

Brazil's New Cabinet Chief Vows to Be More Technical and Less Political

Contributed by Ana Paula Marra
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After assuming the post of Presidential Chief of Staff, Monday, June 21, Minister Dilma Rousseff affirmed that she will handle "government policy and planning and politics in the broad sense of the word."

But she made it clear that Aldo Rebelo, Minister of Political Coordination, will be in charge of activities that involve political arrangements, such as political appointments.

"We cannot confuse the two aspects. Political coordination is another department. My department is government policy management, in which priority is defined in terms of projects and visions of the country's sustainable development," she explained in response to reporters' questions about her functions as Chief of Staff.

She said that, as Chief of Staff, she will be in touch with Minister Rebelo, as she will be with all the other Ministers and the Congress, but that her main function will be technical management of policy.

"President Lula asked me to coordinate the Civilian Advisory Staff from the point of view of government actions, government projects that are being executed by the various Ministries.

"We shall focus this management on securing the implementation of these projects according to schedules we judge necessary, in an efficient and timely manner, so as to benefit the population," she emphasized.

When asked how she plans to deal with the inaction of the National Congress as a result of the political crisis, Rousseff said that it is "perfectly possible to combine an adequate consideration of projects with the investigations of the Parliamentary Inquiry Commission [on the Post Office]."

In her view, uniting democratic and institutional activities constitutes a challenge to the country's maturity. "I see no reason to paralyze the Legislature. That would be an underestimation of our Congress."

Minister Rousseff judged her experience with the National Congress in recent years to have been "productive." She cited as an example the legislation and discussion of the model for the electricity sector in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate.

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