

Brazil Slams UN Security Council Sanctions Resolution Against Iran

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The following is the statement by Brazil, a UN Security Council member, read to the council yesterday, strongly opposing the new sanctions resolution against Iran. The resolution was adopted today under the pressure of the US, UK and France. Turkey and Brazil voted against and Lebanon abstained.

“Mr. President,

Brazil has voted against the draft resolution.

In doing so, we are honouring the purposes that inspired us in the efforts that resulted in the Tehran Declaration of 17 May.

We do not see sanctions as an effective instrument in this case. Sanctions will most probably lead to the suffering of the people of Iran and will play in the hands of those, on all sides, that do not want dialogue to prevail.

Past experiences in the UN, notably the case of Iraq, show that the spiral of sanctions, threats and isolation can result in tragic consequences.

We voted against also because the adoption of sanctions, at this juncture, runs contrary to the successful efforts of Brazil and Turkey to engage Iran in a negotiated solution for its nuclear programme.

As Brazil repeatedly stated, the Tehran Declaration adopted 17 May is a unique opportunity that should not be missed. It was approved by the highest levels of the Iranian leadership and endorsed by its Parliament.

The Tehran Declaration promoted a solution that would ensure the full exercise of Iran’s right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, while providing full verifiable assurances that Iran’s nuclear program has exclusively peaceful purposes.

We are firmly convinced that the only possible way to achieve this collective goal is to secure Iran’s cooperation through effective and action-oriented dialogue and negotiations.

The Tehran Declaration showed that dialogue and persuasion can do more than punitive actions.

Its purpose and result were to build the confidence needed to address a whole set of

aspects of Iran's nuclear programme.

As we explained yesterday, the Joint Declaration removed political obstacles to the materialization of a proposal by the IAEA in October 2009. Many governments and highly respected institutions and individuals have come to acknowledge its value as an important step to a broader discussion on the Iranian nuclear program.

The Brazilian government deeply regrets, therefore, that the Joint Declaration has neither received the political recognition it deserves, nor been given the time it needs to bear fruit.

Brazil considers it unnatural to rush to sanctions before the parties concerned can sit and talk about the implementation of the Declaration. The Vienna Group's replies to the Iranian letter of 24 May, which confirmed Iran's commitment to the contents of the Declaration, were received just hours ago. No time has been given for Iran to react to the opinions of the Vienna Group, including to the proposal of a technical meeting to address details.

The adoption of sanctions in such circumstances sends the wrong signal to what could be the beginning of a constructive engagement in Vienna.

It was also a matter of grave concern the way in which the permanent members, together with a country that is not a member of the Security Council, negotiated among themselves for months at closed doors.

Mr. President,

Brazil attaches the utmost importance to disarmament and non-proliferation and our record in this domain is impeccable.

We have also affirmed – and reaffirm now – the imperative for all nuclear activity to be conducted under the applicable safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Iran's nuclear activities are no exception.

We continue to believe the Tehran Declaration is sound policy and should be pursued. We hope all parties involved will see the long-term wisdom of doing so.

In our view, the adoption of new sanctions by the Security Council will delay, rather than accelerate or ensure progress in addressing the question.

We should not miss the opportunity of starting a process that can lead to a peaceful, negotiated solution to this question.

The concerns regarding Iran's nuclear programme raised today will not be resolved until dialogue begins.

By adopting sanctions, this Council is actually opting for one of the two tracks that were supposed to run in parallel – in our opinion, the wrong one.

Thank you”.

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Em debate sobre o mesmo tema, realizado ontem, 8 de junho, no Conselho de Segurança

das Nações Unidas, em Nova York, a Representante Permanente do Brasil, Embaixadora Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, fez a seguinte intervenção:

“Mr. President,

Brazil and Turkey requested a meeting of the Council open to all members of the United Nations because we firmly believe that the relevance of the issue at hand requires that those on behalf of whom the Council acts have the chance to fully understand the positions and perspectives of each one of us.

Mr. President,

There are important commonalities among the governments represented at this table regarding the Iranian nuclear program:

- a. We all share the goal of fully ensuring that Iran’s nuclear program is entirely peaceful.
- b. We all want Tehran to clarify legitimate doubts the international community has regarding its past and current nuclear activities.
- c. I believe that we also share the understanding that for these things to happen, we need Iran’s cooperation.

The disagreement among some of us is therefore not on the ends we pursue but on the means to achieve them.

Brazil fully supported the policy of engagement and dialogue with Iran pursued by the new US Administration. We also considered the IAEA proposal of last October a very promising avenue and actively encouraged Iran to firmly take it. It did not materialize then.

We continue to believe that this is the right policy to pursue and that additional efforts might yield results that could build confidence and allow for further progress.

We therefore, together with Turkey, continued to engage with Iran in order to help remove the political obstacles that prevented the IAEA proposal to be implemented. In doing so, we had the encouragement of key actors.

The result of such continued engagement was the Joint Declaration of 17 May.

The Declaration fully addresses all key elements that prevented the implementation of the IAEA proposal – i.e quantity, timing and place of exchange. It signaled Iran’s flexibility in a number of aspects.

- a. Iran agreed to send 1,200 kg of its LEU. Although the quantity may now seem insufficient to some, we concur with experts who note that Iran’s agreement to export a large portion of its LEU outside its borders for up to a year is worthy of consideration as a confidence-building measure.
- b. Iran agreed to deposit the LEU in Turkey, thus accepting not to retain the uranium in its territory. The LEU is to remain in Turkey under IAEA surveillance.
- c. Iran also accepted sending the LEU to Turkey before receiving the fuel. This is a positive development in relation to the previous position that the swap should take place

simultaneously (i.e. upon receipt of fuel for the TRR).

d. Iran also agreed to officially commit to the terms of the Declaration. Since then, it fulfilled its notification commitment through a letter to the DG of IAEA.

Mr. President,

The Joint Declaration was never meant to solve all problems related to the Iranian nuclear program, just as the IAEA proposal never did. Rather, it was conceived to be a confidence-building measure, a gateway for broader discussions about that matter.

Brazil recognizes that there are still very important pending issues to be addressed. These aspects can only be dealt in an atmosphere of less suspicion and more cooperation.

The Declaration calls for discussions among the concerned parties to reach an agreement. This will permit the necessary clarifications on a number of issues, including the enrichment of uranium to 20%.

Mr. President,

We are not alone in this overall assessment of the benefits of the Declaration.

Members of the Security Council have expressed support for the Declaration.

This is also the opinion of analysts in respected institutions and knowledgeable people who occupied important positions in international organizations and national governments, such as the former Director General of the IAEA, Dr. Mohammad ElBaradei, who was instrumental in the original proposal.

Dr. ElBaradei said in an interview to the Brazilian press (and we have his authorization to quote him) that the TRR deal “should be perceived as a first good confidence measure, a first effort by Iran to stretch its hand and say [they] are ready to negotiate”. He also argued that “if you remove around half of the material that Iran has to Turkey, that is clearly a confidence-building measure regarding concerns about Iran’s future intentions. The material that will remain in Iran is under IAEA safeguards and seals. There is absolutely no imminent threat that Iran is going to develop the bomb tomorrow with the material that they have in Iran”.

Of course, for the Joint Declaration to be implemented, it needs some but not indefinite time. Certainly a period shorter than any period in which other means can be realistically expected to work.

For all these reasons, Brazil does not believe that this is the moment to adopt further sanctions against Iran.

We believe, along with many, that the only viable solution to disagreements with Iran over its nuclear program is a negotiated diplomatic solution. This is why we are convinced that the fuel exchange arrangement of last May is an opportunity that should not be missed.

Thank you”.

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