

A Strong Country Needs to Produce Knowledge, Says Brazil's Lula

Contributed by Marina Ramalho
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In 10 or 15 years from now, Brazil will have a new generation of scientists, technicians, artists, and intellectuals from the poorest sectors of its population, said returning Brazilian president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

Lula da Silva, from the Workers Party, was reelected last October for a second period of four years.

In his re-inauguration speech, Lula stressed that the goal of his presidency has always been democracy, not only in financial terms but also in knowledge and power. To accomplish this goal, the president said that a quality education was a priority.

"A country grows when it is capable of absorbing knowledge. But it only becomes truly strong when it is ready to produce knowledge," he said.

Lula also said that it is essential to give value to the educational system at all levels, strengthen basic and applied research, and consolidate the incorporation and development of new technologies.

He added that in order to decrease regional inequities, he will invest in big development programs in strategic sectors, such as technological innovation.

His government will prioritize the pharmaceutical, software, semiconductor and digital television fields.

"We have a huge challenge: in the next few years we have to accomplish what other countries did in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries", said Lula.

"We need to overcome the big educational deficits that causes us pain, and at the same time, we have to give quick steps to transform our country into a knowledge society that will allow us to interact with the world in a competitive and superior way," he added.

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