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## **Amnesty International appoints director for new office in Brazil**

Amnesty International today announced the appointment of Atila Roque as director of the organization's new office in Brazil.

"We are very excited about the opening of our new office in Brazil at a key moment in its history and having someone with the experience and talent of Atila Roque leading Amnesty International's work there," said Salil Shetty, Secretary General at Amnesty International.

"Having a permanent presence in the country will allow us to add our efforts to those of the vibrant local human rights movement so that the human rights of all Brazilians are respected, as well as increasing awareness in Brazil of international human rights issues."

Atila Roque joins Amnesty International as the organisation seeks to reinforce a voice from the developing world in its global human rights message and Brazil finds itself in an increasingly influential position on the international stage.

Amnesty International in Brazil will continue to work on global issues as diverse as the death penalty in the United States, prisoners of conscience in China and forced evictions in Angola.

Domestically, the organization will be looking at issues such as public security, indigenous peoples rights, housing rights and the continuing lack of justice for abuses committed during the country's military dictatorship.

"Brazil has undergone significant progress in terms of consolidating democracy and advancing social development. The country has experienced rapid economic growth over the last few years and many Brazilians have been lifted out of extreme poverty. However, a lot remains to be done in terms of fully enforcing all human rights for all without discrimination," said Atila Roque.

"Together with our local civil society partners and the human rights community Amnesty International is here to contribute to improve the lives of those most affected by human rights violations and to further consolidate a human rights culture in Brazil."

"As Brazil plays a more influential role on the world stage, Amnesty International can bring a global dimension to campaigning here. We will be inspiring Brazilians from all walks of life to join Amnesty activists around the world to fight against human rights violations wherever they are committed," said Atila Roque.

### **Background Information**

Atila Roque was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1959.

He joins Amnesty International from the Institute for Socio Economic Studies (INESC), where he was Director since 2006.

Between 2003 and 2006, he was ActionAid's USA Executive Director in Washington.

Previously, Atila was the Coordinator of Public Policies and Globalization at the Brazilian Institute for Social and Economic Analysis (IBASE) where he also worked as a coordinator of the Social Watch Network, a global network which monitors the commitment made by governments at social conferences promoted by the UN, such as the conferences in Vienna (Human Rights, 1993), Beijing (Women Rights, 1995), Copenhagen (Social Development, 1995) and Durban (Racism, 2001). He was Director of the Brazilian Association of NGOs and one of the founders of the World Social Forum in 2001

Atila is a Bachelor in History at the Philosophy and Social Science Institute at the Rio de Janeiro Federal University (UFRJ) and obtained a Master in Political Sciences at the Research University Institute in Rio de Janeiro (IUPERJ).

He has written various articles, amongst them: Construction and de-construction of the silence: reflection about racism and of anti-racism in society, published in the book *Convergent Paths, State and Society* Overcoming Social Inequality and Challenges and Dilemmas Regarding the Debate About Racism in Brazil published in *Society and New Policies*.