



## **DEMONSTRATIONS WITH ANTI-DEMOCRATIC AGENDA AND COUP-MONGERING SPEECHES MARK INDEPENDENCE DAY IN BRAZIL**

Last March, Brazilian and German civil society organizations released a manifest in which they warned about the impacts of the Bolsonaro Government - considering the setbacks in Social, Economic, Cultural and Environmental Rights. The Manifest also pointed to setbacks in Civil Rights, considering the threats to human rights defenders, communication workers, leaders of traditional peoples and communities and indigenous peoples, and black youths from peripheral communities. It also denounced the intentional disregard for the COVID-19 pandemic and the encouragement of deforestation and fires in the Amazon and Pantanal.

On September 7, when Brazil celebrated 199 years of independence, anti-democratic acts, called by President Bolsonaro, took place in 127 cities in 26 states and in the Federal District. The president spoke in Brasilia (DF) and in São Paulo (SP). Both acts received extensive funding from sectors that support the Government, such as the agribusiness.

The president's speech in Brasilia openly incited a coup d'état, with threats to the president of the Federal Supreme Court (STF), Luiz Fox: "Either the head of that Power makes his peers behave or that Power may suffer that which we don't desire. Because we value and recognize the Power of each Republic. All of us here at Três Poderes Square swear to respect our Constitution. Whoever acts outside of its boundaries should get themselves back in formation, or request to be relieved from their position".

And there were also attacks on the STF: "We will not accept that any authority should override our Constitution using the force of power. We will no longer accept any measure, action or sentence that falls outside the four lines of the Constitution," he said. "We also cannot continue to accept that a specific person from the region of the three Powers continues to barbarize our population. We cannot accept any more political arrests in this Brazil of ours."

On Avenida Paulista, in São Paulo, the demonstration took 11 blocks, and Bolsonaro spoke to a crowd, which disrespected the health safety protocols against COVID-19, as most of the demonstrators were too close together and were not wearing masks.

In the speech in the capital of São Paulo, Bolsonaro's coup-mongering tone was even more intense, as he attacked the STF minister, Alexandre Moraes, and threatened: "Either he behaves himself, or he should ask to leave." He also criticized the presiding minister of the Superior Electoral Court (TSE), Luís Roberto Barroso, and the electoral system. "I cannot participate in a charade sponsored by the president of the TSE," he said. President Jair Bolsonaro was even more incisive against minister Alexandre de Moraes in a speech on Avenida Paulista: "This president will no longer comply with any decision made by Alexandre de Moraes". At the end of his speech, he stated that he "will never be imprisoned" and that he will only leave Brasilia "arrested, dead or victorious".

Political analysts estimate that the results of his speeches today are likely to trigger a strong reaction, and not just from his outspoken opponents. But what will be the consequences of this speech?



With his speeches, Bolsonaro will succeed in eliciting a strong reaction from those who were not yet reacting, in the shape of impeachment orders. The political press learned that the PSB, led by Gilberto Kassab, is going to set up a commission to analyze a request for the impeachment of President Bolsonaro. This is totally new, but there was already a signal from the party that if Bolsonaro went too far over the democratic threshold, the party might embark on a request for impeachment. In the MDB, the defense strategy is that party leaders who are in the Bolsonaro government, government leaders, and the Senate, leave the government. Because, otherwise, the message that will remain is that the party is in agreement with the authoritarian temptation of forcefully taking power.

What's more, they want nothing to happen in the National Congress until the president withdraws from his coup-mongering disposition. The PSDB will hold a meeting to define whether they will also file a request for impeachment.

Important topics for the country were not in the agenda of the acts, which were being announced in President Bolsonaro's networks for more than two months. Starvation, for example, was ignored. According to the Brazilian Network for Research on Sovereignty and Food and Nutritional Security, there are 19 million Brazilians in a situation of hunger in 2020, compared to 2018 (10.3 million) reveals that there are 9 million more people in that condition.

On the night of September 7, the president of the Senate, Rodrigo Pacheco (DEM-MG), announced that he had decided to cancel all deliberative sessions and committee meetings scheduled at the Senate for the next 8th and 9th of September. This would be the first reflection of President Jair Bolsonaro's attacks on the Federal Supreme Court (STF). The evaluation of the top tier of the Court is that there is no political climate for voting on projects, whether they are of interest to the Federal Government or not.

The Cry of the Excluded demonstrations protested against authoritarianism. This particular group of demonstrations has had 27 editions so far, and traditionally brings forward agendas excluded by the government; this year, the acts had a political tone and involved several leftist parties. 300 thousand people participated in #ForaBolsonaro acts in 200 cities. All demonstrations across the country, which joined the traditional Cry of the Excluded, took place peacefully.

The defense of social equality, social justice, employment and income were on the agenda. "It was very important to make the defense of sovereignty, institutions and, above all, democracy present in the streets," highlighted the coordinator of the Brazil Popular Front, Raimundo Bonfim.

For the jurists heard by the press, the acts stirred by President Jair Bolsonaro and the threats to the STF ministers and the Superior Electoral Court directly affront the Brazilian Constitution. Jurists see a crime of responsibility in Bolsonaro's speech about not complying with the STF minister's decisions.

On the eve of the anti-democratic demonstrations, last Monday (6), President Jair Bolsonaro signed an MP (provisional measure) to limit the removal of accounts and profiles from social networks. On Independence Day, parties filed a lawsuit in the Supreme Court against that provisional measure, that changes the Internet Civil Framework. The PSDB, PT and Solidarity understand that the measure signed by



Bolsonaro makes it impossible to combat the dissemination of fake news on social networks and paves the way for attacks on democracy.

So far, the spaces for social and environmental governance have not been reestablished. On the contrary, civil society remains with no information on socio-environmental programs, plans and public policies. Bolsonaro rules by provisional measures, without any discussion with society. The debate on cooperation policies is not public either. So far, there is no information or documents on the cooperation agreements that are being established between Brazil and Germany.

The political, economic and social scenario in Brazil is chaotic and needs to be considered in the new round of debates with the Brazilian government, regarding the cooperation policy. Some questions need to be clarified: what principles, criteria, instruments and methodology will this cooperation policy be based on? What will be its priorities? Which public entities will be part of the agreements? What will the transparency, monitoring and social participation policy be like? What are the expected outcomes? What are the predicted territorial, social and environmental impacts? What will be the role of CSOs, linked to human rights, organizations of indigenous peoples, traditional peoples and communities, family farmers?

At this moment, maintaining the Democratic Rule of Law is of paramount importance, so that the three separate powers - legislative, executive and judiciary - don't fall out, which would compromise popular sovereignty.

Brazil, September 8, 2021

**Articulation and Dialogue Process - PAD**