

SALSA Statement Regarding the Recent Election of Jair Bolsonaro as President of Brazil

The Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America, an international scholarly organization composed of 500 professors, students, and practitioners, hereby signals its concern and alarm at the recent election of Jair Bolsonaro as President of Brazil. Mr. Bolsonaro's election threatens to accelerate dangers already facing minority populations and delicate ecosystems throughout Brazil, South America's largest country and the world's fourth-largest democracy.

As an organization dedicated to promoting ethical and sound research on issues related to lowland South America, its peoples, and its environments, we join our voice to the chorus of others who reject the racist, xenophobic, and violent rhetoric of the President-Elect. As advocates for and collaborators with Brazil's native peoples, we have grave concerns regarding his stated policy goals to roll back the rights of indigenous peoples, including: the right to have native land demarcated and protected in trust; the right to culturally-appropriate education and healthcare; and the right of individuals to full participation as members of indigenous nations and citizens of Brazil. Our voice is united with those academics and technicians in Brazil calling to strengthen the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), which Bolsonaro has said he will eliminate. This is not a matter of narrow interests, but rather a question of whether the new administration in Brazil respects fundamental human rights. Remember: the republic is a signatory to both the UN Declaration of Human rights (1948) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007).

Similarly, as advocates for and collaborators with *quilombola* populations, riverine communities, and smallholder agriculturalists in Amazonia, we reject the racist language with which the President-Elect has dismissed the cultures, lifestyles, and rights of these people. Brazil is a dynamic and multicultural society, and the promise of its democracy lies in the equal and fulsome participation of all its peoples in the social, economic, and political life of the nation.

Finally, we are deeply troubled by the proposed changes to Brazil's environmental protection policies and institutions, changes that would not only accelerate deforestation and species loss, but also foment rural violence and the conditions for genocide. Environmental policy is not a subset of agricultural policy, and the work of the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio) and the Brazilian Institute of the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA) must be protected and expanded.

In the months and years ahead, members of SALSA will utilize our expertise to continue to advocate for the peoples and places that Brazil's President-Elect seems happy to destroy. Nothing less than the survival of traditional peoples and the ecological welfare of the planet hang in the balance.

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