

Brazil to Impose Tougher Sentences for Electoral Crimes

Contributed by Nelson Motta
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The President of Brazil's Federal Election Court (TSE), Minister Carlos Velloso, said Monday, November 21, that it is difficult to eliminate the use of unreported funds in electoral campaigns. He believes, though, that it is possible to reduce the problem with a new legislation.

The Minister made these declarations after handing to Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva the project outline proposing more severe punishment for electoral crimes.

For instance, the sentence for using unreported contributions would go from 2-3 years to 3-6 years in prison. The outline also suggests improvements in the expenses report system used by candidates and political parties.

According to Velloso, President Lula promised the creation of a group to study the proposals. "He didn't specify who would integrate the group".

Bingo Inquiry

Members of Brazil's Bingo Parliamentary Investigative Commission (CPI) will debate whether or not to convoke Brazilian Minister of Finance, Antonio Palocci, to testify regarding charges of corruption in the city of Ribeirão Preto (state of São Paulo) when he was mayor.

The CPI is also looking into reports of funds coming from abroad to finance the Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva victorious presidential campaign in 2002.

Palocci told the congressional Commission on Economic Affairs, in testimony last week, that no money from Cuba, Angola or the Colombia insurgent group, FARC, went to the Lula campaign.

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