

H.E. Ms. Nilcea Freire

Minister for Gender Equality, Brazil

Head of the Special Secretariat for Women's Policies of the Presidency of the Republic, Brazil

Nilcéa Freire, born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1952. She was appointed Minister in January 2004 and has since actively spearheaded various activities in gender mainstreaming in Brazil including: the convening of the “Women’s Year in Brazil”; organizing the First National Conference of Policies for Women; establishing the “National Plan of Policies for Women”; and revising national laws on domestic violence against women.

She holds other public responsibilities that include the President of the Inter-American Women Committee as well as the President of the National Council of Women Rights. Ms. Freire is a member of ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean) roundtable. Prior to her ministerial appointment, Ms. Freire has had a long standing career as a physician and also as an academic, including her service as Director of the State University of Rio de Janeiro from 2000 to 2003, and Vice-Director from 1996 to 1999.

Ms. Nilcéa Freire was named “Personalidade Cidadania 2006” in recognition of her work as Minister, and as Dean of the Rio de Janeiro State University - UERJ. This award is sponsored by UNESCO, the Brazilian Press Association, and Folha Dirigida (a Rio de Janeiro media company) through an election of a jury comprised of 2500 people.