BRAZIL

STATEMENT BY H. E. DILMA ROUSSEFF,
PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL,
AT THE OPENING OF THE GENERAL DEBATE
OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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(check against delivery)

Ambassador John Ashe, President of the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly,

Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Heads of State and Government,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me initially to express my satisfaction in having a renowned representative of Antigua and Barbuda – a country that is part of the Caribbean, which is so cherished in Brazil and in our region – to conduct the work of this session of the General Assembly.

You can count, Excellency, on the permanent support of my Government.

Allow me also, at the beginning of my intervention, to express the repudiation of the Brazilian Government and people to the terrorist attack that took place in Nairobi. I express our condolences and our solidarity to the families of the victims, the people and the Government of Kenya.

Terrorism, wherever it may occur and regardless of its origin, will always deserve our unequivocal condemnation and our firm resolve to fight against it. We will never give way to barbarity.

Mr. President,

I would like to bring to the consideration of delegations a matter of great importance and gravity.

Recent revelations concerning the activities of a global network of electronic espionage have caused indignation and repudiation in public opinion around the world.

In Brazil, the situation was even more serious, as it emerged that we were targeted by this intrusion. Personal data of citizens was intercepted indiscriminately. Corporate information - often of high economic and even strategic value - was at the center of espionage activity. Also, Brazilian diplomatic missions, among them the Permanent Mission to the United Nations and the Office of the President of the Republic itself, had their communications intercepted.

Tampering in such a manner in the affairs of other countries is a breach of International Law and is an affront to the principles that must guide the relations among them, especially among friendly nations. A sovereign nation can never establish itself to the detriment of another sovereign nation. The right to safety of citizens of one country can never be guaranteed by violating fundamental human rights of citizens of another country.

The arguments that the illegal interception of information and data aims at protecting nations against terrorism cannot be sustained.

Brazil, Mr. President, knows how to protect itself. We reject, fight and do not harbor terrorist groups.

We are a democratic country surrounded by nations that are democratic, pacific and respectful of International Law. We have lived in peace with our neighbors for more than 140 years.

As many other Latin Americans, I fought against authoritarianism and censorship, and I cannot

but defend, in an uncompromising fashion, the right to privacy of individuals and the sovereignty of my country. In the absence of the right to privacy, there can be no true freedom of expression and opinion, and therefore no effective democracy. In the absence of the respect for sovereignty, there is no basis for the relationship among Nations.

We face, Mr. President, a situation of grave violation of human rights and of civil liberties; of invasion and capture of confidential information concerning corporate activities, and especially of disrespect to national sovereignty.

We expressed to the Government of the United States our disapproval, and demanded explanations, apologies and guarantees that such procedures will never be repeated.

Friendly governments and societies that seek to build a true strategic partnership, as in our case, cannot allow recurring illegal actions to take place as if they were normal. They are unacceptable.

Brazil, Mr. President, will redouble its efforts to adopt legislation, technologies and mechanisms to protect us from the illegal interception of communications and data.

My Government will do everything within its reach to defend the human rights of all Brazilians and to protect the fruits borne from the ingenuity of our workers and our companies.

The problem, however, goes beyond a bilateral relationship. It affects the international community itself and demands a response from it. Information and telecommunication technologies cannot be the new battlefield between States. Time is ripe to create the conditions to prevent cyberspace from being used as a weapon of war, through espionage, sabotage, and attacks against systems and infrastructure of other countries.

The United Nations must play a leading role in the effort to regulate the conduct of States with regard to these technologies.

For this reason, Brazil will present proposals for the establishment of a civilian multilateral framework for the governance and use of the Internet and to ensure the effective protection of data that travels through the web.

We need to create multilateral mechanisms for the worldwide network that are capable of ensuring principles such as:

1 - Freedom of expression, privacy of the individual and respect for human rights.

2 - Open, multilateral and democratic governance, carried out with transparency by stimulating collective creativity and the participation of society, Governments and the private sector.

3 - Universality that ensures the social and human development and the construction of inclusive and non-discriminatory societies.

4 - Cultural diversity, without the imposition of beliefs, customs and values.

5 - Neutrality of the network, guided only by technical and ethical criteria, rendering it inadmissible to restrict it for political, commercial, religious or any other purposes.

Harnessing the full potential of the Internet requires, therefore, responsible regulation, which ensures at the same time freedom of expression, security and respect for human rights.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The choice of the Post-2015 Development Agenda as the theme for this Session of the General Assembly could not be more appropriate.

The fight against poverty, hunger and inequality constitutes the greatest challenge of our time.

For this reason, we have adopted a socially inclusive economic model based on generating employment, strengthening small-scale agriculture, expanding credit, increasing the value of salaries and developing a vast social protection network, particularly through the Bolsa Família ("Family Stipend") Program.

Beyond previous achievements, we have lifted 22 million Brazilians out of extreme poverty in only two years.

We have drastically reduced child mortality. A recent report by UNICEF indicates that Brazil has promoted one of the most notable reductions of this indicator in the world.

Children are a priority for Brazil. This is reflected in our commitment to education. We are the country which has most increased public investment in education, according to the last OECD report. We have also just approved legislation which earmarks 75% of all petroleum royalties to education, and 25% to health services.

Mr. President,

In the debate on the Post-2015 Development Agenda we must focus on the results of Rio+20.

The major step taken in Rio de Janeiro was to place poverty in the center of the sustainable development agenda. Poverty is not a problem exclusive to developing countries, and environmental protection is not a goal to achieve merely once poverty is overcome.

The meaning of the Post-2015 Agenda is the development of a world in which it is possible to grow, include and protect.

By promoting, Mr. President, social ascension and overcoming extreme poverty, as we are doing, we have created an immense contingent of citizens with better quality of life, increased access to information and greater awareness of their rights.

Citizens with new hopes, new desires and new demands.

The protests in June, in my country, are an inseparable part of the development of our democracy and of social change.

My Government did not repress them, on the contrary, it listened to and understood the voices from the streets. We listened and understood because we ourselves came from the streets.

We were educated day to day by the great struggles of Brazil. The street is our ground, our base.

The protesters did not ask to return to the past. They did ask for further progress towards a future of greater rights, participation and social achievements.

It was during this decade that we promoted the greatest reduction in social inequality in the last 50 years. It was during this decade that we created a system of social protection which permitted us to nearly eradicate extreme poverty.

We know that democracy generates the desire for more democracy. Social inclusion demands further social inclusion. Quality of life awakens the yearning for more quality of life.

For us, progress achieved is always just a beginning. Our development strategy demands more, as desired by all Brazilians.

We cannot just listen, we must act. We must transform this extraordinary energy into achievements for everyone.

For this reason, I have launched 5 major pacts: the pact Against Corruption and for Political Reform; the Urban Mobility pact, geared towards the improvement of public transportation and urban reform; the Education pact, our great passport to the future, which will be supported by royalties from oil resources; a Health pact which provides for doctors to assist Brazilians in the poorest and most remote regions of the country; and the Fiscal Responsibility pact, to guarantee the economic viability of this new stage.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Although the most acute phase of the crisis is behind us, the situation of the world economy remains fragile, with unacceptable levels of unemployment.

According the ILO Statistics, there are more than 200 million unemployed people throughout the world.

This phenomenon affects populations of both developed and developing countries.

This is the right time to strengthen the growth of the world economy.

Emerging countries cannot alone guarantee the resumption of global growth. More than ever, it is necessary to coordinate actions in order to reduce unemployment and reestablish the momentum of international trade. We are all in the same boat.

My country is restoring economic growth despite the impact of the international crisis over the last years. We rely on three important elements: i) a commitment to solid macroeconomic policies; ii) the continuation of successful social inclusion policies; iii) the adoption of measures to increase our productivity and, therefore, our international competitiveness.

We are committed to stability, to controlling inflation, to improving the quality of public spending and to maintaining optimal fiscal performance.

We reiterate our support, Mr. President, for the reform of the IMF.

Governance of the Fund should reflect the weight of emerging and developing countries in the world economy. Delaying this reform will further reduce the Fund's legitimacy and effectiveness.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The year 2015 will mark the 70th anniversary of the United Nations and the 10th anniversary of the 2005 World Summit.

It will be the occasion to carry out the urgent reform we have been calling for since that Summit.

It is imperative to avoid the collective defeat of reaching 2015 without a Security Council capable of fully exerting its responsibilities in today's world.

The limited representation of the UN Security Council is an issue of grave concern, considering the challenges posed by the 21st century.

The immense difficulty in offering a solution to the Syrian crisis and the paralysis in addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict exemplify this concern.

In dealing with important issues, the recurring polarization between permanent members generates a dangerous paralysis.

We must provide the Council with voices that are at once independent and constructive. Only the expansion of the number of permanent and non permanent members and the inclusion of developing countries in both categories will correct the Council's deficit of representation and legitimacy.

Mr. President,

The General Debate offers the opportunity to reiterate the fundamental principles which guide my country's foreign policy and our position with regards to pressing international issues. We are guided by the defense of a multilateral world, ruled by international law, by the primacy of peaceful solutions to conflicts and by the quest for a more compassionate and just order - both economically and socially.

The crisis in Syria moves us and is cause for indignation. Two and a half years of lives lost and widespread destruction have caused the greatest humanitarian disaster of the century.

Brazil, which has in Syrian descent an important component of our nationality, is profoundly involved with this drama.

We must stop the death of innocent civilians, of children, women and the elderly. We must cease the use of arms - conventional or chemical, by the government or the rebels.

There is no military outcome. The only solution is through negotiation, dialogue and understanding.

The decision of Syria to adhere to the Chemical Weapons Convention and to immediately apply its provisions is of great importance.

This measure is instrumental to overcome the conflict and to contribute to a world free of those arms. Their use, I repeat, is heinous and inadmissible under any circumstances.

For this reason, we support the agreement reached between the United States and Russia for elimination of Syrian chemical weapons. It is up to the Syrian government to implement this

agreement fully, cooperatively and in good faith.

Whatever the case, we repudiate unilateral interventions contrary to International Law, without Security Council authorization, which would only worsen the political instability of the region and increase human suffering.

In the same vein, a durable peace between Israel and Palestine takes on new urgency in view of the changes occurring in the Middle East.

The time has come to heed to the legitimate aspirations of Palestinians for an independent and sovereign state.

The time has also come to realize the wide international consensus in favor of the two state solution.

The current negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians should bring about practical and significant results towards an agreement.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The history of the twentieth century shows that forsaking multilateralism is a prelude to wars and the consequent human misery and devastation.

It also shows that the promotion of multilateralism brings benefits on ethical, political and institutional levels.

I renew, thus, an appeal in favor of a wide and vigorous convergence of political wills to sustain and reinvigorate the multilateral system, which has in the United Nations its main pillar.

At its creation, much hope was raised that humanity could overcome the wounds of the Second World War.

That it would be possible to rebuild, from the wreckage and bloodshed, a new world of freedom, solidarity and prosperity.

We all have the responsibility of keeping this fertile and generous hope alive.

Thank you.