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Federal Budget Cuts Mean "collapse Of Scientific Research" In Brazil

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On July 27 at a meeting in Sao Paulo, representatives of two dozen scientific societies issued a joint statement asserting that federal budget cuts will lead to a generalized "collapse" of scientific research in Brazil. The meeting was sponsored by the Brazilian Society for Scientific Progress (Sociedade Brasileira para o Progresso da Ciencia-SBPC). The Economy Ministry recently establishing a US$93 million ceiling on the Science and Technology Secretariat's 1993 budget. The figure excludes student scholarships and salaries. Of the US$93 million, US$44 million are earmarked for the National Scientific and Technological Development Council (Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Cientifico e Tecnologico-CNPq). According to the joint statement, the Secretariat's 1993 budget is equal to only a quarter of the 1991 budget, and a third of the approved budget for 1992. Next, the scientists pointed out that the CNPq has a backlog of 6,000 individual research projects accumulated since last year. Minimal funding for these projects surpasses the CNPq's 1993 budget. The scientific associations concluded that the cuts imposed by the Economy Ministry "make the survival of scientific research impossible." [Sources: Gazeta Mercantil (Brazil), Jornal do Brasil, 07/28/92]

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