

# *Mass protests erupt across Brazil in response to Amazon fires*

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Brasilia, August 24 (RHC)-- In Brazil, demonstrations against far-right President Jair Bolsonaro and in defense of the Amazon rainforests took place in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and dozens of cities throughout Brazil. According to reports from Brasilia, the country's security forces did not even try to prevent the mobilization of thousands who took to the streets.

On Friday night, the former Brazilian army captain and current president made a radio and television statement promising to fight the fires. His speech, however, was drowned out by citizens with shouts, whistles and pot banging.

Hours before, a boycott of his speech was convened through social networks. The citizens' action had a strong reception. Even in some well-off neighborhoods, there were people yelling and honking against the environmental disaster.

In Rio de Janeiro, for instance, the pot banging was notorious in the southern zone neighborhoods, which is the most touristy and well-off area. Outrage was also expressed in Rio's western area, especially in Barra de Tijuca, the high class neighborhood where Bolsonaro lives. The situation could not have been more embarrassing for him, as local media reported.???

During his speech, however, Bolsonaro repeated his explanations of the situation that had been widely criticized, among which is the attribution of fires to natural reasons. After 19 days of doing nothing, the Brazilian president said that he had signed a decree to send the army to those Amazon states that request them to help stop deforestation and fight fires.

In Sao Paulo, the far-right President's promises did not alter the spirit of thousands of people who defended the world's largest rainforest by shouting phrases such as "Fire to the fascists", "War on Bolsonaro", "Long life to the Amazon" and "Get out Bolsonaro."

Thousands of people also joined protests against Bolsonaro by carrying out demonstrations in front of Brazil's embassies and consulates in European and Latin American cities.

One of the international organizations that called for the protests was the "Fridays for Future" movement, headed by the young Swedish Greta Thuberg, which called for the protest under the motto "SOS Amazon."???????

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