



Occupied Palestine, 17.08.2011

To: Celso Amorim
 Minister of Defense
 Federative Republic of Brazil

His Excellency Minister Celso Amorim,

We would like to congratulate you for your recent appointment as the Minister of Defense and praise the wise decision of President Dilma Rousseff. We would like to use this occasion to thank you for your active commitment to international law and human rights, which you have enacted through Brazil's historic support of Palestinian human rights. Most recently, we remember Brazil's recognition of the Palestinian state along 1967 borders as one of the last actions of your terms as foreign minister.

We enclose you a photo taken in one of the protests against the illegal Israeli Wall: days after Brazil's recognition of Palestine, Palestinian youth carry Brazilian flags to confront the Israeli military. We hope this can become a symbol of your mandate as Minister of Defense.

Your appointment as Minister of Defense has been received in Palestine with great joy and hope and provides the Palestinian people with a unique opportunity to appeal to the Brazilian government to ensure its defense policies will not continue to undermine the possibility of building effective dialogue for a just and lasting peace in Palestine. We trust your great experience in foreign policy and your deep understanding of the Palestinian question will guide your decisions as Minister of Defense.

You have stated that "in the Brazilian vision, human rights are universal and their implementation must not be subject to political convenience" as well as that "questions of peace and security are an interest of the whole of humanity, they cannot be monopoly of the traditional powers."¹ As Minister of Defense of a country that - as well thanks to your capacity - has risen to be a global diplomatic power, you have once again a unique chance and responsibility to enact these principles.

As Minister of Defense, you have many difficult and important tasks ahead. However, we would like to remind you that Palestine stays de facto a key issue on your agenda.

¹ <http://www.lavanguardia.com/lectores-corresponsales/20101025/54025960581/amorim-las-cuestiones-de-paz-no-deben-ser-exclusiva-de-potencias-tradicionales.html>

Today, Brazil is the fourth largest importer of Israeli weapons and one of the most important supporters of the Israeli military industry. This industry profits from Israeli occupation of Arab land, enables Israel to continue the colonization of these lands, provides technology for the illegal settlements and the Wall. Supporting Israel's military industry is part of the international complicity that supports Israeli apartheid policies, impedes the creation of a Palestinian state and contradicts your 2010 pledge for Palestinian statehood. Brazil's current military ties with Israel include the facilitation of profits for and the presence on Brazilian soil of Israeli companies involved in human rights abuses and war crimes. This risks violating the duties of third states in front of violations of international law.

The ever closer military ties between Brazil and Israel and the fact that many of its own domestically manufactured weapons contain Israeli components have reportedly already created controversy in the region when Israel has put a veto on Brazilian weapon exports to Venezuela and Bolivia² – undermining Brazil's decade long efforts to create South American integration. The same questions arise in regards to Arab and other countries, which are political allies and potential markets for Brazil. Similar concerns surface regarding the latest news about Brazilian plans to launch a spy satellite for Israel³.

You have further spoken of the pride of the people of Brazil of the valiant foreign policy positions taken by Brazil during your mandate⁴. Our letter is written with the fervent hope that you will promote this pride as well through your new position. We are aware of the widespread solidarity with Palestine among the Brazilian people and believe that Brazilian workers producing in Porto Alegre the very same Israeli Tavor rifles that are used to kill our people and the Brazilian military using the same drones used to target Palestinian civilians cannot feel proud of their actions.

We enclose you a detailed research by Stop the Wall on the military ties between Brazil and Israel and their impact and would like to ask you to urgently consider:

- Working towards the cancellation of the security cooperation agreement with Israel.
- Closing down of the offices of the Brazilian Armed Forces in Israel.
- Modifying the procurement regulations of the Brazilian army to ensure that companies violating international law are excluded from contracts.
- Barring companies involved in violations of international law from establishing themselves on Brazilian territory via acquisitions of companies, joint ventures or licensing.
- Barring companies violating international law from participating in the LAAD Defense Expo.

We further would like to alert you about the growing movement of people of conscience that calls for a comprehensive military embargo on Israel. The Palestinian call for a military embargo has been supported by Peace Nobel Prize winners and other renown figures, networks, unions and organizations representing millions of people in Brazil and across the globe.

² <http://politica.eluniversal.com/2011/07/06/israel-prohibe-vender-aviones-antidrogas-a-venezuela-que-fabricara-brasil.shtml>

³ <http://www.gbbes.co.il/serveen/gbbes/docview.asp?did=715135>

⁴ <http://www.lavanguardia.com/lectores-corresponsales/20101025/54025960581/amorim-las-cuestiones-de-paz-no-deben-ser-exclusiva-de-potencias-tradicionales.html>

We trust that you will act in your new position to ensure that Brazil's defense policy promotes solidarity and respect for human rights. In specific, we hope that it does not undermine the support of the Brazilian government for the Palestinian rights to return, equality and self-determination, including the construction of a Palestinian state, and does not finance and/or profit from the very military complex that occupies Palestinian land. There cannot be effective steps towards peace as long as Israel keeps the trigger on the gun that they point at the Palestinian people. Brazil cannot be an effective broker for a just peace as long as it finances this gun.






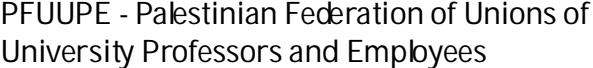
Wishing you success in your new mandate and trusting in your commitment to universal human rights,

Sincerely,

Political Parties:

	Al-Fatah		PFLP – Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
	Palestinian People's Party		Al-Mubadara – National Initiative
	DFLP – Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine		Arab Liberation Front
	Palestinian Liberation Front		Popular Struggle Front
	Fida – Palestinian Democratic Union		As-Sa'iqah

Civil Society Networks:

	Stop the Wall Campaign		PNGO – Palestinian NGO Network
	GUPW – General Union of Palestinian Women		Palestinian Trade Union Coalition for Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions
	PFU - Palestinian Farmers Union		PFUUPE - Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees