

Muslims Intercede for Brazilian Kidnapped in Iraq

Contributed by Keite Camacho
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The search for the Brazilian engineer, João José Vasconcelos, Jr., kidnapped 11 days ago in Iraq, is being enlarged under the auspices of representatives of Brazil's Muslim community.

Haidar Abu Talib, councilor of the Rio de Janeiro Muslim Philanthropic Society, disclosed that a note was sent to the Arab TV network, Al-Jazeera, appealing to Muslim leaders in Iraq to make it clear that Brazil is in no way involved as a belligerent in the country's conflicts and calling for the Brazilian's release.

The Brazilian hostage works for the Norberto Odebrecht Construction Company and was assigned to an Iraqi electric plant. He was the victim of an ambush by the Al-Majahideen group, in cahoots with the radical leader, Ansar al Sunna, linked to Osama Bin Laden's Al Qaeda terrorist network.

In the note sent to the TV networks requesting Vasconcelos Jr.'s release, the Rio de Janeiro Muslim Philanthropic Society underscores the Brazilian nation's and people's solidarity with "the Iraqi people's resistance fight."

The note recalls that this "was clearly demonstrated by the official position of the Brazilian government, which never supported the invasion of Iraq by foreign armies, nor dispatched soldiers or any other type of armed troops or war material to be used against the Iraqi people."

In the message, the organization points out that Brazil's Muslim community is made up of people of diverse origins who coexist with, respect, and receive the respect of those who profess other faiths.

The Muslim Society's note also emphasizes that the engineer's family, despite the suffering caused by his absence, "never once failed to show regard and consideration for the Iraqi people and confide in their good sense, sense of justice, and mercy," in consonance with the teachings of the Koran.

Translation: David Silberstein
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