

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

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Fact Sheet on U.S. - Brazil Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Cooperation

The United States and Brazil share a commitment to protect and promote democracy and human rights and to promote social justice internationally. This commitment is a fundamental cornerstone of our foreign policies. President Obama and President Rousseff have agreed to work together to advance their shared priority in strengthening their countries' commitment to democracy and human rights and promoting such values globally by launching several new initiatives.

Increased Participation in Democratic Governance

In order to improve the workings of democratic governance mechanisms, the United States and Brazil have agreed to cooperate to improve the conduct and administration of elections in the hemisphere and globally, and to focus particularly on enhancing access to the electoral process for people with disabilities, including those who are victims of armed conflict. Both governments now commit to provide support for training governments, regional electoral management bodies, and civil society in the hemisphere on electoral administration and making elections more accessible, including work through the Election Observation and Cooperation Department of the OAS Political Affairs Secretariat. Such support would consist of in-depth training and technical assistance for election officials, monitors and persons with disabilities, and information exchange regarding recent advances and good practice in elections. This support will help improve the ability of governments in this hemisphere to implement recommendations of OAS Electoral Observation Missions, with a view to improving election administration and increasing access to the electoral process for rural and indigenous communities and persons with disabilities.

Advancing Open Government

Both the United States and Brazil are strong proponents of action to promote transparency, integrity, and accountability in government as a foundation for strengthening democracy and protecting human rights. Building on Brazil's extraordinary leadership in this area and the commitments that President Obama called for at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2010, Brazil and the United States will co-chair a global effort to advance open government. We will work in partnership with other leading governments, civil society, and the private sector to build momentum for new and concrete commitments from governments around the world to promote transparency, increase citizen engagement, fight corruption, and leverage new technologies.

Combating Corruption

Recognizing Brazil's growing presence and leadership in key multilateral fora to combat corruption, the United States and Brazil will establish a new framework for ongoing cooperation on international anti-corruption efforts under the auspices of the U.S.-Brazil Global Partnership Dialogue. The framework will foster coordination of the two countries' anti-corruption policy in the Americas and globally, enhancing the impact of their efforts. The framework will also serve to identify and develop opportunities for trilateral capacity building projects in which Brazilian and U.S. expertise will be deployed jointly to assist reformers in third countries. Brazil and the United States will also work together to promote implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (IACAC), the very first international treaty on combating corruption. Stemming from the convention's peer review follow-up mechanism, implementation activities will include the development and use of national action plans, as well as joint support for country visits as part of the process of review of convention compliance.

Enhanced Cooperation through the United Nations Human Rights Council

Brazil and the United States are both members of the UN Human Rights Council, and we have agreed to work more closely together to advance mutual interests there. We have also both joined a statement calling for greater attention to the rights of Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgender individuals. Finally, we have agreed to work together on a future Council resolution that would focus on enhancing human rights in the context of elections.

Special Rapporteur on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues at the OAS

The United States views violence and discrimination against members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community in the Western Hemisphere with deep concern. We believe it is time to increase our efforts to protect the rights of those who are persecuted for their sexual or gender identity. Brazil and the United States are global leaders in promoting the human rights of LGBT persons. The United States has therefore partnered with Brazil to promote LGBT rights as a critical part of our human rights agenda in the Americas and globally. To this end, we have agreed to provide support for the establishment of a Special Rapporteur on LGBT issues within the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which plays a key role in protecting and promoting human rights throughout the hemisphere. We encourage the independent and autonomous Commission to partner with the United States in support of this historic proposal. We believe the time is right and the Special Rapporteur could make a practical difference in advancing LGBT rights throughout the hemisphere. We look to other OAS Member and Observer States to join us in this effort. Internationally, the Special Rapporteur would be the first of its kind in an international system to address violations of the human rights of LGBT persons as part of our human rights commitments. The creation of the Special Rapporteur would position OAS Member States as leaders on human rights and establish important precedents for other international and regional systems.

Anti-Racism Initiative through the UN Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

The United States is committed to working with our global partners, both bilaterally and multilaterally, in the fight against racism and discrimination. The United States and Brazil share a history of slavery and racial inequities which our societies have struggled to overcome, and from which we can draw many lessons to share with others. Our countries have worked bilaterally in this area through the U.S.-Brazil Joint Action Plan to Eliminate Racial and Ethnic Discrimination and Promote Equality, which began in 2008. We have now decided to take this partnership to the multilateral stage, by working with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to develop and implement an anti-racism educational curriculum for the 21st century. As the leading international organization on education issues with access to teachers around the world, UNESCO is well positioned to develop this new curriculum, and disseminate it to educators worldwide.

Cooperation on Labor Issues

The U.S. Department of Labor and Brazil's Ministry of Labor and Employment have agreed to undertake joint activities to promote hemispheric cooperation on labor issues and strengthen cooperation on labor matters in areas that may include, but may not be limited to the development of employment programs that can help workers address the impact of the global economic crisis with special attention to vulnerable groups; youth employment and green jobs, equal opportunities and treatment at work; social protection; social dialogue and collective bargaining; child labor and forced labor; and other labor issues of mutual consent.

Memorandum of Understanding for the Promotion of Decent Work in Third Countries

Brazil is a leader in developing innovative programs to assist vulnerable workers, including the *Bolsa Familia* program and initiatives to combat child labor. The United States and Brazil have a long history of cooperation on labor issues and are increasingly funding joint South-South cooperation projects through the International Labor Organization (ILO). To further this collaboration, the United States and Brazil have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Implementation of Technical Cooperation Activities in Third Countries in the Field of Decent Work, which establishes a framework for future trilateral programs aimed at creating jobs, protecting worker rights, improving social dialogue, and extending social protection. In support of this MOU, the United States and Brazil are launching a new \$1.3 million trilateral program to prevent child labor and generate income for vulnerable workers in Haiti, as well as an \$800,000 project to share Brazilian best practices in combating child labor in Lusophone Africa.

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