

**Brazilian Perspectives on a Global Observation System**  
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Your Excellencies  
Secretary of State Colin Powell,  
Secretary of Commerce Donald Evans,  
Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham,  
Senior officials,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of my Government I would like to express Brazil's satisfaction to be present at this event. I would also like to thank the Government of the United States for this opportunity to exchange views on such a complex and crucial issue to all countries and international organizations represented here. My Delegation is convinced that this Summit constitutes an important occasion for the future of Earth observation activities. In our view, this Summit should also constitute a benchmark for the promotion of social and economic wellbeing to all stakeholders, based on the sharing of scientific knowledge on global observation in an open, equitable and fair basis.

Global observation activities are indispensable tools for reaching sustainable development. For a country as large as Brazil, with significant social needs still to be met, every achievement in the field of Earth observation has meaningful repercussions on all sectors involved. Satellite, aircraft, and ground-based measurements allow the monitoring and understanding of our oceans, coasts, crops, fisheries and weather, as well as the development of forecasts and the dissemination of that information for economic and public benefit. This is one of the reasons why the Brazilian Government has encouraged – over the last few decades – the development of comprehensive observation systems based on governmental policies and effective legislation, as well as on fruitful partnerships with interested countries and international and regional organizations.

I would like to offer some brief comments on our Earth observation applications. We have been using orbital remote sensing since the early 1970s, to

monitor our territory as well as our coastal zone for cartographic updating. My country could be considered one of the world's largest users of Earth observation technologies. In this context, it is worth mentioning the space-borne continuous assessment of the Amazon Forest since 1989, the biggest tropical forest monitoring effort ever implemented, aimed at fostering informed decisionmaking regarding national policies for that region.

As for coastal areas, the Brazilian Government is well aware of the strategic nature of the country's extensive coastline and the importance of its ecosystems to economic growth. Therefore, it has designed a national coastal management plan that includes in situ observation activities, in light of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, targeting marine resources assessment, coastal area zoning program, emergency situations in high environmentally significant coastal areas, among others. Another area of interest is hydrological monitoring. Brazil has more than 5000 stations to monitor rainfall levels, river flows, water quality, sediment and vapour measurements, through space-borne activities.

As far as meteorology is concerned, over the last few years Brazil has been developing a new system of atmospheric observation using state-of-the-art equipment as well as space-based remote surveillance techniques and earthbound devices. Our observations aim at collecting data to improve weather forecasting and climate analysis so as to take advantage of weather bonanzas, thereby minimizing the harmful effects of severe weather conditions on the population and the domestic economy. As for the protection of the environment, the National Program for Biotechnology and Genetic Resources focuses on the implementation of a number of actions encouraging the application of biotechnology that is compatible with national needs in various crucial fields, such as agriculture and health.

This can help explain why Brazil considers, in the context of global observation systems, the coordination of efforts and the development of cooperation with other stakeholders as matters of utmost importance. Particularly with regards to space application, the China-Brazil Earth Resource Satellite is evidence of a successful partnership between two developing countries, that

deserves to be continued and extended to other partners. We are of the view that these existing systems, in the international, regional and national levels should be taken into account, in a coordinated way, when establishing and developing a new global observation initiative. Accordingly, such an initiative also needs to be fully consistent with international conventions, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Protocol, as well as the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, just to mention a few of those that are of paramount importance to my country. Moreover, due to the specific needs of each participating country, we also believe that domestic policies and legislation on Earth observation must be respected when building a global and comprehensive system.

The exchange of observations must be based on an open and equitable information sharing process. It should constitute an exercise among equals, which will meet the requirements established by all those that wish to participate. Developing countries should be the target of capacity building actions to enable them to fully participate in this exercise. Here, I do not refer only to data on Earth observations but mainly to the actual knowledge that is necessary to access and process the information offered by other partners, such as codes and computer systems.

In short, Brazil confirms its participation in the establishment of an Ad Hoc International Working Group to negotiate a future global observation model. We believe that these crucial steps towards an ideal situation will allow the benefits to be shared by participating nations. We think that a successful outcome of this huge effort cannot be achieved through hasty actions. We believe that a comprehensive and all-inclusive analysis of past and present experiences will avoid duplication of efforts, time and resources.

Thank you very much.

