

## Brazil's World Social Forum Guarantees Right of Expression, Says Mayor

Contributed by Rodrigo Savazoni  
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The mayor of Porto Alegre, José Fogaça (PPS), affirmed yesterday, January 24, that the World Social Forum, which will take place in the capital of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, between January 26 and 30, is the "symbol of the new humanity."

Fogaça was received by the International Council, which is composed of 129 organizations and is the forum's main representative body.

"We believe that in the world that is emerging, the most important thing is to guarantee the right of expression. Whether one agrees or disagrees with the conclusions of the forum, whether one is aligned or not, what is important in this diversified world, this plural world, is to ensure the right of these voices and these ideas to find expression," the mayor remarked as he left the meeting.

The mayor asked the councillors to evaluate the possibility of keeping the event in Porto Alegre.

"We can't change the nature of the forum. It is global and frequently itinerant. It was held in India and is already destined to go to Africa," he affirmed.

In his view, Porto Alegre should be maintained as the major reference point, the origin. "In these intervals the forum should always take place in our city," he said.

This is the first time the World Social Forum is being held in the capital of Rio Grande do Sul since the defeat of the Workers Party (PT), which governed the municipality for 16 years.

Translation: David Silberstein  
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