

## Brazil Remembers Second Anniversary of US Missionary Murder

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Between February 9 and 12, different Brazilian social movements staged demonstrations in defense of the Amazon region and against impunity, reminding authorities that two years have gone by since Sister Dorothy Stang was murdered, on February 12, 2005, in Anapu, state of Pará, in northern Brazil.

The demonstrations ended with a hearing granted by the governor of the state, Ana Júlia Carepa.

In Belém, the capital of the state of Pará, the demonstrations began on the 9th with the seminar "Building Community Alternatives for the Amazon Region." On Sunday, the 11th, donations were collected for the Carlos Prestes camp of the Landless Movement in celebrations held in different Christian churches.

In the morning of February 12, an ecumenical celebration was held which brought together about 100 people in front of the Court of Justice of the state of Pará.

In the afternoon, governor Carepa convened her secretaries and received representatives of the Indianist Missionary Council (Cimi), of the Land Pastoral Commission, of the Movement of People Affected by Dams, of the Dorothy Stang Committee, and of others organizations.

Senator José Nery (PSOL Party - state of Pará) and representatives of Incra, Ibama, and the Federal Police also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, a document was delivered to the governor describing the yearnings of social movements in relation to the environment, the land reform, and human rights. The organizations requested protection for threatened people and an investigation into consortia which have been financing murders of human rights supporters.

They also urged authorities to fight slave labor diligently and to take steps to ensure the regularization of land areas in the state, which can reduce the conflicts in rural areas. The movements suggested that the federal administration and state governments should act jointly.

In Anapu, the municipality in which the missionary used to work, Father Erwin Kräutler, the bishop of Xingu and president of Cimi, celebrated a mass on February 11.

In his homily, Kräutler recalled that the murder of Sister Dorothy was not an isolated fact. "It was just another bloody event in the Amazon region caused by land grabbing practices, by the deliberate and planned destruction of this region, by the devastating exploitation of its riches, and by those who want to continue to exploit slave labor."

The February 12 was declared an official holiday in Anapu by the mayor of the city, who before the crime used to say that Sister Dorothy was a persona non grata there.

In other municipalities in the states of Pará, Maranhão, Ceará and others, demonstrations were also staged in memory of Sister Dorothy.

Sister Dorothy Stang died after being shot seven times when she was 73 years old in the morning of February 12, 2005 on a remote dirt road at 53 kilometers from the central area of the municipality of Anapu.

Three of the five people accused of having killed the Brazilian-naturalized American missionary have been convicted already. The trial of the two people who are believed to have hired the killers has not been scheduled yet.

Farmer Vitalmiro Bastos de Moura, known as Bida, is in prison. The other defendant, farmer Regivaldo Galvão, known as Taradão (Big Pervert), is free pending trial.