

## Brazil Seizes US\$ 761 Million in Pirated Goods

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Thursday, 01 September 2005

In the first half of 2004, Brazil's Federal Revenue agency seized approximately US\$ 761 million (1.8 billion reais) in counterfeit products.

This figures appears in the first report on the activities of the Ministry of Justice's National Council to Combat Piracy and Intellectual Property Violations (CNCP).

The secretary of the Federal Revenue agency, Jorge Rachid, said that the agency carried out over 600 operations in the country in the first semester alone.

According to the president of the Council, Luiz Paulo Barreto, it is estimated that this kind of illegal activity causes around US\$ 30 billion in annual losses to Brazil in terms of tax revenues.

But, according to Rachid, there are no precise figures on how much the country loses as a result of piracy. "These amounts are frequently understated," he said.

Following the presentation of the report, the Minister of Justice, Márcio Thomaz Bastos, said that Brazil's efforts to combat piracy have been recognized by countries interested in deterring this practice, such as the United States.

"The job that is being done here is a strong, organized effort involving a whole network, and I am sure it will be successful," he said.

"Sometimes a populist argument arises in favor of piracy, claiming that it creates jobs. It doesn't. It eliminates job, because it practices tax evasion and deprives the State of the opportunity to attain its true goals," the Minister concluded.

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