

Former President Lula Declared Winner in Brazil

Supporters of ousted President Jair Bolsonaro blocked roads to protest the return of a left-wing leader

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A runoff election which pitted the right-wing and neo-fascist President Jair Bolsonaro against former Workers' Party President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has resulted in a narrow victory which illustrates the sharp political divisions in the South American state of the Republic of Brazil.

Lula won the election with just over one percent of the vote while people throughout entire Latin America region, North America and the world paid close attention to the campaign.



Source: Abayomi Azikiwe

The president-elect is a former metal worker and trade unionist. He was a co-founder of the Workers' Party that grew out of the mass movement which arose against the military

dictatorship in Brazil during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Prior to being elected as president in 2002, Lula had been a candidate for head-of-state on several occasions while serving in the capacity as a member of parliament. He was re-elected in 2006 and served out his term.

During his tenure in office, Lula ushered in a series of reforms which were aimed at ending extreme poverty inside the country. These measures provided direct monetary assistance to low-income households while increasing the number of young people attending schools and receiving vaccinations against preventable childhood diseases.

After serving his second term, he was succeeded by his chief of staff Dilma Rousseff. Lula remained active in politics giving lectures inside and outside of the country. When President Rousseff attempted to make Lula her chief of staff in 2016, the appointment was blocked by the Brazil Supreme Court under the guise of a so-called “clean slate act.”

The following year in 2017, after being charged with corruption, he was convicted of a series of crimes which many felt were politically motivated. He exhausted his appeal in 2018 and was sentenced to serve ten years in prison. The federal judge in the case, Sergio Moro, would later be appointed as Minister of Justice and Public Security in Jair Bolsonaro’s government.

During 2016, President Rousseff in her second term of office was impeached by the Brazilian Senate on charges of alleged corruption related to the social welfare programs designed to aid the impoverished and to empower African and Indigenous peoples. These developments were a reflection of the political struggles carried out by the right-wing against the Workers’ Party.

Lula was eventually released from prison after serving over a year-and-a-half behind bars. His conviction had been overturned by the Brazilian Supreme Court.

Right-wing Calls for a Military Coup Against Lula

In response to the declaration of victory by the Electoral Commission, hundreds of truck drivers and thousands of pedestrians staged demonstrations in support of Bolsonaro, a former army officer prior to entering electoral politics. In a similar fashion to the November 2020 elections in the U.S. when defeated President Donald Trump had spent months fostering unsubstantiated claims of “voter fraud”, Bolsonaro, an ally of the former Republican president, had questioned the viability of the electoral system in Brazil.



Brazil right-wing truckers block roads to protest Lula victory (Source: Abayomi Azikiwe)

Bolsonaro's supporters during their protest actions blocked major roads and thoroughfares calling for the Brazilian military to stage a coup in order to prevent Lula from taking office. The right-wing protesters echoed allegations that the elections were rigged and that only a right-wing putsch led by the armed forces could prevent the installation of the new president.

According to a report on the aftermath of the results being made public, [Reuters press agency emphasized that](#):

"Bolsonaro's supporters in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro led festive rallies on Wednesday (Nov. 2), carrying Brazil's yellow-and-green flag draped over their shoulders, blowing horns and chanting anti-Lula slogans. 'We hope the army will intervene in this situation, we know that those elections were fraudulent,' said Reinaldo da Silva, 65, a retired government worker at a rally at the entrance to a Sao Paulo army barracks. 'I came today because I want Brazil to be free, socialism does not work with the Brazilian nation.' Similar rallies were held in 24 of Brazil's 26 states, as well as the capital Brasilia, according to Brazilian online media portal G1. In response to a request for comment, Brazil's defense ministry said peaceful demonstrations were part of free expression under Brazilian law, adding that 'the Defense Ministry is guided by the Federal Constitution.' Bolsonaro, a former army captain, has cultivated strong ties to the military since his 2018 election, winning over the political sympathies of some of the top brass."

Bolsonaro on November 1 held a press conference two days after the results had been announced. Although there was much anticipation surrounding his remarks, the outgoing president refused to concede defeat while praising his supporters throughout the country.

Nonetheless, there were indications that members of his administration had authorized a transfer of power to the incoming Lula administration. There were reports that the Supreme

Court refused to meet with Bolsonaro in the immediate aftermath of the run-off elections in late October.

A Long-Protracted Struggle for Democracy and Representative Government

Brazil is one of the most populated countries in the world with more than 216 million people living in urban and rural areas. The Amazon forests extend through large swaths of territory inside the country which have become a major source of political debates between the indigenous communities, environmentalists and the Bolsonaro administration.

Lula is scheduled to be inaugurated on January 1, 2023 as the 39th president for Brazil, a country which has undergone profound shifts in its historical development over the centuries. The indigenous people of Brazil were conquered beginning in the 16th century by the Portuguese colonialists, opening the path for the kidnapping and importation of millions of Africans as enslaved persons.

Even after the country gained independence from Lisbon in the early 19th century, African enslavement did not officially end until 1888, some 13 years after the Civil War in the United States. Since the time of independence and the collapse of the slave system, the country has remained sharply divided along lines of race and class.

The 1964 military coup against an elected government in Brazil was backed by the U.S. under the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson. A similar situation occurred in the Dominican Republic in 1965 when the U.S. deployed troops to the country based upon the false notion that communist groupings were attempting to take control of the state which shares the island of Hispaniola with the Republic of Haiti, where the Pentagon has intervened on numerous occasions over the last century or more.

During the early months of 1965 as well, the Johnson administration ordered hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops into South Vietnam utilizing the now discredited “domino theory”, which suggested that if a national liberation movement with a socialist orientation took power in one geo-political region it would represent a threat to Washington and Wall Street as the communists would continue to spread their doctrine and social system to other areas.

Today there is a renewed cold war with the ongoing blockade against the Republic of Cuba and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The U.S. was behind the overthrow of Evo Morales as president of Bolivia in 2019. Successive administrations whether Democratic or Republican remain staunchly against genuine national liberation movements and socialist construction throughout Latin America and the world.

Progressive and anti-imperialist forces in the western imperialist states must uphold the right of South American, Caribbean and Central American peoples to self-determination and non-capitalist development. The working class and nationally oppressed in the U.S. should be the natural allies of the revolutionary forces in Latin America and throughout the world.

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