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Brazil

National March in Defence of Rights

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Under the strong morning sun, on October 24 the Brazilian Capital was changed into the Red Capital in defence of our rights, conquered for the Brazilian people throughout many years of struggle and threatened by the neoliberal agenda implemented by the Lula government.

Sixteen thousand militants participated in the National March, organized for the trade union movement (INTERSINDICAL, Conlutas, ANDES, etc.), left parties (PSOL, PSTU, PCB), movements of Without Land (MTST, MLST), youth movements (FOE - Front of Opposition to UNE, Conlute, etc.) and other social movements. They had come from 26 Brazilian states and some of them had travel 40 hours by bus to Brasilia.

[<https://internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/Brazildemo.jpg>]

The National March in Defence of the Rights represents resumed popular pressure against the neoliberal reforms and the privatizations of the Lula government and its allies. The reform of the pensions, labour reform and the education reform are some of the targets of the mobilizations in this next period. But the militants had also mobilised against the payment of the public debt and the payment of the primary surplus. While the march happened, Lula participated in a meeting with some of the 100 most powerful entrepreneurs of the country, demonstrating his commitment to the national and international sectors of capital.

With much creativity, the participants had used music and theatre to make their protest. The lyrics warned: *"um, dois, três, quatro cinco, mil. Ou pára essas reformas ou paramos o Brasil"* ("one, two, three, four, five, thousand. Stop these reforms or we will stop Brazil"). Performances of theatre had used dolls that symbolized the corrupt politicians, that danced with the doll of Corruption, to the sound of music "Tango do Covil" (music of Chico Buarque).

The Party of Socialism and Liberty (PSOL) was present, with union militants, parliamentarians and its President Heloísa Helena. In the opinion of Heloísa, it was the persistence and the collective unity that had guaranteed the accomplishment of the march against the reforms of the Lula government and against corruption in politics. She also said that the socialists need to have the courage to say to the Brazilian people that those who participate in the corruption used to benefit to groups of politicians in exchange for votes, are the same ones that agree to the current economic policy and that, therefore, the corruption in the country is one of the main mechanisms used to extinguish the rights of the workers.

The following day had a great national meeting in Brasilia, with all the movements that had organized the victorious march. This meeting approved an agenda for unified struggles during the next months, and summoned all the movements that had been with us in the past activities, but not had decided to participate in the march. That is the case with the MST which had signed the original appeal for the march but then pulled out at the last moment.