

Permanent Mission of Brazil in Geneva

71, avenue Louis Casai' - Case Postale 165

1216 Cointrin Geneva - Switzerland

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**INTERVENTION BY BRAZIL ON THE REPORTS OF THE SPECIAL
RAPORTEURS ON ADEQUATE HOUSING AS A COMPONENT OF THE
RIGHT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING, AND ON THE RIGHT
TO NON-DISCRIMINATION IN THIS CONTEXT; AND ON MINORITY
ISSUES**

Brazil commends the recommendations contained in the report of the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing as a Component of the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living, and on the Right to Non-Discrimination in this Context. In this regard, I wish to highlight some important initiatives taken by the Government of Brazil as far as state policies for adequate housing are concerned.

On this particular issue, the object of paragraph 9 of the report, it is worthy of note that the Brazilian Government has created the Ministry of Cities, whose main function is to oversee and implement housing and urban planning policies. These policies are often realized in light of principles governing the rights of ethnic and cultural minorities such as indigenous peoples or communities remaining from former slaves' hinterland settlements (quilombolas), as established on paragraphs 47 and 75 of the report. In Brazil, there is a total of 615 Indian lands recognized to this time, in a total 1.07 million square kilometers. This is equivalent to 12% of the Brazilian territory. From that amount, 422 lands or 97.2 million hectares are already duly demarcated with full recognition of the possession and beneficial usage by the Indigenous population.

On the issue of quilombolas, if Brazil, on the one hand, acknowledges the challenges posed by discrimination as mentioned in paragraph 75 of the report, on the other hand, my Government clarifies that we are fully committed to combat all forms of discrimination. The special housing program for quilombola communities, undertaken by the Ministry of Cities is an example of this commitment.

Brazil is thankful for Miloon Kothari's professionalism and his efforts in fulfilling his mandate. We shall continue to work hand in hand with the next mandate holder and we hope to remain in close contact with Mr. Kothari.

Brazil also appreciates the transversal and accurate approach with which the Independent Expert on the rights of minorities, Mfc, Gay McDougall treated the main challenges concerning such an important aspect of the international protection of human rights, in particular the reference to the achievements concerning the draft Inter-American Convention against Racism and all Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance, mentioned in paragraph 4 of the report.

In regard to the right to racial equality, I wish to mention the creation in 2003, of the Special Secretariat for Policies to Promote Racial Equality - SEPPIR -, with a ministerial status, and the establishment of the National Policy to Promote Racial Equality (PNPIR) in the same year. The National Policy proposes short, medium and long-term actions, based on the implementation of a management model for promoting racial equality, on supporting communities remaining from "quilombos", on affirmative action, on support for development and social inclusion, on the strengthening of international mechanisms and on the production of knowledge, as well as the open dialogue with community based activists and human rights defenders.

In the process of affirmation of the rights of disabled people, it is worth mentioning the holding, in 2006, of the I National Conference on the Rights of Disabled People, as well as the process, still in progress, of ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the UN, with the perspective of incorporating of their rights to the Brazilian Constitutional wording.

The Brazilian government also acknowledges the need for creation of normative rules to regulate the promotion of the specific rights focused on sexual diversity and, at the same time, insert homophobic behaviors into domestic criminal legislation, taking into account, especially, that homosexuals are frequent targets of violence acts and homicides.

Finally, I wish to comment on the relevance to the right to an identity, whose inclusion in paragraph 69 of the report my Government particularly appreciates. Brazil has created an interministerial working group, which also counts on highly active participation of the civil society, with the sole purpose of universalizing the right to civil registration in the country.

I thank you, Mr. President.