

Arab dictatorships wants Brazil in ultraconservative alliance

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By Jamil Chade

GENEVA - Authoritarian regimes in the Arab world want to count on Brazil to be one of their allies in an ultraconservative offensive behind the scenes of the United Nations.

The representatives of the Arab governments have wavered at the possibility of opening a dialogue to include Itamaraty in initiatives to promote the “defense of the family”, a theme that divides the international community and is the object of a strong controversy.

The Arabs made the decision to seek a rapprochement to Brazil after last week, when the government radically changed its position on human rights and opened up a discomfort with the Western bloc in the face of its positions on women, reproductive rights and sexual relations.

In negotiations at the UN Human Rights Council, Brazil vetoed terms like "gender" in several draft resolutions and was warned that its position would represent a regression of 25 years in the international framework. For Brazil, there would be no "gender equality", but only "equality between men and women", giving a biological connotation to the terms. Experts have interpreted the government's stance as an effort to undermine sexual orientation that does not fit into this biological view.

Only authoritarian governments in the Islamic world, in addition to Russia, supported Itamaraty's new attitude. The Arabs now want to go further and include Brazil in a médium and long-term process to gain space with such a vision of family and gender within the UN machinery. With this, they hope to weaken progressive guidelines in different international forums.

The Brazilian position is radically different from its traditional position in the beginning of the 21st century, when diplomats in Brasilia innovated by presenting a draft resolution to indicate that no one should be discriminated on the basis of their sexual orientation.

At that time, the Arab countries refused to accept the debate. The government of Algeria, went so far as to say that "the sexual disorientation" was not a matter to be taken to the UN.

Now, one of the ideas initially considered by the Muslims would be to have Brazil at the core of a group that will try to present a joint statement to "defend the family." In the assessment of Western governments, this position is an attack on the diversity of the family and could undermine rights of homosexuals.

To the blog, Arab diplomats considered that a possible accession of Brazil could end up "dragging" other governments to a similar position.

Family in the singular

In recent years, a presentation of a resolution by Egypt in the same direction has already been controversial. LGBT groups have accused the initiative of being a disguised way of ultraconservative groups to undermine any creation of international law that can recognize gays.

The center of the controversy lies in the fact that the resolution deals only with "family," in the singular. Europeans and other countries fear that, as presented, the text does not recognize the existence of diversity and thus could be used as a precedent for barring rights of homosexuals in future texts.

The list of countries that supported the text is a mirror of repressive regimes against gays, such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Uganda and Russia.

In the past, there has been an attempt by Westerners to table an amendment. In it, the text would gain an extra phrase, pointing to the "existence of various forms of family". But in a vote, the amendment was rejected.

In response to the defeat of Western countries, the Saudis withdrew a counterclaim in which they declared that marriage would be an act only between a man and a woman.

In 2014, when the text was first put to the vote and approved, the protests by European governments were harsh.

Seeing that the amendment recognizing the existence of different forms of family was vetoed, the British government abandoned diplomacy and launched an attack on other governments. "I do not know how those who voted can look at a child in the eye and say that because they do not they would not come from a real family," he said.

At that time, the Obama administration in the US regretted the passage of the resolution.

Source: [Uol](#)