

'I Defend a Palestinian State and Israel,' Says Brazil's Lula

Contributed by Alessandra Bastos
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The result of the Summit of South American - Arab Countries will come "in a short time, it won't take long," said Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva during his radio program *Café com o Presidente* (Breakfast with the President).

The Summit occurred in Brasilia, from May 10-11, and gathered presidents and entrepreneurs of 34 invited countries. During the event, there were discussions on issues such as the increase of exchange on commercial, cultural, political, scientific, and technological areas. Several agreements on these areas were also negotiated.

In Lula's opinion, now it is necessary to travel in order to give continuity to conversations initiated during the Summit. Entrepreneurs, ministers, and business people "need to travel in order to sell."

The president added: "We show up with our shoes, clothes, cars, soy, corn, orange juice, construction companies, and we will sell, we will demonstrate our competitiveness."

Lula said that the Minister of Algeria did not believe Brazil had cars with flexible engines that can use alcohol, gasoline, or diesel.

"Next day, at 9 am, we had three cars parked in front of the hotel: one that used alcohol, another that used gasoline, and a "triflex" that also used gas. They were mesmerized. This is how we will be able to show the good things Brazil has to offer, and this competition is tough," emphasized Lula.

Regarding the critical observations Argentinean entrepreneurs made about trading with Brazil, President Lula was emphatic:

"We decided to keep working together; we cannot allow that interests of single economic groups interfere in the State policy we need to establish between Brazil and other South American countries."

He also stressed that Brazil has the responsibility to help in the development of Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay, "because this is the role of the largest, wealthiest country, the one with more technology."

According to Lula, one of the initiatives has to be directed to Venezuela. "We have a great commercial surplus with Venezuela, we need to buy more things from Venezuela in order to reach a certain balance."

Lula said that in the week preceding the Summit, there was a common worry that the meeting would be against Israel and the United States.

"We wouldn't make such an event to be against someone. We did it exactly to favor positive things, and I wanted to stress in my speech that the same way that I defend a Palestinian State, I also defend the State of Israel," he affirmed.

President Lula will travel to South Korea and to Japan on May 22nd. "Instead of staying here complaining, we will reach out and show our products to the world," he said.

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