

Dear .....

President Dilma Rousseff

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Ministry of Justice

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We are deeply concerned about the escalation of the conflict between the MST and the plantations and timber company Araupel and regret the violence used against the Landless Workers of the camp Dom Tomás Balduino, which has resulted in two deaths and seven injured.

The MST has stated that its members were ambushed by the military police and the security guards from Araupel, who were hiding in trenches and who shot at their vehicle.

Though the police has accused the MST activist of carrying weapons, reports say that the activist were all shot in the back. Lawyers present at the scene also claim that the police removed bodies and objects without the presence of the Medical Legal Institute, which would allow them to manipulate evidence. Furthermore the victims were only taken to a hospital two hours after the attack and even there were not allowed to talk to their families nor to lawyers. This all seems to corroborate the MST version.

After the shooting INCRA, the governmental land reform agency has again confirmed that Araupel has landgrabbed the area and that MST's claim to the area for land reform is legitimate (1). Unfortunately, the slow process of solving this problem has caused it to escalate. Last year, leaders of the movement had already informed the public prosecutor and the Commission on Human Rights of Parana's Legislative Assembly, that they were receiving death threats.

As environmental and human rights organisations, we share MST's criticism of the impacts of large scale monoculture plantations. But we are especially concerned about the lack of respect for essential human rights and the violence that seems to be tolerated by governmental institutions.

We welcome the determination of the minister of Justice, Mr Eugênio Aragão, to have the Federal Police investigate these murders [2]. Nevertheless, we would like to stress our support for MST's demands [3] and strongly urge you to implement them diligently:

- Immediate investigation of the crimes committed detention of the policemen and private security forces involved, and sentences for all of those responsible (executors and contractors) of the crime against the landless workers;
- Immediate retreat of the military police and the security forces hired by Araupel;
- Guarantees for the security and protection of the lives of all people that are living in camps in the region;
- Restitution of the land fraudulently appropriated by Araupel and enforcement of Agrarian Reform, leading to secure land titles for the families that live on the land.

First undersigned/ NGOs:

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1 <http://www.incra.gov.br/noticias/nota-oficial-morte-de-trabalhadores-rurais-em-quedas-do-iguacu-pr>

2 Agencia Brasil, 9/4/16, [\*MST fazatopormorte de trabalhadores e pedefim da violência no campo\*](#)

3 Brasil de Fato, 8/4/16, The Dawn News