

Left Marches Against Lula and Vows to Stop Brazil with Strikes

Contributed by Yara Aquino
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Carrying banners and flags, demonstrators taking part in the March against Corruption and the Lula Government concentrated in front of Brasília's Cathedral, in the Ministries Esplanade before walking to the Brazilian National Congress.

The march was organized by the leftist political parties PSTU, P-SOL, PDT, PPS, and another union entities such as the ConLutas (Coordenação Nacional de Lutas - National Coordination of Struggles).

The participants divided themselves in four sectors. Two of them asking for an end to corruption and answers to workers' revindications while the other two sectors protested against the government's proposed reforms and Lula's economic policy.

The secretary of the P-SOL's National Executive Committee, Martiniano Cavalcanti, tells that "the union and labor reforms have the purpose of dismantling the union organizations and eliminating labor rights through a policy that would eliminate and unregulate work relations."

According to him, the march's main goal is the fight against corruption. "We want to guarantee an investigation and punishment process and we also want to seek a way out for this crisis with an eye to the population's best interest".

When the marchers reached the National Congress, the Military Police estimated their numbers at 8,000. One of the event organizers, Amauri Pessoa, of PPS, said that they were expecting as many as 25,000 people, once all the buses carrying demonstrators had arrived from other states.

According to Oraldo Paiva, from the PSTU's national leadership, the march is just the "initial kickoff" for a general strike. "We're having this march today, and tomorrow we'll have a Conlutas' gathering.

"But we intend to propose the process of preparation for an ample general strike in the country, so that the workers can impose the changes they dreamt when they elected Lula, but that they never got."

The ConLutas is formed by union organizations, social movements and student entities.

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