



**BRAZIL**

**IV United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries**

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Vera Machado  
Undersecretary-General for Political Affairs**

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset allow me to congratulate the host country on the excellent organization of this Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. I also wish to extend our sincere gratitude to the Government and people of Turkey for their warm hospitality. For its rich history and unique geographical position, Turkey, and Istanbul in particular, offers an exceptional venue for this Conference, whose main goal is to bridge development gaps and support LDC's efforts towards graduation.

This Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries offers the opportunity to collectively confront some of the most compelling challenges of development. We must learn from the successes and disappointments of the past and commit to do more, and better, in the future. The international community still has a long way to go to fulfill the pressing needs of nearly one fourth of all Member States of the United Nations, who currently fit the criteria for identification as LDCs.

In the last ten years, many developing countries have made important strides in the struggle against poverty. The LDCs themselves have been no strangers to success. Economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa averaged almost 6 per cent in the last decade, more than twice as much as in the 1990s (2.3%). It is unfortunate, however, that the economic and financial crisis that originated in the developed countries has taken its toll. According to the African Development Bank, the economic downturn may have longer-term negative consequences for African countries, including difficulties in reaching the Millennium Development Goal of halving the number of people living in hunger and poverty by 2015.

Excessive price volatility poses a threat to food security and political stability in many vulnerable LDCs. To face this situation, the first priority is to raise the levels of ODA to the agricultural sector in LDCs, in accordance with their needs and the commitments already made. Brazil also favors the establishment of a strong and effective global food and nutrition security governance system, centered on the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and its sister Agencies in Rome. We must also consider the establishment of humanitarian food stocks, consistent with WTO rules, to counter actual or potential food crises. This very real problem cannot serve, however, as pretext for the maintenance of trade distorting policies that prevent the development of agriculture and disrupt markets in developing and least developed countries.

As far as trade is concerned, the greatest contribution to the development of LDCs would be the elimination of distortions in agricultural trade. Agriculture is the main economic activity and the main source of employment in LDCs. Yet, total support to agricultural production in rich countries is still three times as large as the volume of ODA. Subsidized exports from developed countries continue to displace production in developing and least developed countries, thus denying income generating opportunities and reinforcing dependency on not always reliable handouts.

The Doha Development Agenda remains unfinished, although it was launched ten years ago, shortly after the III UN LDC Conference in Brussels. The prospects of reaping the fruits of prosperity and economic growth from the conclusion of the Doha Round look dimmer by the day. And the Round has not stalled because of some determined effort to improve the benefits to LDCs. The Round has come to a standstill because some developed countries want even more market access in developing countries, while at the same time invoking the need for protection against exports from LDCs.

There can be no letup in international support for the LDCs. Developed countries, in particular, must live up to their commitments in terms of investment, debt relief and market access, as well as official development assistance. – including the target of 0.7% of GDP for ODA.

Naturally, we must all share in the effort to support the development of LDCs. International organizations such as UNCTAD, FAO and the United Nations agencies in general, the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO must all be involved. There are also other stakeholders, and I refer in particular to the private sector and the NGOs. Like an increasing number of other issues that have a global impact, support to the LDCs is an enterprise that calls for joint efforts.

The increased contribution of emerging donors is not to be seized as a pretext to reduce the support offered by rich countries. In spite of the crisis, developed countries still have a differentiated responsibility. Their per capita income continues to be several times larger than that of the largest emerging countries. There is no basis for withdrawing commitments or shirking responsibilities. International support to the LDCs will only be effective if each country is prepared to contribute according to its ability.

Brazil is prepared to do as it says. Without overlooking its own domestic challenges, including that of lifting a still sizable share of its population from poverty, Brazil has already undertaken a very substantial increase in support to the LDCs in the last few years.

## **TCDC**

Over the years, Brazil has accumulated significant experience in technical cooperation with other developing countries (TCDC). Brazil's TCDC Programme draws on our own experience, often well adapted to the social, economic and environmental conditions of LDCs.

Solidarity is the basic principle of South-South cooperation pursued by the Brazilian Government. This principle is translated in the construction of horizontal partnerships, non-conditionality and the promotion of autonomy and self-reliance. We favour structural initiatives that promote access to food, generate income and strengthen local markets. We listen to the demands of our partners. We assist them in achieving their objectives and finding their own solutions.

Last year, in Africa alone, the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) carried out more than 300 short, medium and long term initiatives in 38 countries, of which 22 LDCs. The amount of technical cooperation with African countries currently stands at over US\$ 54 million, mostly spent on human resources training, capacity and institution building and technology transfer. Among the most important projects, I would like to highlight the professional training centres in Guiné-Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé and Príncipe, as well as the Cotton-4 project, which is transferring Brazilian cotton-producing technology to Mali, Chad, Burkina Faso and Benin. A similar project for rice is transferring technology and training experts in Senegal, Mali, Guiné-Bissau and Mauritania.

In Asia, Timor-Leste is a priority for Brazil, with US\$ 9 million in projects and activities in areas such as agriculture, food security, education, professional training,

justice, public administration and food security. A vocational centre has trained more than 1500 students since 2002 in areas such as mechanics, informatics and construction. Since 2005, Brazil has provided judges, public attorneys and defenders to help strengthen the East Timorese Judiciary.

In Haiti, Brazilian cooperation intensified after the earthquake of January 2010. Brazil has undertaken several dozen technical missions in areas such as agriculture, food security, health and social inclusion, education and professional training, as well as infrastructure and institution building. There are currently 16 Brazilian technical cooperation projects in Haiti, accounting for over US\$ 15 million in Brazilian funds. Humanitarian assistance to Haiti exceeds US\$ 200 million.

Brazil, India and South Africa jointly set up in 2004 the IBSA Fund for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation. Each of the three countries provides US\$ 1 million a year to the Fund. It has already supported 9 projects in 6 LDCs (Burundi, Cambodia, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Laos and Sierra Leone).

## **ECDC**

Within the Paris Club, Brazil supported the Initiative for the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HPIC) and has agreed to reductions of more than US\$ 1 billion in its credits to those countries. In the last five years, Brazil was waived close to US\$ 500 million in debts and is currently renegotiating the debts of 14 LDCs – 10 of which are part of HPIC.

While supportive of HPIC, Brazil believes it is insufficient to solve the problem of chronic indebtedness in the LDCs. We believe that changes to the international trading system are required to enable LDCs to generate enough income and overcome the structural tendency to contract unsustainable levels of debt.

## **Brazil-LDC Partnership**

Our contribution will increase further in the next decade. The Brazilian Government has decided to launch the Brazil-LDC Partnership. It will deepen and expand our humanitarian, financial, economic and technical cooperation with the LDCs, based on the principles of solidarity, non-conditionality and shared responsibilities.

We will further encourage our LDC partners to fully own technical cooperation projects. The Brazil-LDC Partnership will promote autonomy and self-reliance. It will favour structural initiatives that promote access to food, generate income and strengthen local markets, but always demand-driven. Our technical cooperation will be flexible. There are not recipes and no ready-made projects. We want to help our partners achieve their objectives and to find their own solutions.

A major example is the construction in Mozambique of a factory for the production of anti-retroviral drugs. Having sponsored the feasibility studies about the production by the Mozambican Government of anti-retroviral and other medicines, Brazil is now starting to build the factory – the first of its kind in Africa -, on land purchased by the Mozambican Government.

We will expand the number of LDCs that receive technical cooperation from Brazil. In Asia, Brazil has recently started to provide technical cooperation to Afghanistan.

We expect to finalize agreements with three other countries in the region: Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar.

Brazil's Agricultural Research Company (EMBRAPA) opened an office in Ghana, to serve as a centre for the transfer and diffusion of technology in Africa, with a special focus on tropical agriculture. A recently enacted law changed the bylaw of EMBRAPA with the objective of providing greater flexibility for its operations abroad, particularly in Africa.

Brazil strongly believes that the development of human resources will be crucial to allow LDCs to escape poverty. In this connection, it provides scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students from 12 LDCs. The Brazil-LDC Partnership will extend the programme to another 8 LDCs.

## **HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

Since 2006, Brazil has provided humanitarian assistance to 70 countries, of which 24 LDCs. A law enacted early this year has allocated 100 thousand tons of rice, up to 300 thousand tons of maize, up to 10 thousand tons of milk powder and a ton of horticultural seeds to humanitarian assistance in Latin America, Africa and Asia, through the World Food Programme, to countries facing acute food insecurity. Among the countries that could receive this food in the short term are Ethiopia, Niger, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, Sudan, Haiti, Angola, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau.

## **BIOFUELS**

Another issue of great relevance for the LDCs is the generation of energy for development. Brazil is willing to share with LDCs its long experience in biofuels and renewable energies, including through the transfer of technology, with a view to establishing production chains, generating exports and strengthening their economies.

## **TRADE**

In accordance with the Hong Kong WTO Ministerial Declaration, Brazil has committed to providing duty-free and quota-free access (DFQF) to exports from the LDCs. We expected that this would be one of the crowning achievements of the Doha Round. In view of the tardiness in the Round, however, the Brazilian Government has decided to submit to Congress in the coming months a proposal for a DFQF programme for LDCs, independently of the outcome of the Doha Round.

Our support to the LDCs is predicated on South-South solidarity. We view their success as reflecting on us; we are proud of what LDCs have already achieved, and look forward to their future prosperity.

It is from this perspective that we approach the task of this Conference. The international community must commit to redouble its efforts in support of the 48 most vulnerable countries in the planet. More than an economic need, this is a moral imperative. Brazil is prepared and determined to do its part.

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & RIO+20**

Finally, I would like to recall that Brazil will host in June 2012 the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). Its objective is to ensure the balanced integration of economic development, social development and environmental protection. It offers a unique opportunity to strengthen the conceptual and political achievements commonly reached in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro. It will be an occasion to emphasize the need to strengthen the commitment of the developed countries to increase the financial flows for sustainable development, especially to the LDCs. The LDCs are the most vulnerable to climate change and therefore need special instruments to develop mitigation and adaptation strategies. Brazil invites all LDCs to come to Rio de Janeiro at the highest level and make sure that their priorities are duly reflected in the decisions and outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference.

Thank you.