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Covid-19 pandemic in Brazil

Jair Bolsonaro is a threat to Brazil and global health

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This letter is addressed to all who defend humanity across borders. The Covid-19 pandemic attacks all human beings without regards for nationality, ethnicity, or social class. But the vast majority of the population, those who are not part of the privileged 1 percent, are infinitely more vulnerable. Almost every government in the world has taken health, economic, and political measures to confront this tragedy, but in the absence of a vaccine, social distancing is the most important method for saving lives.

In Brazil, widespread testing is absent and the underreporting of cases is distressing. Meanwhile, the health system is collapsing due a shortage of beds, intensive care units, and medical supplies. Health professionals on the frontlines in the war against the virus suffer from a lack of equipment and are working exhausting hours to save lives. The number of health workers who are infected or who have died is alarming.

And governmental emergency aid of just over \$100 a month for three months distributed to the most vulnerable sectors is being paid late and leaving many people out, while forcing those who do receive it to wait in endless lines at the banks.

The health and economic crisis facing the Brazilian people – who are suffering the sixth highest Covid-19 death toll on the planet, making us the epicenter of the pandemic in Latin America – is not due to "natural causes." It is the product of a deliberate policy by President Jair Bolsonaro. Bolsonaro is a coronavirus denialist and an authoritarian, he has led a crusade against science since taking office and constantly attacks the necessity of social distancing. Bolsonaro, together with an important sector of Brazilian elites, advocates "healthy markets" at the expense of public health. They are taking advantage of the situation to increasingly close down democratic spaces, increase deforestation in the Amazon, and invade and threaten indigenous nations, leaving them exposed to the virus. They attack education, culture, and science, cutting the resources necessary for their sustenance and development.

Bolsonaro's politics and posture put our national health at risk, but they also constitute a threat to global health. Several countries are already beginning to organize a kind of cordon sanitaire around Brazil, which may deepen the crisis still more. Therefore, the authors of this letter have filed impeachment petitions against Bolsonaro. To date, there are approximately thirty such petitions from different sectors of society which are increasingly gaining support from artists, intellectuals, social movements, and well-known personalities. Bolsonaro isolates himself politically and institutionally with every statement he makes and each action he takes, leading him to harden his extreme right-wing base and venture even further down an authoritarian path in conflict with democracy and the Brazilian Constitution.

An editorial published on May 9 by one of the world's leading medical scientific journals, The Lancet, warns that "perhaps the biggest threat to the response to Covid-19 in Brazil is its president, Jair Bolsonaro." The article concludes, "Bolsonaro needs to change his course drastically or he will have to be the next to go."

We, the undersigned from across the world, denounce Jair Bolsonaro and the genocidal policies he is enacting against his people. Of all heads of state, he is the most criminally reckless and represents a danger to world health.

#ForaBolsonaro

Initiative by PSOL congresspersons

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Jair Bolsonaro is a threat to Brazil and global health

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