

## **IRAN DEEPENS BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH SEVERAL G-15 COUNTRIES**

Official visits abroad in November 2009 by Iranian President H. E. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his ministerial delegations have helped deepen bilateral ties between Iran and other G-15 member countries. During the course of his 5-nation tour of South America and Africa, the Iranian President signed eight agreements with his Brazilian counterpart, H. E. Lula da Silva. These agreements, signed on 23 November 2009, aim to pave the way for Iran and Brazil to enhance their cooperation in the areas of commerce, energy, and agricultural research and also simplify the visa regime between the two G-15 countries.

The Iranian President next visited Venezuela where, on 25 November 2009, Venezuela and Iran inaugurated a new binational development fund, and signed accords that aim to boost Venezuela's agricultural and industrial production. During the visit, the Venezuelan government handed over 4,000 three-bedroom apartments to low-income Venezuelans. The apartments were constructed as part of an Iranian investment that was agreed in 2005. The Venezuelan government subsidizes up to 80% of the cost of the apartments depending on the income level of the recipients, according to the state television station, VTV.

On the last leg of his foreign tour, the Iranian President visited Senegal, where he held discussions with President Wade on international and regional issues. Iran has already set up a car manufacturing plant in Senegal where thousands of cars are produced each year for export across Africa. The Iranian leader also pledged aid and new development projects including an oil refinery and tractors assemble plant to Senegal.

Meanwhile, Iran's Foreign Minister Mr. Manouchehr Mottaki paid a two-day official visit to India on 16-17 November 2009, where he held delegation-level talks with Indian External Affairs Minister S. M. Krishna on a range of bilateral and regional issues, including energy security, trade and enhanced collaboration in science and technology. During the visit, the two G-15 countries decided to accelerate negotiations over a host of agreements aimed at bilateral investment protection, avoidance of double taxation and a preferential trade agreement. To boost cultural contacts, it was decided that an Indian Cultural Centre would be set up in Tehran and an Indian cultural week would be held in Tehran and Shiraz in 2010.

Source: IANS, 16 November 2009 and [www.islamidavet.com](http://www.islamidavet.com)

## **INDONESIA, MALAYSIA PLAN TO COOPERATE ON SEVERAL FRONTS**

Bilateral economic and political relations between Indonesia and Malaysia received a boost during the visit of Indonesian President H. E. Susilo Yudhoyono to Malaysia where he met with his counterpart, Prime Minister H. E. Najib Rajak on 11-12 November 2009. The Malaysian Prime Minister said the two neighbouring countries would strive to improve grassroots ties through better cooperation between lawmakers and the establishment of friendship societies. The

two leaders also announced plans to boost cooperation in the food and energy sectors. Mr. Najib said Malaysia would consider supplying its excess energy capacity to Indonesia. Recent news reports had said that Malaysian power giant Tenaga Nasional would transmit electricity to Indonesia via high-voltage cables, in a 600-megawatt project to be made operational in 2015. In the area of food security, Mr. Yudhoyono proposed that Indonesia and Malaysia could jointly invest in food production in a climate of rising commodity prices.

Source: [www.channelnewsasia.com](http://www.channelnewsasia.com), 12 November 2009

## **JAMAICA, MEXICO SIGN AIR SERVICES AGREEMENT**

Jamaica and Mexico have signed a new bilateral civil aviation agreement, which will allow for improved air service between the two G-15 countries. Jamaica's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Dr. Kenneth Baugh, and Mexico's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Patricia Espinosa Cantellano, signed the Air Services Agreement in Montego Bay, Jamaica, on 5 November 2009. The agreement provides the framework within which designated commercial carriers can operate and is intended to expand the air links between Jamaica and Mexico, and in turn facilitate investment and tourism flows.

Source: Jamaica Information Service, 6 November 2009

## **BRAZIL TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC TIES WITH ZIMBABWE**

Brazil is ready to strengthen ties with Zimbabwe and help the country develop its vast mineral resources, the head of a visiting delegation from Brasilia has said. Speaking after paying a courtesy call on Zimbabwe's Vice President Joyce Mujuru on 17 November 2009, Ambassador Piragibe dos Santos Tarrago, Brazil's Under Secretary for Africa and Asia in the Ministry of External Affairs, said that Brazil wanted to partner Zimbabwe in development projects. He said a Brazilian trade mission would visit Zimbabwe in 2010 to evaluate possible partnerships. The delegation was in Zimbabwe for the convening of the inaugural Zimbabwe-Brazil Joint Commission.

Earlier, Ambassador Tarrago met Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara, who expressed confidence that the Joint Commission would help Zimbabwe learn from Brazil's development experience. He said the Joint Commission provided Zimbabwe with an opportunity to compare notes with Brazil, one of the fastest developing nations on the globe.

Source: The Herald (Zimbabwe), 18 November, 2009