

## Brazil and Spain Sign Pact to Fight Organized Crime

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The ministers of Justice of Brazil, Márcio Thomaz Bastos, and Spain, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, signed an agreement Tuesday, May 23, establishing cooperation and legal assistance in the penal area.

Among other items, the agreement provides for evidence searches, the appearance of witnesses and experts in the two countries, the exchange of information on prior criminal records, and assistance in the confiscation of property.

In Bastos's opinion, the agreement perfects the means to fight crime. "We have attempted to expand our network of relations and contacts with all countries, because the war on crime requires us to make use of the instruments afforded by globalization to combat organized crime around the world."

The Spanish minister of Justice said that he agrees with the need for a joint effort to combat organized crime. Spain, he informed, is committed to the international legal agenda of peace and security, "but it comprehends that, in the globalized world, the challenges of insecurity should be attacked at their roots by combating injustice."

López Aguilar observed that the two countries face common challenges, such as drug trafficking and human trafficking, and that Spain pledges to use every possible technological advance for the agreement to function well. He added that Brazil and Spain are engaged in the fight against what he referred to as supranational crime.

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