

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 15, 2011 4:59 AM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Marcelo Tas

From: Ross, Alec J
Sent: Sunday, August 14, 2011 07:19 PM
To: Mills, Cheryl D; Jacobson, Roberta S
Subject: Fw: Marcelo Tas

Cheryl+Roberta:
Always impressed by Tom's thinking/analysis. The below interesting....

Alec Ross
Senior Advisor for Innovation
Office of the Secretary of State

From: Shannon, Thomas A
Sent: Sunday, August 14, 2011 05:22 PM
To: Ross, Alec J
Cc: Chapman, Todd C
Subject: RE: Marcelo Tas

Alec:

Thanks for your note. This is great news, and a very powerful example of what you have been able to accomplish.

The dramatic content of social media messaging from Syria, and your effort to amplify it, has had a positive impact here. As the violence and killing have mounted, the traditional arguments used here in defense of the sovereignty of the government of Syria and to keep Brazil on the sidelines of this event have eroded. It is worth noting that the recent IBSA mission to Damascus was an example of how Brazil, India, and South Africa felt they could not work within the BRICS context because of significant differences with the Chinese and Russian over human rights. Even this mission, however, will be a source of problems for the countries that participated. The very traditional images of diplomats seated in conversation with the Syrian President and Foreign Minister were overwhelmed by the social media images of the violence that continued that same day, with 15 dead. The promises made by Bashir and his FM in the meeting, and which were repeated in the statement released by the visiting IBSA delegation, stood in stark contrast to images of tanks firing into crowds.

A disconnect exists here between the traditionalism of the foreign affairs experts, and the emerging world of social media. The traditionalists still do not understand what they are up against, and have relied on the relative inertia of most Brazilians regarding foreign affairs. However, this is changing

rapidly, and events in Syria could be what defines a new stage in building popular content into Brazil's foreign policy.

Regards,
Tom

From: Ross, Alec J
Sent: Friday, August 12, 2011 12:31 PM
To: Shannon, Thomas A
Cc: Chapman, Todd C
Subject: Marcelo Tas

Tom,
Small thing I thought you would find of interest; you've heard me talk about how we should cultivate "social media influencers" for the purpose of validation and amplification of our message.

Embassy Brasilia set up a coffee for me and Marcelo Tas during my brief trip to Brazil in April. Very positive visit. This morning, I pushed out some Syria-related content on Twitter. Tas picked up on it, built in a Portuguese translation, and then disseminated to his nearly 2 million followers on Twitter. That then ricocheted around Brazilian social media circles where it was further amplified so that literally millions and millions of people in Brazil (perhaps 10M+) have read the content we pushed out. More importantly, they don't think of it as something the USG is pushing out, but rather Marcelo Tas. In translating and disseminating the content himself, he became its publisher and validator.

It's a small thing, but a good thing; an example of how to use "networks" for local amplification and validation.

My best,
Alec

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