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Paraguay

**The MST rejects the
illegitimate dismissal of the
president of Paraguay and
demands that the people
decide**

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- News from around the world -

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The Movimiento Socialista de los Trabajadores [Socialist Workers' Movement] of Argentina repudiates the "institutional coup" in Paraguay that through a farce of impeachment has dismissed President Fernando Lugo, who has been replaced by Vice President Franco of the Colorado Party, complicit with this illegitimate manoeuvre. We also reject the brutal repression unleashed on the thousands of demonstrators who opposed this fraudulent removal of the President.

In a few hours, the corrupt Paraguayan Parliament, in a quick process that did not allow the slightest right to a trial defence, with the favourable vote of the parliamentarians of the Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico, Partido Colorado, el Partido Patria Querida, Partido Unace and Partido Democrático Popular, dismissed a President elected by the people, when only the people have the right to decide that he cease his duties.

This coup is not just an affront to the democratic rights of the people of Paraguay, but serves to protect the interests of the big agribusiness corporations, landowners and multinationals that operate in the country.

If the Paraguayan right has been able to perform such an outrage it is because Lugo did nothing to attack their interests and the sources of power that they have had for decades and abandoned his campaign promises to favour the peasants, workers and the people. In a country where 85% of the land is owned by only 2% of the population, in recent years soya production has increased by 15% as a result of displacing thousands of peasant families from the lands where they lived.

The Lugo government was elected with great popular support in 2008, putting an end to decades of domination by the Colorado party. Far from relying on the popular organizations, it governed in alliance with sectors of the traditional right of the country, first with the Liberal party, and later with a faction of the Colorado party. This shift to the right by the government explains the low levels of popular support and growing discredit of the president, which the right took advantage of to carry out the coup.

It is in this context that the massacre of Curuguaty where 17 people, 6 policemen and 11 peasants, were killed in a dubious episode suspected of being organised, not only to curb the just peasant struggle, but also to destabilize the Lugo government, took place. A serious political responsibility for what happened lies in not dismantling the repressive apparatus at the service of the minorities who exploit the people of the neighbouring country.

The socialists of the MST denounce the removal of President Lugo and reject as illegitimate the appointment of Federico Franco, we demand that the Paraguayan people decide on who should govern their country. That is why we demand immediate elections and the convening of a free and sovereign constituent assembly so that the people can decide what model of country is required to respond to the needs of the popular majorities and face the right and the agents of the big capitalists and multinationals.

We call on all political and social organizations claiming to be democratic to mobilize together against the coup and in defence of the democratic rights of the brother people of Paraguay. We call on the Government of President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner to break all trade and diplomatic relations with the illegitimate government and demand that this position is taken by our country at the next meeting of the UNASUR, aiming to isolate the coup and defending the rights of the brother Uruguayan people.

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Buenos Aires, June 23, 2012

National Directorate of the MST