

THE CAIRO REVIEW INTERVIEW

BRAZIL ON THE WORLD'S STAGE

Antonio Patriota, the Brazilian ambassador to the United Nations, speaks on the Middle East crises, American spying, domestic protests, and the 2014 World Cup

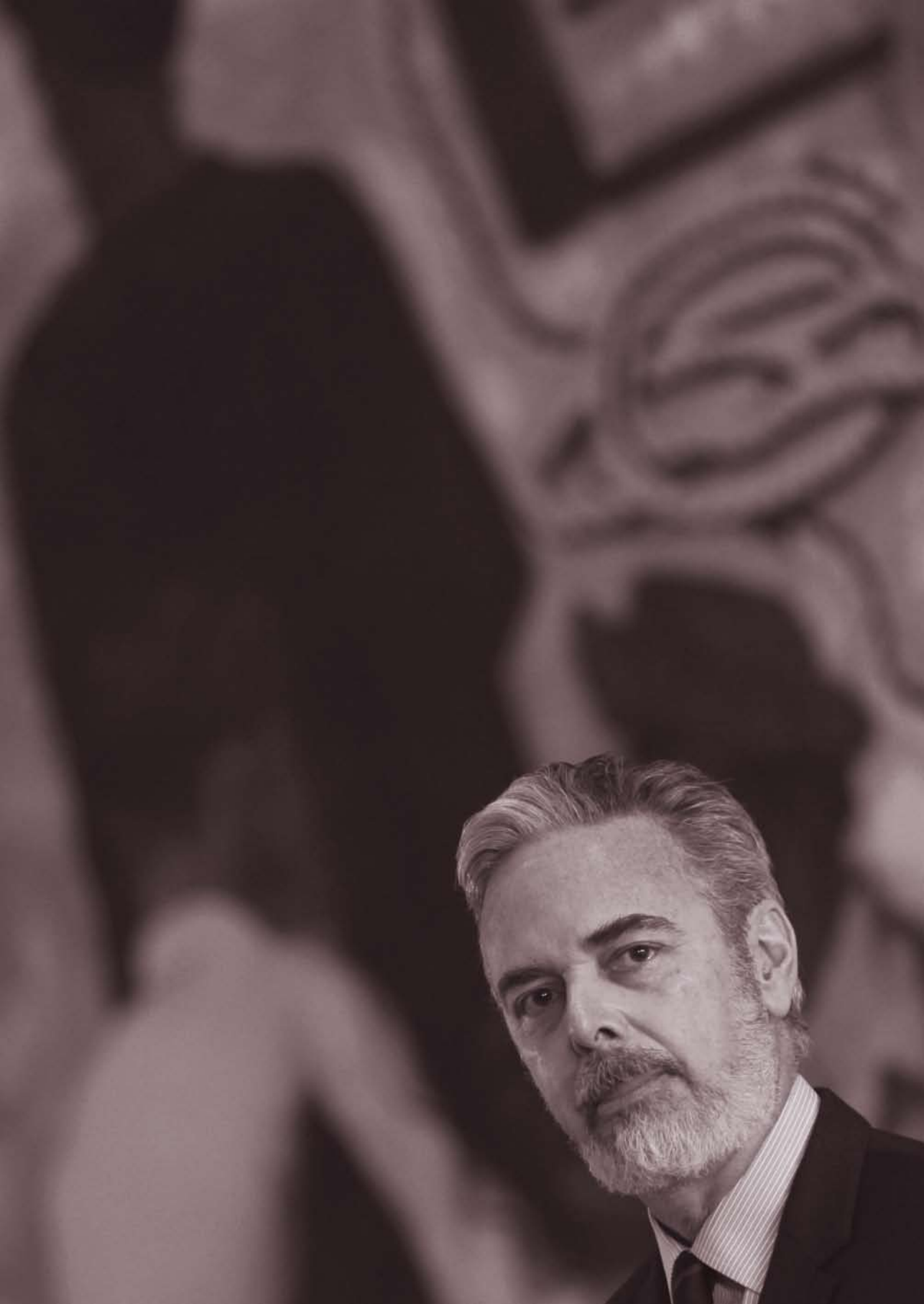
Brasília is a diplomatic backwater no longer. On the strength of impressive economic and social strides, the Federative Republic of Brazil is projecting its influence throughout the Americas and beyond. It is making a strong push for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. And in 2014 and 2016, respectively, Brazil pulls off the enviable feat of hosting two international sporting spectacles back to back: the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup, and the Olympic Games.

To take the measure of Brazil's growing global stature, the *Cairo Review* caught up with one of the country's star diplomats, **Antonio Patriota**, a former foreign minister, envoy to Washington, and currently Brazil's permanent representative to the United Nations. In addition to also serving in Brazilian missions in Geneva, Caracas, and Beijing, he has held numerous positions in the Ministry of External Relations in Brasília including secretary general of the ministry, under secretary for political affairs, and secretary for diplomatic planning. A native of Rio de Janeiro, Patriota, 59, holds degrees from the University of Geneva and the Rio Branco Institute, Brazil's diplomatic academy. *Cairo Review* Managing Editor **Scott MacLeod** interviewed Patriota on December 20, 2013, at the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations in New York.

CAIRO REVIEW: *Do you see a way out of the Syria crisis?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: The Syria crisis has now become extremely violent, brutal, deadly. Of course, this is something that has particular resonance for Brazil, because of the large number of Brazilian descendants of Syrians and Lebanese, mostly Christian Syrians and Lebanese, but Muslims as well. This instability and the scale of the violence is something that affects us very personally and in a very emotional way. Now the way out for us is obviously through diplomacy. We don't see a military way

▷ **Antonio Patriota at the Itamaraty Palace, Brasília, Aug. 28, 2013. Ueslei Marcelino/Reuters/Corbis**



out of the crisis. This is something we've repeated many times, since we were in the Security Council in 2011, in fact. We welcomed the appointment of Kofi Annan at the time as special envoy to the Syrian issue for the United Nations and the Arab League. His efforts that culminated with the outcome document of the first Geneva Conference in mid-2012 to me provided a blueprint for a diplomatic solution in Syria. Unfortunately, that document was not endorsed by the Security Council in the following months for reasons that I think have more to do with domestic politics in [the countries of] some of the permanent members of the Security Council rather than with the Syria crisis itself. This delayed the establishment of a strategy for pressuring the parties into a political transition. Several months later, the use of chemical weapons in Syria led to the U.S.-Russian Federation agreement that led Syria to join the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons, and to the dismantling of the chemical weapons arsenal in Syria—which is a very positive development in itself. But perhaps as important was the final endorsement by the Security Council of the Geneva I document. Which among other things says that there is no military solution for the Syrian crisis, and foresees a transition and a political program for the country.

Now that a Geneva II conference has been announced, and Brazil is going to be among the parties, along with India and South Africa, this is something important. From the very outset, Brazil, and myself in my former capacity [as foreign minister] in Brasília, we had defended the idea that the IBSA countries—India, Brazil, South Africa—that enjoy correct relations with all the countries in the region including Israel, and that kept a diplomatic presence in Damascus through the conflict, could add some value to the multilateral efforts to put an end to the violence, to promote a ceasing of hostilities, and to support a political transition. This doesn't mean that we have condoned the actions by the Syrian government. Brazil in particular has condemned systematically the human rights violations by the Al-Assad regime, at the Human Rights Council and at the General Assembly.

As you speak to me today, [UN and Arab League envoy to Syria] Mr. [Lakhdar] Brahimi has just announced the twenty-five countries that will be participating in Geneva II, and Brazil, India, and South Africa are included. We welcome this announcement and look forward to the possibility of creating a kind of adequate environment for a solution to the crisis to be negotiated and upheld by enlisting the support of the United Nations in particular. I think the department of peacekeeping operations here in New York is making contingency plans to look at how a UN peacekeeping or a civilization mission or some form of UN presence including a military component can ensure that whatever agreement is now reached for the Syria crisis can be sustained and lead to a sustainable peace.

CAIRO REVIEW: *What is the formula for peace?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: The formula is already in Geneva I, so you don't need to reinvent the wheel. I think one of the big challenges now is the presentation by the opposition. The opposition as we know is very fragmented. The [Syrian] government has already expressed its intention to participate in this new conference. So what is not clear is who will represent the opposition. Within the opposition, there are extremist groups. How do you handle that situation? There are the Kurdish elements. There are Kurdish elements that are sympathetic to the government. There are others that are sympathetic to the opposition. Whereas the way forward is not difficult to imagine, since we already have the first Geneva conference outcome document, the real difficulty lies in the *modus operandi*: who will be there, how do we ensure that the actors who need to sit around the table to negotiate will actually do so.

There is also the question of the supply of weapons to the factions or to those involved in the conflict in Syria, involvement by countries in the neighborhood and countries beyond the neighborhood. That also has to be taken into consideration. Even today, there was an article in the *New York Times* that talks about the inter linkages between Iran and Syria. I think it is a legitimate question to ask whether the more favorable atmosphere that is developing between the Iranian authorities and the Western governments—in particular the United States—that has led to an interim agreement on the nuclear file for Iran, will have repercussions for the Syria situation. What has become clearer in the past few months is that whereas in the past certain countries considered the departure of [Syrian President] Bashar Al-Assad as a precondition for looking at a transition in Syria, well, this is no longer a realistic proposition.

CAIRO REVIEW: *What about internally in Syria? You mentioned the split within the opposition. Something's got to give or they will continue fighting with more bloodshed and bigger crisis.*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: I think the process has to be Syrian-owned. This is a point that Mr. Brahimi made today in his press conference in Geneva. I don't think it would be appropriate for me, up front, and at this point, to pronounce myself on how the Syrians themselves should negotiate. Or what exactly is the format for them. I think that the general framework adopted in 2012 provides the necessary parameters for an agreement to be reached.

CAIRO REVIEW: *I was in Beirut in the 1980s covering the Lebanese civil war, and today the world is still talking about how to reconcile Lebanese factions. Should the Syrian people really put much faith in this process?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: Well the first step is cessation of hostility. Reconciliation takes time and is obviously difficult when you have 100,000 deaths plus, and different sectors of society that have been killing each other. But I think there is something to be said also about a foreign involvement. You were mentioning the 1980s. But you know the crisis, for example, between Iran and the United States predates that. And if we were to evolve into a scenario where there is communication—there doesn't have to be agreement across a whole range of issues, but adequate communication between Tehran and Washington. In the press recently, one was reading that there actually are many areas where the two countries would have common interests in the Middle East—certainly in Afghanistan and possibly in Syria as well. Especially in avoiding the worst-case scenarios, which I think are—and this perhaps is where also a consensus is emerging—the prospect of the more radical Islamist groups occupying parts of territory, or coming to dominate the country to some extent. So I think one has to be pragmatic but also not be deterred by the challenges, because there are also positive elements on the horizon. I think the chemical weapons agreement in many respects seems to have been a turning point. And maybe in the future, as we look back hopefully to a stabilized Syria—there have been societies that have gone through civil war in the past and that reconciled. I mean, the United States went through a civil war that killed more than 300,000 people in the nineteenth century. Even strength can be derived from that, and look into the future.

CAIRO REVIEW: *You mentioned the Islamic extremists. Is there a growing feeling that stability of the regime, even around the Al-Assad regime, is now an international interest? To prevent more gains by radical elements, to prevent a failed state scenario?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: I think the expression 'failed state' is a little bit overused. I don't see Syria as ever falling into that category because it has such a strong sense of identity. Syria is a society that has millennia behind it. Damascus is the city in the world that has been inhabited for the longest time continuously. This is one aspect of your question. The other one is how do you deal with some of these Islamic agendas that are appearing in the Middle East? I think to the extent that they don't advocate violence, and that they are ready to participate in a democratic process, they should be allowed to do so. And to the extent that a transparent fair electoral process gives them a voice in society, I think that this voice should be heard. I think it is very problematic when Islamic groups that are participating in a democratic process and have electoral victories are not allowed to govern. And this unfortunately has happened in the Middle East. And when they are not allowed to govern, what we witness is a lapse into even more extremism. We've seen this in Algeria; we've seen this to some extent in Palestine. The question is raised whether we are witnessing this in Egypt. Certainly Brazil has gone through military dictatorship and today there is a national consensus

that places democracy as one of our priorities in terms of our national development. Certainly there are no voices that question the value of democracy in Brazil. We also defend democracy for others. I think it would be a serious mistake for groups of countries or individual countries in the international community to predetermine who are the leaders who should govern country X or Y. It is up to the electorate to determine that. And if a ruler doesn't govern to the satisfaction of the majority, he can be replaced through another democratic process.

CAIRO REVIEW: *What do you make of the recent Geneva Agreement with Iran? Has Iran simply succumbed to sanctions pressure, and buying time? Has the Obama administration genuinely opened a window for Iran? Or is this a tactic so that if Iran fails to live up to the agreement, Washington can win more support for stronger measures against Iran?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: I was present at the inauguration of the new Iranian administration in Tehran a few months ago, when President [Hassan] Rowhani took office, as an envoy of President Dilma Rousseff. And I had meetings with the outgoing foreign minister, Mr. [Ali Akbar] Salehi, and brief encounters with some of the incoming [ministers]. All the expressions I heard from the Iranians at that time—that they were committed to reaching an understanding with the United States and with the P5+1 countries that are negotiating with them the nuclear file—have within a short time span in effect revealed themselves to be correct and true. I think the answer to your question is, yes, there is something important happening here. A new administration in Tehran, democratically elected, through their procedures, by the Iranian people, on a platform that included the idea of overcoming this stalemate that is creating difficulties for Iran, is going forward.

And here, on the part of the United States also, I think there has been a readiness to open serious channels of communication. This is something that has not been going on since the 1970s. So it is a major diplomatic event, and we should not underestimate its importance. I think it has the potential for being a real game changer in the Middle East, in a positive sense. In a sense of limiting violence, limiting tensions, introducing more rationality in a region where, unfortunately, there has been considerable irrational behavior. The irrational behavior is not only a manifestation of behavior by those in the Middle East. I think the U.S.-led Iraq intervention in 2003 was a very irrational intervention as well. It took place under a false pretense, the pretense that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Rather than contributing to stabilize a region, I think it actually destabilized it quite considerably. Let's give credit to those who are sitting around the table through the P5+1 format negotiating with Iran, and hope that this will continue to lead to improved contacts between Iranian authorities, the West,

and their immediate neighborhood. I think the fact that the Iranian foreign minister has been visiting the countries of the Gulf to explain the agreement is an additional demonstration of their interest in normalizing relations in the region and beyond.

CAIRO REVIEW: *How did this come about? There have been years of false starts, Iranian reluctance, American reluctance.*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: I like to believe that people learn from their mistakes. The accumulation of all these years, and the fact that this stalemate wasn't producing any positive results for the region, led a more enlightened leadership to reach the conclusion that a renewed effort should be made to try to look at possibilities for an understanding that would preserve Iran's essential interests as regards Iran's development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. They have always affirmed that their objective is purely peaceful. So if this is sincere, and we have reason to believe it is, then there should be ground for understanding.

CAIRO REVIEW: *Does Iran have a "right" to enrich uranium?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: Certainly, yes. NPT [Non-Proliferation Treaty] signatories have a right to enrich for peaceful purposes. Brazil is an NPT signatory. It has enshrined in its constitution a commitment not to develop nuclear weapons. And yet it has enrichment capacity that was developed through an autonomous technological process. Iran should have the same right; of course provided that it grants the kinds of assurances that are being requested from Iran that its nuclear program is exclusively for peaceful purposes. The Iranian situation has been brought to the attention of the Security Council. The international community included this item in its agenda at the United Nations. What is it saying? It is saying that it is not perfectly or entirely satisfied by the guarantees that Iran has provided. So there is a question here of Iran reconquering the trust and credibility that will indeed allow it to pursue enrichment. I think the position that Brazil holds, and it is not only Brazil, it is a mainstream interpretation of the NPT, is that signatories who afford the necessary guarantees that their programs are for peaceful purposes have a right to enrich.

CAIRO REVIEW: *Can those assurances actually be given on a technical basis, or is it ultimately a political decision in Washington whether the assurances are acceptable or not?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: I think there are technical assurances that can be satisfactory. Certainly. For example, in the case of Brazil and Argentina, we are countries with advanced nuclear technology. We have nuclear reactors, the capacity to build nuclear reactors. Some years ago, we had kept an option open of pursuing a military program, especially as non-NPT signatories. We only signed the NPT in the 1990s, so

there was no international obligation that would have prevented us from doing that. We unilaterally gave up this option through our 1988 constitution. And we provided the international community with the guarantees, the technical guarantees, that our program is exclusively geared toward peaceful purposes. This was through a very *sui generis* kind of understanding that includes a bi-national entity, which is the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials. And through agreements between Brazil and Argentina and this agency that have been deposited at the International Atomic Energy Agency today the international community and entities such as Nuclear Suppliers Group have recognized that the kind of assurances we provide are satisfactory. Iran in fact has even gone beyond Brazil in some respects because they have signed an instrument called the Additional Protocol to the NPT, although they have not ratified it. Now I understand that, through this agreement that was just reached in Geneva, they have also opened up the country to much more intrusive verification by international experts. This is something that is feasible, and I think the international cooperation in this area has advanced sufficiently for there to be satisfaction that a country is actually fulfilling its commitments.

CAIRO REVIEW: *Brazil became involved and negotiated the Tehran Declaration in 2010. Is there a diplomatic role for Brazil in the ongoing negotiations with Iran to ensure a successful outcome?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: I wouldn't rule out the possibility that at some point Brazil may be called upon to play some role in contributing to the full satisfaction by the international community that Iran's program is exclusively for peaceful purposes. But in some respects we have already made a significant contribution that historians and political analysts often refer to. And I would mention a recent book by Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*. There is a chapter in the book called "The Art of Taking Yes for an Answer," which is about the efforts by Brazil and Turkey that led to the Tehran Declaration of May, 2010, that at the time conformed integrally with the kind of parameters that letters by the president of the United States to Prime Minister [Recep Tayyip] Erdoğan and to President [Luiz Inácio] Lula da Silva had established for what would be seen as a significant confidence-building measure in dealing with the Iranian nuclear file. And yet was not well received once it was achieved due to other considerations and probably some degree of discomfort in the face of two non-permanent members of the Security Council accomplishing through their own diplomatic efforts and through a process that was essentially based on dialogue and not on threats or military pressure, for that matter, where others had failed. It remains an important contribution, I think, that speaks in favor of exhausting channels of communication before you resort to coercion.

CAIRO REVIEW: *The Tehran Declaration showed that the P5+1 was not achieving success with Iran at that time. Can it do so now? Or do they need Brazil and Turkey back in the process?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: There is a new government in Tehran. This new effort that is yielding results is very much the product and consequence of a deliberate political decision by the Iranian authorities who have been recently elected to, in fact, seek better communication, dialogue, and try to reach an agreement with the P5+1. That's a very important element. Under the previous circumstances, there was greater animosity between the Iranian government under President [Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad, the U.S., and others. We always condemned the kind of hostile rhetoric by the Iranian authorities regarding Israel's right to exist, for example, or Holocaust denial. Notwithstanding our disapproval of these messages, we always thought that threatening Iran with unilateral military action was not in conformity with international law, in the absence of concrete proof that Iran had any hostile designs over Israel or another neighboring country. And the hostile rhetoric would not qualify as sufficient in that case. Not only Brazil, Turkey, but other leaders, like the foreign minister of Sweden, have considered that the Tehran Declaration was a good example of what can be achieved through dialogue. Whereas intimidation will not get you there, necessarily. And it can still be an interesting reference. Be that as it may, I think we are in a different context, and we welcome the agreement announced in Geneva last month and hope that this process indeed will promote a more stable environment. Because if there is one thing the Middle East needs, it's stability.

CAIRO REVIEW: *Secretary of State John Kerry has also been very active on the Israel-Palestine issue. Is there any sign that the approach of the United States on this issue is any different from what we have seen in the past?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: I suppose that those who take a more skeptical view of what these efforts may lead to are in part justified in their attitude. Indeed there is a sense of *déjà vu*—you know, that this has been attempted before, it doesn't really lead very far, the Israelis continue building settlements, we don't really see tangible results coming out of the diplomatic negotiations. But on the other hand experience shows that even when it looks like you are going through a repetitive motion, there are new elements always coming into politics domestically or diplomacy internationally that alter the equation somehow. And I mean we've been talking about Iran, Syria, and others—the mere fact that the U.S. is speaking to Iran today, and that an agreement is being reached on the nuclear file—I think that takes away from the Israeli authorities the kind of argument that they have been using that the real existential threat to Israel is the Iranian nuclear file.

I say this very comfortably because when I met with Israeli authorities in October [2012], I told them, in a very straightforward manner, I told this to Mr. [Avigdor] Lieberman, the foreign minister, and to Mr. [Benjamin] Netanyahu [the prime minister] in a meeting where he was courteous enough to receive me as an envoy of President Dilma Rousseff, that to our mind the real threat to Israel was not Iran. It was the absence of an agreement with the Palestinians. This is what Israel needs in order to continue on a sustainable path for development and peace in its region. You can be assured that Brazil is a very firm supporter of Israel's right to exist in the first place. We enjoy strong relations with Israel; we cooperate in a number of areas including science and technology, trade is thriving. There is an influential and well-integrated Jewish community in Brazil with which the Brazilian government stays in close contact. So our own commitment to positive relations with Israel is one that cannot be called into question. But at the same time, we are extremely worried by some of the manifestations we see on the ground, the continued settlement activity, and the subterfuges and delaying tactics that seem to always be preventing Israelis from seriously addressing the question of a sovereign and viable Palestinian state. We saw this even through opposition at the United Nations to grant observer status to Palestine or UNESCO where Palestine is already a member, and in other instances. It may look like there is a repetition here but there are other elements in the surrounding environment and complex equation that are moving. And of course we are very supportive of Secretary Kerry's efforts and we believe that everything should be done in order to try to advance in this direction. Like many have said before me, the essential elements of what an agreement should look like are well known by the two sides. It is really a question of political will, and enlightened leadership taking the difficult decision to compromise where the compromises have to be made.

One aspect that I've been highlighting recently, that struck me as very significant but sometimes doesn't transpire into the mass media, is the strength of Israeli civil society. Beyond and outside governmental circles there are NGOs and groups of Israelis that actively pursue peace. There are extremely admirable groups such as the Parents Circle group that is made up of Israelis that lost family through terrorist attacks. But rather than becoming anti-Palestinian, they reach out to Palestinians who have also lost family in this conflict. And they join hands in favor of peace. I think it is very important to become aware that these groups and these individuals exist. These are heroic people and with the right kind of leadership on both sides, I think Israel and Palestine have everything to heal their wounds and join forces in making the region a region of prosperity and democracy. They already are Israel and Palestine, and through their own models and given their own circumstances that are very different, they are successful examples of democracy in the Middle East. And this is something that we should value in itself.

CAIRO REVIEW: *Broadly looking at the Arab Spring, are you optimistic it will change the Middle East for the better?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: Brazil will always be on the side of the forces that promote democracy, social justice, and emancipation for societies. I think the previous regimes in many of these countries that are now experiencing turmoil were not really sustainable and didn't meet standards of democratic rule that we would like to see for ourselves and for others. We obviously supported and identified with all those who manifested in favor of a greater say in their countries' futures, better institutions, more economic opportunity, employment, freedom of speech and expression, and we will continue siding with those views. Now radical change in any part of the world, if we look at history, always brings with it new and unforeseen consequences and complexities. We are witnessing some situations that seem sometimes to point in a direction of even more circumscribed freedom of expression or democracy. But I think we also have to be to some extent respectful of each society's trajectory without undue interference. We've been defending this perspective here at the United Nations and at the Security Council and elsewhere that whenever the international community is authorized to intervene it should do so responsibly. It is the concept of "responsibility while protecting." Because, if there is one thing that the United Nations or the Security Council or anyone from outside the region should avoid doing, it is making a situation worse than it is.

Unfortunately this is what I believe the 2003 military intervention in Iraq did. And perhaps in the case of Libya, there are arguments in favor and arguments against and there are several schools of thought. But I believe that today there is an international consensus that the way the intervention was carried out, it actually spread instability into the Sahel, into Mali, and into other areas where weapons are now finding their way in a pattern that has actually created more difficulties for the civilian population perhaps than the benefits the intervention may have brought to some civilians in Libya. This is not to say that the former regime of Muammar Gadhafi was one that could be considered minimally acceptable from all these standards I have mentioned to you—democracy, offering opportunity, equality, justice, etc. But it is a very difficult call at times, and one of the questions this raises is precisely the question of governance. Here, one of the challenges is having mechanisms that reflect today's distribution of power and influence and capacity for dialogue in order to reach and devise the best possible strategies for dealing with these complex situations. And not just taking decisions in a precipitate manner in order to placate your domestic public opinion in one direction or another. I am referring indirectly to the need for the Security Council to reform for example.

CAIRO REVIEW: *Do you think in your diplomatic lifetime that Brazil will have a seat as a permanent member of the Security Council?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: The debate has been going on for twenty years. I think there is a sense of frustration with the absence of results. I've been called to participate in a small advisory group to the president of the General Assembly here in New York to try to impart new impulse into the discussions on Security Council reform. And if there is one common element that I identify, it is the desire by a majority of UN members—and when I say majority, I think what we need here is a two-thirds majority—to reach some understanding on the expansion of the Security Council within a relatively short time span. The time span that Brazil has been advocating, for example, is 2015. Because that will be ten years since a declaration in 2005 was issued at presidential level that called for early reform of the Security Council. While you can interpret “early” in a rather elastic way, I think that after ten years we can agree that it will not be early anymore. We are working very hard to ensure that by 2015 we will have made significant progress in this direction.

CAIRO REVIEW: *President Rousseff came to the United Nations and delivered a very strong statement against the American government's global network of electronic surveillance. Why has Brazil been so outspoken on this issue in comparison to other nations? President Rousseff demanded apologies, explanations, and assurances that this espionage would not be repeated. Have any of these demands been met up till now?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: We take this to heart strongly, but we are not the only country that has reacted in this manner. Germany has, and others have, around the world. And many in the United States also expressed their disagreement with these practices whether they affect Americans domestically or others internationally. A demonstration of this is the strong NGO support that Brazil and Germany received when they decided to present an initiative on the right to privacy as a human right in the Third Committee of the General Assembly. Brazil, and Germany and others, what we are doing is trying to raise awareness regarding practices that can represent an abuse of power and a violation of human rights; the right to privacy, the right to freedom of expression. You are a journalist. The extensive wiretapping of communications involves also placing journalists' sources at risk. In that sense it affects your profession, it affects the kind of free societies we would like to see thriving internationally. But, of course the human rights dimension is not the only one. There are other aspects that have to be dealt with. The disregard of sovereignty of other countries, which brings to mind issues of cyber security. There are the gaps in international law that we have been calling attention to, and today we are reaching a situation of a new consensus that we need to look at Internet governance in ways that are equitable and that do not accept a disproportionate amount of control by one individual country. There are other aspects that have to do with the secrecy and security of communications from diplomatic missions and embassies

around the world, which I think also require strong vigilance. We have international commitments in this regard through the Vienna conventions on diplomatic relations and consular relations. But the truth is that the digital age has provided new means for international surveillance—or domestic surveillance, for that matter—that have completely revolutionized this area [and] that I think are urgently calling for international cooperation. It is in this sense that we are working here at the United Nations.

If you ask me why does Brazil react in this way, I think it is because Brazil values freedom, values justice, values its independence, and is not ready to compromise on any of these agendas. Maybe what also drew attention was the fact that it is true that Brazil asked for explanations and apologies and assurances that these practices would not continue. And so far the response has been less than satisfactory. This does not mean we cannot have correct relations with the United States. The United States is the number one investor in Brazil, our second largest individual trading partner. The two nations are multiethnic democracies in the Americas that share values and objectives. But I think one of the objectives we share is upholding the rights of individuals. The U.S. Constitution says that all men are created equal. I think this has to apply universally.

CAIRO REVIEW: *What kind of assurances would Brazil be looking for, in terms of the practice not continuing? The National Security Agency is a spy agency that operates in secret.*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: Just to give you a very broad and general answer, I think the assurances are that the rights of Brazilian individuals will be respected, and the Brazilian leadership will not be spied on, and that Brazil will not be the object of wholesale spying that is entirely unjustified and disassociated from common objectives. For example, if the U.S. is interested in combatting terrorism through these mechanisms, well then we should develop a dialogue about this and join forces. We already have mechanisms, for example, for looking at the so-called tri-border area that joins Paraguay, Uruguay, and Brazil, where there were suspicions in the past that there may have been some financing for terrorist activities. So we created a working group and joined forces to see how we could work. This is how nations that value cooperation and openness join their efforts.

CAIRO REVIEW: *Is Brazil ready for the World Cup?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: Brazil is absolutely enthusiastic about soccer, as you know, very proud to have been chosen for the venue of the 2014 World Cup. We will be ready. There are setbacks, this happens in different countries at different times, but I think they can be overcome, and they will be. And I know that we will be providing the world with a fabulous spectacle of a sport that we excel at.

CAIRO REVIEW: *What does it mean for Brazil to host the World Cup and then the Olympics, back to back? Luck of the draw?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: First of all, it is not only a draw. To some extent this involves quite a bit of diplomacy, achieving the honor to host such events. And by having convinced the necessary number of countries to support your bid to host them, well, this says something about the country in question, and about Brazil in particular. I think that this is also associated with the economic growth, the social programs, the kind of model that today one sees in Brazil that associates economic and social progress, environmental awareness and progress in that dimension as well, and very strong engagement with the outside world. In some respects, Brazil is a large country with a large economy and has always had a strong diplomatic presence in the region and in multilateral organizations. But perhaps for the first time in our history, we are in a position where we have true global outreach. In the past ten years, we've opened close to forty new embassies across the world, many in Africa, some in Europe, and in Central Asia, and the Far East. It's hard to find a place around the globe where you won't see a Brazilian company or Brazilians interacting with any given society. So this new kind of global outreach, in a situation where, for a country of this sized economy and population, we are in a very distinct situation of not having enemies anywhere in the world, having essentially an agenda for peace and development in our relations with other societies and with other countries. If you put all that together it is a very compelling case for hosting events that symbolize international cooperation through sports, peaceful means.

CAIRO REVIEW: *Does that in itself make Brazil a target for terrorism during the World Cup and Olympics?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: I think we have to raise our awareness somehow, because we have been blessed in Brazil and by and large in our part of the world, with exceptions here and there, in having been spared the scourge of terrorism and extremism that is based in intolerance. We take pride in being a very multiethnic but also a relatively harmonious society. Of course today we are more aware than in the past of the remaining manifestations of racial prejudice that still affect us, but we are a society where Jews and Arabs and people of African descent and European descent intermarry and cooperate in all areas of activity; in business, the arts, etc. So the answer is that while not underestimating the importance of being on the lookout and being vigilant, I think we have reasonable grounds to be confident that this is not going to happen in Brazil.

CAIRO REVIEW: *After the protests in Brazil in 2013, should we expect some domestic unrest around these events?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: I think the important observation to make here is that to the extent that these manifestations are peaceful and do not involve destruction of private or public property, or any violent attitudes, they are legitimate expressions of opinion that a democratic society such as Brazil's does not repress. In fact, the president herself is on record having said that we must listen to the voice of the streets. It is quite an extraordinary development, for those who know Brazil and have observed Brazil, given the passion for sports and soccer that most of the population have, that young people and others should come to the streets and say, "Listen, we also want first rate hospitals and schools. We don't only want first rate stadiums." I think this is well received by the political establishment. In some respects, as the president and others have said, the reason these expressions of frustration are coming out into the open, into the streets, is because the standard of living has been rising continuously in Brazil. More than forty million people brought into the middle classes, and extreme poverty being all but eliminated. I think within this decade we will be able to say that Brazil is a country that, with very rare exceptions, you don't have extreme poverty anymore. So when this happens in a society, the public starts aspiring for better transportation, better schooling, better health system. And these improvements come gradually; they don't come from one day to the next, hence the frustration. But again to the extent that manifestations are peaceful, this is part of what democratic societies are about.

CAIRO REVIEW: *Connection with the Arab Spring protests?*

ANTONIO PATRIOTA: I see more differences than similarities. To the extent that there are manifestations, there is some parallel. The other similarity is the way in which new technologies and new social media, Internet, cell phones, can be used for rallying people to come out in the streets in favor of a cause. That is a common phenomenon. But the important difference is the following. In the Arab World, what you saw in Egypt, or Tunisia, or in Syria in the first stages in the manifestations was a rejection of the form of government that was in place, which was, let's face it, dictatorial, undemocratic, suppressing fundamental liberties and freedoms and human rights. In Brazil, this is quite the opposite. We have fully democratic institutions, increasing respect for and protection of human rights. In fact, in many areas we are at the forefront of legislation. For example, in combating violence against women, we have some of the most progressive laws in the world. In other areas as well. So there is no parallel in that sense. There is a national consensus that upholds and defends the conquests of the past decades in terms of political institutions, human rights, social progress, etc. What happens in Brazil is a desire for better services, quality of life that is superior to the existing quality. Let's face it, in many respects we remain a developing country. We have made strides but it takes time to establish and to provide the great majority

of the population with the kinds of services you have in a highly developed country. So the manifestations reflect this aspiration for an accelerated transformation into a higher degree of development. Not something easy to deliver within a short time span. I think also in the recognition by the government itself that these manifestations are legitimate and should be taken seriously you have another contrast with what the attitude was, perhaps, in the Arab Spring.