

Special Lecture | Brazil and the Middle East: Prospects of Future Cooperation

On Thursday, 3rd March 2011, Al Jazeera Centre for Studies organized a lecture delivered by Mr. Celso Amorim, Brazil's former Minister of Foreign Relations. The lecture addressed the prospects of future cooperation between Brazil and the Middle East. It was held at Sharq Hotel in Doha at 7:00pm, and was broadcasted live on Al-Jazeera Mubasher.



After former Brazilian President Lula da Silva assumed power, Brazil entered a new era and reached an internationally prestigious position. This was the result of big changes such as reinforcement of the democratic process, distinguished economic performance, and support of social justice. These changes were accompanied by a bold and efficient foreign policy.

During the past eight years, Brazilian diplomacy sought to enhance ties with Middle Eastern countries and engage in bilateral and regional dialogues to support economic and cultural cooperation. Intensive contact with the region helped establish partnerships based on mutual understanding, trust and respect.

An important step was Brazil's recognition of the Palestinian state which encouraged a number of Latin American countries to act similarly and was a confirmation of Brazil's historic stances that support the establishment of an economically viable and

geographically contiguous Palestinian state within the 1967 borders. Strong relations between the Brazilians and the Arabs (there are ten million Brazilians of Arab descent) make Brazil's experience of democratization and adoption of just social policies of particular importance, especially with the great transformations currently taking place in the Arab world.



Minister Celso Amorim

Celso Amorim was born in the Brazilian city of Santos in 1942. After graduating from the Instituto Rio Branco, he worked at Vienna Diplomatic Academy and the London School of Economics and Political Science. He served as Minister of Foreign Relations in the administration of former presidents Itamar Franco (1993-1994) and Lula da Silva (2003-2010). He also served as Brazil's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other international organizations including the External Trade Organization and the Conference on Disarmament (in New York, from 1995 to 1999, and in Geneva from 1991 to 1993 and 1999 to 2001) and as ambassador to the United Kingdom.

He received several medals and awards, and was chosen by Latin Trade magazine as one of the best creative leaders of 2010. He was also ranked sixth in Foreign Policy's Top 100 Global Thinkers for the same year.