

Brazilian Minister Gets a Middle East Full of Meetings

Contributed by Isaura Daniel
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The Brazilian minister of Foreign Relations, Celso Amorim, arrived in the Middle East yesterday and is going to be visiting 10 countries in the region up to February 26. Yesterday he met the new president of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), Mahmoud Abbas.

According to Musa Odeh, the Palestinian ambassador in Brazilian capital Brasília, at the meeting with Abbas, the Brazilian minister discussed the Arab and South American summit, scheduled for May, in Brazil, and trade relations between Palestine and Brazil.

Amorim's visits to the other Arab countries are also going to focus on the summit and on trade relations, according to the Itamaraty, the Brazilian Foreign Office.

After visiting Palestine, Amorim will be returning to Amman, on Friday, from where he will leave to Beirut, in Lebanon. On Saturday, the minister will be travelling to Damascus and Syria, and on Sunday to Jeddah and Riyadh, in Saudi Arabia.

Amorim will also be visiting Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Tunisia and Algeria. In each of these countries, the diplomat will be meeting his peers and other local authorities.

Mission

Amorim is also going to participate in the activities of a Brazilian commercial mission to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait between February 21 and 24. During the four days there will be seminars and business roundtables between Brazilian and Arab organizations.

Over 20 companies, financial institutions and sector organizations are registered to participate in the mission. Amorim is going to meet the delegation on the 21st, in Saudi Arabia, and on the 22nd, in Kuwait, when the opening of the delegation's activities in each country will take place.

Among the Brazilian companies and institutions included in the mission are mining giant Vale do Rio Doce, aircraft maker Embraer, aerospace company Avibras, oil company Petrobras, trading company Comex, the Bank of Brazil, the National Confederation of Industries (CNI) and the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce (CCAB).

The business meetings will be opened with seminars, in which sector leaders and Brazilian governors are going to address the business opportunities between Brazil and both Arab countries. Companies interested may also visit local factories and distributors.

The Brazilian government's intention with the organization of this mission is to present Brazil to the Saudis and Kuwaitis and to increase trade relations between the country and the region.

Apart from heading the mission, Amorim will also participate in a seminar in Saudi Arabia, on Sunday, one day before the official program of the mission. The Brazilian Foreign minister is going to address the Brazilian foreign policy at the 6th Jeddah Economic Forum.

Translated by Mark Ament
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