'd like to-- to-- to-- to hear-- Lucia on Haiti. And the-- the-- the-- crisis we had-- with-- Haitians in-- in-- in Brazil. But on-- on a more-- general-- perspective, I think-- migration-- I mean, taking aside this specific case of Hai-- Haitians in-- in Brazil. Mi-- migration is-- is not-- is not part of the political agenda in Brazil now. And-- I think it will be soon. I mean, it's-- it's not something in-- that is-- discussed in-- for-- for elections or-- you know, it's not a political issue. (CLEAR THROAT) A strong political issue now. And I think-- Brazil must be prepared because it will be soon.

I think-- the-- the-- the distance-- economic distance between Brazil and other Latin American countries-- will probably make Brazil-- a very, very-- attractive-- place for-- much stronger waves of migration than-- we are seeing now. And-- also the-- the-- we have had a lot of-- improvement in-- domestic work rights in Brazil recently.

And-- some people think that-- the-- one of the outcomes would be that-- we'll begin to have, you know, illegal-- workers. Or migrants-- in Brazil doing this-- domestic work. What-- which you absolutely don't have. I mean, it's really-- rare to see someone. Although-- I mean-- many, many-- medium class-- families does have a lot of domestic employers in Brazil.

It's really rare to have someone with-- I mean-- a migrant-- doing this job. And I think this will be the case quite soon. So I think Brazil has the opportunity now to think and to plan-- a new migration-- legal framework. Gener-- a generous one before it becomes a political sensitive-- issue. And I think this is-- this is what we are-- we're trying to do-- discussing-- the migration-- reform.

The government that-- unfortunately-- didn't pass. But I think it's-- I mean, it's possible to make it pass at this moment. And I-- and I don't think it will be-- in ten years. So I think it's-- it's key to-- and-- and-- and I think-- Brazil does have-- a generous legal framework and approach with-- and-- and it's prepared for-- for this. I think it can really influence-- the way-- the world will see-- migration. Lu-- Lucia.

LUCIA NADER:

Yes, I-- just-- just to-- to add to this. I completely agree. And (LAUGH) it's boring when both agree, right? I'm sorry. (LAUGHTER)

(OVERTALK)

LUCIA NADER:

But-- I-- I mean, I think there is a-- an issue with the culture around migration in Brazil even if we are in theory-- really in theory a racial democracy, that we welcome people and Brazil was formed by migrants (UNINTEL PHRASE).

There is-- we don't know how Brazilians really perceive people. Bolivians come to work and-- it's stealing. And-- I'm here using many commas-- brackets. Jobs and things like this. So I think there is a culture iss-- culture issues to be tackled. There is no thinking-- strategic thinking, as Pedro was saying, about other issues on foreign policy about how to deal with migrant.

And there is a very concrete legal and structural problem. We don't have a migration law. We don't-- a policy, let's say, more than a law. So our migration policy dates from the dictatorship that is-- that started to do (UNINTEL PHRASE). And this deals-- and-- and it's there-- it deals with migration as a police issue. So the federal police is the first one to deal with migrants, I think.

And this is a big thing. And three ministries are responsible for migration in Brazil. And none of them are. (LAUGHTER) Because it's the justice ministry, the defense ministry, and the labor ministry. And none of them say, "No, no. But this is not really our thi--" and-- and so no one is really responsible (CLEAR THROAT) for this.

To give you a very concrete example, we have been working with the issue of-- Haitians in Brazil. And we did a mission-- I mean, we-- we did a six month research. We asked-- information through the Access to Information Law. And we went to Acre in the border of Brazil, and we saw there-- 850 and 32-- people in this conditions. This is a picture we took there. This-- they have in hand is the labor (FOREIGN LANGUAGE).

HELOISA GRIGGS:

It's like-- a worker-- a worker--

LUCIA NADER:

A worker--

HELOISA GRIGGS:

--permit?

LUCIA NADER:

--permit.

HELOISA GRIGGS:

Permit.

LUCIA NADER:

A worker--

HELOISA GRIGGS:

(UNINTEL PHRASE) where you work.

LUCIA NADER:

So these peop-- they were-- this was-- when a businessman arrived. And they were all fighting to have this job, you know. And this a re-- I mean, we called it a refugee camp and a humanitarian emergency crisis. And we were-- the government didn't like the way we called it because they say, "We have to not-- to make it natural. So we don't have to make a big deal around it."

But they-- they were-- 830 peop-- thir-- 32 people sleeping one above another with ten toilets only with kids there, living there with-- women together with men in the, you know, like showers. So how-- how can we deal with this? So if you went in our website-- Conectas.org, there are some videos that are some graphics on how this shelter was made.

And after this, we went to-- to Brasilia, to the capitol, to talk to these three ministries. And-- they decided to do a test for us that will happen again-- now the-- October 31st. And they want us to go together. And we don't know how we will deal with this-- if we are going or not.

And we have, like, 20 hours of-- recording-- or-- that are summarized here of Haitian voices, both in Sao Paulo and-- and-- and there at the border. So I think this gives you, of course, it's an extreme situation. We are-- it is not at all the migrants that are like treated like this in Brazil. But there is no policy about it. It-- it has to be done in a more adult way, let's say again.

MARIA TERESA ROJAS:

To me. (LAUGHTER) Questions? Go ahead, Marla.

MARLA:

I'm Marla (UNINTEL PHRASE). Just have a question of what-- what would you think would be the best, like, foreign policy strategy for Brazil for the region? Like, if you could pick, like, I don't know-- five things that you think would be the best things that Brazil could engage in the region, what would you say?

LUCIA NADER:

Well, we-- we know how to criticize. (LAUGHTER) And-- yes, to propose is not really our (LAUGH)-- main skill. But--

(HELOISA GRIGGS: UNINTEL)

LUCIA NADER:

Yes. Yeah. I am still a teenager as well. (LAUGHTER) No, I think-- just about the regional thing, I forgot to mention that we just got-- (HITS MIC) dramatic hearing at the O.A.S. about-- the Haitians to-- to tackle with the issue at the regional level inside the Human Rights Commission.

So it's to happen the 31st of October as well. The same date of the test for us. (CLEAR THROAT) I think that the region is somehow a priority to Brazil. But I don't know, Pedro, maybe there-- you-- you have more to say. But-- sometimes Brazil still doubt that we are part of the region. (LAUGHTER) You know, I've-- so both on the language. Bo-- it-- you know, like on how we deal with the others.

What are-- the other day I went to Paraguay to do a training on something. And for the first time I had to be-- to apologize for being Brazilian, you know, because of the-- no, the economic power that-- in the region is. Or in Argentina as well so many Brazilian companies running the Argentinian economy, let's say.

So I think there is (COUGH)-- there is a love and hate dynamic in the region regarding the role of Brazil. You know, one is to go against the U.S. then the region is united. One is to discuss what's going on in Venezuela, then we have a clear division. One is-- (COUGH) so-- but I think the migration issue is huge. Should be a regional issue.

And Brazil shou-- could play-- a leading role on that. I think the issue about energy is key because most of these dams are being built in the Amazon. And this-- has-- effect in the-- in other countries of the region as well when the-- the-- the-- the things that are happening there.

What else? The-- the O.A.S., the effectiveness of the O.A.S. system. So Brazil had a very problematic in the O.A.S. strengthening process. (COUGH) Now they're just-- the-- the Human Rights Commission-- strengthening process that just happened.

At the beginning, it was a very-- I mean, it was a bad position at the end. They were a bit better. And now we have-- Pablo Vanucci that is one of the independent-- commissioners of the-- the O.A.S. Human Rights Commission that can play eventually-- a new role. And-- and even if he's not talkin' about Brazil, he is Brazilian.

He was at the government. And, you know, he's independent now there. But is a role. But I would take these three key issues. You know, how to strengthen the-- the regional O.A.S. system and its human rights approach to the region. (CLEAR THROAT) How to deal with migrants. And how to deal with the economic growth slash energy and infrastructure issues in a more regional perspective.

MARIA TERESA ROJAS:

Pedro, anything on that question?

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

I'll take this. (LAUGHTER) No, no. No. But--

MARIA TERESA ROJAS:

Vonda, did you have a question? Did I see that?

VONDA:

Yeah, I was-- I was just curious, as the Open Society Foundation's-- we work on so many issues around Open Society. And we're always seeing Brazil, I notice with all of our colleagues in-- in many programs. We see Brazil as one that can play a role. That they have all this potential.

And it usually comes back to working with Conectas-- (LAUGHTER) in the end. And-- and I know that you try to work with other national groups-- on the issues of foreign policy. But how do you see kind of that civil society voice? I know that the-- you know, you answered the question of the everyday person on the street might not care that much about it.

And I would say, you know, there are other powers in-- in the world that also-- you know, the everyday citizen would rather not have them be too engaged globally. But in the case of-- of Conectas and-- and civil society as a whole, do you see any more interest in engaging with the Brazilian government around foreign policy? Or do you feel like you're alone in Conectas pretty much-- dealing with a lot of the issues of o--

of Open Society?

LUCIA NADER:

I mean, let me start by saying that we would really prefer you also to have other people and organizations to contact. (LAUGHTER) You know? It's a-- it's a pleasure and a privilege. But, I mean, we are-- we are really trying to foster other groups' engagement on this.

I think several groups are engaged. And some of them before Conectas. But in specific thematic areas. So you have some groups on women's rights, on environment, that have an international-- background that-- in-- in working with the Brazilian government on this. On development and things that-- it's older. I-- I mean, they do this for a longer period than Conectas has been doing. But working with the foreign policy in a more structural and dealing with foreign policy in a-- as I said, as a public policy in a democracy, very few groups are doing.

But we have partners that were-- that are good partners today. I can-- s-- tell you, for instance, I.N.E.S.C.I., and N.G.O. based in Brasilia. They work with the budget. And they-- they see, you know, how foreign policy's budgeted in the annual budget of the government. And they do some work. The co-- the Baha'i community, they do some specific co-- word about-- work about Iran and the Baha'is and-- and things. But we also do a lot of work with them around other issues. Or, you know, we-- or-- you have, like-- there-- there are some groups.

And they are all part of an initiative-- or-- I mean, some of them are part of an initiative that is the-- Brazilian Committee for Foreign Policy and Human Rights that we helped to create. And we are the executive secretary that brings together other groups.

Including the health ministry. It's-- it's weird. Because, you know, there are some ministries inside the government that don't like too much the-- the foreign affairs. (LAUGH) And they want to be-- they are more-- in the N.G.O. side on this.

But, I mean, there is a long-- there is a potential, let's say. But as I said, there are many national issues going on as well. There is a financial decision to be taking on-- a strategic and financial decision if you are going to focus on national or international issue. And this is-- is a daily choice. And-- but I think that m-- no. My-- I am optimistic. I think there is a lot of potential. Some groups that were not working with this are now working. But there is a lot of-- things to be strengthened still. (SIRENS)

VONDA:

Thank you.

JERRY:

(CLEAR THROAT) How would you characterize Brazil's foreign policy and development policy relationship with (UNINTEL PHRASE) Africa? Specifically (SIRENS) Angola and-- and Mozambique, both countries where China is very actively engaged?

To what degree, if any at all, is-- is-- Brazil seen as a kind of cou-- counter model to the Chinese model of development? And is-- is Brazil seen as a more trusted intermediary or interlocutor for-- particularly for-- for this-- foreign countries (SCRAPING) in Africa?

LUCIA NADER:

Do you want to start, Pedro? (LAUGHTER) You're the--

(OVERTALK)

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

No, no. Please--

LUCIA NADER:

(COUGH) I think that (SIRENS) our take with Luza Foreign Africa (PH) is more about how the Brazilian companies are behaving there. So Mozambique is the main (SIREN)-- country where Brazil is investing today. And one of the main recipients of baily-- of the Brazilian National Bank for Development money through Brazilian companies. And what we hear is a lot around this, you know, like, how Brazil-- Brazilian companies are behaving in those countries. And somehow benefitting from sometimes not very strong-- rule of law. Or democratic institutions. (SIREN) And this is the case, for instance, of some-- infrastructured companies.

Like the main-- the most-- famous one-- is-- I mean, you know, (FOREIGN LANGUAGE) and things that they are-- they-- they valley. And things that they-- they sometimes are doing abroad that we received from partner groups from this country. Sometimes some complaints. For instance, evictions.

So some of them were displaced by a Brazilian company. In-- in Angola this happened. And they asked Conectas help to try to counter part of this. So I don't know if it's as bad as China. Or if-- if-- I don't know even if-- or, I mean, exactly what China is doing there. I don't know if it's as aggressive, let's say, as China.

But there is a lot to be-- to be done. And known about what Brazil-- Brazilian companies are-- are-- are doing there. And how this is being (CLEAR THROAT) powered by public money through the National Bank for-- for Development. And

therefore-- there is a-- even a stronger need for the Brazilian go-- government to be more accountable on what they have been doing.

Because at the end of the day I'm paying the eviction task force (LAUGH) in Angola. So-- how can-- how can-- can-- I mean, we deal with this. I-- there is no-- not really stra-- any strategic view for this. For instance, we have-- we met with the-- Luza Foreign Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. And they-- they are more worried about cultural events (SCRAPING) and linguistic barriers and things like this, you know. And the Brazilian corporation agency called A.B.C. is also not really transparent. And I don't know if Pedro-- Pedro knows from inside the government.

But-- they are not really strong. I mean, they have to restructure themselves to be more transparent, more vocal and-- and-- and bigger somehow to-- to regulate the-- corporation investments and not only, you know, like, how to invest in private companies to-- to be in Africa.

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

I think it's-- this is-- first of all, I think there's-- I mean, the-- the-- the explosion of Brazilian presence in Africa is most of all due to-- to Lula. He-- I mean, he took it-- as-- a priority. He traveled to-- to Africa more than any other-- Brazilian president before.

And-- and I think-- Brazil-- after China is the country that-- that in-- I mean, country that didn't have any colony in Africa with the-- biggest number of-- embassies-- in the continent. So-- I mean, in-- in-- it all happened-- during-- Lula's government.

And I think, again, I mean-- Lula-- of course-- there-- there-- the-- Africa was seen as a possibility of-- of-- new exchange. Brazil diversifying-- its commerce-- with-- different countries. But-- what exactly-- Brazil as a-- as a-- would do that-- that-- there wasn't clear. The only thing that was clear was the role of-- our development bank-- loaning-- money to Brazilian companies that wanted to do infrastructure-- investments-- in Africa. And what is-- what happened-- also in the-- in Latin America in general.

And I think this is-- a really-- big issue. 'Cause, again, we have this enormous bank-- as Lucia said. Many times bigger than the World Bank. That is-- playing a big role in-- investments in-- infrastructure in the developing countries. And it wouldn't cost much to Brazil if Brazil wanted to have legitimacy-- in-- in the global debate to establish rules-- for-- (CLEAR THROAT) this bank. I mean, it really wouldn't cost-- I mean, to establish rules of-- of-- how to invest this money. And to differentiate itself to, you know, other aggressive countries in the regions.

The point is-- I think Brazil is not-- this is a moment where-- Brazil is not claiming to have this-- global leadership on-- on-- on human rights. So-- it's true that there's no cost but there's no damage. There's no real and-- actual damage in-- to Brazil to not-- doing that.

So I think one of the important thing that-- organizations like-- Conectas has to do is to create this cost of not doing that. Create a cost 'cause I think-- if we can manage to make this bigger than the cost of doing-- there we could-- begin to-- to-- to re-- I mean-- re-- shape this-- this influence that Brazil is having in those countries. And maybe begin to-- to shape what Lucia is calling the-- adult phase of (LAUGH) Brazilian leadership-- at the global-- debate.

JERRY:

Can I just ask, by increasing the cost, you mean increasing the cost with the Brazilian public or the government.

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

Well, if, I mean-- it's-- it's not something that appears even with Dilma's-- meeting with-- foreign president or-- that international (UNINTEL PHRASE) society. What-- it's not something that-- it-- it simp-- simply doesn't appear.

Of course, if-- if-- there were, you know-- international pressure on Brazil on this publicly, it will have impact in-- internally in Brazil. But it's not part of the-- the agenda of-- you know, pressuring governments now. And I think it-- it-- it needs to be because-- I mean, it will be good to Brazil to-- to-- as-- to le-- legitimacy of Brazil in the global debate to have-- the-- to restructure the way it is investing in-- in other countries.

JERRY:

Can I-- can I follow up on that? (CLEAR THROAT) On the international level-- and it seems to me that especially with regard to human rights and foreign policy that the Brazilian approach, and I think it's true of India and South Africa as well and maybe Indonesia is intimately tied up with the whole issue of global governance.

And so, you know, when you point out-- Lucia, that selectivity is one of the arguments that they make. And then you push back and say, "Well, you're selective, too." The argument's not really selectivity. It's about the system that creates the selectivity and the imbalance of power.

And-- particularly the relative powerlessness of countries like-- like Brazil. The emerging-- emerging powers, emerging democracies. Democratic powers, in particular. And so-- so I guess the question is, you know, how do we-- can we really address human rights separate from addressing these issues of global governance? And-- and how can we create a strategy that addresses both of 'em together and is pro-human rights, doesn't-- you know, depend upon resolving the issues of global governance, which are gonna take a long time before we get progress on human rights.

LUCIA NADER:

Yeah, I-- (LAUGHTER)
(OVERTALK)

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

I agree with the question. I-- (LAUGHTER) I don't know the answer. But--

JERRY:

Why do you think they're paying the big bucks? (LAUGHTER)

LUCIA NADER:

Now, Jerry, I-- I also-- I completely agree with this. But I think it's also, just to add to what you said. For us, like, we have been choosing-- trying to choose some issues where we could be together with the Brazilian government. You know, so, for instance, the Security Council Reform.

The-- the health-- the-- all the discussion around patents where the-- for medicines where the north is not a good player. And-- and things like this. And I-- I honestly believe that this issue about the global-- governance has also to be tackled in a more pressing way by-- human rights groups based in the north.

You know, like-- how they deal with their own government on the way they behave at the international estate. You know, I-- I see-- I mean, of course, we have to have a better-- behavior and a stronger behavior of emerging powers in-- in regard international protection. But I truly believe that the U.S. and Europe has also to review the way they do it. You know, this-- and it-- the-- the way they relate to-- to N.G.O.s that are not based in their own countries. The way they respect or not even things like this. You know, the other-- I told you this ten times but the other day I was in a meeting.

And then at-- a U.S. diplomat came to me and said, "Ah, okay. Let me introduce myself. I just received a-- received a memorandum that now we have to take Brazil seriously." I said, "Ah, thank you very much." (LAUGHTER) You know, so, I mean, this-- I-- and-- you know, I said, "Ah, okay, I'm glad."

So-- yeah. You know, I mean-- so, yeah. So (LAUGH)-- so there is something also to be discussed about the way-- (COUGH) I mean, the big powers deal with-- the rest of the world. And-- and how to the-- (SIRENS) and, I mean, I'm far from saying that-- the north is responsible for all the problems.

I think that the Brazilian elite is perhaps more responsible about what's happening in Brazil than the north. You know, and I really don't believe it's about north and south.

I believe there are several south inside the south. But I think there is-- there is much more to be done by-- by big groups based in the north regarding their own country's foreign policy as well.

VOICES:

Yeah.

PEDRO ABRAMOVAY:

And-- and I think this-- this N.S.A. case is-- is really-- I mean, it's-- it-- there's-- a new debate that rise-- from that. That-- I-- I mean, the-- the internet governance has been-- I mean, closed-- on-- U.S. hands (LAUGH) mostly. And the-- the-- the argument for that was that-- U.S. was maybe the only country that could, you know, really-- stand for the values of-- freedom of expression and privacy and-- and (UNINTEL PHRASE). (LAUGHTER)

It-- it-- it (UNINTEL PHRASE) doesn't. So-- but-- but the problem is that now-- what is the solution? If-- if it is to create and to-- to give the ability to country to create their own internet, that-- I mean-- so-- so Rousseff's speech at the U.N. was that we must have a global governance on that. But what is that exactly? And so what-- countries-- from the-- well, so-called-- north-- can-- can-- must watch is that when-- when they-- when they-- do it (LAUGH)-- I mean-- what-- they are doing as in the N.S.A. case-- they open space for a global governance that-- will be-- discussed-- maybe not on human right-- I mean-- basis.

So I think this-- to-- to-- to create a space, to really discuss-- a global governance and-- and put human rights at the center of it, I agree it should be at the center of-- the-- the international agenda of-- northern-- or go-- human rights organization.

LUCIA NADER:

And something that I-- I just put there-- a picture of. 'Cause the oth-- the other day we were discussing that we are-- we feel we are more or less in a jazz band situation (LAUGHTER) where there is no tenant. How do you say the tenant in--

VOICES:

Conductor?

(OVERTALK)

LUCIA NADER:

There-- there is no conductor at the international. I mean, I think that each of the-- the people there in the jazz band are trying to figure out, you know, how they play their own sound. As in a jazz band. That there is no conductor.

And at the same time, it's good to listen. You know, because I think that the-- the big powers are-- they like to be conductors. And I don't know if the world today needs one conductor, several conductors. I know this is a bit of a-- it's not supposed to be a poem. (LAUGHTER)

But I mean-- but you know, I think that the way (COUGH) of doing international relations that is more. Even if we have the U.N. having one or two big conductors in the room all the time is being in-- is being questioned. And I don't know the answer. I mean, I don't-- I don't think we have all to give our hands and let's go together to do something. But there is something to be discussed and changed. Because I don't think this is working as it should.

MARIA TERESA ROJAS:

Was there a question? Yep, go ahead. Go ahead.

(OVERTALK)

MIKE O'HEFLIN:

This is Mike O'Heflin (PH) with the Human Rights Initiative. And I guess you-- you talked about this a little bit, Lucia, but I'm wondering if there's the potential to do more work-- with existing domestic social movements to kinda craft-- you know, an advocacy strategy that both, you know, relates to the domestic issues. But also then connects to international issues. I mean, it seems-- and whether that's around issues of discrimination like women's rights or L.G.B.T. rights or racial or ethnic minorities, you know, where maybe Brazil, you know, is not perfect at home, obviously. Needs to do some work.

But, you know, where you can see policymakers and politicians trying to on the one hand, you know, satisfy or demonstrate to a domestic constituency that's already organized to a certain degree that they're taking steps to make progress at home. But then also, again, connecting that to a broader international agenda.

And, again, I know that ultimately you're tryin' to get a pla-- to a place where they're-- there's this more structural approach to-- foreign policy. But it seems like those would be areas where-- or whether it's income inequality where there would be (LAUGH), you know, potential to really galvanize that local energy. Connect it to an also-- a complementary international agenda. And get the attention of the government-- more easily than maybe some of these other issues that-- where people aren't already kind of engaged locally.

LUCIA NADER:

I-- I agree. I agree but we don't know exactly how to do it. To be very honest. I think one, there are some groups like the trade unions in Brazil, even if now they're a bit-- being questioned as well. They have an international back-- track record that is quite big.

They work internationally. Or, for instance, the World Social Forum was created in Brazil and brought together, you know-- organizations all over the world. And-- and-- and-- things like this. But I think there are big challenge for human rights groups-- either thematically or not, as you were saying. Is to s-- to-- to rethink the way they relate to their own societies and to social movements. I know this is not really new. We know the-- the-- I mean, the-- the-- the-- how do you say? The tension between social movements and-- and N.G.O.s and how you balance one and the other and-- and things like this.

But this became very clear for Conectas. Like, two years ago we decided to open-- like to be much more aggressive on communication as a way to build constituency. And to-- you know, like, to-- to open Conectas to the public-- for the debate. And we were scared of this debate. You know, it's very difficult to talk about human rights inside Brazil as well.

You know, we are seen as-- grouping-- groups protecting impunity and therefore responsible for the 50,000 homicides we have per year in Brazil. So, I mean, it's-- there are reasons for us to be more, you know, not wanting to debate with the whole society and with social movements about it. But at the same time, (COUGH) I saw no way we can escape this. I mean, I really-- the-- the protest in June showed us that-- I mean, there is much more in there than the organized groups.

And they-- that these organized groups somehow are being-- they aren't really being a channel of participation. So where are they? You know, they are not grassroots. They are not high politics. They are not talking to the streets on these daily problems that brought people to the streets like the transport, the health issue.

You know, we are talking in a macro level of foreign policy, access to justice, improving democracy. And this is not getting people-- galva-- we are not galvanizing all the people that we could. At the same time, I say-- I-- I really think that this is the moment to do it. And-- we are ready to do so. And-- and some groups are really, really paying attention to this and trying to change that.

MARIA TERESA ROJAS:

I'm gonna unfortunately have to cut off the conversation a little bit short. First, to thank both-- Lucia and Pedro for taking part and for the conversation. And everybody for taking part in the questions. And obviously many of you know and work with Lucia.

And this is sort of an ongoing iterative conversation we've been having and will

continue to have over the years. And we'll be having now with Pedro-- in terms of the organization as a whole. So for us it's--

LUCIA NADER:

Can I--

MARIA TERESA ROJAS:

Go ahead.

LUCIA NADER:

--can I just invite?

MARIA TERESA ROJAS:

Yeah. Go ahead. (LAUGH)

LUCIA NADER:

Just to-- to invite you all-- on Saturday, we-- our 13th international human rights colloquium is starting. Heloisa's going, Jerry's not, Pedro is not. (LAUGHTER) I'm blaming. And--

(OVERTALK)

LUCIA NADER:

And-- and one of the activities in trying to broaden the discussion is-- the first day of-- on Monday, we will have a TEDx format event. And this will be in Touca (PH), a big theater in Brazil for 700 people, not only 100 people selected to the colloquium to try to debate on these issues.

And the subject will be what about human rights in a multipolar world? If we are really in a multipolar world or not. It's 14 speakers from eight countries. And it will be a webcast in our website at the TEDx website. So we can continue this conversation for the website as well on Monday.

HELOISA GRIGGS:

So should they contact--

LUCIA NADER:

Yeah, the-- the webcast link will be on our website as well. Conectas.org.

(OVERTALK)

HELOISA GRIGGS:

Or feel free to right me.

LUCIA NADER:

Yeah, or Heloisa. (LAUGHTER)

HELOISA GRIGGS:

Thanks, everybody.

VOICES:

Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

* * *END OF TRANSCRIPT* * *