

One Year Later, No Word on Brazilian Kidnapped in Iraq

Contributed by Roberta Lopes
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It has now been a year since Brazilian engineer João José Vasconcellos Júnior was kidnapped in Iraq where he was working for Brazilian construction firm Odebrecht.

A convoy that Vasconcellos Junior was travelling in near the city of Baiji, in the so-called Sunni triangle, was attacked by terrorists and he was taken hostage on January 19, 2005.

The Foreign Ministry says that ever since the confirmation of the abduction of the Brazilian everyone in the government, from president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva down, has done all that was possible to free him.

However, the Ministry adds, the area where the kidnapping took place is very dangerous and the site of frequent skirmishes, attacks and bombings, which makes it extremely difficult to get reliable information.

Brazil has set up an "Iraq Center" at its diplomatic representation in Jordan and used that as a base for investigating the case.

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