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**High-Level Meeting on the Midterm Review of the Almaty Programme of Action:
Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New
Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit
Developing Countries**

**Statement by Ambassador Piragibe Tarragô, Deputy Permanent Representative of
BRAZIL**

Mr. President,

At outset, I would like to indicate that my delegation associates itself with the statement made by Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the G-77 and China.

Mr. President,

I wish to thank you for the timely convening this meeting to take stock of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, as mandated by the Resolution 62/204. Our thanks also go to Ambassadors Gaspar Martins, of Angola, and Majoor, of the Netherlands, for their endeavours in coordinating consultations and in putting together the draft Outcome Document for the Mid-term Review of the Almaty Programme of Action.

My Government is deeply conscious of the importance of achieving the goals agreed to in Almaty. At that occasion, we set ourselves a roadmap to guide our efforts in assisting the landlocked developing countries to overcome the main obstacles to their economic development, which, to a large extent, derive from their particular geographic situation.

In keeping with the Programme of Action, Brazil is committed to assisting, in particular, its landlocked neighbours, namely, Paraguay and Bolivia, to carry out the actions identified in the five priorities.

As a transit country, Brazil is ready to contribute to their realization, especially by seeking to facilitate the flow of trade of landlocked developing countries to and from international markets. With that in mind, Brazil has taken, over the years, a number of initiatives.

Together with our neighbours in the region, we signed, in 1990, the Agreement on International Land Transportation (ATIT), which provides the legal basis that ensures the

transit of goods to and from the landlocked countries in our region. Thanks to that agreement, intense and dynamic transport flows have ever since taken place.

Political initiatives undertaken in our region might also contribute to the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. In particular, the creation of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUL) represents an important step towards a strengthened regional integration that will foster closer relations among its members in various fields, including through the development of physical infrastructure projects. UNASUL has already created two working groups: one on regional infrastructure, and the other one on finance integration, which shall benefit the transit to and from landlocked countries in the region.

Brazil also maintains bilateral Committees on Trade Monitoring with Bolivia and Paraguay, which constitute important instrument for trade enhancement. That is in addition to periodic meetings at the level of Deputy Foreign Ministers

Mr. President,

Financing is a key issue for the promotion of regional integration and for the development of the landlocked countries. In order to ensure the viability of the numerous projects on infrastructure, particular attention must be paid to risk-related mechanisms of the corresponding credit operations. In this respect, Brazil has been able to extend financing in support of infrastructure works, by means of specific export credit programmes and increased capital in regional financing institutions, such as the Andean Development Corporation.

On trade, Brazil relations with Bolivia and Paraguay have improved in the current decade. Two-way trade between Brazil and Bolivia has grown more than 200% since 2002; and between my country and Paraguay, roughly 100% in the same period. A substantial number of Brazilian companies have invested in those two neighbouring countries, in such diverse fields as agriculture, cattle breeding, agro-chemicals, furniture, metallurgy, banking, fuel distribution, textile and clothing, oil and gas exploration, etc. Likewise, and of no less importance, my Government supports the view that landlocked developing countries should receive treatment in the WTO Doha Round that enable them to participate more fully in the multilateral trading system and benefit from their integration into it.

With a view to reducing the existing asymmetries in the Mercosul countries, Brazil supported the establishment of the Structural Convergence Fund in the Southern Common Market. Since its inception in 2006, the Fund has already financed 13 development projects in Paraguay to the amount of US\$ 48 million in areas like housing, roads, credits to small enterprises, development of technological capacity and improvements in animal health.

In addition, Brazil has committed financing support for important road projects in Bolivia that will improve domestic links, as well as facilitate the transit of goods from Brazil to ports on the Pacific coast. Brazil and Paraguay have agreed to build a new bridge over the Paraná River, thus easing the congestion that today hampers an increased flow of vehicles between the two countries and to the ports on the Atlantic coast.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, through a series of bilateral and regional initiatives, Brazil has shown its commitment to the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. And it intends to continue to do so. We have been working, together with partners in the region, to create conditions that may facilitate the development of the landlocked neighbours and reduce the current disequilibria. We believe that trading, financing and transport benefits that we, transit countries, may be able to extend to our neighbouring landlocked countries will also wind up advantageous to ourselves, as these benefits will have a positive impact on the development of our whole region.

Thank you