



## Washington Luiz de Souza Seraphim

1986 – 2010

Third Sergeant Washington Luiz de Souza Seraphim, a national of Brazil, was deployed to the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) since June 2009.

Originally stationed with the 5th Light Infantry Battalion of Lorena, it was Washington's devotion towards the wellbeing of others which drew him to Haiti. "It's not an easy country to live in," he told one of his university professors. "There are quite intense conflicts, but we're here to help."

Washington was an undergraduate student of biology at the Integrated College of Teresa Avila in Lorena. He was looking forward to continuing his studies upon his return to Brazil at the end of January 2010. While in Haiti, he made the most of his expertise and his time to study the effects of ecology in urban conflict areas.

"He was collecting information on water, sanitation and natural resources to try to build a model to observe the ecological issues in a city where there is urban conflict," said his professor.

In 2008, Washington also completed a programme on sustainability, Forum Ambiental, at the Instituto Santa Teresa in Brazil.

Always enthusiastic to help where he could, friends described Washington as "grounded....with good values."

"He was a quiet person but liked to be among friends," a childhood friend said. "We met before he went to Haiti and we were laughing and playing like when we were children."

Washington placed great importance on family. Until he was a teenager, he lived in his grandparents' home in the suburb of Vila Passos in eastern Brazil. Afterwards, he moved with his parents to Vila dos Comerciantes in the southern part of the country. "He had always been in touch with his mother via webcam while in Haiti," a friend said.

Washington had plans to marry Najara, his girlfriend of five years, upon his return. "They had already bought land and were planning to make their future home there," said a family member. "He had so many plans."

A ceremony was held on 22 January at the Brasilia Air Base to honour Washington and his fallen colleagues, which was attended by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and First Lady Marisa Letícia. President Lula called their work with MINUSTAH "the noblest humanitarian mission ever carried out by the Brazilian Armed Forces."

Washington and his colleagues posthumously received a promotion and the Peacemaker Medal from their country for outstanding acts of courage and bravery under life-threatening circumstances.

Washington is survived by his family and his fiancée Najara.