



## Francisco Adolfo Vianna Martins Filho

1968 – 2010

Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Adolfo Vianna Martins Filho, a national of Brazil, was the Aide de Camp to the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) Force Commander.

Born in Belo Horizonte in the southeastern region of Brazil, Francisco's distinguished career began when he joined the Brazilian Army at the age of 19. He studied at the Military Academy of Agulhas Negras graduating with a Bachelor of Arts and Sciences in 1991. He went on to pursue a Ph.D. in Military Science which he awarded in 1999.

After serving with the UN in Angola in 1997, Francisco returned to Brazil where in 2000 he became Company Commander of the 4th Company of the Presidential Guard Battalion in charge of security for the Brazilian President's official home and office. He also held several positions in the Department of Army Personnel and rose to the rank of Major before being appointed to the mission in Haiti.

A colleague from his time in Angola shared this story of his selflessness even in the face of illness: "When the mission mandate was revised and altered and national battalions went back home, he was left behind with a small group to organize the last troop echelon and to care for equipment and material. In his last week in Angola he got malaria but even sick he did not abandon his tasks so he could support his subordinates."

According to his wife, "The Army was his calling, and if we had had a son, it would have been his father's wish that he joined the military and pursue a career in the Army." She added that Francisco was "personally

invited to join the Brazilian contingent by the MINUSTAH Commander General Floriano Peixoto Vieira Neto, who described him as a very kind person, a brilliant officer, a leader for his men and a real comrade to his peers and superiors."

A ceremony was held on 22 January at the Brasilia Air Base to honour Francisco 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."

Francisco 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. Francisco was the recipient of several other peacekeeping-related honours from his country.

Francisco's wife said that she is proud of her husband's achievements during his mission in Haiti, adding that "Chiquinho, as he was familiarly called, was part of the heroic work that characterized the Brazilian Army in Haiti."

Francisco spoke fluent English and Spanish in addition to his native Portuguese and he was a religious person. Friends say he kept his faith even in the worst situations.

He is survived by his wife Emília Ribeiro Martins and a nine-year-old daughter.