



## **Fortnightly Report**

# **Analysis of the Brazilian Situation A perspective from MST**

*Collective of International Relations of the Landless Movement*

**April 2021**

Dear Comrades,

The month of April has a special character for all those who fight for agrarian reform in Brazil, as it is the moment when we remember the Massacre of Eldorado de Carajás, our 19 dead and the survivors with mutilations and physical or psychological consequences. The April 17 Massacre, 25 years ago, is the synthesis of the struggle for land in Brazil: companies, police, and large landowners together using violence to prevent men and women from distributing land and producing food.

This year, the character of struggle, denunciation, and anger becomes stronger because in Brazil we face the loss of more than 300 thousand Brazilians in a year of pandemic, with the number of deaths increasing every day and with the vaccination rollout still very slow and insufficient. The main cause of the Brazilian tragedy is Captain Jair Bolsonaro and his supporters - businessmen, military men, and parliamentarians - who since the beginning of the pandemic have refused to adopt measures of social isolation, have not encouraged the development of vaccines and have refused offers from pharmaceutical companies. Bolsonaro's decisions bet on both rapid herd immunity and economic pressures so that economic activity was not paralyzed. This insistence caused the health system to collapse in several cities, with crowded Intensive Care Units (ICUs), lack of oxygen, while tests for Covid are losing validity in Ministry of Health warehouses and the government is slow to buy vaccines.

This situation is aggravated by the fact that the government has refused to maintain emergency aid of US \$120 a month so that this help for the poorest families does not interfere with the financial system's requirement to maintain this year's budget spending ceiling. After much pressure, the aid was extended in 2021, but excludes 25% of the beneficiaries and was cut to US \$30 per month. In parallel, unemployment figures are skyrocketing and there are more than 17 million Brazilians without jobs.

In addition to the economic and health crisis, the political crisis in the country grew more acute. Even sectors linked to capital, which have always been omitted or supported Bolsonaro's

authoritarian policies, express their concern about the lack of vaccines and more concrete measures to contain the pandemic. Finally, for financial elites, it has become obvious that without massive vaccinations there is no economic recovery, in addition to the instability caused by the pandemic. These elites pressure and direct the actions of the presidents of the Houses of Congress, who are from the same party base as Bolsonaro.

In this political scenario, two decisions of the Federal Supreme Court benefited Luis Inácio Lula da Silva and returned his political rights. One of them declared the Curitiba Court, in the State of Paraná, incompetent to adjudicate the proceedings. This decision nullified the convictions, but maintained the proceedings, which are now in the initial phase in another city. And the most important decision was that Judge Sérgio Moro did not act in an impartial way to condemn Lula. Decisions are still sustained on a fragile basis and are not final. They are the result of a change in the correlation of forces and in the society's opinion of Operation Car Wash, especially after the leakage of messages between the judge and the prosecutors who revealed their intention to condemn Lula politically and turn the Operation into an instrument for political intervention by the Brazilian judicial elite, outside the rules of the democratic game.

Lula's return to the political scene animates the people who have been struggling and have suffered so many defeats since 2016. This can be measured by the repercussions on social networks and by the movements for his candidacy in 2022 as an anti-Bolsonaro candidate and unifier of the progressive field.

The MST fought intensely for this moment. We organized the Lula Livre March in 2018, which asked for the guarantee of his candidacy, and the Lula Livre Vigil, during his imprisonment in Curitiba. We celebrate his freedom because it is the symbol of the defeat of a project that criminalized social struggles and hurt the Brazilian constitution in the name of the political project of an elite with strong ties to the United States, as the leaked messages proved, revealing the FBI's participation in directing the prosecutors' action.

However, we also understand that the political, economic, social and, above all, health crisis that we are experiencing cannot wait until the 2022 elections. The MST is part of the Brazil Popular Front and together with the People Without Fear Front - both bringing together union movements, popular and progressive parties - we demand Vaccinations Now for everyone; the return of emergency aid in a dignified amount for thousands of Brazilians, and Bolsonaro Out.

Health conditions do not yet allow us to carry out demonstrations on the streets. It would be irresponsible, in the face of so many deaths, for the Movement to encourage large gatherings at a time when this is Bolsonaro's policy. However, it will still be a period for agitation and propaganda. We will remain at home, but not in silence! Our actions of solidarity with the slums, with the donation of food in various cities, also continues.

So, once again, as in every year, April will be a month of struggle, memory, and resistance!

We cannot say goodbye in this letter without paying homage to our companion Joaquim Piñero, Kima. Certainly many men and women met him in his work at the International Relations Collective and at the Apolônio de Carvalho Brigade in Venezuela, of which he was the first brigade member exactly 15 years ago, and in the construction of the ALBA Movement Coalition. Since last year, Kima had been facing cancer which did not respond to treatment and he left us this March. His internationalist example will continue to be present not only in the various tributes received, in the hundreds of trees we planted on the day of his farewell, but mainly in the concrete action of the Friends' Committees, the Internationalist Brigades, in the international courses at the Florestan Fernandes National School and in every gesture of internationalist solidarity.

Kima presente! Presente! Presente!

We also take the opportunity to suggest some links with information and activities carried out by the MST:

Materials and articles in English

<https://mst.org.br/english/>

Materials and articles in Spanish

<https://mst.org.br/espanol/>

Economic Analysis - Ana Penido, a researcher at the Tricontinental Institute and GEDES / UNESP, brought an analysis of the presence of the military in the Bolsonaro government, their role in the economy and health

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0FclQmOHmo>

18th Opening of the Agroecological Rice Harvest

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILtZIQVX4Bg>

Analysis of the Landless Women's Struggle Day in 2021

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QH6gQWc9BRc>

Varanda Cantoria: 150 Years of the Paris Commune

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVyuicEk32Y&t=4652s>

