

## Brazil Drafts US Multinationals to Affirmative Action Program

Contributed by Juliana Cézar Nunes  
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Brazil's Minister of the Special Secretariat of Policies for the Promotion of Racial Equality (SEPPIR), Matilde Ribeiro, and representatives of the automobile industries will go to Detroit (USA), still this year, to visit headquarters of multinational companies.

"The idea is to create transnational affirmative action programs, motivating companies to utilize racial inclusion projects," explained SEPPIR's deputy secretary, Douglas Martins.

Yesterday, during the international seminary "Promoting Racial Equality: a Dialog about Policies," in Brasília, the secretary said that dialog with public and private national companies have already started.

The secretary's strategy has been to stimulate entrepreneurs and managers to include Afro-Brazilians in the market. SEPPIR offers support to mediate negotiations between employers and employees. The next step would be to consolidate partnership with workers' unions.

"We want to negotiate items that foster the promotion of racial equality. We have to change this exclusion scenery," defends Martins.

According to him, the government along with regional work offices intends to identify companies that demonstrate any kind of racial discrimination during the hiring process or through their employee promotion policies.

A Synthesis of Social Indicators released by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) in 2004, shows that salaries vary according to worker's skin color.

While average salary of white employees hired through official means was US\$ 342 (890 reais), in 2003, black and brown Brazilians received an average of US\$ 206 (536 reais).

Even though black and brown population reached, in 2003, practically the same school level that white population had in 1993, average income still remains 50-60% of the average salaries white people received 10 years ago.

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