

Rio de Janeiro, August 14, 2020.

Mr. Joel Hernández

Rapporteur for Brazil

Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders

Urgent matter: Ongoing violent eviction of Quilombo Campo Grande community current forced eviction (Minas Gerais, BRAZIL)

Justiça Global respectfully asks for support to stop the current eviction taking place in the Quilombo Campo Grande community, of the Landless Workers Movement (MST), in the municipality of Campo do Meio, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil.

Six families have already been evicted and a school has been demolished. The remaining 450 families are still threatened in the area, heavily surrounded by police apparatus.


Therefore, the Global Justice, with respect and urgency, requests this Special Rapporteur to forward a letter to the Governor of the State of Minas Gerais, Romeu Zema, requesting the suspension of this eviction, which is carried out by police from its Public Security Secretariat.

About the community:

The community has 450 families from the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST) who have lived in the area for 20 years. The community is a great reference in the production of organic agroecological food. The area was even the subject of an expropriation decree for agrarian reform purposes, granting the land to the community, however, due to the dismantling of this policy in the country, the decree was revoked.

Quilombo Campo Grande has 40 hectares of cultivated ground, 60 thousand native trees and 60 thousand fruit trees, and annually produces 510 tons of coffee without the use of pesticides, in addition to the production of 8 tons of honey, as well as cereals, vegetables, fruits, herbal medicines, milk and derivatives, sweets and jams.

Therefore, the eviction of Quilombo Campo Grande is a serious human rights violation of local families, who may lose their homes and livelihoods. Furthermore, it directly impacts the food security of all families that receive the food produced there.



It is also important to note that the struggle for land rights in the region is much older. The name of the occupation is a tribute to the ex-quilombo Campo Grande that existed in the State of Minas Gerais for more than 250 years, which was one of the largest quilombos in Brazil, housing approximately 20 thousand people, including black people who escaped slavery, people freed from slavery and and poor in general.

About eviction:

The eviction started on August 12, 2020, with 150 police officers from the Minas Gerais State Military Police, 20 police vehicles and even helicopters. A local school (Escola Eduardo Galeano) was demolished by the police and 6 families were evicted. The policemen stayed two nights and are still there today, August 14. The remaining families are vigilant so that the police does not advance over the collective areas where the 450 families live and grow their crops. The families denounce that the police have acted with great hostility, making provocations, and not allowing their companions to bring food for those on watch.

The legal decision that supports the action has its legality and scope questioned, since it would affect families that are not part of the process, as well as the area not involved in a judicial agreement signed. The legal decision even includes a gross error in the area's coverage, according to the advice of the Human Rights Commission of the Legislative Assembly of Minas Gerais in the case file 6105218- 78.2015.8.13.0024.

Furthermore, even though the eviction order has already been carried out, the Human Rights and Minorities Commission of the Chamber of Deputies, together with dozens of parliamentarians, pointed out that the police are still at the scene. So the police are there to carry out the eviction of the other families without any order, so the eviction is flagrantly illegal.

In 2018, the National Human Rights Council (CNDH) approved Resolution No. 10/2018, on solutions that guarantee human rights and preventive measures in situations of collective rural and urban land conflicts. For the CNDH, evictions and removals should only occur under exceptional circumstances, when displacement is the only measure capable of guaranteeing human rights. In the document, the Council also emphasizes that "the public power must not employ coercive measures that imply a violation of human dignity, in particular the cut of light, water or any other measure that results in the uninhabitability or unhealthiness of the occupied area", and that State action must be oriented towards the peaceful and definitive resolution of conflicts, "striving to guarantee the permanence of groups in situations of vulnerability in the areas in which they live, occupy and claim". That is why it is essential that

states and justice operators are aware of this resolution in order to prevent human rights violations from being committed.

It is worth mentioning that there is a state of calamity in Brazil, decreed by the Federal Senate on March 20 at the request of the Federal Government. The state of Minas Gerais has 160,485 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and more than 3,783 deaths, and reached, on the eviction date, a record increase in the daily number of deaths, with 170 deaths in 24 hours.

In May 2020, the Federal Supreme Court (STF) decided to suspend, until the end of the coronavirus pandemic, all judicial processes and appeals for repossession and annulment of the demarcation of indigenous territories in process in Brazil, through the an action filed by the Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (Apib). It is important that this same understanding be extended to all conflicts over land and territory in the country so that human rights can be protected.

Therefore, the Justiça Global, with respect and urgency, requests this Special Rapporteur to forward a letter to the Governor of the State of Minas Gerais, Romeu Zema, requesting the suspension of this eviction.



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Subscribed by:

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