

## Brazil Sends 98 Athletes to Athen's Paralympics

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Brazil is sending 98 athletes to Athens for the Para Olympic games for the handicapped (also known as the Paralympics) which began on September 11 and will end on September 29.

It is the largest group of athletes Brazil has ever sent to this event. Brazilians will compete in 13 of the 19 sporting competitions.

"Fortunately, we were able to prepare well. We should come back with a gold medal," says Mizael Conrado, of the soccer team for the visually impaired, known as Five Soccer.

Rivaldo Martins, a cyclist, says there are no favorites in his sport. "There will be forty of us and twelve are possible winners." Martins lost his left leg in a traffic accident in 1986.

In Sidney in 2000, Brazil came back with 22 medals from the Para Olympics, its best ever performance. Spokesmen for the Brazilian Olympic Committee say they want to be among the top 20 nations at these games.

The Para Olympics will bring together 4,000 athletes from 43 countries.

### Cuba Agreement

Last year, Cuba and Brazil signed a cooperation agreement for the development of school sports in Brazil.

Cuban specialists in this area will work together with technical personnel in the Ministry of Sports to strengthen school sports as a tool for social and human development. In return, Brazil will send soccer professionals to the island to train coaches.

In addition to this aid, the exchange also encompasses sports for the handicapped; sports for women; anti-doping; development of sports science, technology, and infrastructure; sports medicine; information and documentation; community sports; sports and cultural identity; scouting talents; recreation and leisure; and high performance sports.

The agreement was signed by the Minister of Sports, Agnelo Queiroz, and the president of the (Cuban) National Institute of Sports, Physical Education, and Recreation (INDER), Humberto Rodriguez.

They consider that the agreement has historical significance in the relationship between the two countries.

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