



# BRAZIL

**STATEMENT BY H. E. DILMA ROUSSEFF,  
PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL,  
AT THE OPENING OF THE GENERAL DEBATE  
OF THE 70<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

New York, 28 September 2015

(check against delivery)



Your Excellency, Mogens Lykkeskov, President of the Seventieth General Assembly of the United Nations,

Your Excellency Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Your Excellencies Heads of State, Government and Delegation,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a privilege to address the General Assembly in this year when the United Nations celebrates its seventieth birthday.

Let my first words, Mr. President, be to congratulate you for your appointment to preside over this Assembly.

I reiterate, in particular, Brazil's support for your efforts to adopt measures to strengthen the development agenda of this Organization.

Seventy years have passed since the San Francisco Conference. On that occasion, the international community sought to build a world founded on International Law and on the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Since then, there have been progress and setbacks. The decolonization process has shown notable evolution, as can be seen from the composition of this Assembly.

The UN has broadened its initiatives, incorporating the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, in other words, issues related to the environment, poverty eradication, social development and access to quality services.

Matters such as urban challenges and gender and race issues have become a priority.

The Organization has not had the same success, though, in addressing collective security, an issue which was present at the UN's origins and which remains at the center of its concerns.

The proliferation of regional conflicts - some with high destructive potential - as well as the expansion of terrorism, that kills men, women, and children, destroys our common heritage and displaces millions of people from their secular communities, show that the United Nations is before a great challenge.

One cannot be complacent with barbaric acts such as those perpetrated by the so called Islamic State and other associated groups.

This situation explains, to a large extent, the refugee crisis that humankind is currently experiencing.

A significant portion of the men, women and children who perilously venture the waters of the Mediterranean and painfully wander along the roads of Europe come from the Middle East and Northern Africa, from countries which had their state institutions de-structured by military action undertaken in contravention of international law, thereby opening space for terrorism.

The profound sense of indignation caused by the picture of a dead Syrian boy on the beaches of Turkey and by the news of the 71 people asphyxiated inside a truck in Austria must be translated into unequivocal acts of solidarity.

In a world where goods, capital, data and ideas flow freely, it is absurd to impede the free flow of people.

Brazil is a hosting country. We have received Syrians, Haitians, men and women from the around the world, just as we sheltered, over a century ago, millions of Europeans, Arabs and Asians. We are a multiethnic country, where differences coexist.

Mr. President,

This worrisome backdrop dictates that we reflect on the future of the United Nations and requires that we act decisively and swiftly. We need a UN that is capable of promoting sustainable international peace and of acting quickly and efficiently in situations of crisis, localized regional conflicts and any crimes against humanity.

We can no longer delay, for example, the creation of a Palestinian State, coexisting peacefully and harmoniously with Israel. In the same vein, the expansion of settlements in the occupied territories cannot be tolerated.

A comprehensive reform of its structures is paramount in order to give the United Nations the centrality it is entitled to.

The Security Council needs to be expanded in its permanent and non-permanent categories to become more representative, legitimate and effective. Most Member-States do not want a decision on this matter to be postponed.

We expect that the session that begins today enters into history as a turning point in the UN trajectory. That it yields concrete results in the long, and so far inconclusive, process of reforming the Organization.

Our region – where peace and democracy reign – welcomes the establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States, putting an end to a dispute derived from the Cold War. We hope that this process will be completed with the end of the embargo against Cuba.

We also celebrate the recent agreement reached with Iran, which will allow that country to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and restore the hope of peace for the whole region.

In the BRICS, we launched a New Development Bank, which will assist in expanding trade and investment and possibly in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. President,

The 2030 Agenda outlines the future we want. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals reaffirm the basic tenet of Rio+20: it is possible to grow, include, preserve and protect.

They establish universal goals and highlight the need for cooperation among peoples and a common path for humanity.

This Agenda requires global solidarity, a determination from each one of us and a commitment to confront climate change, overcome poverty and generate opportunities.

In Paris, this upcoming December, we must strengthen the Climate Convention, while fully implementing its provisions and respecting its principles. The obligations to be undertaken must be ambitious - including with regard to financial and technological support to developing countries and small islands - in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Brazil is making a significant effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions without jeopardizing our development.

We continue to diversify the renewable sources in our energy mix, which is among the cleanest in the world.

We are investing in low-carbon agriculture.

We reduced deforestation in the Amazonian region by 82%.

Ambition will continue to guide our actions.

In this spirit, I announced yesterday, here at the United Nations, our INDC (Intended Nationally Determined Contributions). Brazil's contribution will be a reduction of 43% of its greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, having 2005 as the base year.

In this period, Brazil intends to put an end to illegal deforestation; to reforest 12 million hectares; to recover 15 million hectares of degraded pastures; to integrate 5 million hectares of crop-livestock-forest.

In a world where the share of renewable energy is only 13% of the energy mix, we intend to ensure a ratio of 45% of renewable sources in our energy mix. We will aim for a proportion of 66% of hydropower in our electricity generation output; a share of 23% of renewable sources, including wind, solar and biomass power, in our electricity output; an increase of about 10% in our electricity efficiency rate; a proportion of 16% of ethanol fuel and other sugarcane-derived biomass sources in our energy mix.

Brazil is thus contributing decisively to the global efforts towards implementing the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which has established the limit of no more than 2° Celsius for global warming in this century.

Brazil is one of the few developing countries to commit to an absolute goal for emissions reduction.

Our INDC includes actions to increase the resilience of the environment and to reduce the risks associated with the negative effects of climate change on the poorest and most vulnerable populations, with an emphasis on gender issues, workers' rights, and indigenous, quilombola and traditional communities.

We recognize the importance of South-South cooperation in the global efforts to counter climate change.

I would emphasize that since 2003, social policies and conditional cash transfer programs have helped lift over 36 million people out of extreme poverty. Last year Brazil graduated from the World Hunger Map. This is a testament to the efficiency of our Zero Hunger policy, which has now become the SDG number 2.

In the transition to a low-carbon economy, it is important to secure dignified and fair conditions for workers. Sustainable development requires us to commit to the promotion of decent work and the generation of quality jobs and opportunities.

The efforts to eradicate poverty and promote development must be collective and global.

In my country we know that the end of poverty is only the beginning of a long journey.

Mr. President,

For a period of six years, we sought to keep the impacts of the world crisis that emerged in 2008, in the developed world, from impacting our economy and our society.

During these six years, we adopted a comprehensive set of measures by lowering taxes, expanding credit, strengthening investment and stimulating household consumption.

This effort reached its limits due to both internal fiscal constraints and external conditions. The slow recovery of the world economy and the end of the commodities' supercycle negatively affected our economic growth. Currency devaluation and recessive pressures brought about inflation and a strong reduction of tax revenue, leading to restrictions on public finance. In order to face this situation, we are rebalancing our budget and have strongly reduced public expenditures, including investments.

We realigned prices and are adopting measures for permanent spending cuts as well as limitations on credit incentives. We are also redefining sources of revenue.

All of these initiatives aim to reorganize the fiscal situation and lower inflation in order to consolidate macroeconomic stability, increase confidence in the economy and ensure the resumption of economic growth with income distribution.

The Brazilian economy is today stronger, more solid and resilient than some years ago. We are capable of overcoming the current difficulties as we advance in our path towards development.

We find ourselves at a moment of transition to another cycle of economic expansion, a profound, solid and long-lasting one. In addition to the measures of fiscal and financial rebalancing, and of incentives to exports, we also adopted measures to foster investments on infrastructure and energy.

In Brazil, the process of social inclusion has not been interrupted. We hope that the control of inflation as well as the resumption of economic growth and credit will contribute towards further expanding household consumption.

These are the bases for a new development cycle led by an increase in productivity and the generation of more investment opportunities for businesses, as well as more jobs for citizens.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our achievements throughout the last few years have been reached in an environment of consolidation of democracy.

Thanks to the efficiency of our legal system and to the strength of democratic institutions, the functioning of the State is being scrutinized firmly and impartially by the Judiciary and by all the branches and public institutions in charge of supervising, investigating and punishing misconduct and crimes.

The Brazilian government and society do not tolerate corruption.

The Brazilian democracy becomes stronger when the authorities recognize the limits imposed by the law as their own limits.

We Brazilians want a country where the law is the limit.

Many of us fought for this, precisely when laws and rights were violated during the military dictatorship. We want a country where rulers behave strictly according to their duties, without giving way to excesses. Where judges judge with freedom and impartiality, without any pressure whatsoever and disconnected from political passions, never compromising on the presumption of innocence of any citizen.

We want a country where the clash of ideas takes place in a civilized and respectful environment. We want a country where freedom of the press is one of the cornerstones of the freedom of speech and the expression of different positions, a right of all Brazilians.

The sanctions of the law must apply to all those who committed illicit acts bearing in mind the need to uphold the principle of due process. These are the very foundations of our democracy; in this regard, I avail myself of a recent statement made by my friend José Mujica, former President of Uruguay, whom I quote: "This democracy is not perfect for we are not perfect. However, we must defend it in order to improve it, not to bury it".

Let it be known that we will not relinquish the achievements for which the Brazilian population has greatly struggled.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that Brazil welcomes citizens from around the world with open arms for the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games to be held in Rio de Janeiro.

This will be a unique opportunity to promote sport as a key tool for peace, social inclusion and tolerance, and in the fight against racial, ethnic or gender discrimination. It will also be an opportunity to promote the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities, one of the priorities of my Government.

One last point.

A few days ago the murals "War" and "Peace" by Brazilian artist Candido Portinari, donated to this Organization by the Government of my country in 1957, were reinaugurated here at the United Nations headquarters.

These works of art denounce violence and poverty and call upon peoples of the world to seek understanding and tolerance. They are a symbol representing the responsibility of the United Nations to prevent armed conflict and promote peace, social justice and the eradication of hunger and poverty.

Portinari always said that "there is no great art which is not identified with people".

The message of the Murals remains valid. It alludes not only to victims of wars but to the refugees who risk their lives on fragile boats in the Mediterranean, as well as to all of the anonymous people who seek in the United Nations protection, peace and well-being.

We hope that, upon entering the United Nations and gazing upon these murals we may be capable of hearing the voices of the people we represent and of working persistently so that their calls for peace and progress may be heeded. These were, after all, the ideals which were present, seventy years ago, at the foundation of this important accomplishment for humanity, namely the Organization of the United Nations.

Thank you.