FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL
NATIONAL DEFENSE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In light of the challenges and opportunities emerging from the new international order, appropriate, flexible, and creative mechanisms must be developed in Brazil for strategic thinking to cope with the country's defense needs.

1.2 Because of the domestic as well as the regional and global changes observed, the national defense policy needs to be properly articulated from the highest level of state, if it is to reflect the aspirations of society while serving as a frame of reference for current strategies.

1.3 The aim of the national defense policy—which is designed to address external threats—is to pinpoint objectives for the defense of the nation and to guide the preparation and application of the nation's capability at all levels and spheres of power, and with the involvement of civilian and military sectors.

1.4 A subject of interest to all of society, the national defense policy is based on the premises, objectives and principles set forth in the federal constitution and it is consistent with the country's foreign policy which in essence seeks to settle disputes peacefully and enhance international peace and security.

1.5 Brazil derives geo-strategic depth from its profile—both continental and maritime, equatorial, tropical, and subtropical. It shares extensive borders with nearly all the South American countries and has a long coastline, an exclusively economic zone, and the continental shelf. All of these factors make overall defense planning more complex. Coupled with the availability of natural resources, the broad demographic and territorial base produced by its diversified physiology results in a variety of scenarios that require a general and integrated policy and must be dealt with in a specific case-by-case approach.

1.6 Implementation of a sustainable defense policy that will gradually modernize self-protection capability calls for a development model which can bolster democracy and reduce social inequalities and regional imbalances, at the same time reconciling the country's political, social, economic, and military priorities with its defense-oriented and diplomatic needs.

1.7 In this process, defense needs must be made compatible with the available resources approved by the National Congress; and, whenever possible, with involvement of the academic, scientific, technological, and industrial sectors.

2. THE INTERNATIONAL SCENARIO

2.1 With the end of the East-West confrontation, an amorphous and unstable multipolar international environment is once again emerging as forces become realigned—the reason being the lack of contact between the centers of strategic-military, political, and economic power, the evolution of which is difficult to predict.

2.2 Simplistic generalizations about ideological and military bipolarity, which had been prevalent until then, were rendered obsolete by the end of the Cold War. Although the risk of a global nuclear confrontation is now reduced, the relative predictability thereof has disappeared.

2.3 Given the localized conflicts currently in progress on nearly every continent; the fresh outbreak of ethnic, nationalist and religious extremism; and the fragmentation observed in various countries, it is now clear that such traditional concepts as sovereignty, self-determination, and national identity will continue to prevail.

2.4 At this transitional stage—when new political and economic rules for coexistence among nations are being applied in the absence of clear paradigms but with greater involvement of agents outside the government—the country is seeking to define its strategic involvement and priorities in the area of defense, free of ideological influences.

2.5 The uncertainties currently prevailing in the international scene dictate that national governments will still have to cope with defense needs, and the presence of the military continues to be a very important factor in the survival of states as independent entities. It is

unrealistic to think that any state that is reasonably powerful and influential in the international arena might choose to dispense with the services of a reliable defense force. Armed forces are the means whereby a state can exercise the right to defend itself, a right that, moreover, is set forth in the United Nations Charter.

2.6 Far removed from the international hot spots, South America is regarded as the world's most demilitarized region. The restoration of democracy throughout the continent has reduced the probability that conflicts can erupt, and regional disputes have been managed fairly well.

2.7 For Brazil, which comprises different regions and has a very diversified profile—ranging from the Amazon and the Atlantic, to the River Plate and the Southern Cone in a single country—the concept of regional space expands the South American continental landmass to the point where it includes the South Atlantic.

2.8 In examining the region's strategy approaches, therefore, it is important to note that South America is a very complex mosaic of countries and subregions, which requires multilateral regional engagement based on a policy of harmonizing interests.

2.9 After more than a century of no involvement with its neighbors, Brazil is now seeking to promote greater integration and rapprochement among the countries of the continent and has, as a result, gained international credibility.

2.10 The strengthening of the MERCOSUR integration process; close relations with its Amazon neighbors, pursuant to the Amazon Cooperation Treaty; intensified cooperation with Portuguese-speaking African countries; and consolidation of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation in the South Atlantic, thanks to positive and concrete diplomatic action, are factors which constitute a real circle of peace surrounding the country. As a result, efforts can concentrate on setting up a viable national development project and fighting social inequalities.

2.11 But the country has not been entirely free of risks. Despite its status as a peaceful member of the international community, Brazil could be forced into externally generated conflicts which might threaten its patrimony and its vital interests.

2.12 There are still pockets of instability in the region that could affect Brazilian interests. The ravages of armed bands operating in neighboring countries at the edge of the Brazilian Amazon and the depredations of organized international crime are prominent among the issues of concern.

2.13 Military capability and diplomacy are expressions of national sovereignty and dignity. Brazil has consistently and clearly demonstrated the will to exist in peace and harmony, consistent with the principles and rules of international law, and to honor the commitments it has assumed.

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 All of the factors described above result in the need to devise specific strategies that reflect the nation's interests and its basic national defense objectives.

3.2 Despite a favorable environment, a suitable defense system must be maintained to preserve national sovereignty and democratic rule of law. To that end, a national defense policy incorporating the official social, economic, military, and diplomatic strategies, and backed by the resources for its application plus support from the entire country, is now being carried out.

3.3 The national defense objectives are:

a. to ensure sovereignty by preserving territorial integrity, patrimony, and national interests;

b. to ensure the rule of law and the protection of democratic institutions;

c. to preserve the nation's cohesion and unity;

d. to safeguard the people, property, and resources which belong to Brazil or come within its jurisdiction;

e. to pursue and maintain Brazil's interests abroad;

f. to project Brazil's place in the community of nations and enable the country to become more involved in the international decision-making process;

g. to help maintain international peace and security.

4. STRATEGY GUIDELINES

4.1 The objective of the Brazilian state's defense operations stems from its obligation to provide security for the nation, in times of both peace and conflict.

4.2 To that end, the current policy focuses on active peace-oriented diplomacy while pursuing a strategic policy of deterrence based on the following premises:

— clearly defined borders and coastlines that are internationally recognized;

— close relationships with neighboring countries and with the international community in general, based on mutual confidence and respect;

— the repudiation of wars of conquest; and

— efforts at peaceful settlement of disputes, using force only as a means of self-defense.

4.3 The preventive nature of Brazilian defense is based on its reliance on diplomacy as the first resort in settling disputes and in the absence of a military structure capable of generating effective deterrence.

4.4 But the defensive approach does not mean that in case of conflict, the role of the armed forces should be confined to carrying out defensive operations only. In a broader defense context, if it needs to stave off potential armed aggression, the country will engage all the military power required to settle a conflict as quickly as possible, with minimal damage to the national integrity and interests, under conditions conducive to the restoration of peace.

4.5 Even-handed nationwide training is essential in the area of defense, with the involvement of the industrial, academic, scientific, and technical sectors. Scientific and technological development is vital to secure optimal strategic autonomy and boost the operational expertise of the armed forces.

4.6 Military power should be based on the ability of the armed forces, on national resource potential, and on reserves that can be mobilized to prevent potential attempts at flouting the rules governing peaceful coexistence among nations. The Armed Forces should operate in a manner consistent with the country's political and strategic status, and should be endowed with a flexible and versatile structure so that swift and effective measures can be adopted in different places and under different situations.

4.7 The Armed Forces, whose mission is enshrined in the Constitution, bear responsibility for defending the nation whenever necessary, ensuring its continued integrity and sovereignty. The preparation and engagement of the Armed Forces should be constantly upgraded and a rational approach should be adopted in dealing with similar activities.

5. GUIDELINES

5.1 To achieve the national defense policy objectives, the following guidelines should be observed:

a. active participation in creating an international order based on the rule of law and conducive to universal and regional peace and sustainable development of mankind;

b. increasing participation in the relevant international decision-making processes;

c. improvement and enhancement of Brazil's negotiating capability in the international arena;

d. promotion of the Brazilian position on global disarmament based on the dismantling of nuclear arsenals and other weapons of mass destruction, as part of a process agreed upon internationally;

e. participation in international peace-keeping operations, consonant with its national interests;

f. active involvement in strengthening, expanding, and consolidating regional integration;

g. maintenance of a climate of peace and cooperation along national borders, plus solidarity throughout Latin America and the South Atlantic region;

h. increased sharing of knowledge with the armed forces of friendly countries;

i. Continued participation of the armed forces involved in subsidiary activities aimed at national integration, civil defense, and socio-economic development for the country, consistent with constitutional objectives;

j. protection of Brazil's Amazon region with support from society as a whole and through military presence;

l. prioritization of efforts to develop and revitalize border regions, particularly in the North and mid-Western regions; particular;

m. improving the organization, equipment, training, and cohesion of the Armed Forces, providing them with the conditions, organic means, and human resources needed to carry out their constitutional mission;

n. upgrading the command, control, and intelligence capabilities of all agencies involved in national defense by providing them with conditions that facilitate decision-making in peace time and in conflicts;

o. heightening of the surveillance, control, and defense system along Brazil's borders and in its territorial waters, continental shelf, airspace, and on its sea and air transport;

p. ensuring adequate and ongoing resources to create effective conditions to prepare the Armed Forces and other agencies involved in national defense;

q. strengthening the national transport, energy, and communication systems;

r. the search for a level of research in science, technological development, and production capacity to reduce the country's dependence on external resources for its defense;

s. promoting scientific knowledge of the Antarctic region and active participation in decision-making on their purpose;

t. improving the system for mobilization to meet the country's needs when forced into armed conflict; and

u. creating awareness on and explaining public opinion to create and maintain a national defense mind-set through incentives for civic pride and patriotism.