

Iran will extend 'red carpets' for Brazilian companies' investments

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Brasilia - After four years commanding the Iranian embassy in Brazil, Mohsen Shaterzadeh, age 52, returns to Teheran. In this interview, he highlights the importance of Brazil for the Iranian foreign politics, points out the areas of common interest and invites the Brazilian enterprises to invest in his country.

"We extend red carpets for the Brazilian companies wishing to invest in Iran, in any area, and we are sure that the Iranian investments in Brazil are welcome", he affirmed to the

InfoRel.

However, Shaterzadeh discards any cooperation on the matter of Defense with Brazil. The ambassador reminded the young Iranians who died in eight years of war with Iraq, country that imported weapons from Brazil. Follow the interview (also in the Portuguese and Spanish versions).

What is the importance of Brazil for the foreign politics of Iran?

Our relations with Brazil must be seen in the context of the alterations in the World Order. The World Order belongs to a reality of 60 years ago and it is old. There is a World Order controlled by the great powers, where only the rights of the great ones are observed, a group that has power of veto and where there reigns the called "law of the jungle". The victorious powers of World War II also dominate the United Nations Organization (UNO) and this World Order has no place for the independent and sovereign countries. More than 120 nations integrate the movement of non-aligned countries, but they fulfill no role in the world management or in the UN Security Council, for example. The group of powers controls the IMF, the World Bank, the IAEA, and overrides the rights of other nations. Within this space and considering the necessity in promoting alterations, the cooperation between Iran and Brazil becomes still more important. Both countries are defenders of changes in the world government, both look to promote the dialog based on the Justice, both work for the eradication of the misery and poverty and, together, both question the capitalist system where 1% controls 99%. Brazil and Iran agree in working for a true Peace. Besides, both countries have great capacities and can help each other. Brazil is a great power in the hemisphere and we know that Iran also is considered a power in the Middle East, Western Asia and within the Persian Gulf, with the oil, but also in energy, technology and economy. And in this sense, the cooperation between the two countries is positive for both. Both win. Both are also very important when the subject is the South-South Cooperation.

In this context, what would you point out, regarding the South-South Cooperation, as a priority for the foreign politics both of Brazil and of Iran?

This cooperation becomes more and more a necessity. The countries of the South occupy 80% of the territorial extension of the planet, concentrate almost 70% of the world population and 60% of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In the next years, the economical growth of the north countries will be negative whereas the growth in the south countries will be of 6%, which turns them into the dynamic motor of the world economy. More than 90% of the energetic resources of the world are concentrated in these countries, which detains still more than 80% of the mines of the planet. These countries have today more than US\$ 10 billion in projects under development. We know that there is no cheap labor in these south countries and that many specialists who today act in north countries want to return to their countries, what will accelerate yet more the development of the south countries. Countries as Iran and Brazil have great energetic resources, mining, raw materials, cheap labor and professionals of high level in the areas of Science and Technology that can execute projects that, in the past, only the rich countries might do. Unfortunately, the financial institutions are in the hands of the north countries and that's why we defend changes in this World Order. The north countries gain four times with the exploration of the products manufactured in the south countries. If we manage to strengthen this cooperation between the south countries, the collected value of their products returns to these countries. That we will testify in the near future, that will happen. We will witness the fall of great currencies and the appearance of new currencies from the emergent countries. These south countries will become a center of employment generation, development and accumulation of riches. This is one of the factors that move us to increase the relations of cooperation with Brazil. The principle of the foreign politics of Iran is based on the South-South Cooperation and we know that the foreign politics of Brazil too.

Among the bilateral agreements that are secured or to be confirmed, which ones would you point out as priorities for the strengthening of the relations between both countries?

We have very important agreements with Brazil that are previous to 2008 (when the ambassador assumed the post in Brasília). In the last 50 years, the two countries signed 12 documents. Between 2008 and 2010, we signed 28 documents,

2.5 times more than in half a century of relations. I can say that we signed agreements in practically all the sectors and areas: exemption of diplomatic visas, art and culture, trade, energy, academic, industry, mining, bank system. I emphasize the areas of energy and technology, whose agreements are already being implemented. In 2010, we had a growth of 81% in the volume of the bilateral trade and, in 2011, this trade turned to US\$ 2.5 billion. Besides, we are negotiating a series of projects in a total value of US\$ 3 billion. Both presidents have already agreed in increasing this commercial value to US\$ 10 billion in next five years. We have studies that show that this potential can reach US\$ 25 billion in ten years. Brazil and Iran signed agreements in the areas of nanotechnology, biotechnology, technology of the information and communication, medicines with new formulas. In the technological area, Brazil and Iran created a fund of US\$ 1 million to support projects and workshops in both countries. Also we have three documents in the area of energy and mines. One of these documents is between the ministry of Oil and the National Agency of the Oil (ANP), for professionals' training and meteorology. We have still an agreement for the exploration in deep waters, between the oil companies of both countries. The respective ministries of Mines and Energy signed one agreement for the generation of energy and construction of stations and another for the exploration of ores. In the agriculture area, we have three documents secured, one of them with the EMBRAPA, for agricultural researches. With the ministry of Development and Industry of Brazil, we have another three agreements. Those are in the area of industrial and nanotechnological standardization. With the APEX-Brasil we sign an agreement for the realization of fairs and the creation of a line of bank credit. Both central banks also have an agreement of cooperation. In the academic area, we have four agreements that involve universities of Brazil and of Iran. With the National Confederation of the Industry (CNI), there is an agreement with the Chamber of Trade, Industry and Mining of Iran. Also, the stock exchanges of São Paulo and Teheran have an agreement of cooperation. In the promotion of the tourism we signed an agreement and we are now negotiating agreements of cooperation in the judiciary area, higher education and cultural inheritances. In the visit of ex-president Lula to Iran, there were signed agreements in the areas of Sport and Youth. These documents show the interest of both countries in working together. We respect Brazil and consider it a nation able to influence in the necessary alterations in this World Order. Together we can do many things.

Doesn't Iran intend to hire a soccer trainer to bring the country to the World Cup of 2014?

We have many Brazilian players in the soccer of Iran. In the three divisions of our soccer, we have 60 teams and many of them have players, trainers and assistants that are Brazilian. In the volleyball, we have a Brazilian trainer. Besides, we already showed our interest in participating of the works of infrastructure for the World Cup of Soccer of 2014 and the Olympic Games of 2016.

From the commercial-economical point of view, which are the interests of Iran in Brazil?

We are ready to invest in Brazil and to receive the investments of Brazil in Iran. The respective economies are complementary, not rival. In this sense, one can cover the other. In the area of generation of energy, Brazil has great experience in the construction of hydroelectric stations. In turn, Iran has great experience in thermoelectric factories and in the construction of turbines up to 500 megawatts. Iran is the 7th of the world in the fabrication of these turbines of gas. We are ready to receive this Brazilian experience in hydroelectric stations and the investments of Brazilian enterprises in this area. In the oil area, Iran has an experience of 100 years and Brazil has great experience in the oil exploration in deep waters. Iran wants this experience of Brazil for its projects in the Caspian Sea. On the other hand, we are willing to transfer our knowledge and to contribute with personnel's training. In the technology area, Iran wants to work with Brazil in projects of nanotechnology, biotechnology, technology of the information and communication, aerospace sector, nuclear area and medical area. Iran is the 4th of the world in researches on stem cells and the 14th one in nanotechnology. In the general medicine, Iran is the first of its region. The Iranian scientists have much interest in working with their Brazilian colleagues.

In the space sector, are there means of cooperation?

In the aerospace area, Iran manufactures satellites and the Satellite Launch Vehicle (VLS), and the country is willing to transfer its 100% national technology to Brazil. Even in the nuclear area, Iran obtained many conquests with 100% of national technology. The country is willing to pass this knowledge to countries like Brazil. This science must be made available for all. Our slogan was always "Nuclear Energy for all and nuclear armaments for nobody". It is a right of the humanity to use the nuclear technologies for pacific aims. We also can work in the industrial area with Brazil. Iran has four national brands of vehicles and the country has interest in bringing them to Brazil. These brands are present in four continents and more than ten countries. Brazil has great experience in steelworks and Iran has interest in developing in this area.

Does the Brazilian iron ore interest Iran?

Iran needs 55 million tons of steel and, up to the moment, we managed to manufacture 20 millions. To reach this goal, we need more than 50 million tons of iron ore. With the great mines Brazil has, the country is our priority in order that we attend this demand. Another promising area is the agriculture one. Annually, In 2011, the commercial exchange between

Iran and Brazil totalized a value around US\$ 2.5 billion. In this period, Iran imported agricultural and industrial products, as well as food from Brazil. We also want to invest in this area to produce in Brazil. Brazil has great experience in researches and Iran also has, regarding desert areas, and we can exchange experiences.

The current government stimulates the Brazilian enterprises to invest in projects abroad. Which areas would you point out as potentially viable for these enterprises in Iran?

We are equally interested in engineering projects. We have great professionals and enterprises that act in the country and abroad with more than 230 projects. Construction of refineries and factories of energy generation, popular homes, roads, cement factories, petrochemical facilities, factories of vehicles and tractors, transforming industry, food industries, ships construction. We know that in these areas there are great enterprises in Brazil, but we can work together in our countries and in other countries. We extend red carpets for the Brazilian companies wishing to invest in Iran, in any area, and we are sure that the Iranian investments in Brazil are welcome.

In the Defense area, Brazil intends to export armaments again. There are also projects of long term of modernization of the Armed Forces. Does Iran have interest in having cooperation in Defense with Brazil?

At present, there is no cooperation in Defense between Brazil and Iran. We produce, in our country, complex equipments in the Defense area. There are the armaments necessary for our Armed Forces with great variety of missiles with more than two thousand kilometers of range, several models of Unmanned Air Vehicles (VANTs) with two thousand kilometers of autonomy, tanks, different anti-aircraft systems, warships, submarines, airplanes and helicopters. All of them are equipments that we produce in Iran. Also, there are systems of control and navigation, always according to our defense necessities. Iran, in the last 100 years, didn't attack any foreign country, but we always gave very severe responses to our enemies. In the area of technology and engineering, if Brazil has interest, there is our interest in exchanging experiences. We never authorized the export of armaments. A great deal of our young people, in eight years of war with Iraq, died because of weapons sold by Brazil to Saddam Hussein.

How do you evaluate the position of Brazil regarding the Nuclear Program of Iran? Does your country dispose of the Brazilian support in keeping on developing this technology?

This question must be asked to the Brazilian authorities, but we believe that Brazil still has interest in these negotiations. In this sense, any independent movement of Brazil will be welcome.

In the period in which you led the Iranian embassy in Brazil, what can be highlighted as positive and what do you believe that still need to be done?

The interest of Brazil in its approximation with Iran is of increasing the trade and exporting more to have more access to the great Iranian market, knowing that Iran is not only a market of consumption, but a great partner. And our interest in Brazil is to increase our cooperation in all the areas. Unfortunately, we did not find great cooperation from Brazil to increase the exports of Iran to Brazil. We have to find a solution and that doesn't pass through the Brazilian government, but through the enterprises.

President Ahmadinejad started 2012 with a tour in the Latin America. In this context, does Brazil remain as priority or does your country identify in the region other equally strong partners?

We establish good relations with our friends. Anywhere in the world. In the Middle East, in Africa, in the Latin America. The travel of the president to the region is motivated by the re-inauguration of the president of Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega. Naturally, during these visits, contacts, meetings and conversations happen between friends. Brazil is among our friends. Also we have good relations with the countries of ALBA, Venezuela, Bolivia, Cuba, Nicaragua and Ecuador. And we know that each one of these countries has its potential. And, in this sense, no country could have priority. We always had interest in the relations with Brazil and it is possible that there is a meeting between our president and president Dilma Rousseff. We know that the bilateral relations need mutual interest. If there is interest of Brazil in extending the relations, there is our will. Our president will participate of the Rio+20 in June in the Rio de Janeiro. If president Dilma goes to the inauguration of president Ortega, they can talk.

Which is the impact of the economical sanctions to your country?

Since the first sanctions against Iran, four years ago, up to today, the Stock Exchange of Iran grew 230%. In this period of five years, practically all the valuable markets hadn't even 10% of increase. In 2011, all the valuable markets of the world had decay. Australia registered 16% of decay; Japan, 18%, Hong Kong, 20%, Shanghai, 22%; London fell 26%; Switzerland, 8%; Germany, 16%; France, 18%; the United States stayed on zero. Chile, 15% of decay; Brazil, 22%. In 2011,

with all the restrictions, our Stock Exchange registered 29% of increase. Since the beginning of the sanctions, our exports registered increase of 500%. If these sanctions were efficient, they would produce some impact there. Our scientific production, for example, grew 28% when the world average is in 2.5%. The development of Iran is not only in its nuclear program. If this economical reality is well presented to any Brazilian authority, we will manage to alter the vision that they have of Iran. We have different cultures, but the national interest of both countries obliges the respective authorities to be work in the development of the countries. Even the Brazilian opposition well informed about the Iranian reality, may change its mind. We can't waste the time. We have to use the time.