

## We Opposed the War, Brazil Tells Iraq Kidnappers

Contributed by Juliana Cézar  
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The Brazilian Minister of Foreign Relations, Celso Amorim, launched an appeal for the release of José Jorge Vasconcelos Júnior, a 49 year-old Brazilian engineer who was taken hostage last Wednesday, January 19. in Iraq.

"These facts are even more incomprehensible in light of the fact that he is a citizen of a country that obviously didn't back the war. We are making an appeal that is humanitarian in nature," Amorim informed.

The Minister recalled that the Brazilian government has been accompanying the case since its inception, remaining in touch with the presidency of the Odebrecht construction company, Vasconcelos's employer.

"We are not only keeping track, but we are also mobilizing all possible information channels and preparing the company for whatever actions may be necessary," the Chancellor said in a collective interview.

Brazilian Ambassador Affonso Celso de Ouro-Preto, special representative to the Middle East, left today for Amman, Jordan. There he will help in the negotiations for the release of the Brazilian engineer.

Amorim revealed that President Lula plans to make a telephone call to an important Arab leader. The leader's name was not disclosed.

"To maintain these channels requires a certain degree of discretion," Amorim explains.

According to the Minister, Brazil has exchanged information with countries that have experience with similar situations.

Translation: David Silberstein  
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