

Brazil's Vice-President: Interests Are Halting Country

Contributed by Brazzil Magazine
Wednesday, 15 September 2004

The president of the Brazilian Supermarket Association (Abras), João Carlos Oliveira, seemed very optimistic in relation to the Brazilian economy. "The 4% increase in our GDP during the first semester fills us with high expectations."

by Geovana Pagel

"It means more employment, greater production levels at the industries and higher sales volume in the trade sector," asserted Oliveira, during the opening of Expo Abras - the 34th International Trade Show of Products, Services, Technology and Equipment for Supermarkets and 38th National Supermarket Convention.

According to Oliveira, the supermarket sector has more than 72 thousand stores in all states in Brazil, generates 740 thousand direct jobs and has a yearly revenue of US\$ 31 billion, equivalent to 6% of the national GDP.

Oliveira emphasised how the Brazilian social security tax (Cofins) reduction on the basic food basket was important for the sector. "Reducing the tax burden is vital for an improvement in the economy. It is important that taxes fall on revenues, not on the productive chain," he explained.

The Minister of Development, Industry, and Foreign Trade, Luiz Fernando Furlan, said that since June this year, sales of hard goods, and now also sales in the food sector, has been increasing.

The Brazilian Vice-President, José Alencar Gomes da Silva, returned to the issue of interest rates reduction. "High interest rates break the country's growth. Never was there such a high value transfer to the banking system," he stated.

The Vice-President also underscored the importance of the internationalization of the fair. "The participation of businessmen from China, Poland, Mexico and the Arab countries shows how much the growth in the sector is attractive to entrepreneurs all over the world," he said.

The Gourmet Space is one of the innovations of the 34th edition of the Expo Abras. It is an area that includes various culinary product releases, exhibited in different manner. At the site, the exhibitor can show guests their novelties preparing, for example, recipes.

A kitchen set up in the shape of an auditorium, with a capacity for 25 people, is used by famous chefs connected to the Brazilian Association of High Gastronomy (Abaga).

The space is organized by the Rio de Janeiro Union of Hotels, Restaurants, Bars, and Similar and sponsored by the sector's National Federation.

ANBA – Brazil-Arab News Agency