



Brazilian Minister Steps Down Amid Corruption Charges

FEBRUARY 3, 2012

Brazil's Minister of Cities Mário Negromonte resigned on Thursday amid allegations of corruption published in the Brazilian newspaper Folha de São Paulo. Wednesday's report alleged that the ministry's executive director Roberto Munize held secret meetings with a lobbyist from Negromonte's Partido Progressista (Progressive Party) and a businessman who was interested in bidding on a public works contract in Cuiaba that the ministry was in charge of granting.

The minister of cities coordinates urban development policies like Minha Casa, Minha Vida (My House, My Life), a federal program that builds low-cost housing for families making less than \$1,600 reais (\$930) per month. As a result of its booming economy, 80 percent of Brazilians now live in urban centers, giving increased importance to the ministry.

President Dilma Rousseff accepted Negromonte's resignation and Aguinaldo Ribeiro, who is also a member of the Progressive Party, is expected to be inaugurated as the new minister of cities on Monday. Following a meeting with the president, Ribeiro said that his top priority will be "overcoming obstacles" in the ministry and that he would use the weekend to consider the "real outcomes" of the ministry's actions.

Negromonte is the seventh member of President Rousseff's cabinet to step down since June on unrelated corruption charges, along with the ministers of defense, transportation, labor, the chief of staff, and others

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