

## Lula Urges Portugal to Ease Process of Legalizing 30,000 Illegal Brazilians

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President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's first stop on his European trip this week was in Portugal where the situation of an estimated 30,000 Brazilians living illegally in the country was discussed at the 8th Brazil-Portugal Summit. This is far from the first time this issue has been dealt with by the two governments.

In fact, in 2003, after long, complicated negotiations, they signed an agreement to facilitate the legalization of Brazilians living in Portugal which permitted approximately 13,700 Brazilians to get documents.

But the document process is expensive as it includes fines for working illegally, requires social security contributions and has a fixed cost of 75 euros.

In a press conference upon arriving in Portugal, Lula declared that he intended to ask the Portuguese authorities to make Brazilians exempt from paying the fines.

José Socrates, the Portuguese prime minister, said only that his country is interested in having Brazilians legalize their situation in the country and is now running a campaign to get them to do so.

Socrates announced that beginning in November members of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) would have exclusive reception areas at arrival points in Portugal.

"This is a community that has helped Portugal develop. We like members of this community. They are welcome here," he declared.

### Conference

Today and tomorrow president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva will be in Salamanca, Spain, for the 15th Iberian-American Conference which brings together the heads of government and state from 22 nations.

On the agenda are discussions regarding socioeconomic problems, migration, the Millennium Goals program, action plans to combat hunger and poverty, investments in infrastructure and social programs, globalization and social inclusion.

During the conference, Lula will attend various social events with the other presidents and prime ministers. He will have a series of private meetings with them. He will also meet privately with the new president of the Interamerican Development Bank, Luiz Alberto Moreno.

Tomorrow Lula will sign a memorandum of understanding for the establishment of a Hispanic- Brazilian Cultural Center and a Brazilian Studies Center in Salamanca.

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