

## After Camping for Close to Three Years, Landless Get Land in Brazil

Contributed by Mylena Fiori  
Wednesday, 28 September 2005

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's agenda today in Porto Seguro, in the Brazilian northeastern state of Bahia, includes the symbolic presentation of the deed to the Coroa Ranch to 68 families of landless farmers who, until this past weekend, resided in the Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva bivouac.

The President will be accompanied by the Minister of Agrarian Development, Miguel Rossetto, and the president of the National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform (Incra), Rolf Hackbart.

Another 447 families who also lived in the bivouac alongside the BR-101 highway, in the extreme south of Bahia, were transferred to another four rural properties, expropriated or purchased by the Incra in the region in the past two months.

The total area of 6,615 hectares designated for the future settlements will cost US\$ 6.2 million (14.1 million reais) - US\$ 4.7 million (10.5 million reais) in agrarian debt bonds (TDAs) and US\$ 1.5 million (R\$ 3.5 million) in cash.

The bivouacked farmers have been waiting to be assigned to settlements for two years and eight months. President Lula visited the locale in January and promised to return in July, by which time the farmers were supposed to have been settled. Today the president is also scheduled to participate in the inauguration of the Veracel Cellulose plant in the south of Bahia.

The regional superintendent of the Incra in Bahia, Marcelino Gallo, informs that in August the Incra transferred the Virote Ranch, in the municipality of Itabela, and the Santa Cruz do Ouro Ranch, in Itamaraju, both in the extreme south of Bahia, to 173 families that were also camped out in the Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva bivouac and awaiting settlement.

The settlement projects for both areas are now ready. Another 84 families were moved to the Bela Vista Moveelar Ranch, and 180, to the Cerro Azul Ranch. In both cases the landless farmers are living in temporary camps, as is the case with the Coroa Ranch.

The larger of the two properties was acquired by the Veracel company through an understanding with the Incra. The company went ahead and purchased the property, which will be sold to the Incra in exchange for TDAs.

The extreme southern region of Bahia is formed by 21 municipalities, where, according to the Incra, there are 28 settlement projects, with 2,139 families settled on 47,246 hectares of land.

Since 2003, nine properties, totaling 15,286 hectares, have been declared areas of social interest and distributed to 783 families. Incra had not expropriated land in the region since 1997.

Agência Brasil