

Brazil Moves to Deal with Charges of Arms Smuggling from Neighboring Countries

Contributed by Iolando Lourenço
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The multilateral commission formed in Brazil to discuss illegal trade in arms plans to hold its first meeting early in March, in Brasília, the Brazilian capital.

This information was given by the coordinator of the Transnational Crimes division of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Marco Gama, who is also coordinator of the commission.

He said that representatives of the Argentinean, Bolivian, Paraguayan, Surinamese, and Uruguayan embassies were invited to participate.

The multilateral commission was conceived and organized at a meeting in the Ministry of Defense, in response to accusations by members of the Parliamentary Investigatory Commission (CPI) on Arms Trafficking that Air Force officers from other South American countries are engaged in illegal cross-border arms shipments to Brazil.

According to Gama, the accusations had repercussions in the these countries, leading to the meeting at which the commission was created.

"This is not the first time we are going to meet with these countries to discuss arms trafficking. We are familiar with and have discussed various ways to combat firearms trafficking," he affirmed.

He said that the commission plans to meet every two weeks, in Brasília, including representatives from the embassies of these countries and representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Relations, Defense, and Justice, the presidential Institutional Security cabinet, the Brazilian Intelligence Agency (ABIN), and the CPI on Arms Trafficking.

According to Gama, the first meeting should serve to define the commission's line of action, as well as the desirable paths to combat arms trafficking. The commission is also expected to begin analyzing documents in the possession of the CPI containing accusations about illegal trade in arms.

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