



Speech of the President of the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft

Professor Dr. Patrick Cramer

At the Reception on Invitation of the Consul General, Martina Hackelberg

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Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany, São Paulo

– Check against delivery –

It is wonderful to be back to Brazil. And I'm sure I speak for our whole delegation, which includes also our General Secretary Simone Schwanitz. I would like to thank the German Consul General for hosting us here. Thank you very much, Martina Hackelberg!

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

The reason for us to come here is twofold. First, we want to celebrate our long-standing and strong research collaborations with our partners in Latin America. And second, we would like to strengthen our collaboration, in particular with Brazil. The Max Planck Society is eager to strengthen its cooperation with Brazil because Brazil stands out as the leader in research and innovation. Over the past year, Brazil has witnessed an inspiring resurgence in scientific ambition and policy engagement. After periods of budget cuts, the government has taken decisive steps to restore funding for research and postgraduate education, sending a strong signal that science is vital for our future. This revitalization is fueling hope and positioning Brazil as a beacon for evidence-based solutions - especially as we approach the United Nations Climate Conference that takes place in Belém in November.

Did you know that Brazil is a global leader in renewable energy, with almost 50% of its total energy supply – and 80% of its electricity! – coming from renewables? Or did you know that in 2012, Brazil established SENAI, an innovation system comparable to Germany's Fraunhofer institutes? And did you know that Curitiba, a city with around 1.8 million inhabitants, was named the "Most Intelligent City in the World" in 2023 and hosts three unicorn startups that are valued over one billion dollars each?

Over the past year, Brazil's scientific community has made remarkable progress, enabling groundbreaking work across diverse fields. For example, Brazilian scientists have led pioneering studies in infectious diseases, such as advancing clinical trials for vaccines against leprosy. But some of the greatest achievements are emerging from a unique environment, the Amazon region, where Brazilian research is leading the global conversation on climate, forest resilience, and biodiversity. Cross-disciplinary partnerships -including indigenous communities, universities, and international agencies -are breaking new ground in reforestation, carbon management, and the protection of our invaluable natural



heritage. These efforts are not just scientific milestones; they are moral imperatives. They underline Brazil's role as a steward of the planet at a time when the stakes could not be higher.

Dear guests,

When I say we wish to strengthen cooperation with Brazil, we of course do not start from scratch. Instead, we can build on many shared successes. Let me briefly highlight the outstanding collaboration between the Max Planck Society and Brazil, which has grown remarkably. Over the last 5 years, researchers from both sides have co-authored 3,213 scientific papers, an incredible number. Our collaboration includes 56 research projects, 3 active Partner Groups and 3 Tandem Groups, funded by FAPESP. The top 3 Brazilian institutional partners are the Universidade de São Paulo, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, and Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Físicas. A very remarkable partnership is the Amazon Tall Tower Observatory (ATTO) project with INPA, the Brazilian Institute for research in the Amazon, in Manaus. These successes in collaboration require strong leadership on both sides. Some of our scientific leaders are with us today: Susan Trumbore, Ricarda Winkelmann, Thomas Duve and Victor Caetano Andrade.

Dear guests,

This vibrant and fruitful partnership exemplifies the deep scientific ties and mutual commitment between the Max Planck Society and Brazilian institutions. But of course, there are also challenges. I would like to at least mention the geopolitical shifts we are currently experiencing. As the new administration in the United States renders the exchange of talent with the US more difficult, Brazil prioritizes strategic alliances through BRICS and close relations with China. However, Brazil also maintains strong ties with Europe, and remains a key driver of Mercosur, but then often faces hesitation and delays from European partners. In these times, we would like to offer an open, mutually beneficial partnership between Brazilian and Max Planck researchers. Together, we should identify opportunities for synergy in research and for the exchange of talent and training of the next generation. We should be guided by excellence and should be open with respect to the research field. We should take our opportunities, to the best of society and humanity. I am much looking forward to a shared future! Thank you.