

Brazil Blasts US and Casts Doubt It Will Buy American Fighter Planes

Contributed by Isabela Vieira
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Brazilian Defense minister, Nelson Jobim, told reporters this Friday, November 6, that the dispute between the US, France and Sweden to sell 36 fighter planes to the Brazilian Air Force is still going on and it's very strong.

He then went on to say he didn't want to create a controversy with any comment that might be seen favoring any of the countries and companies involved. But he didn't spare the United States.

"I will not get into a fight of companies," Jobim said after visiting the Cetex (Army's Technological Center), in Rio de Janeiro's west side.

According to the minister, the most controversial matter among the suppliers is the technology transfer issue and he emphasized that, in this area, the United States doesn't have a favorable history.

"The trouble with the United States," he stated, "are past issues. The past is a big example of technology transfer embargo. We experience this here today at the Cetex."

Jobim revealed that during his visit to the technological center he heard reports by military men stating that American companies would supply technology for the finishing of military equipments, such as batteries and propellers, only in ten years.

The difficulty to formalize technology transfer deals, according to Jobim, is a problem for several countries. "This is part of the game," he commented. "All countries of the world don't want the others to develop technologically. But Brazil is going to develop itself."

Brazil's Defense ministry intends to announce the winner of the bid to purchase the 36 fighter planes until the end of year. The Air Force is still evaluating the received proposals. The competitors are the Rafale fighter planes, from French company Dassault; the F/A-18 Super Hornet, from US company Boeing and Gripen NG, from Swedish company Saab.

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