

## Brazil's Ex-Minister Pans Lula for Bush Bashing and Third World Mentality

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Former Brazilian Finance Minister Mailson da Nóbrega says President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva could win next year's presidential election, but says much will depend on the opposition's tactics. Lula's chances will be boosted by the "macroeconomic outlook" for 2006, which da Nóbrega describes as being one of the best in the last eight years. He foresees no risk of the government giving in to political pressure and changing its economic policy.

"Lula knows this would be a mistake in economic terms and suicidal in political terms," said da Nóbrega in a wide-ranging interview with Brazil Political Comment, a recently-launched site, which covers the Brazilian political and business scene.

In other comments, da Nóbrega says Lula's foreign policy is based on a Third World agenda, is marked by anti-Americanism and is "one of the worst in the history of Brazil".

He describes the pension system, introduced by the 1988 Constitution, as a "fiscal disaster" which is holding back Brazil's development.

Da Nóbrega also discusses his forthcoming book "O Futuro Chegou - Instituições e Desenvolvimento no Brasil" (The Future Has Arrived - Institutions and Development in Brazil).

"I believe Brazil is migrating to a new development model, which will be marked by democracy, a market-oriented economy, and be founded on strong economic institutions with social policies focused on the poor.

"The transition will be long, difficult and risky but I believe we will arrive there. The signs of this future can already been seen."

The interview is available in English and Portuguese at [www.brazilpoliticalcomment.com.br](http://www.brazilpoliticalcomment.com.br)

You can also read John Fitzpatrick's article [Brazilian Parties Start Long Haul in Fight for Presidency](#) in which he claims that the forthcoming presidential election campaign will be a no-holds conflict, marked by dirty tricks and mudslinging. Here is an excerpt:

"In early October I was talking to someone closely involved with the São Paulo PSDB leadership who said that the Workers Party (PT)... was wrong if it thought the ongoing political crisis was running out of steam. Something would occur which would show Lula that he would not have a clear run at a second mandate next year.

I assumed he was referring to some ambush the PSDB was preparing for just before next year's election. "Oh no, it will happen sooner, perhaps this month," he said. Events in the last few days of October show he may have been speaking the truth."

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