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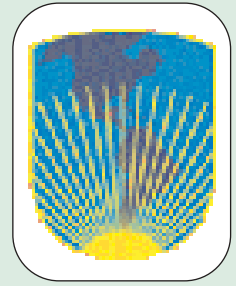


Woodrow Wilson  
International Center  
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## Legislatures, Trade and Integration

### *Regional Initiatives in the Americas*

In July 12-14, 2004, the Wilson Center's Latin American Program and Brazil @ The Wilson Center, with support from the Inter-American Development Bank, hosted a delegation from the Brazilian Congress. Seven Brazilian Representatives and one Senator, who all hold leadership positions in Brazil's Congress, participated in a productive dialogue with American legislators at the Wilson Center and on Capitol Hill. At an opening reception Roberto Abdenur, Brazilian Ambassador to the United States, noted that this was the most senior and significant delegation from Brazil's Congress ever to have visited Washington. Inter-American Development Bank President Enrique Iglesias underscored the importance of this exchange, expressing his strong support for this program and future initiatives.



The program provided both Brazilian and American lawmakers with a better understanding of their respective legislative processes and trade negotiations, and offered an excellent opportunity for personal interaction. Designed in two parts, the agenda began at the Wilson Center where the delegation was

United States. Held on Capitol Hill, the second phase of meetings presented various perspectives on the procedural aspects of trade legislation in the U.S.



Ambassadors Anthony Harrington and Ross Wilson

Congress, as well as opportunities for exchange between Brazilian and American lawmakers.

Opening panels covered regional trade and agreements

briefed on the most up to date perspectives on international trade in the

from the perspectives of international financial institutions and various U.S.

stakeholders. Coupled with a presentation made by chief Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiator Ambassador Ross Wilson, (Office of the United States Trade Representative - USTR), these panels provided a comprehensive and realistic overview of the regional trade negotiations and their prospects. The varied viewpoints presented during these sessions converged on the idea that trade agreements are not particularly popular in the United States Congress, particularly during an election year. These agreements can be inhibited by congressional polarization, vocal labor unions, and, as Paul Drazek (formerly of the USDA) remarked, the growing belief among U.S. farmers that they cannot compete in the global market without assistance. Ambassador Wilson pointed out, however, that these agreements should be considered of vital importance to both the United States and Brazil. As for FTAA prospects he felt that it would be impossible to reach an agreement by January 2005 because of two major hurdles: Brazilian inflexibility on the intellectual property issue, and the United States' changing position regarding market access.

### Congressional Staff and the TPA

Continuing with several meetings on Capitol Hill, the Brazilians began by analyzing staff sup-



Representative Luiz Antonio Fleury and Angela Ellard

port and services available for their American counterparts. Speaking directly with American staffers gave the Brazilians a better understanding of the relevance of staff in congressional activities vis-à-vis those in Brazil. Angela Ellard, Counsel to the House Ways and Means Committee, explained the role of Congress in trade negotiations— in particular as it pertained to the passage of Trade Promotion Authority (TPA)— while underscoring concerns with the complexities of a “two-track FTAA.” Ms. Ellard and Brazilian Representative Yeda Crusius both



Panelists at the opening session



**Representative Donald Payne**

highlighted an interesting bi-product of the congressional debate to approve the TPA: although the bill was meant to empower the Executive Branch, it also prompted lawmakers to become more involved in trade issues.

Switching gears to the topic of general congressional services, staff from the Congressional Research Service and the Government Accountability Office discussed the roles of their organizations in the legislative process. In debates with political advisors and campaign experts, the Brazilian legislators garnered a new perspective on the manner in which trade negotiations operate in the context of political campaigns in the United States.

Additional events provided opportunities for discussion and exchange with 14 U.S. lawmakers, including Senator Bob Graham (D-FL). Senator Graham stressed the importance of economic and trade issues in North-South relations within a broader context defined by social policy and cultural under-

standing. He highlighted the role of U.S. lawmakers as those ultimately responsible for the approval of trade agreements.

Brazilian Senator and Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations Eduardo Suplicy described how his congress is still struggling to attain a more active role in trade negotiations, referencing the TPA's Brazilian counterpart, Senate Bill 189. According to Senator Suplicy, Bill 189, which is currently under debate in the Brazilian Congress, is based on the premise that "Brazilian participation in international trade negotiations should be guided by the premise of using trade for economic and social development." Suplicy also highlighted the "human aspect" of trade, and suggested models for eradicating poverty and creating wealth.



**Representative Collin Peterson speaks to members of the delegation**

### Congressional Roundtable

The final meeting facilitated an extraordinary exchange of positions between members of both legislative bodies. Chaired by Representative Cass Ballenger (R-NC, Chairman



**Reps. Thomas Nonô, Luiz Antonio Fleury and Cass Ballenger**

of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the International Affairs Committee), Representatives Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Donald M. Payne (D-NJ), Collin C. Peterson (DFL-MN), Charles W. Stenholm (D-TX), and Jerry Weller (R-IL) discussed various trade positions. They emphasized the cooperative status of bilateral relations between Brazil and the United States, even in the face of critical disagreements over particular points in the trade agreements.

Opening the session, Ballenger noted that, “A democratic and prosperous Brazil is a necessary part of U.S. interests, and after the meeting between President Bush and President Lula, U.S.-Brazil relations are stronger than ever.” Among the several important issues discussed was the recent decision of the World Trade Organization to condemn subsidization of the U.S. cotton industry. Some of the Representatives present felt Brazil

contributed to this decision by reverting to litigation instead of negotiation.

Thomas Nonô, Brazilian House Minority Leader, responded by explaining that Brazil had requested the WTO arbitration only after all efforts at bilateral negotiation were exhausted. “As it was clear that we had failed at the bilateral level, we moved to the multilateral level,” said Nonô. He continued, “We don’t see the WTO as a battleground, but as

neutral ground where the position of each side can be examined fairly.”

Brazilian Representative Luiz Antonio Fleury pointed out that the Brazilian and U.S. economies are complementary and suggested the formation of an inter-parliamentary group to promote better understanding and facilitate partnership between the two countries. Fleury emphasized that in order to make bilateral trade relations mutually advantageous, “...we must



**Senator Suplicy speaks as members of the delegation look on**

learn from each other.”

During the final debate, several other important issues unrelated to trade emerged and Brazilian legislators clarified Brazil’s positions on non-proliferation, the environment, Cuba, and human rights. They portrayed Brazil as a strong defender of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, implying the need for more assertive positions by the current nuclear powers.

On the environmental front, the Brazilians offered a summary of political and technological initiatives that, despite continued implementation problems, have made Brazil a forerunner in the area of environmental legislation since

1992. The issue of Cuba and human rights was also broached, in light of Brazil’s non-intervention policy that prevents the country from openly criticizing the domestic policies of other nations. The Brazilian delegation maintained that the best strategic policy toward Cuba and Fidel Castro should not be one of isolation and embargo, but instead should promote assembly and engagement with democracies in the region.

During the wrap-up discussion, the participants reemphasized their willingness to continue the inter-parliamentary dialogue and to build on the personal and institutional relationships developed through the program. ⇐



*Thinking Brazil Update* is an electronic publication of *Brazil @ the Wilson Center*. This project is founded on the conviction that Brazil and the U.S.-Brazilian relationship deserve to receive better attention in Washington. Brazil’s population, size, and economy, as well as its unique position as a regional leader and global player fully justify this interest. In response, and in keeping with the Center’s mission to bridge scholarly research and public action, *Brazil @ the Wilson Center* sponsors activities designed to create a “presence” for Brazil in Washington that captures the attention of the policymaking community. *Brazil @ the Wilson Center* is grateful for the support of ADM and The GE Foundation.

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