

## Astronaut chosen as Goodwill Ambassador for UN industrial development body



Brazilian astronaut Marcos Pontes (right) with UNIDO Director-General Kandeh Yumkella

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The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) announced today that it has [appointed](#) Marcos Pontes, the first Brazilian astronaut to go into space, as a Goodwill Ambassador.

Mr. Pontes began life in poor living conditions in the suburbs of São Paulo, the agency said in a news release announcing his appointment, which took place during the 14th session of the UNIDO General Conference being held in Vienna this week.

He went on to reach his dreams through basic education and professional skills training that enabled him to commence subsequent studies in aeronautical technology and engineering, UNIDO noted.

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“With his unique life story, Marcos Pontes is giving an example of how basic education and professional skills can make a real difference,” said UNIDO Director-General Kandeh Yumkella. “His story is an inspiration for many people around the globe.”

Mr. Pontes voiced his appreciation to UNIDO for considering him for the position of Goodwill Ambassador to advocate the agency’s messages and activities.

“Looking from space, earth is a unique and beautiful planet. We have 7 billion people trying to live with some quality on this wonderful blue home. But that will not be possible if we try it selfishly.

“We need to get together and prepare the new generation to be citizens of one world. UNIDO can help in this challenge, and I am honoured to accept the nomination to cooperate as UNIDO Goodwill Ambassador for a better future on earth,” said Mr. Pontes.

Since it was inaugurated in October 2004, UNIDO’s Goodwill Ambassador Programme has tapped various public figures, eminent businessmen and industrialists from various regions of the world to improve the agency’s visibility, profile and global reach, both with governments and business circles.

They also have an advisory role and support the agency’s activities in its three thematic priorities: poverty reduction through productive activities, trade capacity building, and energy and environment.

UNIDO’s other Goodwill Ambassadors include the chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Rajendra K. Pachauri of India and the businessmen Peter Sutherland (Ireland) and Mansour Cama (Senegal).

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