

# *A necessary space for dialogue and consultation*

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## **A necessary space for dialogue and consultation**

By María Josefina Arce

The urgent need to protect the sovereignty and integrity of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean and to fight against the negative effects of neoliberal policies in the region, which have increased poverty and inequality, were the focus of the debates of the Sao Paulo Forum, which met in Brasilia, the capital of Brazil.

It was precisely in this Latin American nation where this mechanism for the coordination of left-wing and progressive political parties and movements was born in the 1990s, at the initiative of the historic leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro, and the current Brazilian president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, founder of the Brazilian Workers' Party.

And after an inevitable pause due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the Forum returns to join efforts and strategize against a right wing with a long history of affiliation with imperialism and of promoting coups d'état to remove progressive governments that work in favor of the citizens.

A right wing that in its attacks increasingly resorts to new information technologies. That is why this twenty-sixth meeting could not miss the analysis of the challenge that the communication battle represents for the sovereignty of the peoples.

As the participants denounced, the social networks publish false news, discredit progress and seek to create states of opinion to encourage actions against the constitutional order.

It was also urged in Brasilia to consolidate integration in such important aspects as energy, health and education, since the pandemic showed the existing gaps and the need to join efforts in an increasingly

selfish world.

In its more than 30 years of existence, the Sao Paulo Forum has been a necessary space for dialogue, exchange of experiences and to chart the course to be followed in defense of the peoples.

In it, its executive secretary, Monica Valente, has pointed out, political and social leaderships have matured and anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist movements have been strengthened.

The Sao Paulo Forum also gave rise to concrete ideas on the importance of regional integration to preserve sovereignty and work for the benefit of the region's inhabitants.

Today, this mechanism for concerted action continues to be essential in the fight against hunger, poverty and inequality, especially in a post-pandemic world.

And the fact that after the COVID 19 pause, it returned to Brazil, where it was born and which currently has a government in favor of the majorities and Latin American and Caribbean unity, headed by Lula da Silva, one of its founders, is undoubtedly one more step in the consolidation of the role it plays in the integration of Latin America and the Caribbean, a region that, as Fidel Castro said, has so many things in common.

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