

Brazil Calls Space Mission's US\$ 10 Million Price Tag Small Considering Benefits

Contributed by Yara Aquino
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Brazil's Minister of Science and Technology, Sérgio Rezende, refuted criticism this Thursday, April 20, about expenses with the mission that took to space, in the beginning of the month, Brazilian astronaut, Marcos Pontes.

"This was the most important event to make Brazilian science and technology known," said the Minister during the ceremony to acclaim Pontes at the Planalto Palace, in capital Brasília.

According to Rezende, results compensated the US\$ 10 million invested in the mission. The minister recalled that the budget expected for the Brazilian space program went from US\$ 26 million, in 2002, up to US\$ 104 million, in 2005.

In the ceremony, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva told Pontes that this trip represents just the beginning of new achievements in the area.

"I'll work to make this trip one more step of our country's journey to conquer space and towards scientific and technologic knowledge."

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