

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ (MARCH 13, 2008)

At the invitation of the Brazilian Minister of Foreign Relations, Celso Amorim, the U.S. Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, visited Brazil (March 13-14, 2008). In Brasília, Secretary Rice met with President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Minister Amorim. Secretary Rice and the Brazilian Minister for Racial Equality, Edson Santos, signed, in their capacities as representatives of two major multiethnic democracies, the Joint Action Plan to Eliminate Racial and Ethnic Discrimination and Promote Equality. In Salvador, Secretary Rice will meet the Governor of the State of Bahia, Jaques Wagner.

Minister Amorim and Secretary Rice conducted a wide ranging assessment of the U.S.-Brazil bilateral relationship and the regional and international situation, from the perspective of our shared values in the areas of democracy, human rights and development with social justice.

Minister Amorim and Secretary Rice reviewed the advances achieved in implementing the Memorandum of Understanding on Biofuels, and discussed next steps in advancing this initiative.

In the context of strengthening the bilateral partnership on biofuels, they agreed to establish a Task Force on the Sustainability of Biofuels, with the objective of collecting and disseminating information on the basis of up-to-date, accurate and reliable scientific research.

They stressed the importance of deepening the Economic Partnership Dialogue (EPD) which enables both countries to take a strategic view of the bilateral economic relationship and allows identification of opportunities for cooperation.

In this context, they welcomed the upcoming seminar to be held in April in Washington, D.C. between the textile industries of both countries to discuss common challenges and opportunities for enhanced cooperation. They encouraged other parts of the private sector to replicate this initiative.

They also reviewed the results of the first meeting of the U.S.-Brazil CEO Forum and discussed plans for the next meeting on April 28, 2008, in Washington.

They noted the importance of the bilateral dialogue under the Brazil-U.S. Common Agenda on the Environment. They pledged to broaden and intensify educational cooperation, through existing programs such as the U.S.-Brazil Higher Education Consortia Program (CAPES/FIPSE).

Secretary Rice and Minister Amorim noted continuing progress under the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism between the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Relations and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, and the resumption of meetings of the U.S.-Brazil Consultative Committee on Agriculture.

They applauded the success of the U.S.-Brazil Innovation Conference and emphasized the importance of stimulating cooperation between governments, academia and private sectors of both countries to foster innovation.

They reviewed with satisfaction the improvement of the security situation in Haiti and reiterated their support for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), and social and economic development in Haiti.

They reaffirmed their determination to maintain a strategic dialogue on global issues through biannual consultative meetings. They reiterated their intent to maintain a dialogue to address issues related to peace, security, and economic well-being in Africa and the Middle East.

They reaffirmed that both governments are committed to the process initiated at the Annapolis Meeting to promote Middle East peace. They exchanged ideas on ways of providing support for Israeli and Palestinian efforts to realize the shared vision of two states, living side-by-side in peace and security.

They reiterated their readiness to work in partnership with the governments of African countries to promote peace, democracy and development, noting with satisfaction the advances in implementing trilateral cooperation projects with Guinea Bissau and São Tomé e Príncipe. They acknowledged the role played by Brazil as coordinator of the configuration of the UN Peace Building Commission on Guinea Bissau and agreed to cooperate closely therein.

The two ministers underscored the importance of concluding the Doha Round as early as this year, in view of the role that international trade can play in sustaining global economic growth and development. They reiterated the two countries' commitment to achieving an ambitious and balanced outcome that fully meets the mandate of the Doha Round.

They assessed the work of the formal and informal multilateral economic and financial mechanisms and looked at measures to bring them into line with structural changes in the world economy. They discussed reform of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, including the process for selecting senior officials and reformulation of the IMF quota system. They also addressed the expansion of the G-8 by fully incorporating major emerging countries.

Finally, they reaffirmed the importance of reform of the United Nations to make the organization better able to deal with today's complex international agenda. They further reaffirmed their commitment to coordinate closely on the issue of Security Council reform.