International Trade Union Confederation
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Statement for the freedom of Lula

We are currently living a process of judicialization of politics in Latin America and the Caribbean where the judiciary and security forces are at the service of political parties, governments and public policies with a conservative bias and favouring neoliberal policies.

In this way they are breaking with the democratic State of law and with the National Constitutions in their eagerness to neutralize popular leaderships through the manipulation and coercion of justice. This has been happening in several of our countries.

The most obvious and most relevant case is that of the former President Lula in Brazil, who was convicted and imprisoned for allegedly receiving property that never belonged to him and in the coming months he will face new charges of the same kind.

He was convicted and imprisoned to impede him to participate in the presidential election this year, which he certainly would have won as the polls indicated. The strategy behind the accusations against him and the outcome of his trial have just been unmasked with the appointment of the judge who sentenced him as minister in the newly-elected government.

It was the proof that the world needed to understand that Lula is a political prisoner and not just a victim of a judicial error. As with other historical characters who were repressed and imprisoned for fighting for the emancipation of their people opposing racism, dictatorships and other forms of oppression, Lula is arrested because he also fought his whole life for the emancipation of the Brazilian people. When he was President, he implemented policies to combat poverty that are known and admired around the world, but which the Brazilian elites never accepted.

The campaign for Lula's freedom of the international trade union movement is part of our commitment to the struggle for democracy, social justice, equality and workers' rights.

Free Lula!

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