



BRASIL

Statement by H. E. Ambassador Celso Amorim,
Minister of External Relations

of the Federative Republic of Brazil,

at the Opening of the General Debate

of the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

New York, 17 September 2005

(Check against delivery)

Let me extend my warmest congratulations to Ambassador Ian Eliasson, of Sweden, on his assumption of the Presidency of the 60th General Assembly. Allow me also to express our fraternal greetings to Secretary General Kofi Annan, whose wisdom and commitment to multilateralism have made an immense contribution to progress in the United Nations. Minister Jean Ping, of Gabon, deserves special recognition for the competent and dedicated manner in which he presided over the 59th session of the General Assembly.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

History offers us a rare opportunity to promote change. Let us not waste it. Peace, Development, Democracy and Respect for Human Rights are objectives that unite us. Reform must be our motto.

The Final Document adopted yesterday by the Summit has unquestionably fallen short of our expectations. It provides us nevertheless with the guidelines that will allow us to accomplish our tasks.

Mr. President,

The General Assembly must be strengthened. More than ever, we need a forum of universal representation where the crucial issues of today's world can be democratically debated. The General Assembly must provide leadership and political guidance to the Organization as a whole. In supporting the authority of the General Assembly, by means of reforms to render it more agile and productive, we are supporting the very essence of the United Nations.

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) must become again a dynamic and influential organ. It must help us find convergences on issues related to trade, finance and development, in an environment free from prejudice and dogma. ECOSOC should be the privileged deliberative forum in the quest for conciliation between the objectives of sustainable economic growth and the reduction of the inequalities derived from an asymmetric globalization. President Lula suggested this year, at the G-8 Summit at Gleneagles, that we could start raising the profile of ECOSOC by organizing a high level segment with the participation of the Economy Minister of the country in

charge of the G-8 Presidency. ECOSOC must also contribute to the promotion of peace and stability in partnership with the Security Council, as set forth by Article 65 of the Charter.

The establishment of a Peace-Building Commission will bridge an important institutional gap. It will be the link, inexistent today, between security and development.

The structures and mechanisms of this Organization in the human rights field must be improved and reinforced. We support the creation of a Human Rights Council, based on the principles of universality, dialogue and non-selectivity. The elaboration of an annual global report on human rights by the High Commissioner's Office, covering all countries and situations, will contribute to increase the credibility of the UN human rights system.

The Secretary General has called for better coordination in our work to protect victims of grave and systematic violations of human rights. International cooperation in the human rights and humanitarian assistance field must be guided by the principle of collective responsibility. We have sustained, on several occasions — in our region and elsewhere — that the principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of States must be associated with the idea of "non-indifference".

We have been called upon to deal with new concepts such as "human security" and "responsibility to protect". We agree that they merit an adequate place in our system. But it is an illusion to believe that we can combat the dysfunctional politics at the root of grave human rights violations through military means alone, or even economic sanctions, to the detriment of diplomacy and persuasion.

Human security is mainly the result of just and equitable societies, which promote and protect human rights, strengthen democracy and respect the rule of law, while creating opportunities for economic development and social justice. The United Nations was not created to disseminate the notion that order should be imposed by force. This extreme expedient can only be considered when all other efforts have been exhausted and peaceful solutions have indeed proved not viable. The judgment regarding the existence of such exceptional circumstances must always be a multilateral one. On that basis, the Charter foresees two situations for the use of force: the need to restore or maintain international peace and security and the right to self-defense. Mixing these two concepts would blur the very tenets of this Organization.

Mr. President,

Security Council reform is the centerpiece of the reform process in which we are engaged. The immense majority of Member States recognizes the need to make the Security Council more representative and democratic.

At this historical juncture, no Security Council reform will be meaningful should it not contemplate the expansion of permanent and non-permanent seats, with developing countries from Africa, Latin America and Asia in both categories. We cannot accept the perpetuation of imbalances that run contrary to the very spirit of multilateralism.

Above all, a more efficient Council must be capable of ensuring the implementation of its decisions. It is not reasonable to expect that the Council can continue to expand its agenda and responsibilities without addressing its democracy deficit.

Two years ago, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva declared before this Assembly that every nation committed to democracy, at the domestic level, must strive – in its external relations – for more transparent, legitimate and representative decision-making processes. In the same spirit, Secretary-General Kofi Annan pointed out the contradictions to be overcome, and I quote: "We are the ones who go around the world lecturing everybody about democracy. I think it is about time we apply it to ourselves and then show there is effective representation".

Mr. President,

We are still far from accomplishing the goals of the Millennium Declaration. This week's Summit has stressed the importance of a renewed commitment to Development Assistance, and contributed to promote universal acceptance of the 0.7 per cent threshold as the proportion of GNP to be destined for ODA. At the same time, we must continue to work on innovative and additional sources of financing. I note with satisfaction that since the World Leaders Meeting for the Action Against Hunger and Poverty - convened last year by President Lula - we have achieved significant progress. A growing number of governments and NGOs have joined in the effort to eradicate hunger and poverty. This is the only war in which we are engaged. This is the only war we can all win.

This year we witnessed yet again brutal acts of terrorism. Innocent civilians, women and children are today victims of groups who stand as adversaries to the values we share. As a country whose identity cannot be dissociated from the notions of tolerance and diversity, Brazil rejects in the strongest terms these abhorrent acts, which go against the very notion of humanity. We will continue to lend our support to increased international cooperation in the combat against terrorism and to the elimination of its deep-rooted causes. Such efforts must be undertaken with due respect for international law and human rights. The fight against terrorism cannot be viewed in terms of police repression alone. Neither can such repressive acts result in absurd, indiscriminate deaths, similar to those caused by terrorism itself. Despite the fact that there is no automatic linkage between poverty and terrorism, communities can be exposed to extreme attitudes by fanatical groups as a result of grave social and economic problems – especially when associated with the absence of civil and political liberties. I wish to express Brazil's readiness to work intensively with a view to the prompt conclusion of a comprehensive convention on terrorism.

We recognize the risks of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, we cannot disregard the importance of reducing and dismantling existing arsenals of all such weapons. We regret that the Seventh Review Conference of the NPT did not produce tangible results. Together with non-proliferation efforts, we must continue to work tirelessly towards nuclear disarmament.

In addition to the challenges I have just mentioned, we are faced with two crises of global impact: the pandemic explosion of HIV/AIDS, and the serious threats posed by climate change. Brazil will remain engaged in promoting the implementation of existing multilateral instruments to fight these scourges.

Mr. President,

Brazil is committed to reinforcing the strategic alliance with its main partner in our region – Argentina – and to the promotion of a prosperous, integrated and politically stable South America, building upon our experience in MERCOSUL. We will tirelessly strive for MERCOSUL's advancement in the economic and political fields. The South American Community of Nations, which was founded last year in Cuzco, Peru, can be seen as a driving force for integration in Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole.

Our efforts in establishing partnerships with other developing countries and regions go beyond our immediate region.

IBSA – the India, Brazil and South Africa Dialogue Forum – has brought together three large democracies from Africa, Asia and Latin America, keen on deepening the economic, political and cultural ties among themselves and their regions.

Together with other partners we joined in the setting up of the G-20, which has placed developing countries at the center stage of agricultural trade negotiations of the WTO Doha Round. Thanks to the role played by the G-20 it has been possible to associate trade liberalization and social justice in the context of the multilateral trade system.

Strengthening our ties with Africa has been a longstanding aspiration of Brazil's. No previous government has pursued this objective with the resolve demonstrated by President Lula. Trade and cooperation between Brazil and Africa has grown significantly. Political dialogue has intensified. We have been contributing to the consolidation of peace and democracy in countries such as Guinea Bissau and Sao Tome and Principe. We have helped to fight hunger, develop agriculture, and combat the scourge of HIV/AIDS in various brother countries of Africa.

The same sense of solidarity inspires us to participate in the peace efforts of the United Nations in Haiti. Brazilian and Latin American presence in Haiti is unprecedented both in terms of troops and of political commitment. We are moved by three main objectives: 1) the setting up of a safe environment; 2) the promotion of dialogue among the various political actors with a view to a genuine democratic transition; and 3) effective international support for institutional, social and economic reconstruction. Haiti is likely to be the first test case for the Peace Building Commission.

Brazil and the Arab world are renewing their ties of friendship, inspired by strong historical and cultural affinities. Apart from bilateral initiatives, Brazil has been strengthening its relations with regional groupings such as the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League. In May 2005 an unprecedented summit of South American and Arab States took place in Brasilia. This pioneering initiative brought together two regions of the developing world, in a concrete demonstration of harmony of civilizations.

In several trips to the Middle East, I had the opportunity to talk to a variety of people, including leaders from Israel and Palestine. They are aware of Brazil's willingness to support the work of the Quartet, as a partner for peace. The practice of tolerance and respect for others, as well as the harmonious coexistence of different communities in our country, constitute our comparative advantage. I believe this conviction is shared by important personalities and political leaders from both Israel and Palestine.

Mr. President,

At the threshold of a new chapter in the life of the United Nations, Brazil remains committed to the ideals that led to the creation of the only Organization of universal scope; the only body that can guarantee a future of peace and prosperity, not for the few, but for all.

Thank you.