

Brazil Declares War to Piracy and Promises Zero Tolerance

Contributed by Ana Paula Marra
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In his recap of last year, the executive secretary of the Brazilian Ministry of Justice, Luiz Paulo Barreto, confirmed that 2005 was "an historic year for Brazil" in the battle against piracy. He assured that this effort will continue in 2006, since any activity connected with piracy will no longer be tolerated.

US\$ 84 million in counterfeit merchandise was confiscated during the whole year of 2005, 130% more than the value of the goods seized in 2004.

Altogether, 1200 individuals associated with this kind of activity were arrested, as against 40 in 2004. "2005 was the period in which the largest number of arrests were made involving individuals involved in piracy schemes," he affirmed.

In 2006, the secretary informed, the Federal Police, Federal Revenue agency, and the Federal Highway Police will act in conjunction to combat piracy and contraband in every state of the Federation.

"We really must attack it with professionalism. And, in 2006, this will also be one of the government's priorities, since piracy does serious harm to consumers, domestic companies, and, as a result, the country, which is deprived of tax revenues," the secretary pointed out.

Around 500,000 counterfeit CDs and DVDs seized all over the country in 2005 were destroyed in December in front of the National Congress. This symbolic act marked National Anti-Piracy Day.

The creation of the National Anti-Piracy Council by the federal government at the end of 2005 also constituted a significant watershed in the way combating piracy is approached, according to Barreto.

Since its implantation, it is possible to perceive the progress in repressing this type of crime, the executive secretary emphasized.

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