



PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE **ALLIANCE PROGRESSISTE**

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Resolution

Against the threat to social democracy in Brazil

The progressive, social-democratic and socialist forces from all over the world, united in the Progressive Alliance, are following with great concern the increasing threats to democracy and the rule of law in Brazil. With the pretext of fighting corruption, leading representatives of the Brazilian Workers' Party (PT) have been exposed in the media to an unprecedented smear and defamation campaign. Under these circumstances, the democratically elected president Dilma Rousseff was removed from office in May 2016 with questionable justifications. At the time, a change of politics was initiated that undermines and goes against the huge and worldwide renowned progress reached by the PT-led governments since 2003 in terms of social inclusion and democracy. After millions of Brazilians had been raised out of poverty and precarious living conditions thanks to social programmes during the PT era, we now see with dismay a new rise of poverty levels and social marginalisation.

The Progressive Alliance is deeply concerned that the former President of Brazil and Honorary President of the Workers' Party (PT), Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who has become an international reference of social progress and democracy, has been accused and sentenced of corruption in a climate of prejudgement which is detrimental to any fair and just trial. Lula is not above the law because of his great merits, but like any other citizen he has the right to a fair process. The principle of presumption of innocence must apply to him as well, until all legal remedies guaranteed by the Brazilian constitution have been exhausted. The Progressive Alliance explicitly shares the view of the UN Secretariat for Human Rights that this must also apply to the guarantee of his political and civil rights, including the right to stand



again as a candidate of the Workers' Party at the presidential elections on 7 October.

The disregard for these rights reinforces the impression that the legal proceedings against Lula are not free of undue political interference and that they are being misused to exclude the candidate from the upcoming elections who, according to all election polls, has the strongest support of the Brazilian population and the best prospects of winning the elections. Obviously, a majority of Brazilians share the hope that with Lula, Brazil will find its way back to more social justice and democracy.

The Progressive Alliance strongly condemns all attempts to obstruct fair and free elections in Brazil. It also insists that the Brazilian people must not be patronised in the election of their next head of state. This is the only way to consolidate and deepen Brazil's democracy. We are convinced that for this to happen Lula and the Workers' Party are indispensable.