

## **Joint Statement for the 31<sup>ST</sup> U.S.-Portugal Standing Bilateral Commission June 20, 2012 – Washington, D.C.**

The U.S.-Portugal Standing Bilateral Commission held its 31<sup>st</sup> Session on June 20. The Commission met at the Department of State in Washington, D.C.

The Commission reviewed progress on political, defense, economic, law enforcement and scientific relations in recent months. The Commission highlighted the exemplary cooperation between the two countries in the UN Security Council, which testifies to the excellent bilateral relations between two strong allies.

The Commission discussed the current global financial and economic situation, particularly in Portugal, the Euro Zone and the United States. In this framework, the U.S. reiterated its full support of Portugal's efforts in the implementation of the reform program under the Memorandum of Understanding with the IMF and European institutions.

The Commission also addressed the following issues:

- The high levels of dialogue and cooperation between Portugal and the United States in the area of defense, including several projects at bilateral and trilateral levels that are ongoing or planned for 2012.
- The importance of the U.S. military presence at Portugal's Lajes Airbase in the Azores in the context of the strategic partnership between the two allies.
- The importance of international coordination on issues relating to global security and stability, including the present situation in Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, as well as in Mali and Guinea-Bissau and elsewhere in Africa.
- The importance of homeland security and law enforcement cooperation, particularly with regard to the exchange of terrorism screening information, implementation of the Agreement for Preventing and Combating Crime, and airport and air carrier security.
- The importance of strong and sustainable cooperation with the Azores Autonomous Region.
- The progress report of the action statement developed by the Committee on Science, Technology, Energy and Environment.
- The success and renewal of the International Partnerships Program between Portugal and American universities.
- The promotion of bilateral trade and investment, including through trilateral trade initiatives in Africa.
- The pledge of the United States and Portugal to deepen and broaden bilateral cooperation and review progress in the 32nd meeting of the Bilateral Commission, to be held next fall in Lisbon.
- The complaints presented to it by Lajes workers of the U.S. Air Force 65th Air Base Wing.

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- The report of the Technical Committee, including the approval and completion of several projects.