

# “Nuclear Diplomacy”: Brazil and Iran. Our Motives and the Bullying Trio

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Global Research, June 18, 2010

[CASMI](#) 17 June 2010

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)  
Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#), [United Nations](#)

Despite what the experts of barefoot diplomacy [1] never stop repeating, there is nothing even remotely anti-American in the Brazilian position on Iran: our motives, unlike those of the bullying trio (USA, France, United Kingdom), are clear, transparent and openly stated several times.

We support the peaceful development of nuclear energy. We do not believe there is any evidence that Iran has a secret nuclear-weapons program. Defending Iran, we are defending *our own right* to master the full nuclear-fuel cycle, we are defending our right to develop our own enrichment technology, we are defending our right to build our own reactors that will move the nuclear submarines that will defend our sovereignty. No more, no less. We want for Iran just what we want for ourselves.

There is *no proof* that Iran is trying to make nuclear weapons according to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the *only* international body that has the authority to speak on this subject and, being managed by a 32-country, hard-to-manipulate board, is relatively independent. If you don't believe everybody could be lying so brazenly, read all the actual reports, [here](#) on IAEA's page on Iran, and especially the latest one, [here](#).

What the IAEA does state to keep the bullying trio and their lesser Chinese and Russian partners happy, after saying in unequivocal terms that the Iranian nuclear program is fully tracked and monitored and that there is no evidence of “diversion of purpose”, is that it cannot guarantee that a secret program is not active somewhere. Yet the very same thing can be said about Brazil, or South Korea, or Taiwan or even about Argentina. Iran is a signatory to the NPT and, according to what the IAEA has said repeatedly, it complies with *all* the safeguards established by the UN body.

The IAEA, however, complains that Iran refuses to comply with *illegal* Security Council resolutions demanding that it ceases enriching uranium, a *right* Iran has under the NPT terms. Nobody, not even the Security Council, has the legal power to prevent Iran from developing nuclear technology within the limits established by the NPT without *overwhelming evidence* that these limits are being exceeded. The IAEA complains that Iran does not adhere to the Additional Protocol, which is only *voluntary* – Brazil, for example, has not adhered to it and denounces the AP as detrimental to national sovereignty. And it requires Iran to grant UN inspectors access to the sites where the centrifuges are designed and manufactured, which not only is not an obligation for Iran or for any other party to the NPT but is also absurd: a country under threat of a military attack by *two* nuclear powers (one of which has just reformed its nuclear posture to include the possibility of a nuclear attack against a non-nuclear country – an obvious violation of the NPT basic tenets) cannot

be asked to reveal where it manufactures the equipment that would allow it to rebuild what may be bombed, for these sites would then become *the first targets*.

Iran grants UN inspectors more access than for example Brazil, who, citing industrial secrecy, will not allow them to see what happens within our centrifuges: they can see what goes in at one end and what comes out from the other, but not what happens between them. Brazil, South Korea and Taiwan also do not disclose the sites where their centrifuges are designed and manufactured, and at least Brazil, in full compliance with the safeguards negotiated with the IAEA by the Brazilian government at the time we joined the NPT in 1997, allows no access to the development program for nuclear-submarine reactors, claiming military secrecy - *Brazil* does have a military nuclear program, Iran does not.

The Iranian government even volunteered to abide by the intrusive NPT Additional Protocol terms in 2003, giving UN inspectors unrestricted and unannounced access to any facility in Iran in which in their opinion there could be anything related to a nuclear-weapons development program, but withdrew from them almost two years later after realising that throwing everything wide open and having inspectors poking around did nothing to diminish the “West’s” suspicions - because, of course, these “suspicions” are and have always been unfounded, and thus resistant to any contrary evidence.

So, despite all attempts at negotiation and the guarantees the Iranians have made for the past 20 years, despite lacking the technological capacity to enrich uranium to the levels needed to make atomic weapons or to reprocess spent fuel and for producing plutonium, despite the Iranian nuclear program being subject to strict surveillance by the IAEA with *on-site inspections* and 24/7 cameras installed at all sites linked to the production of LEU at 3.5% and 20%, despite postponing the start of uranium enrichment programme to 20% so that the IAEA staff could inspect the centrifuges and install surveillance cameras, despite *all* fissile material in Iran being fully accounted for and tracked, despite Iran’s repeated agreements in the past to suspend enrichment activities, *to which they are entitled*, so as to boost confidence and facilitate negotiations, despite Iran’s agreement with Brazil and Turkey to export most of their LEU according to the exact terms proposed by the Vienna Group and despite fulfilling its obligations under the IAEA Safeguards even though the country has been put under unjustified sanctions, Iran is *still* officially accused of “non-transparency” and of having a secret military program, and unofficially of being on the brink of making an atomic bomb (read [here](#) how to lie about Iran with UN support). And gradually, what was just rabid media scaremongering becomes the basis for the next round of official lies.

In short, it is clear that the charge that Iran is trying to make nuclear weapons is just another excuse, sustained by lies, for ulterior motives.

If it was possible to blatantly lie about Saddam Hussein’s “weapons of mass destruction” and then devastate Iraq, if they can lie shamelessly about the Iranian nuclear program and threaten Iran with a military strike, what is to ensure that the same thing will not happen to Brazil tomorrow? Today, we are friends and allies of the United States, and even signed a military cooperation agreement with them, but who can tell what our relations would be like in two, ten, twenty years? If the U.S., France and the UK have reasons to want to attack Iran for who knows exactly what reason, how can we be sure that they will not find a bunch of similar reasons to attack Brazil, or prevent it from developing this or that technology if it is convenient to them?

If we allow Iran to be *illegally* prevented from developing a peaceful nuclear program they are entitled to, the NPT would become a dead letter, and we may be subject to the same treatment in the future. The *illegal* attack against Iran's rights and the preparation of *another illegal military intervention* against a sovereign country under false pretenses obviously needs to be stopped *now*, while it is still possible. Brazil has a *duty* to defend the rights of Iranians today, lest we endanger our own rights in the future. Our status as an emergent global power and the very continuity of our development *depend on* our unconditional support for the right of the Iranian people to develop a peaceful nuclear program without interference, threats and attacks.

Russia and China have their own motives (some perhaps recognisable but almost all venal and none related to Iran's nuclear program) to support the attempt to push Iran into a corner. The U.S., Britain and France have a very long track record of meddling in the affairs of Middle Eastern countries, and it is no surprise that they now may want to attack yet *another* country in the list of those they have invaded in the region since the eighteenth century – all except Iran and modern, post-Ottoman Turkey. The other seven countries (including two – Bosnia-Herzegovina and Uganda, whose GDPs are equivalent to the budget of Brazil's Bolsa Familia income-transfer program, and another – Togo – with a GDP lower than the budget for education in the state of Bahia) yielded to the formidable pressure and blackmail of the United States and the two former colonial powers that have caused much misery in the Middle East over the past two centuries. This bullying trio has even tested us and almost succeeded against Turkey on the eve of the Brazil-Iran-Turkey agreement – which was forged only at the insistence of the Brazilian president.

Countries that were not subjected to these pressures, such as Indonesia, India, Central Asia nations, Pakistan, South Africa and most African countries who voiced their views on Iran's nuclear programme, Portugal, Norway (both part of the EU, officially pro-sanctions), all of South America except Colombia and Chile, all of Central America except for Panama, the 57-nation Organisation of Islamic Conference and the 118 countries of the Non-Aligned Movement declared themselves against the imposition of new sanctions. And, with the exception of the US, Canada, Australia, and the UK and the few others who were quiet about it, every country in the world, including France, hailed the Tehran Declaration.

Brazil has now the *obligation* to live up to the trust and solidarity it got from the *real* international community and be faithful to the principles that guided the negotiations leading to the May 17 agreement, defending by all means the path of negotiation and dialogue to solve the Iranian impasse.

### **Note**

[1] Shortly after 9/11, a Brazilian Foreign Minister on his way to Brazil from a UN conference bowed to airport security in New York and agreed to take his shoes off before being allowed to board his plane. "Barefoot diplomacy" has since become a synonym for a submissive foreign policy in Brazil.

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