

## Brazilians Indicted in the U.S. for Murdering American Nun in Brazil

Contributed by Newsroom  
Wednesday, 22 June 2005

The U.S. Department of Justice announced today that two Brazilian nationals have been indicted in connection with the Feb. 12, 2005, murder of Sister Dorothy Mae Stang, an American Catholic nun, in the Amazon region of Brazil.

The two men charged - Rayfran das Neves Sales, 28, and Clodoaldo Carlos Batista, 30 - are currently charged in Brazil for the murder and have been in the custody of Brazilian authorities since late February.

The three-count indictment, returned by a federal grand jury in the District of Columbia yesterday, charges both men with: conspiracy to murder a U.S. national outside the United States; murder of a U.S. national outside the United States; and using, carrying and discharging a firearm in the commission of a crime of violence.

"This indictment was the direct result of outstanding cooperation and investigative efforts by Brazilian authorities," said Attorney General Gonzales.

"Working with the Brazilians, we will continue to seek justice for Sister Stang's many loved ones, here and abroad."

U.S. Attorney Kenneth Wainstein of the District of Columbia stated, "Sister Stang's murder was a tragic loss for Brazil, for the United States and for all humanity. We will not rest until all who participated in this brutal and cowardly crime are apprehended and brought to justice."

Dorothy Mae Stang, 74, was a member of the Sisters of Notre Dame. Stang was from Ohio, but had lived and worked as a missionary in Brazil for about the last 30 years. Sister Stang was a well-known activist for agrarian reform in the Amazon region of Pará State.

Stang's murder, allegedly by employees of a Brazilian land holder, is widely regarded as a direct response to her activism in advocating land reform and peasants' rights within the programs set forth by the Brazilian government.

The indictment charges that in the early morning hours of Feb. 12, 2005, the defendants approached Sister Stang on a dirt road and shot her at least three times, killing her.

The indictment alleges further that the defendants had been offered the equivalent of US\$ 20,000 to commit the murder and that they had set out to find Sister Stang on the previous night, but were unsuccessful.

After the murder, the defendants are alleged to have fled and hid in the jungle until they were arrested by Brazilian authorities on or about Feb. 21, 2005.

The investigation is being handled by agents of the FBI's Miami Field Division, in close coordination with Brazilian law enforcement authorities.

The prosecution is being led by the U.S. Attorney's Office in the District of Columbia and the Counterterrorism Section of the Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice.

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