

A16 Thursday, November 19, 2009

◆ **BRAZIL**

**Former Guerrilla Battisti
Faces Extradition to Italy**

Brazil's top judge said he will vote to extradite former Italian guerrilla Cesare Battisti to face murder charges in Italy, his home country.

The vote by Supreme Court Chief Justice Gilmar Mendes broke a tie among the court's judges and comes days after Mr. Battisti went on a hunger strike in a Brazilian prison to protest his possible extradition.

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva granted Mr. Battisti political refugee status and could still decide to block the court's decision.

Mr. Battisti, 54, who reinvented himself as a novel writer, was convicted in absentia of four murders from the 1970s. He could face life in prison in Italy on the murder charges, dating from when he belonged to a guerrilla group called Armed Proletarians for Communism. He denies the murder charges. *Reuters*