



STATEMENT
BY
MINISTER CELSO AMORIM
BEFORE
THE ANNAPOLIS CONFERENCE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ANNAPOLIS

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Madam Secretary of State,

President Bush and your own personal efforts in favor of peace in the Middle East are highly commendable. I wish to express special recognition for the courage and farsightedness displayed by President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

As we have heard this morning, the time has come to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict realistically and effectively.

Land for peace remains a guiding principle for a durable, negotiated solution. This must lead to a sovereign, democratic, cohesive and economically viable Palestinian State within a credible time horizon. Peace must also include efficient measures to protect and secure Israel from acts of violence and allow it to have peaceful and fruitful relations with the Arab States.

Negotiations must be comprehensive and inclusive. Discussions on our main subject today must be accompanied by good-faith efforts to settle definitely the outstanding issues between Israel and its Arab neighbors (Syria and Lebanon) on the basis of the pre-1967 border and UN resolutions. We often hear that moderate voices must be strengthened. I agree. But this is not to be achieved by words of esteem and appreciation, however eloquent. Only solid and tangible results in the peace process will give the moderates the political support they need from their constituencies.

Madam Secretary of State,

Brazil has been following with concern the continuous deterioration of living conditions in the Occupied Territories. Particularly in the Gaza Strip, we see deprivation, poverty and frustration. Brazil, together with its partners in the IBSA Fund, India and South Africa, is engaged at this very moment in developing social and economic projects to mitigate these dire conditions.



Brazil also supports the efforts of the Quartet Special Representative, Mr. Tony Blair, to stimulate the Palestinian economy and consolidate institution-building in Gaza and the West Bank. We are ready to extend any help that is deemed necessary in this field.

Brazil participated in the Stockholm Donors` Conference of September 2006. In the upcoming Conference in Paris, Brazil is prepared to significantly increase its economic and technical cooperation to the rebuilding of Palestine.

In order to be lasting, genuine peace must be accompanied by grassroots initiatives. If considered useful by both parties - and given our own experience of peaceful and friendly conviviality between Jewish and Arab communities - Brazil would be ready to host inclusive meetings involving civil society designed to foster adherence to the values of peace and coexistence in the Middle East.

Madam Secretary of State,

Last year, in his address to the UN General Assembly, President Lula stressed the need to engage more countries in the endeavor for peace, including developing countries with good relations with both parties. In this respect, this Conference represents an important step. We are glad to note that this kind of enlarged participation of the international community is already being considered for the follow-up to Annapolis. We support Minister Lavrov`s proposal for a Conference in Moscow in early 2008.

We welcome the Israel-Palestine joint statement, as read by President Bush. We saw in it a strong disposition to proceed on the road to peace. This is reflected in a more precise process and tighter schedule. We sense that there is a new disposition to address substantive issues - including all core issues - in parallel with the indispensable confidence building measures. This is in itself a breakthrough.

Brazil expresses its confidence that the Annapolis Conference will pave the way for a meaningful and effective resumption of the peace process. Only then will despair give way to hope.

Thank you.