



INTERVENTION BY THE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF BRAZIL IN GENEVA,
AMBASSADOR CLODOALDO HUGUENEY

SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Geneva, Switzerland

Check against delivery

11 August 2006

Mr. Chairman,

A month ago, this Council gathered in its first Special Session and adopted a resolution on the human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territory in which it decided to urgently dispatch the Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories to undertake a fact-finding mission on the situation.

It is with deep sorrow and grave concern that we witness, once more, the escalation of violence, the spiralling and unchecked use of force in the Middle East. Brazil is deeply concerned with the blatant violations of international humanitarian law for which the civilian population on both sides of the Israel/Lebanon border have borne the brunt.

The escalation of the Lebanese conflict is deeply felt by the People and Government of Brazil. As recently recalled by President Lula, Brazil is home to the largest Lebanese community outside Lebanon. A significant Brazilian community also lives in that country. Equally, there is an important Jewish community in Brazil and many Brazilians live in Israel. We feel directly affected by the dimension of the violence against civilians, in both sides of the border.

At least seven Brazilian nationals, three of them small children, have perished because of air raids against the cities of Srifa and Tallousa. We strongly condemned those actions and also expressed our opposition to retaliations which deteriorate even further the fragile

situation in the Region. We cannot accept the loss of innocent civilian's lives.

The Brazilian Government established an unprecedented operation to evacuate approximately 3.000 nationals so far. A major supply of medicines providing sufficient treatment for 9 thousand people, for three months, has been donated and dispatched to Lebanon through the World Health Organization.

The reported numbers of civilian casualties is appalling and the humanitarian situation disastrous. Both the loss of life in Israel as a result of rocket attacks by Hezbollah and the disproportionate scale of Israeli military response are deplorable. We condemn the loss of civilian lives and sufferance upon civilians, including children, women, ageing people.

In a communication sent to the Secretary-General Kofy Annan, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva reiterated **(and I quote)** "that Brazil repudiates terrorism, which cannot be justified on any grounds. However, we cannot fail to condemn, in the most vehement terms, the disproportionate reaction and the excessive use of force that have resulted in the death of a large number of civilians, including women and children, and in the destruction of infrastructure in Lebanon"**(end of quote)**.

According to assessment provided by many reliable sources, including agencies from the United Nations system, bombing in Lebanon has created 400.000 refugees, almost 1 million displaced -- practically one quarter of the

Lebanese population - almost 3.400 civilians injured and 1.000 deaths. More than 200 thousand Lebanese are in improvised shelters, in schools and other public buildings, and other 600 thousand have sought accommodation with relatives. According to recent report by OCHA, food supply in Lebanon is only sufficient for the next three days. Assurances of safe humanitarian supply routes are now essential to avoid a catastrophe.

Moreover, targeting basic infrastructure of a country is a form of collective punishment that jeopardizes not only the development of that country, but also implies the restriction to the full realization and enjoyment of all human rights in Lebanon.

The devastating attack on Qana, on 30 July 2006 in southern Lebanon, in which the vast majority of victims were children, is symptomatic of the way in which this conflict has been fought to date. The attacks that led to the death of four UNIFIL observers were equally a reason for deep consternation.

The conflict, deplorable "per se", has at this time gone beyond any acceptable limit of proportionality for its growing use of indiscriminate force, in flagrant violation of the most basic principles of International, humanitarian and human rights law.

Any violation of humanitarian law by Hizbullah would not have absolved Israel from its legal obligations to protect civilians by strictly observing the principle of proportionality and the clear limits established in

international rules. For its part, Hizbullah's firing of rockets against Israeli cities and towns violates the prohibition of direct attacks against the civilian population.

Brazil calls on the parties to the conflict to immediately observe their obligations under international humanitarian law and to allow unimpeded humanitarian access to civilians and ensure their unhindered and safe passage from areas of military operations. Humanitarian supply routes for delivering aid must be established. Brazil urges all forces in the conflict to allow for humanitarian assistance to be provided to the affected population forced to flee their homes, guaranteeing the necessary conditions for protection and support for all persons displaced by the current conflict.

Mr. Chairman,

We do not believe that the use of violence by either side in this conflict is justifiable or effective in the pursuit of justice and peace. And certainly escalating the level of violence will not make a durable peace more likely. Brazil is a country which firmly believes in dialogue and in the peaceful solution of conflicts. It is necessary to interrupt the logic of military action and restore the diplomatic logic of negotiations.

As a principle, my country does not accept the use of violence as an instrument to achieve goals. Violence, independently of its motivation or origin, only fuels conflict and constitutes an obstacle to the search for a

peaceful solution to the problems in Lebanon and in the Region.

The Government of Brazil fully supports the efforts undertaken by the United Nations to achieve an immediate cease-fire and setting up conditions for achieving a durable, negotiated and just peace between Lebanon and Israel. Through the Security Council the international community must urgently fulfil its responsibilities and take immediate action to prevent further escalation of the conflict, further civilian casualties and damage, which are likely to spur a new cycle of violence, causing more victims.

The Human Rights Council has a major responsibility to guarantee the defence, the promotion and the respect for all human rights for all the people independently of their nationality. Brazil appeals to Israel to allow the delimitation of safe humanitarian corridors in order to make it possible to bring help to civilians.

The international community must not remain passive and under the effect of a kind of banalization of violence and war. President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and our Minister of External Relations, Ambassador Celso Amorim, have since the beginning of the conflict, appealed to a cease fire and expressed hope for a diplomatic process which could bring the understanding in that region.

During the last weeks, President Lula and Minister Amorim have made contacts with the Secretary General of the

UN and with many heads of governments or states in order to contribute to a solution.

Brazil supports the diplomatic efforts aiming at reaching an immediate cease fire and achieving a negotiated, just, lasting and comprehensive peace between Lebanon and Israel.

Mr. Chairman,

We cannot solve the most profound and intricate issues involved in the conflict during this Special Session of the Human Rights Council. Yet, my delegation is convinced that this Council can make a difference by drawing the attention and calling upon discernment, the absolute need for respect for human rights and international humanitarian law.

Thank you.