

## Brazil Wishes to Free the Internet from US Control

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Monday, 19 September 2005

At the 2nd Global Society of Information Summit, in November, in Tunis (Tunisia), Brazil will defend the creation of a body under the aegis of the United Nations (UN) to assume responsibility for discussing matters related to the administration of website addresses.

Internet governance is currently in the hands of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Addresses (Icann), a non-profit organization based in the United States.

The Brazilian delegation argues that, because it is connected to a single country, governance is inadequate to deal with international conflicts.

"There are a series of cross-border issues having to do with crimes committed in several countries, as, for example, forgery, fraud, theft, or child pornography. At times the server is not based in the country where the crime occurred, but in another country," argues Rogério Santanna, secretary of Logistics and Information Technology in the Ministry of Planning.

Santanna points out that there is no forum where countries can discuss internet crimes, nor is there a treaty covering this issue. "The Internet today is not backed by any international treaty."

The secretary emphasizes, however, that it is not a question of eliminating the role of the Icann with regard to names, domains, numbers, IPs, and protocols.

"We defend the creation of a forum that will supervise the areas of conflict, and the Icann will maintain its role."

The idea is for this forum to act in the definition of international policies and agreements and to contain an exclusively governmental decision-making body to deal with areas that involve national sovereignty.

Provision is also made for geographic and economic representativeness, bringing together governments, the third sector, the business sector, and the scientific and technological community, according to criteria determined by the Global Society of Information Summit.

Another theme the Brazilian delegation plans to defend is the use of free software as an instrument to encourage knowledge-sharing among nations.

"The use of free software is a strategy for reducing dependency. Whenever we in the government discuss the purchase of software, the suppliers - and this is standard business practice - try to create competitive differentials to bind us to their solutions.

"And the users have to defend themselves through the use of open standards and free software, which is a strategy for opening the codes and allowing users to change, become familiar with, study, and distribute them," Santanna argues.

Brazil will also back a proposal presented by the Senegalese delegation for the creation of a digital solidarity fund. "This is an important theme at the Tunis conference. But the developed countries resist adopting this fund. It is one of our major battles," he remarked.

Agência Brasil