

## PSDB's Serra to Manage Brazil's Largest City

Contributed by Iolando Lourenço  
Monday, 01 November 2004

The mayor-elect of São Paulo, Brazil, José Serra (PSDB), defeated his rival, incumbent mayor Marta Suplicy (PT), by 54.99% (3,313,092) to 45.01% (2,711,434) of the votes. 99.28% of the valid ballots have been tallied up to this moment.

With Serra's election, the PSDB will assume the administration of Brazil's largest city, with 7.7 million voters and a population of 10.8 million inhabitants. Serra will also be in charge of one of the country's largest budgets for the next four years.

Serra, who is the party's national president, obtained this victory two years after losing in the second round of the presidential election to Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. In the presidential race Serra was the candidate of the president at the time, Fernando Henrique Cardoso.

Serra, who was born in the capital of São Paulo, began his political career in the student movement.

He was president of the UNE (União Nacional dos Estudantes—National Student Union) in 1963.

After the military coup in 1964, he went into exile and spent the next fourteen years in Bolivia, Chile, Italy, and the United States.

Serra returned to Brazil in 1978, when he was named Secretary of Economics and Planning of the São Paulo state government during the Franco Montoro administration.

He was elected federal deputy in 1986 and 1990, and senator in 1994.

He served as Minister of Planning during the first Cardoso Administration.

In 1996 he resigned the post to run for mayor of São Paulo and was defeated by Celso Pitta, ally of Paulo Maluf, the mayor at the time.

During the second Cardoso Administration, Serra was appointed Minister of Health.

Among Serra's proposals for education are to expand the number of places in day-care centers and pre-schools, to accommodate 150 thousand more children, and to extend the school day to five hours in fundamental education (grades 1-8).

In the health area, the candidate intends to recover health posts, through investments in doctors, assistants, and equipment, and create 24-hour health posts.

Serra is expected to renounce the presidency of the PSDB, because the position cannot be exercised by someone with an executive mandate.

Agência Brasil  
Translator: David Silberstein