

*Brazilian foreign minister  
repudiates racist offenses against  
soccer player*

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## Brazilian Real Madrid soccer player Vinicius

Brasilia, May 24 (RHC-- Brazil's Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira today repudiated racist offenses against Real Madrid soccer player Vinicius Jr. and demanded concrete measures from the Spanish government during a congressional hearing.

"I cannot fail to mention the regrettable episode in which the player Vinicius Jr. was the victim of racist insults. Brazil repudiates, in the strongest terms, these attacks," said the foreign minister in the Foreign Relations Committee of the Chamber of Deputies.

The racist episode occurred this past Sunday, when the young athlete was called a monkey by Valencia fans at the Mestalla Stadium.

The Foreign Ministry telephoned the Spanish ambassador in Brasilia, Mar Fernández-Palacios, to express the discontent of the government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. "We are closely following the first measures taken by the Spanish authorities and the sports authorities, whose objective is to punish the perpetrators and, above all, to avoid the repetition of such acts," the minister remarked.

He insisted that "we will remain attentive to the case and to the promotion of an anti-racist foreign policy."

Vieira assured that Brazil and Spain are in permanent contact to find formulas to put an end to racism in soccer and other sports.

He revealed that in the last few days he had a telephone conversation on the delicate matter with his Spanish counterpart, José Manuel Albares, who expressed the decision of the government of Pedro Sánchez to prevent the recurrence of such events and to prevent them from going unpunished.

"Minister Albares expressed his full repudiation," stressed the head of Brazilian diplomacy, convinced that what happened at Mestalla does not reflect the characteristics of Spanish society.

The national press assures that Real Madrid showed its most energetic repudiation and filed a complaint with the Spanish Attorney General's Office for the racist insults against Vinicius Jr. In a statement, the sports company pointed out that "these facts constitute a direct attack on the model of coexistence of our social and democratic state of law" and such aggressions "also constitute a hate crime."

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